

Introduction

I'm going to begin with a parable which Jesus told in Matthew 20. I'm going to summarise it. There was once a wealthy man who, early one morning, dropped by the marketplace. There he hired a bunch of guys to work in his vineyard for an agreed upon rate of pay. A few hours later, he went back again and then again later that same day, each time employing more and more men. In fact, as Jesus told it, the owner of the vineyard hired extra workers right up until it was time to go home for the day. The last men were hired just one hour before sunset.

As the last light of day faded, the workers gathered to receive their pay. They were lined up in order from the last ones hired and working backward. And this is when Jesus clinches it with the parable. Every man, no matter how long they had worked that day, received exactly the same pay: one day's wages.

Question – if that was you, how would you have felt if you were there from early morning?

Well the atmosphere was rather tense. A low murmur passed among those who were hired early that morning. Finally someone just said it: "This is not right. We got a bad deal today. We did most of the work. We carried the burden under the hot sun. But you treated them as equals! It's simply unfair"

And so the owner says to the men, "Didn't we agree together on what I would pay you? I've kept my word to you. Now don't begrudge my desire to be generous! For reasons that are mine, I wanted to do something unexpected, something crazy, something that would make these men run home to their wives and say, 'You're not going to believe what happened to me today!'"

Let me start by saying that those are not just the experiences in other people's lives. There isn't a single person today who hasn't experienced outrageous, lavish, unexpected, undeserved goodness and kindness. What is more, we experience these blessings every single day. They are poured out over us constantly. That is because God is so good to us.

Reflection – how much do you and I take time to realise how good and kind God is to us?

Question – why don't people naturally recognise how much they are blessed by God?

Have you ever noticed some people who have been through so much in their lives, and they understand truly the blessing it is to be alive. It therefore permeates through their expression of love towards God.

If we want to know how amazing God is, then just listen to some of these verses. "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good" (I Chron. 16:34). "Taste and see that the Lord is good!" (Ps. 34:8) "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him and praise His name! For the Lord is good and His love is eternal, and His faithfulness endures to all generations." (Ps. 100:4-5)

So, Psalm 145 is written by David and every verse provides evidence of how much he wants to talk about God's greatness, his goodness and his grace for David. Psalm 145 is the only Psalm that has the title "A psalm of praise".

Read Psalm 145

The last 6 psalms are songs of praise. There are no requests to God or confessions within this psalm. It is pure praise. It is also one of the psalms that is an acrostic. An acrostic is when the first letter in every line of a text spells out a specific word. In this case, each verse begins with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet which has 22 letters. Now dependent on your bible, you may have noticed that your bible has only 21 verses and that is because there's a Hebrew letter missing in verse 13, although it has been inserted in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), one Hebrew manuscript, and one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. You will see these lines maybe inserted at the bottom of verse 13. But allowing for that slight technicality, because of the Acrostic it is considered as the **A-Z of praise**.

Structure

So the main theme throughout is that it's **David's praise to God, and that he's overwhelmed in his praise**. If we want to structure the psalm, then David gives reasons for giving praise to God.

Verse 1-7 because God is great

Verses 8-9 because God is full of grace

Verses 10-13 because God is faithful

Verses 14-20 because God is good to all

Verse 21 because God deserves everything

Verses 1-7 Because God is great

So many leaders today, especially Trump, will brag and boast about how good their achievements have been. They almost consider themselves to be perfect in every way. And yet in the opening verses of this Psalm David calls God the King. And yet who is the King? It's David.

Question – what does this say about David's position of himself and God's position?

Notice that David says 'my' God. You will never be able to consider God as King, or be able to properly praise him if you think someone else other than God is king. God has got to be your God, not someone else's. When God sent Jesus to carry the weight of sin to the cross, he did it for you and me. For Jesus to be King, we have first got to recognise that for ourselves. If we don't then he's not King, and something else is.

John 20:31 says that 'these are written that **you** may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name'. So when we come to praise God, however that may be, we must make him first in our lives, otherwise the praise we give him will never fully be to him, because something else will be in the way.

Verse 2 – every day I will praise you.

