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Praising God with Many Voices and One Voice; Psalm 66

GPBC

2.14.21

Introduction – Psalm 65 opens with the declaration that God is worthy to be praised. Then it proceeds to describe three reasons why God is due praise. Psalm 66 opens with a command to praise God. Psalm 65 says God should be praised. Psalm 66 says, “You praise God!” Psalm 65 is descriptive, describing what is to be done. Psalm 66 is prescriptive, calling on all voices to do it. Psalm 65 is addressing God and declaring He must be praised. Psalm 66 is addressed to us and exhorting us to start praising Him!

- I. An Invitation to Praise (vv1-5)
 - a. Notice in vv1-3 the many ways this psalm is exhorting and motivating us to praise the God who is praiseworthy.
 - i. “Shout” – so it should be big praise. Don’t whisper it; shout it. God’s too great to be kept a secret. He can’t be kept quiet or silent. Shout it. Let everybody around you hear it. “for joy” – That’s why you have to shout it. The fountain of this praise is joy. When your heart overflows with joy, you don’t respond as quiet as you possibly can. No, you let it out large. “to God” – That’s why the praise is so big and full of joy, it is directed to God. He’s big. He’s full of joy. “all the earth” – every single voice is called upon to praise because every single voice has known the goodness and greatness of God.
 - ii. “sing the glory of His name” – Don’t just shout but sing also. As the hymn says, “I sing because I’m happy. I sing because I’m free.” Joy bubbles over in our lives in shouts and songs. III. sports
 - iii. “give to Him glorious praise” – give to God the only kind of praise that is to be given Him – glorious, celebratory, honoring praise. Don’t give Him half-hearted, mumbling praise. Give Him glorious praise.
 - iv. “Say to God” – shout, sing, give, say – in other words, here is a good place to start – say this! Tell God how awesome are His deeds and how great His power.

- v. “All the earth worships you” – let your voice represent all voices. Let your voice be the praise that should be lifted from every tongue. “Oh for a 1,000 tongues”
 - b. V5 is the invitation – come and see what God has done. We are to worship Him and tell Him how awesome are His deeds and how great is His power. So come and see. Come and see His deeds. Come and witness His power. Because when you do, you cannot help but praise Him!
 - c. That’s what Bible reading and Bible study is all about – coming and seeing how great and awesome and good is our God!
- II. God Has a History of Grace with All of His People (vv6-12)
 - a. First, the psalmist calls us to see how awesome and great are God’s works among all His people.
 - b. Vv6-12 take us back to the Exodus and to the days of Israel’s slavery in Egypt. The book of Exodus stands tall throughout history as an example and a reminder of God’s grace among His people. If you want to know what God will do for His people, read Exodus. Come and see.
 - c. Vv6-7 – take us back to that great standoff between Israel and the forces of Egypt at the shore of the Red Sea. Israel is trapped and outmanned. There is nowhere to run and hide. Pharaoh and all his forces and horses and chariots are bearing down on a nation of runaways. From any viewpoint of battle strategy, Israel is defeated. They must surrender now or face certain annihilation. Will God come through for His people? Is the kingdom of Egypt too powerful for God? Has all been lost? Has it all been for nothing and in vain?
 - i. Well, you know the story don’t you? God’s presence, represented in a great, thick cloud settles between Israel and Egypt and a strange, mighty wind begins to blow, and then happens what no one could have imagined – the sea begins to divide and dry land begins to appear. With a wall of water on either side, Israel walks through the Red Sea, and when Pharaoh and his army pursue, they are swept away in a mighty rush of water as the walls of the sea collapse upon them. God defeated the greatest army of the world with water to save His people.

ii. Come and see. See how God watches over His people and cast down those who rebel and exalt themselves against Him.

That's who God is – so shout and sing to Him!

- d. Vv8-12 looks at Israel in the heavy burden of bondage in Egypt all the way to dwelling in the promised land. Come and see how far God has brought His people – from slavery to abundance!
 - e. God allowed Israel to bear the weight of years of slavery. He brought them to a place of testing and trial. He proved to them He was their source of life and salvation.
 - f. He was with them all the way – through bondage, through deliverance, through the wilderness, through the conquest, through it all. He carried them through the fire and the water.
 - g. III. Spurgeon quote
- III. God Has a History of Grace with Each One of His People (vv13-20)
- a. Now in vv13-20 the psalmist moves from God's grace among all His people to God's grace with each individual believer.
 - b. How we are to shout and sing for all that God has done for His people, but our single voices should be raised to an even higher note when we remember all that God has done for us individually.
 - c. V13 – I will come and I will offer – I have reason to praise God. God has been good to me. God has done great things for me. I will worship. I will give thanks. I will live my life for Him.
 - d. Vv14-15 – When I was in trouble, I cried to God, prayed to God, made promises to God if He would only hear and deliver – and He did! So I will keep my promise and praise Him and offer Him sacrifices of worship and thanksgiving.
 - i. Oh how often have we been guilty of forgetting God when He answers prayer. How we plead with Him in times of trouble. Oh God, if you will only help me now, I will never do this or that again, I will always go to church, be a witness, live a holy life – and then God quiets the storm and answers and life resumes a normal pace, and all of sudden we forget all the pledges we made to God when we were in the storm.
 - e. V16 – here we have the psalmist testifying, inviting us to come and see and hear what God has done for him.
 - f. Vv17-19 – cf 65:2

- i. Key, fundamental lesson of prayer – God hears and answers His people when they pray, but we must pray with a clean and pure heart. Confession of sin opens wide the gates of God’s mercy and grace. Repentance of sin gains the ear of heaven and hand of our Father.
 - ii. Sin is the greatest hindrance to prayer. It pulls us away from the prayer closet. It pours doubt into our hearts. It drains our will to approach God. It bars the doors of heaven. It keeps us in our trouble and blocks the flow of grace into our lives.
 - iii. But once the note of contrition is uttered, the refreshing waters of communion burst upon our souls wearied and parched with sin, and once again we find that God restores all that the enemy has stolen!
- g. V20 – so the psalmist can only do what he has called us all to do in vv1-4. He himself has known the awesome deeds and the power of God, and so he praises Him! He has experienced, he has seen God’s grace in his own life. How God cares for all His people is how God cares for Him!
- h. All of the many voices of praise are built by many individual voices of praise!! When each one of us praise Him for His goodness and greatness, we all praise Him!!

Conclusion – Come and see, and when you see – praise!!