

Summer in the Psalms: Perpetual Praise
Psalm 145
ABC 9/25/22

We've all been around fanatics. Maybe you are one. Sports fanatics are quick to talk about their team. They know all of the key players & their stats. Others are fanatics about cars or fishing or music or art or politics or hunting or quilting. Whatever their passion, they talk about it enthusiastically. There's nothing wrong with being passionate about any of those things within limits. But as those who've experienced the grace & love of God, He should be our main passion. Those who know the one true God should be fanatics of Him & always talking of His greatness, grace, & goodness. That's the subject of Ps 145, the last identified psalm of David & the only psalm with the title, **of praise**. It introduces the grand finale of praise that runs through the last 5 psalms. It's also the last of 8 acrostic psalms. Ps 145 is an A to Z of praise. While the entire book of Psalms is praise, this psalm is the clearest praise of all. David saved the best for last.

1. God is Great (1-7) David begins this psalm by an opening statement in which he praises Jehovah as his **God & King** (1). This is a significant statement from the mouth of Israel's king, because it acknowledges that although David was the king of Israel, God is the King of kings & therefore David's **King** as well. But He's not just the King of kings, He's the King of all things. David doesn't hesitate to bow before God & acknowledge Him to be his King. He praised and promoted the name of God in the most personal of ways:

- He did it with a direct address (**You**).
- He did it with a personal reference (**my God**).
- He did it with a surrendered heart (**O King**).
- He did it unendingly (**forever and ever...every day**).

What does this King deserve? What can we give Him when we come into His presence? It was usual to bring kings gifts but there's nothing we can give God that He needs or doesn't already have. Everything is already His. But we can give our praise & worship to Him.¹ That's what David says he'll do. **1-2**

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms 107–150: An Expository Commentary*, p 1250

This is a deliberate, determined vow to praise the Lord. **Extol** means to elevate to a high place, to lift up, to exalt. David chooses to raise high the name of God above all other names. This adoration flows out of his personal relationship with his **God**. You can't praise God unless He is your God. It isn't enough if He's your parents' God. He must be your God. Your spouse's God won't do. He must be your God. For Him to be your God, you must come as a needy sinner to the cross, where God sent His own Son to bear the penalty for sin that you deserve. God set His seal of approval on the substitutionary, atoning death of Jesus by raising Him from the dead. You must trust in the crucified & risen Jesus as your Savior. When Thomas saw the risen Jesus, his doubts turned to faith as he proclaimed, **My Lord & my God!** (Jn 20:28). John goes on to tell us that all of the signs that he recorded in his gospel **have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; & that believing you may have life in His name** (Jn 20:31). For you to join David in this psalm of praise, you must have put your faith in the risen & living Jesus, so that you know Him as your Lord & your God. What does David say?

A. I will extol You; I will bless Your name. This is worship, acknowledging God to be what & who He truly is: the sovereign, holy, just, righteous, merciful, awesome, majestic God. Worship isn't coming to God to get things from Him. Worship is acknowledging God to be God. It's doing exactly what David does in the remainder of this psalm. He shows us that praise requires great thoughts of God & great thoughts of God prompt our praise. That means our praise is tied to our view of who God is. If we believe that God is great, it moves us to great praise. If we lack understanding of His greatness, it will lead to a lack of praise & worship. David's great theology of God leads him to doxology, to praise his God. You can't worship God as you ought until you know Him as He is. & as you become more knowledgeable of who He is, it ought to move you to more praise & worship of Him. When will David worship His God?

B. Every day I will bless You; I will bless/praise you forever & ever. David isn't going to praise God just on the Sabbath. He's going to praise God **every day**, Monday through Sunday, morning, noon, & night. At all times in all places. We can do the same. How long will David do this? 3x times in this psalm David resolves to praise or bless God **forever & ever** (1, 2, 21). It's as if **forever** isn't long

enough & he has to add, & **ever**. The book of Revelation indicates that the song of praise will go on throughout eternity. **Forever & ever** means more than just to the end of David's life. It means forever, indicating his belief he'd be worshiping God even after his worship on earth was ended. If you've been saved, you'll be worshiping God forever also, along with the other redeemed saints from all ages of world history. What does David praise God for? Why is David so eager to **extol, bless, & praise** God? 3