Question – why do you think it is so important to give God the praise every day?

Other things could very quickly become the focus. We get a good result in work and so the praise suddenly goes to you and not to God. When David was receiving gifts for the building of the temple in 1 Chronicles 29 he ensured that God received the praise and not him for the incredible beauty that was the temple.

Verse 12 'Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. ¹³ Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name ¹⁴ "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand".

They chose to highlight that everything came from God to start with. Every day we must acknowledge in praise that without God's provision we simply would not have anything.

ACTION – why not each morning as you waken, before you lift your head, praise God for the things he has given you. And at the end of every day, as the last thing you do before you fall asleep, give God the praise for what he has blessed you with in that day.

The greatness of the Lord as David describes is actually impossible to describe. Verse 3 David says, "Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom". So it cannot be described. God is far greater than any word.

If we think for a moment of how great God is, let's consider the what he has created. It is beyond comprehension. A telescope in Hawaii has snapped a picture of a galaxy 65,000,000 light years from the earth. Light travels at 186,284 miles per second. So this is 65 million times 31.5 million times 186.284 miles to reach that far – 3E+20 miles to travel. God who can make all of this surely deserves our worship and praise. And this galaxy is probably not even all of this. Even greater than all of this creation, is in the face of this, He cared enough to save our souls. David says his greatness no one can fathom. And this is coming from someone that had no sense of the science that we now have access to.

So how great is God? There are plaques put up in many churches that say words like 'To the glory of God', but how often are these words bigger than the words of the person the plaque is being dedicated to? We have to remember that when it comes to praise, God is God, and we are not. He deserves the praise, we are nothing, and yet in his eyes we are more precious than anything else Zephaniah 3:17 – '*The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing*'.

Verses 4-7 speak of God's works. Creation is an incredible example of his mighty works, and yet many will try to tell us that God didn't make any of it, it was evolution. The creation of everything around us is not a result of luck or sheer chance.

Question – do you think the development of science has had a damaging effect on pulling people away from the reason for a creator God who therefore should be praised?

Verse 4 talks about one generation will commend God's works to another.

Parents will tell their children, who will tell their children of the greatness of God. Again, this implies that the parents have experienced personally something of God's greatness in saving them from their sins. If we do not rejoice daily in Christ as *our* Saviour, we can't pass it on to our children.

Question – in light of these verses (4-7), do you think parents understand today their role in telling their children about the goodness of the Lord. How does this affect the current role of the church?

Verse 7 is translated as 'they will abundantly utter your goodness'. The word rendered "abundantly utter" means to bud forth, to gush out, to flow, as a fountain (Prov. 18:4; 1:23; 15:2; 15:28). It is applied to words as poured forth in praise. The meaning is, that the heart is full, as a fountain is full of water, and that it naturally overflows, or seeks to discharge itself. The thought of the goodness of God fills the heart, and makes it overflow with gratitude.

For a new generation, is this not what is currently missing? Lives have become so busy that our children do not hear parents spending enough times uttering God's goodness and his works, gushing out in praise.

So our praise rises up because we recognise the greatness of God.

2. Verses 8 & 9 describe that God is full of grace.

Verse 8 'The Lord is gracious and compassionate' cites Exodus 34:6 where Moses had chiselled new tablets of stone, and God comes down in a cloud proclaiming 'The Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin'.

This should give each of us a clear picture of who God is. These verses show just how patient, and kind, and merciful this great God is that we serve. He does not want even one person to be lost. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he

is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Question – how do you think this view of God differs from what people might think in our communities or amongst our friends? How do we go about changing their view of Him?

3. Verses 10-13 because God is faithful and his Kingdom is displayed in glory.

The Psalms repeatedly proclaim that God is the rightful Sovereign over the universe: Psalm 103:19 “The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all”.

Verse 10 ‘All you have made will praise you’ – [watch video](#) – every sound gives praise – different frequencies of sound.

<https://youtu.be/wvJAgrUBF4w>

Question - How does this make you feel about nature and everything around you where the whole earth gives God praise? Every living creature.

