

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Psalms: Living By Faith In God
XCVIII. Handling An Unfair World
(Psalm 98:1-9)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Belief in the equality of all people is foundational to the Declaration of Independence and U. S. Constitution, and with it the concept of fairness for everyone. However, this concept is being widely violated in today's world:

(1) A lot of people in the (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) office of President Biden's Veterans Administration face dreadful unfairness: "At one point, a senior manager fired a mid-level manager because both men wanted to sexually harass the same employee . . . The 125-page report paints a shocking portrait of the 400-person diversity office, in which employees spend much of their time filing complaints against each other instead of serving veterans." (Luke Rosiak, "DEI Office In Biden's VA Is 'Hostile, Toxic' With Rampant Sexual Misconduct, Internal Probe Finds," Daily Wire, March 11, cited in "Quotable," Republican-American, March 15, 2024, p. 6A)

(2) Conscientious reporters face great unfairness: "(I)nvestigative reporter Catherine Herridge" was laid off by CBS, and "the Hill's Jonathan Turley" theorized that it was due to her "pursuing stories that were unwelcomed by the Biden White House and many Democratic powerhouses, including the Hur report on Joe Biden's diminished mental capacity, the Biden corruption scandal and the Hunter Biden laptop. She continued to pursue these stories despite reports of pushback from CBS executives' . . . (Thus,) journalism is *important* and *indispensable* and *the bedrock of democracy* when it doesn't upset the political interests of the ruling class and the ideological interests of the people who run newsrooms." ("When is the press free?," Ibid., March 20, 2024, p. 8A) However, "(w)hen journalists speak truth to power, rather than telling power what it wants to hear, all knives are out," Ibid.

(3) Connecticut residents face unfair exposure to violent criminals: The "state Board of Pardons and Paroles . . . approved parole for a . . . man who had served only 26 years of a 60-year sentence for an especially outrageous crime . . . He kidnapped a 16-year-old girl from her home in Pennsylvania and took her to Bridgeport, where he imprisoned her for weeks" and badly mistreated her. "(T)he perpetrator already had an extensive criminal record . . . (but) such hefty discounting of criminal justice . . . won't be over any time soon. Thanks to President Biden and U. S. Sens. Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy, the state is about to get a federal judge who, during the recent pandemic, called for the release of *all* prisoners, including the most violent." (Chris Powell, "A grossly premature parole; and teachers aren't underpaid," Ibid., March 14, 2024, p. 8A)

(4) Borrowers face an unfair, burdensome financial future due to the growing federal debt that is caused by huge overspending by elected officials: "(T)here is no reason to expect that long-term rates will decline . . . (A)s growing federal debt crowds out private capital, interest rates can be expected to increase slowly (as I and others have shown in empirical research) and I include this effect in the projected model. The effective interest rate on federal debt by 2039 rises to 6%." ("Quotable," Ibid., citing Mark J. Warshawsky, "A Fiscal Crisis Is Approaching Sooner Than Official Projections Indicate," National Review Online, March 19)

Need: *So, we ask, "How should we handle the unfair situations that we face in today's world?"*

- I. Psalm 98:1-3 calls for praise to be given to the Lord for His past faithful record of delivering Israel from unfair harm by her Gentile oppressors. (H. C. Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms, 1974, p. 691):**
- A. Verses one to three call for a new song to be sung in praise of the Lord for performing His wonders to deliver Israel from her Gentile enemies, a deliverance that was witnessed by the people groups of the world.
 - B. The historical occasion might well have been Israel's release from her Babylonian Captivity since Psalm 98:3 recalls Isaiah 63:7 and Psalm 98:6 recalls Isaiah 6:5 where deliverance from Babylon is the main context, Ibid.
- II. However, based on the Lord's faithfulness to Israel, Psalm 98:4-9 calls for the world to praise God for His future deliverance in the Millennial Kingdom of all believers from unfair treatment by oppressors:**
- A. Psalm 98:1b carries the same theme as Isaiah 59:16 and 63:5, Psalm 98:2 carries the same theme as Isaiah 52:10 and Psalm 98:8 carries the same theme as Isaiah 55:12, passages in Isaiah that predict Christ's future Millennial Kingdom! (Ibid.; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1114, 1117-1118, 1106, 1111)
 - B. Thus, Psalm 98:4-6 anticipates God's deliverance of believers from their oppressive foes in Christ's future Kingdom, so these verses admonish all nations on earth to praise the Lord as the King of the earth.
 - C. Even the sea, the land, the rivers and the mountains are told figuratively to praise the Lord in Psalm 98:7-8, likely anticipating the release of the Adamic curse from creation as foretold in Romans 8:19-21. (Ibid., p. 865)