C. God is great David's compelled to praise God because He is so **great**. As David goes on to say, God is **glorious** in the **splendor of His majesty** (5). It's as if David is piling up words to describe God's greatness. But as the word **unsearchable** shows, his words fall short. God knows everything about us. As Ps 139 states, **O Lord, you have searched me and known me** (1). But we do not, and cannot, know everything about God. We bow before the mystery of the One whose greatness we only dimly understand (Is 40:8). All true worship must contain this sense of the transcendence of God. Here is the divine King, great beyond all human understanding,² far greater than all of the words we can think of combined. Paul uses similar language when he talks about **the unfathomable riches of Christ** (Eph 3:8) & when he exclaims, **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom & knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments & unfathomable His ways!** (Rom 11:33). Where do you suppose David got his understanding of the **unsearchable greatness** of God? Isaiah & Ezekiel had visions of God in His glory but there's no record of David ever having such a vision. Twice the Lord appeared to David's son, Solomon (1 Kgs 11:9), but it's not recorded that David ever had such an experience. Where did he get his understanding of God's greatness? In Ps 19 David tells us he had 2 sources: God's creation & God's Word, which for him was probably the 5 books of Moses. As David meditated on the glory of God as revealed in His creation, he realized how great God is. He spoke the universe & all of life into existence by the word of His power (Ps 33:6, 9). But God hasn't revealed Himself as fully in nature as He has in His Word as we'll see in vs 8 where David quotes from Ex 34:6. It's from that great scene when Moses asked God to reveal His glory to him (Ex 33:18). God responded by telling Moses no one can see His face & live, but He'd pass by & let

² Robert Davidson, *The Vitality of Worship: A Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, International Theological Commentary, p 467

Moses get a glimpse of His back. As He passed by, God proclaimed the words that David quotes in vs 8, which is the most frequently repeated vs in the OT (Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Ps 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Joel 2:13; &, Jonah 4:2). By meditating on God's Word, David came to realize that God's greatness is unsearchable. We can only know Him as He chooses to make Himself known to us. It's God's greatness that brings such praise from David. As we grasp glimpses of God's greatness, we too will join in His worship.³ The proper praise of God comes from the proper knowledge of God. Not only is God great but as a great God He...

D. God does great works 4-7

David doesn't praise God as an isolated man. He joins past worshipers & shares the responsibility of bringing up the next generation to know God & to submit to & worship Him. David **meditates** on God's **glorious splendor**, referring to the sum total of His divine attributes and actions. Worship comes not from emotion but from careful thought & meditation on God's Word & works. David meditated not only on the great things God did (His **wondrous works**), but he also paid attention to God's **glorious splendor**. The idea is of the glory and wonder of who God actually is. The more we know of God the more we'll worship Him. When we read of **mighty acts, glorious splendor, wonderful works, & awesome acts** of God, it's natural to think of His works in nature. That isn't a bad place to start in our praise. If you can look at the waves of the ocean, a beautiful waterfall, the majesty of the mountains, a brilliant sunset, or the splendor of the stars on a cloudless night & not be moved to praise God there's something wrong with you. Yet as wonderful as God's works of creation are, a person who's come to know God's goodness in Jesus can't stop there. The greatest of God's works are His salvation works. In the case of Israel, these were always understood to involve His power in delivering them from slavery in Egypt & bringing them into their own land. For us, God's salvation works are His works of saving us from sin through Jesus' death & resurrection. By writing of God's **abundant goodness & righteousness**, it must be these saving works of God that David's thinking about. Unknown to David but know to us is that both God's **goodness & righteousness** were displayed in the death of Jesus. In Jesus' death God showed Himself to be both good &

³ Donald Williams & Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Psalms 73-150*, vol. 14, The Preacher's Commentary Series, p 505

righteous in saving sinners. Neither of these attributes of God is seen in creation. Redemption began after the fall when God graciously clothed Adam & Eve with animal skins & promised that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). It continued in God's gracious call to Abram, when He promised to make a great nation from his descendants & to bless all nations through him (Gen 12:1-3). It was further demonstrated in the exodus, when the blood of the Passover lamb protected the firstborn & God parted the Red Sea to lead His people out of bondage. That same episode demonstrated His judgment on those in spiritual darkness, as the Egyptians experienced His wrath. Both redemption & judgment would be seen completely when God sent His own Son to be the final & sufficient sacrifice for our sins. In that sacrifice, God reveals Himself as being both abundantly good & absolutely righteous (7). Obviously, for David to be so caught up with God's greatness as revealed in His creation & His mighty works, he had to spend a fair amount of time studying & thinking about these things. If we want to be moved by these truths, we must also take time regularly to read & meditate on God's Word & His mighty works in Scripture & in our own lives. Because God & His mighty works are great, we should praise Him every day, from generation to generation, forever & ever. Do we praise God every day, many times a day? If He's as great as David proclaims, shouldn't we praise Him at all times? If we don't, the root cause may be that we aren't captivated by His **glorious majesty & unsearchable greatness**.