All of these unexplainable discoveries should make us fall on our knees before the supreme intelligence of the universe. These discoveries should make us realize the frailty of man compared to the Mighty God.

And God’s Kingdom will never be crushed unlike many other things in the world and in history. Look at the effect of something like Coronavirus – it just shows how delicate our civilisation actually is.

The meaning of verse 13 is, that the reign of God, his Kingly reign, will continue forever and ever. It will never pass away as other dominions do. It will not change as dynasties do among people. It will not be overthrown as they are. Its great principles will stand firm forever and ever (compare notes at Psalm 72:17).

The throne of God is from everlasting to everlasting. God was God of Adam and He is still God of us today. He will always be God. His throne is the same. It is for all generations past and all generations to come. He was God, He is God, and He will be God.

4. Verses 14-20 David gives God the praise because God is good to all

These verses speak of the goodness, kindness, and mercy of God toward all of His creatures. David's observation about God opening His hand and giving food to satisfy the desire of every living thing (vv. 15-16) goes beyond people to every animal on earth. Remember Matthew 6 that If He cares for the sparrow, surely He will care for His children, as Jesus pointed out (Matt. 6:26; 10:29-31).

Question – if we recognise all that God provides for us, why do we not see generosity within some churches? Why are traditional mainstream churches finding it hard to survive?

Verses 18 & 19 are worth memorizing and claiming often, “The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them.” If we fear Him (that is to give him respect and his rightful place as Lord), our desires will be in line with His will. So when we call upon Him, He will be near to us and hear our cry to save us.

Note also in verse 18 that David says The Lord is near to those who call on him in truth. So God will not be fooled by a mouth worship. We must worship Him in our heart. We call in truth, when our mouth speaks the words that are in our heart. It's made me really think about how I can worship God as we gather on Sundays, but do I give him worship through the week in how I act to various situations or with members of my family. Those who worship, worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23)

Verse 20 is also a wonderful promise, “The Lord watches over all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.” Those who fear God (v. 19) also love Him (v. 20). There is no tension between the fear (respect) of God and heartfelt love for Him. God's promise is to keep us safe, and to watch over those who love him

Question – how does that make you feel at present? For me it makes me want to praise him even more, because he remains loving and faithful no matter what.

Wiersbe in his book 'Meet yourself in the Psalms' says 'How strange that in a song of praise, David should mention the judgment of the wicked! But even in His judgments, God is to be praised (Rev 19:1-5). The more

we love God, the more we ought to hate evil and want to see it judged and destroyed’.

So David has told us to praise God always because both He and His works are so great. Praise Him because of His grace. Praise Him because of His faithfulness and glorious kingdom. Praise Him because of His goodness towards all who call upon Him. He ends with a final determination to praise God.

5. Verse 21 because God deserves everything

“My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.” There is a sense of determination in David’s words.

It is interesting that in nearly every psalm, David (or other psalmists) are in some overwhelming trouble (143:3-4). And yet the psalms are filled with praises to God. The only way that we will join the psalmists in praising God every day, even in times of trial, is if we resolve to do so. We have got to make every effort to do so, even when it seems so tough.

Conclusion

So as we praise God, this Psalm teaches us what God’s people are to be like :

- *They extol God and bless His name continually (1-2).*
- *They are enthralled with His greatness (3).*
- *They tell the next generation about His mighty works (4).*
- *They meditate often on God’s glorious majesty and wonderful works (5).*
- *They tell others about God’s greatness (6).*
- *They bubble over with God’s abundant goodness and His righteousness (7).*
- *They are awed by His grace, love, goodness, and mercy (8-9).*
- *They rejoice in the majesty of His kingdom (11-13).*
- *They are touched by His kindness to the needy (14-20).*
- *They look to God to meet their daily needs (15-16).*

- *They know God as both righteous and kind (17).*
- *They call upon the Lord in prayer (18).*
- *They both fear and love God (19-20).*
- *Their desires are satisfied in the Lord as their Savior and keeper (19-20).*
- *They know that He will judge the wicked (20b).*
- *They determine to speak God's praise and bless His holy name forever (21).*