- D. Significantly, “the specific occasion for praise that the psalm mentions is held in reserve until the very last verse” (Ibid., Leupold), where at Psalm 98:9a, the author explains that God is coming to judge the whole earth in Christ’s future Millennial Kingdom! (Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 865)
- E. That judgment, similar to God’s past deliverances of Israel from mistreatment by her enemies, will involve the Lord’s deliverance of all individuals and nations from unfair wrongs by their oppressors, Psalm 98:9b:
1. The Lord will judge the world with *sedeq*, “righteousness” (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 841-842), what implies impartial and unbending alignment to God’s laws (Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1968,, p. 101; H. A. W., Theol. Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, vol. II, p. 752-755)
 2. God will also judge the world with *meysarim*, “evenness, equity” (Ibid., B. D. B., p. 449).
 3. God’s *sedeq* and *meysarim* was illustrated by His acts toward Israel’s Egyptian oppressors in the Exodus:
 - a. His *sedeq*, God’s impartial and unbending alignment to His laws, was displayed by God’s sending the ten plagues on the Egyptians to get them to let Israel leave their taskmasters in Egypt, for those plagues were directed against Egypt’s false pagan gods upon whom the Egyptians relied for their welfare, Exodus 12:12.
 - b. God’s *meysarim*, His fairness, is seen in Israel’s gaining the silver, gold and clothing of the Egyptians so that Israel “plundered” Egypt as if Israel had defeated the Egyptians in battle, Exodus 12:35-36 NIV. God arranged for Israel to be given Egypt’s wealth as “fair” compensation for Israel’s slave labor in Egypt!
- III. **Similarly, we know from our study of the Laodicean Church era (Revelation 3:14-22) that the Revelation 3:21 “enthronement” promise with 7:17 and 21:4-6, God will relatively shield believers from today’s “mini-Great Tribulation” trials if they rely on the Holy Spirit to heed His Word regarding those trials.**

Lesson: *As God was to be praised for rescuing Israel from past unfair Gentile harm, God is to be praised for His deliverance of all believers in His future Kingdom. The Lord will also relatively shield believers from unfair harm in today’s trials if they rely on the Holy Spirit to heed His Word.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God's gift of eternal life, John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11. (2) May we be encouraged from God's past deliverance of Israel from unfair Gentile harm, (3) may we praise Him for His future rescue of all believers from unfair oppressors and (4) may we rely on the Holy Spirit to heed His Word for His deliverance of us from oppressors today.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message and provide additional guidance . . .)

We apply the sermon lesson to the issues of concern noted in the introduction for God’s advice in living today:

(1) As we noted in our message, Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 and 21:4-6 implies that if we believers today rely on the Holy Spirit to heed Scripture on God’s will regarding the issues of concern in our introduction, God will **relatively shield** us from the harm of oppressors and oppressive events in today’s “mini-Great Tribulation” trials.

(2) The Scriptures we must heed for God to shield us from the oppressors and trials noted in our introduction are as follows: (a) On the mistreatment of people in the DEI office of the Veteran’s Administration, (i) believers in such settings should withdraw from the abuse (2 Timothy 3:1-9), taking the needed steps to do so. (ii) Paul’s call to “turn away from” (v. 5 KJV) is in the middle voice in the Greek (*apotrepou*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 735; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 48) where the subject is to act for his own good. (b) On the mistreatment of conscientious journalists by powers that be that push political and ideological agendas, (i) employees in such settings should heed 2 Timothy 3:1-9 and withdraw from the trouble, and (ii) believers who face the mainstream media’s output can heed 2 Timothy 3:13-17 that predicts that such deception would increase, and to handle it, we must heed the truths of Scripture. (c) On the public’s unjust exposure to violent criminals, (i) 1 Corinthians 15:33 ESV states that “Bad company ruins good morals,” so we should fellowship with good people to avoid a lot of trouble. (ii) In the context of dealing with an evil pagan world, Colossians 4:5 directed believers in the Early Church to walk in wisdom before pagans who lived lives that contrasted sharply with the lives of Christians. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Col. 4:5) Living in today’s world where violent criminals at times run free requires that we be wise in avoiding conflicts with them. (d) On our exposure to rising interest rates fueled by rising federal debt, (i) we can financially thrive (+) if we are content with what we have to avoid wasteful spending (Hebrews 13:5-6), (+) if we budget thriftily (John 6:12; Luke 14:28-29) (+) and avoid debt (Proverbs 22:7) so as to (+) save and (+) invest (-) regularly, (-) boldly, (-) for the long-term (-) with proper diversification for long-term gain and financial stability (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6).

May we trust in Christ Who died as our Atoning Sacrifice for sin that we might receive God’s gift of eternal life. May we draw encouragement from God’s past deliverances, praise Him for His coming deliverances in Christ’s Kingdom, and function righteously, wisely, and carefully with consequential blessing!