David mentions **one generation shall praise Your works to another... shall declare... shall speak... tell... utter... shout joyfully** (4-7). This doesn't mean merely that the stories of God's past acts will be passed on by the redeemed community, though that is true. But that each generation of believers will add to that story the account of what God has also done with them. An older generation may inspire a younger generation to praise by remembering God's mighty acts in the past. A young generation might stir praise in an older generation by declaring the fresh & new things God is doing. Young people, there are those around you with gray hair who've been praising God for decades. The baton is being passed. Will you take it up or drop it? Will you join them in praising God? God is so great that it demands the next generation to praise Him. If the next generation doesn't, He won't be the loser; you will. If we don't rejoice daily in Christ as our Savior,

we can't pass it on to our children & grandchildren. So David tells us to praise God every day forever & ever because He is great & does great things. But that's not all.

2. God is Gracious 8-9

As I said, vs 8 quotes Ex 34:6. It's a vs of great hope for sinners. Certainly God is almighty, all-wise, all-knowing, & all-powerful. We expect that. The unexpected thing is that God is **gracious**. He is **merciful, slow to anger, great in lovingkindness, & good** to those who've rebelled against His authority. John Calvin called this vs...

...as clear & satisfactory a description of the nature of God ... as can anywhere be found. He adds that the proper view of God is that which invites us to seek after Him. He asks, If it be true that God is not only willing to befriend us, but is spoken of as touched with sympathy for our miseries, so as to be all the kinder to us the more that we are miserable, what folly were it not to fly to Him without delay?⁴

God is good to all, even to His enemies, showing them common grace. He isn't merely good to the good, because there is none that is good (Rom 3:12). He shows favor to the undeserving, delaying His judgment, extending further opportunities to repent.⁵ God spreads some of His goodness to all humanity. Jesus said, **He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil & *the* good, & sends rain on *the* righteous & *the* unrighteous** (Mt 5:45). God is gracious to His chosen people & to all people. Remember the story of Jonah when he doesn't want to go to Nineveh to preach? He said to God, *The reason I didn't want to go there is because I knew You were gracious & merciful & slow to anger & abounding in love.* See what Jonah's saying? *I didn't want to go to those pagans in Nineveh because I knew You'd forgive them. I knew You were like that!* You know how the story ends. In Jonah 4:9 God comes to Jonah & says something very interesting that echoes what is said in Ps 145. He says, *Jonah, you had compassion on the plant I caused to grow up overnight. When it died, you were sad. But there are thousands of people in Nineveh & I had compassion on them.* This is a central attribute of God. His grace, mercy, forbearance, patience, lovingkindness, goodness, & compassion ought to be praised. No wonder John said, **God is love** (1 Jn 4:16). David says if you understand God's grace you'll praise Him for who He is, for His love & compassion. If vs 8 isn't your idea of

⁴ Calvin's Commentaries, Ps 145:8, p 275

⁵ Steven J. Lawson, *Psalms 76-150*, ed. Max Anders, vol. 12, Holman OT Commentary, p 359

God, if you think of Him as out to zap you for your sins, you don't have the biblical picture of God. It's out of love that He created us & it's out of love that He's chosen to redeem us. He went to extreme measures to provide a way that He could be both righteous & merciful in forgiving your sins. He maintained His righteousness in that Jesus paid the full penalty for sin on the cross. If you'll trust in His sacrifice on your behalf, in your place, you'll praise God forever because of His abundant grace.

