

Psalm 65

Title: God's Favor Upon Man and Earth

Author and Date: David

Key Verses: Psalm 65:3, 6, 11

Type: Praise

Outline

- A. Graciousness: God's abundant pardon (verses 1-4).
- B. Greatness: God's abundant power (verses 5-8).
- C. Goodness: God's abundant providence (verses 9-13).

Notes

Title: "For the Chief Musician. A Psalm. A Song of David." See the notes on the title of Psalm 4. The distinction between a "psalm" and a "song" is also found in Psalm 66-68. See the titles to Psalm 30 and 46. It is difficult to determine the exact difference, if any, between a "psalm" and a "song".

Summary: Psalm 65 is a praise psalm (it opens and closes with praise). The psalmist is thankful and praises God for his abundant favor to mankind (verses 1-5) and to the earth (verses 6-13). This psalm is positive and optimistic without the curses and complaints found in previous lament psalms. First, God is praised (verse 1) because he is gracious to mankind. He answers their prayer (verse 2), he pardons their transgressions (verse 3), and he allows them to approach him in worship in his holy temple (verse 4). Next, God is praised for his greatness and power. With his great power, God answers prayer (verse 5), sets the mountains (verse 6), fills the seas (verse 7), and sends out the morning and evening (verse 8). Finally, God is praised for his goodness to his earth. He waters the earth (verses 9-10), it produces bounty, and rejoices (verses 11-13).

Verse 2: "All flesh" points to the fact that God's graciousness, greatness, and goodness are for all mankind, not just Israel (see also verses 5, 7, and 8).

Verse 3: God will "forgive" (Heb. *kaphar*), meaning he will atone for and expiate our sins.

Verse 4: This verse states a beatitude: "Blessed is the man..." (see also Psa. 1:1; 32:2; 34:8; 40:4; 84:5, 12; 94:12; 112:1). If the "house" and "temple" in this verse refer to Solomon's temple, then this psalm would be dated later than the time of David.

Verse 5: "Terrible" means "holy fear" or "reverence".

Verse 8: “Thy tokens” (KJV) are the “signs” (ESV, NASV) and “wonders” (NIV) of God’s power in the world around us; the evidence that God gives us of his power.

Verse 9: God waters his earth (Psa. 78:15-16; 104:10-11; 105:41; 107:35; 114:8). The rainy season in Palestine runs from May to October.

Questions

1. What is given to God in Zion (verse 1)?
2. What does God hear (verse 2)?
3. What does God forgive (verse 3)?
4. What man is blessed (verse 4)?
5. How does God answer man’s prayer (verse 5)?
6. What does God do with his strength (verses 6-7)?
7. What are people afraid of, or in awe of, concerning God (verse 8)?
8. What does God do to the earth (verses 9-10)?
9. What does God do to the year (verse 11)?
10. What does God do to the pastures, hills, and valleys (verses 11-13)?

Applications for Today

1. God answers prayer (verse 2). How does God answer our prayers (Psa. 69:13; 143:1)?
2. God forgives us of our iniquities and transgressions (verse 3). What did sinful Israel need to do to be forgiven (1 Kings 8:47-50)? Who is blessed (Psa. 32:1; Rom. 4:7)?
3. Man is blessed who can come and worship God in his house, the holy temple (verse 4). Who are the temple of God today (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21)? Who are the house of God today (1 Tim. 3:15)?
4. Men stand in awe of the wonders of God's creation (verse 8). What do the heavens declare (Psa. 19:1)? How is mankind made (Psa. 8:3-5; 139:13-16)?
5. God waters his earth (verses 9-10). What does God send to mankind and his earth (Mt. 5:45; Acts 14:17)?
6. God is good (verse 11). What comes down from God (Jas. 1:17)?
7. God gives us all spiritual blessings (verse 3) and all physical blessings (verse 11). What do Christians have in Christ (Eph. 1:3)? What does God give (Phil. 4:19)?