
A praise psalm by David.

PSALM 145: 1 I will exalt you, my God, the King. I will praise your name forever and ever.

God is praised for his unsearchable greatness, Psa 145:1, Psa 145:2; for his majesty and terrible acts, Psa 145:3, Psa 145:6; for his goodness and tender mercies to all, Psa 145:7-9; for his power and kingdom, Psa 145:10-13; for his kindness to the distressed, Psa 145:14; for his providence, Psa 145:15-17. He hears and answers prayer, Psa 145:18-20. All should praise him, Psa 145:21.

This Psalm is attributed to David by the Hebrew and all the Versions. It is the last of the acrostic Psalms; and should contain twenty-two verses, as answering to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; but the verse between the thirteenth and fourteenth, beginning with the letter נ nun, is lost out of the present Hebrew copies; but a translation of it is found in the Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon. See below. It is an incomparable Psalm of praise; and the rabbins have it in such high estimation, that they assert, if a man with sincerity of heart repeat it three times a-day, he shall infallibly enjoy the blessings of the world to come. It does not appear on what particular occasion it was composed; or, indeed, whether there was any occasion but gratitude to God for his ineffable favors to mankind.

Verse 1

I will extol thee - I will raise thee on high, I will lift thee up.

I will bless thy name - לעולם ועד leolam vaed, for ever and onward, in this and the coming world. This sort of expressions, which are very difficult to be translated, are on the whole well expressed by those words, in a hymn of Mr. Addison: -

Through all eternity to thee A joyful song I'll raise

But O, eternity's too short To utter all thy praise!

This contains a strong hyperbole; but allowable in such cases.

PSALM 145: 2 Every day I will praise you. I will extol your name forever and ever.

PSALM 145: 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised! His greatness is unsearchable.

Verse 3

His greatness is unsearchable - Literally, To his mightinesses there is no investigation. All in God is unlimited and eternal.

PSALM 145: 4 One generation will commend your works to another, and will declare your mighty acts.

Verse 4

One generation - Thy creating and redeeming acts are recorded in thy word; but thy wondrous providential dealings with mankind must be handed down by tradition, from generation to generation; for they are in continual occurrence, and consequently innumerable.

PSALM 145: 5 Of the glorious majesty of your honour, of your wondrous works, I will meditate.

PSALM 145: 6 Men will speak of the might of your awesome acts. I will declare your greatness.

PSALM 145: 7 They will utter the memory of your great goodness, and will sing of your righteousness.

PSALM 145: 8 The LORD is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and of great loving kindness.

Verse 8

The Lord is gracious - His holy nature is ever disposed to show favor.

Full of compassion - Wherever he sees misery, his eye affects his heart.

Slow to anger - When there is even the greatest provocation.

Of great mercy - Great in his abundant mercy. These four things give us a wonderful display of the goodness of the Divine nature.

PSALM 145: 9 The LORD is good to all. His tender mercies are over all his works.

Verse 9

The Lord is good to all - There is not a soul out of hell that is not continually under his most merciful regards; so far is he from willing or decreeing before their creation the damnation of any man.

His tender mercies - His bowels of compassion are over all his works; he feels for his intelligent offspring, as the most affectionate mother does for the child of her own bosom. And through this matchless mercy, these bowels of compassion, his son Jesus tasted death for every man. How far is all that is here spoken of the nature of God opposed to the Molochian doctrine of the eternal decree of reprobation! "His grace for every soul is free:

For his, who forged the dire decree;

For every reprobate and me."

PSALM 145: 10 All your works will give thanks to you, LORD. Your saints will extol you.

Verse 10

All thy works shall praise thee - The God who is good to all.

Thy saints - חַסִּידֵיךָ chasideycha, thy compassionate ones; those who are partakers of thy great mercy, Psa 145:8. These shall bless thee, because they know, they feel, that thou wiltest the salvation of all. The dark, the gloomy, the hard-hearted, the narrow-minded bigots, who never have had thy love shed abroad in their hearts, can unfeelingly deal in the damnation of their fellows.

PSALM 145: 11 They will speak of the glory of your kingdom, and talk about your power;

PSALM 145: 12 to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, the glory of the majesty of his kingdom.

Verse 12

To make known - They delight to recommend their God and Father to others.