3. God's Kingdom 10-13

The world is full of ancient ruins that proclaim the might of kingdoms that are no more. The pyramids of Egypt, the Taj Mahal in India, Machu Picchu in Peru, & many others. These awesome architectural achievements show us that in the past various kingdoms ruled the lands. None of them, however, can claim the power & majesty & glory of God's kingdom. The Psalms repeatedly proclaim God as the rightful Sovereign of the universe: **The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, & His sovereignty rules over all** (Ps 103:19). **Our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases** (115:3). While not every enemy is yet subject Him, He scoffs at those who think they can overthrow His rule (Ps 2:1-4). He's seated David's Lord, Jesus, at His right hand until He makes His enemies a footstool for His feet (Ps 110:1). When Jesus comes in power & glory to crush every enemy & to reign on the throne of David, the earth will know the glory & majesty of His everlasting kingdom. One part of God's goodness is His rule over us. We can't rule ourselves & it's a work of God's grace when we realize the necessity of His rule. Nebuchadnezzar took the glory of God for himself when he looked out over the city of Babylon & declared in his pride, **Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power & for the glory of my majesty?** (Dan 4:30). God judged him for his arrogance, taking his sanity & causing him to live with the beasts of the field & acting like them. He lived that way for 7 years, but at last Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson. When he did, he praised God in the words of Ps 145:13. **I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven & my reason returned to me, & I blessed the Most High & praised & honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, & His kingdom endures from generation to generation** (Dan 4:34). When you've learned that lesson

you've learned a lot. It's even more important to become a grateful subject of God's kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ.⁶ We read of this kingdom in Revelation. **Worthy are You to take the book & to break its seals; for You were slain, & purchased for God with Your blood *men* from every tribe & tongue & people & nation. You have made them *to be* a kingdom & priests to our God; & they will reign upon the earth** (Rev 5:9–10). God has never been & will never be dethroned. His kingdom won't be overthrown. His reign & rule never cease & His **dominion endures throughout all generations** (13). Make sure you're in submission to the King of all kings. Things would go so much more smoothly in our lives & Christ would be exalted more if we subjected every thought, word, & deed to our King Jesus. God's greatness, God's grace, God's kingdom, & now...

4. God's Goodness 14-17

These vss ooze with the goodness, kindness, & mercy of God toward all of His creatures. How does God demonstrate His goodness? He does it by keeping His promises & by caring for His creation. When we fall, He lifts us up (14). There is no burden too heavy that He won't bear. As Peter says, **casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you** (1 Pt 5:7). When we're bowed down by distress, He restores us (14). When we're hungry, He provides food (15). David's observation about God opening His hand & giving food to satisfy the desire of **every living thing** (15-16) goes beyond humans to **every living thing** on earth. If He cares for the sparrow, surely He'll care for His children, as Jesus pointed out (Mt 6:26; 10:29-31). But what the psalmist seems to be thinking of is the faithfulness of God even to the animal kingdom, for he stresses **every living thing** in vs 16. But the promises of God to His redeemed people are much greater. What the animals need from God is food. Humans need that & many other things. What we need most of all is God Himself. Augustine said, *Thou hast formed us for Thyself, & our hearts are restless, till they rest in Thee.*⁷ God promises to give us Himself if we come to Him through Jesus. Then He also meets every other right desire we may have. God says, **Open your mouth wide & I will fill it** (Ps 81:10). Paul testified, **my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus** (Phil 4:19). There's a wonderful

⁶ Boice, p 1253

⁷ Augustine, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, 1:45.

universality in these vss as seen in the word **all**, which is repeated often. God is good to **all** (9) & His throne lasts for **all** generations (13). He upholds **all** who fall (14) & the eyes of **all** creatures look to God for their food (15). He satisfies all **living things** (16) & helps **all** who call on Him (18). One day **all** flesh will praise Him (21).⁸ We read of **all generations** (13), **all who fall**, **all who are bowed down** (14), **all look to You** (15), **all His ways**, **all His deeds** (17), **all who call upon Him** 2x (18), **all who love Him**, **all the wicked** (20), & **all flesh** (21). Because God is good to **all**, **all** ought to praise Him. Ps 145 & the entire Psalter end on this note. Psalm 145 says, **All flesh will bless His holy name forever & ever**. The Psalter ends, **Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!** (150:6).

