



SERMON RECAP

OCTOBER 19, 2025

Enthronement Psalms: God is King

Series: Spirituality for Justice

Scripture: Psalm 98

“Sing to the LORD a new Song.” This is a common refrain in a set of Psalms known as Enthronement Psalms. Found grouped together in Psalms 93, and 95-99, the enthronement Psalms are about the reign of the LORD (Yahweh) as the King of all creation. “Sing to the LORD a new song,” is the refrain that begs the question, “what is the old song?”

The old song is despair. It is a song of lamentation (which we will get to in a couple of weeks). It is the song that was sung in exile, when the world had crumbled, society was crushed, the Temple was razed, and the people were taken to a foreign land. The devastation of the exile cannot be overstated, and it presented a theological crisis. How can the LORD be God if the people were destroyed? How can the people worship the LORD if they were no longer in the land that the LORD provided? These were huge questions that threatened the identity and very existence of the people of Israel.

The enthronement Psalms were a declaration that despite all of the doom and gloom, the LORD was still King. Whether written in the midst of exile as a proclamation of a future hope, or written after the exile ended as a proclamation of joy, they were a call to sing a new song. The new song was a song of justice. The other commonly repeated refrain of the enthronement psalms is “the LORD is establishing justice on the earth.”

Psalm 82 (last week) told us what made the LORD divine. Other gods were demoted and destroyed because they failed to give justice to the widow and the orphan. Here in Psalm 98 we are reminded that God is coming **so that** justice could be established on earth, and all of creation should join in the song. God is King, no one else is. Anything that does not lead to justice is not of God.

For those working for justice, the work can be arduous. Like the people of Israel, whose whole world was crushed by the Babylonian armies, we feel under attack. The songs of despair are easy to sing. It can feel as if society is crumbling, our institutions are failing, and that justice will never reign. This is why we sing a new song. The old song is worn out, but we can sing a song of God on the throne and be reminded that the work we do is worth it.



Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor. At the end of the third quarter of football games here, over 100,000 people sing together the rock hit song “Mr. Brightside,” by the Killers.

We sing a new song - and this does not have to be a metaphor. The physical act of singing together brings tremendous joy - and even health benefits. Take a moment and do an internet search on “benefits of singing together,” and you might find an article published by Oxford University entitled “Singing together promotes health, and is the perfect ice breaker.” Many studies have shown that singing together for the mind, body, and soul.

Many people think to themselves, “I can’t sing,” and as an individual, it might be true that no one would want to hear me sing. But when I sing in a group, something changes. My voice locks in with others, and even if I’m not hitting all the notes - the sound of a choir can be sublime. Thousands of people gather together in stadiums and claim they can’t sing, but when “Mr. Brightside,” “Sweet Caroline,” or “Living on a Prayer,” comes over the loudspeaker, suddenly an entire stadium can erupt in one voice. Search any of these songs with the word “stadium” and you will hear some of the most beautiful choirs in the world.

The act of singing together, people tap into something that we cannot easily identify. We enter into a space of creative energy that imagines a new reality. When we sing enthronement psalms, God IS King. We make it real by singing together. When we sing a new song of justice, we join in the heavenly chorus bigger and more beautiful than any stadium. We create a new reality. A song of justice, care for the poor, protection for the widow, and welcome for the immigrant is a song worth singing.

Sing in worship. Sing with the choir (Wednesdays at 7:00). Sing a new song and in the midst of doom and gloom, give power to the LORD our King.

NEXT WEEK:

Torah Psalms: The pursuit of happiness, Psalm 1