PSALM 145: 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words, and loving in all his deeds.

Verse 13

Thy dominion endureth - There is neither age nor people in and over which God does not manifest his benignly ruling power. As the above verse begins with the letter מ mem, the next in the order of the alphabet should begin with נ nun: but that verse is totally wanting. To say it never was in, is false, because the alphabet is not complete without it; and it is an unanswerable argument to prove the careless manner in which the Jews have preserved the Divine records. Though the Syriac, Septuagint, Vulgate, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Anglo-Saxon, have a verse, not in the Hebrew text, that answers to the נ nun, which is found in no printed copy of the Hebrew Bible; yet one MS., now in Trinity College, Dublin, has it thus, I suppose by correction, in the bottom of the page: - נֶאֱמַן יְהוָה בְּכָל דְּבָרָיו וְחָסִיד -
בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו

Neeman Yehovah bechol debaraiv; vechasid bechol maasaiv. "The Lord is faithful in all his words; and merciful in all his works." Πιστος Κυριος εν τοις λογοις αυτου· και οσιος εν πασι τιοις εργαοις αυτου. - Septuagint.

Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis: et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis - Vulgate.

These two Versions, the Septuagint and Vulgate, are the same with the Hebrew given above. The Anglo-Saxon is the same: - "True Lord in all words his, and holy in all works his."

The Latin text in my old Psalter is the same with the present printed Vulgate: "Fidelis Dominus in omnibus verbis suis, et sanctus in omnibus operibus suis."

Thus translated in the same MSS.: Lorde true in all his words: and holy in al his workes.

It is remarkable that the whole verse is wanting in the Vulgate, as published in the Complutenstan Polyglot, as also the Antwerp and Paris Polyglots, which were taken from it. It is wanting also in the Polyglot Psalter of Porus, because he did not find it in the Hebrew text.

PSALM 145: 14 The LORD upholds all who fall, and raises up all those who are bowed down.

Verse 14

The Lord upholdeth all that fall - נפלים nophelim, the falling, or those who are not able to keep their feet; the weak. He shores them up; he is their prop. No man falls through his own weakness merely; if he rely on God, the strongest foe cannot shake him.

PSALM 145: 15 The eyes of all wait for you. You give them their food in due season.

Verse 15

The eyes of all wait upon thee - What a fine figure! The young of all animals look up to their parents for food. God is here represented as the universal Father, providing food for every living creature.

In due season - The kind of food that is suited to every animal, and to all the stages of life in each animal. This is a wonderful mystery. It is a fact that all are thus provided for; but how is it done? All expect it from God, and not one is disappointed! For,

PSALM 145: 16 You open your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Verse 16

Thou openest thine hand - What a hand is this that holds in it all the food that meets the desires and necessities of the universe of creatures! A very large volume might be written upon this: The proper kinds of food for the various classes of animals.

PSALM 145: 17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and gracious in all his works.

Verse 17

The Lord is righteous - It was the similarity of this to the omitted verse, which should have been the fourteenth, that caused it to be omitted.

PSALM 145: 18 The LORD is near to all those who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

Verse 18

The Lord is nigh - Whoever calls upon God in truth, with a sincere and upright heart, one that truly desires his salvation, to that person God is nigh. The following verse shows he is not only near to praying people, but

1. He will hear their cry.
2. Fulfil their desires.
3. Save them. Reader, lift up thy soul in prayer to this merciful God.

PSALM 145: 19 He will fulfil the desire of those who fear him. He also will hear their cry, and will save them.

PSALM 145: 20 The LORD preserves all those who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

Verse 20

The Lord preserveth - He is the keeper of all them that love him.

But all the wicked will he destroy - They call not upon him; they fight against him, and he will confound and destroy them. There is something curious in the שומר shomer, the keeper or guardian of the pious; he is שמיד shamid, the destroyer of the wicked. The first word implies he is continually keeping them; the second, that he causes the others to be destroyed.

PSALM 145: 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD. Let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

Verse 21

Let all flesh bless his holy name - He is good to all, wants to save all, actually feeds and preserves all. And as near as שמר shamar is to שמד shamad, so near is he a Savior to those who stand on the brink of destruction, if they will look to him.

For the application of all this Psalm to the Church of Christ, see the analysis.