Vs 17 affirms both God's righteousness & His kindness & they aren't in opposition, as we sometimes think. His righteous standards are kind because they're for our good. Later, Paul would write about this idea, how in the person and work of Jesus, God demonstrated **His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus** (Rom 3:26). The combination of being both **just & the justifier** is much the same as being both **righteous & gracious**. God is upright, righteous, & just in responding to those who have needs & call on Him, those who are in peril & seek salvation.⁹ Even when a loved one dies we can truthfully say that God is righteous & kind (17). We can worship God even in tragedy by acknowledging that He helps the falling & answers our prayers. Vss 18 & 19 are worth memorizing & claiming often. **18-19**

If we fear Him, our desires will be in line with His will so when we call upon Him, He'll be near to us & hear our cry to save us. It's true that *God hears His people as truly when He withholds what is for their hurt as when He grants what is for their good.*¹⁰ Throughout our lives God shows Himself to be a good, caring, saving, & persevering God. Vs 20 is also a wonderful promise. **20**

Up to this point the psalm has been one unending chorus of praise, but this vs reminds us that our praise must still be offered in a sinful world. The sad thing about the wicked, whom God will destroy, is that they have nobody to thank when a blessing comes their way. We need to tell them

⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Exultant*, 1st ed., "Be" Commentary Series, p 211

⁹ Boice, p 1254

¹⁰ A.R. Fausset, *A Commentary Critical, Experimental, & Practical on the Old & NTs*, 2:406

about our wonderful Lord who died for them & desires to save them.¹¹ Those who fear God (19) also love Him (20). There's no tension between the fear of God & love for Him. God's promise to keep us is a great comfort. His promise to judge the wicked is also a comfort to those who rejoice in His righteous judgment.

David's tells us to praise God always because both He & His works are great. We're to praise Him because of His grace & for His glorious kingdom. We're to praise Him because of His goodness towards all who call upon Him. David ends with a final determination to praise God: **21**

This is the last word we have from David in the Bible. It's his last will & testament, if you will. In it he praises God & invites others to praise God also. There's a sense of determination in his words. In fact, he repeatedly states, **I will** in this psalm (1--2x; 2--2x]; 5; 6; 21 [**my mouth will**]). He also affirms repeatedly that others will testify of God's greatness & sing His praises. The only way we'll join the psalmists in praising God every day, even in times of trial, is if we resolve to do so. To do that, we must know Him & focus on His glorious majesty & splendor. Then we can join David in becoming God fanatics, those who can't stop speaking of His glorious name.

Here's a list from this psalm of who God is & of what God fanatics look like. Here's who our God is:

- He rules as King over all forever (1, 11-13).
- His greatness is unsearchable (3).
- He does mighty works (4-6).
- He is glorious in His majestic splendor (5).
- He is full of abundant goodness to all (7, 9).
- He is righteous in all His ways (7, 17).
- He is gracious & merciful (8).
- He is slow to anger & great in lovingkindness (8).
- His kingdom is glorious & everlasting (11-13).
- He sustains all who fall & raises up all who are bowed down (14).
- He gives food to the hungry (15-16).
- He is righteous (7, 17).
- He is kind in all His deeds (17).
- He is near to all who call upon Him in truth (18).

¹¹ Wiersbe, p 212

- He fulfills the desire & saves those who fear Him (19).
- He hears our cries (19).
- He keeps all who love Him (20).
- He will destroy all the wicked (20).
- His name is holy (21).

Here are some characteristics we should have as fanatics of God:

- We extol God & bless His name continually & forever (1-2).
- We are enthralled with His greatness (3).
- We tell the next generation about His mighty works (4).
- We meditate often on God's glorious majesty & wonderful works (5).
- We tell others about God's greatness & awesome acts (6).
- We bubble over with God's abundant goodness & His righteousness (7).
- We are awed by His grace, love, goodness, & mercy (8-9).
- We rejoice in the majesty of His kingdom (11-13).
- We are touched by His kindness to the needy (14-20).
- We look to God to meet our daily needs (15-16).
- We know God as both righteous & kind (17).
- We call upon the Lord in prayer (18).
- We both fear & love God (19-20).
- Our desires are satisfied in Him as our Savior & Keeper (19-20).
- We know He'll judge the wicked (20b).
- We determine to speak God's praise & bless His holy name forever & ever (21).

I pray that we all have joined the ranks of bold fanatics of God. Rising up from within our souls must be an anthem of perpetual praise to God. We must always be lifting our voices in magnifying His name. God is so worthy of our praise that we should never cease praising Him. He is great &, therefore, greatly to be praised. His sovereignty is unsearchable, far beyond our human comprehension. His incomparable glory produces wonder & astonishment that overwhelm us. His mighty deeds fill us awe-filled worship that must be offered up to Him forever.¹² God's character & God's awesome works furnish us with more material than we could ever exhaust, & we will have all of eternity to keep learning more!¹³ Is it your desire to say truthfully with David, **21**?

¹² Lawson, p 360

¹³ Wiersbe, p 211