

Psalms 66

This evening - we're continuing our overview of the Old Testament book titled Psalms.

With this as our focus - let's open our Bibles to Psalms chapter 66 - and as we make our way to the 66th Psalm...

...I wanna begin by first pointing out that there is no mention about the author of this Psalm.

And while the style of this Psalm is most certainly Davidic...

...we can't say for sure if the lyrics of this song was written by David - or someone else.

Just like the previous Psalm - this song was not only dedicated to the Chief Musician of Israel...

...but - this Psalm also includes a superscription section that identifies this as a Song and a Psalm.

And what this means is that - this Psalm can be spoken - like a poem - or sung with musical accompaniment.

I like the way that Spurgeon introduced this Psalm - it's in his commentary of this chapter - where he writes...

A Song or Psalm, or a Song and Psalm. It may be either said or sung; it is a marvelous poem if it be but read; but set to suitable music, it must have been one of the noblest strains ever heard by the Jewish people. We do not know who is its author, but we see no reason to doubt that David wrote it.

Well - regardless of who wrote this Psalm - what we can say for certain is that this is a song of praise.

And as we make our way through this chapter - we will consider how...

...the author of this psalm encouraged us to proclaim the praises of God...

...for His awesome works - His benevolent benefits - and His faithful deliverances

With this as our focus - let's turn our attention to the lyrics found here in the 66th Psalm.

Look with me beginning there at verse 1 - where the Psalmist writes...

Psa 66:1 To the Chief Musician. A Song. A Psalm.

Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth!

Psa 66:2 Sing out the honor of His name;

Make His praise glorious.

Psa 66:3 Say to God,

"How awesome are Your works!

Through the greatness of Your power

Your enemies shall submit themselves to You.

Psa 66:4 All the earth shall worship You

And sing praises to You;

They shall sing praises to Your name." Selah

Here in the first section of this Psalm - we find the psalmist - encouraging the people of the Earth - to joyfully shout the praises of God.

And just to be clear - it'll help you to know that the phrase - Make a joyful shout - found there in verse 1...

...was translated from one Hebrew word - which in this context...

...was used of those who shout for joy - after securing the victory over the enemy.

I can't help but to consider the way that sports fans react - when their team secures the final victory of the season.

Whether we're talking about the Super Bowl - or the World Series - the NBA Finals - or the MLS Cup for soccer...

...the fans of the winning team will shout for joy - as they praise their team for securing the victory.

According to the reports - it was last February - when Philadelphia Eagles fans...

...engaged in the one of the loudest and most chaotic celebrations...

...after their team won Super Bowl 59.

Now - as we consider the shouts of joy - that come from those who are thrilled about their favorite team...

...we should take a moment to consider the victory that Jesus secured for us - on the cross.

When Jesus died on the cross for our sins - He wasn't just winning an a temporary victory - like the Super Bowl.

No - instead - He was securing the everlasting salvation of those who would trust in Him.

That being the case - those of us who have received the victory over death - by faith in Jesus Christ...

...should shout for joy - as we celebrate our Savior.

With this in mind - let's take another look at the beginning of this Psalm - look with me - beginning there at verse 1 - where he declared...

Psa 66:1 Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth!

Psa 66:2 Sing out the honor of His name;

Make His praise glorious.

Not only should we shout with joy - as we celebrate the victory of our Savior - Jesus...

...but - we should also sing songs of praise - as we glorify the name of the Lord.

I like the way that the scholars who created the New English Translation rendered verse 2 - they put it like this...

Psa 66:2 Sing praises about the majesty of his reputation! Give him the honor he deserves!

Christian - listen - we should not only shout the praises of our Savior - like a sports fan who is filled with overwhelming joy...

...but - we should also sing songs of praise - as we consider the majesty of our Messiah.

And with this as the goal - the Psalmist encouraged us to consider the awesome works of God.

Notice with me again - there at verse 3 - where the author of this psalm declared...

Psa 66:3 Say to God,
"How awesome are Your works!
Through the greatness of Your power
Your enemies shall submit themselves to You.

Here in this verse - we find the Psalmist - encouraging those who sing this song of praise...

...to acknowledge the awesome works of our almighty God.

This of course includes the work of creation - which is described in the book of Genesis...

...as well as the work of Redemption - which includes the prophecies presented in the Old Testament...

...and the fulfillment that occurred during the first advent of the promised Messiah - Jesus.

Without debate - our God deserves to be
praised - for all of His awesome works.

Not only that - but - it's there in the second half of verse 3 - where
the Psalmist also referred to the way in which...

...the enemies of God - all submit themselves to Him.

This includes the Egyptians - who were defeated in the
Red Sea.

Then there was the battle of Jericho - when the Lord
enabled Israel to invade the walled city - without a fight.

From the days of Joshua - through the times of the
Judges - and through the days of David...

...the enemies of God were always brought to a point
of submission.

That being the case - we can rejoice in knowing
that...

...the enemies of God will be brought to
submission...

...at the time of Christ's second
coming.

Let's consider how John described that day - in Revelation chapter 19
it's beginning at verse 19 - where he declared...

Rev 19:19 I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies,
gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and
against His army.

Rev 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false
prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived
those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped
his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with
brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

At the time of Christ's return - the kings of the earth - and their armies - will gather together to make war against Jesus.

And it's at that point in time - when He will destroy those who will try to stop Him from claiming the throne of King David.

Then - after He defeats the armies of the world - - He will establish His Millennial kingdom...

...as He rules and reigns over the Earth - with a rod of iron.

Let's consider how the Psalmist described that day here in this Psalm - look with me again - there at verse 4 - where he declared...

Psa 66:4 All the earth shall worship You
And sing praises to You;
They shall sing praises to Your name." Selah

Christian - listen - there's coming a day - when all the earth will worship the Lord - as they sing the praises of our Savior.

Here's how the prophet Micah explained it - in the 4th chapter of his book...

Mic 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the mountain of the LORD's house
Shall be established on the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow to it.

Mic 4:2 Many nations shall come and say,
"Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths."
For out of Zion the law shall go forth,
And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

During the Millennial kingdom of Christ - the nations of the earth will gather together for the feast of tabernacles...

...as we sing the praises of the Lord.

And with that being the case - those who trust in the Lord today...

...should become people of praise - as we rejoice in the God of Jacob.

With this as our goal - let's consider how the psalmist encouraged us to rejoice in our Redeemer - here in the 66th Psalm.

Look with me - beginning there at verse 5 - where he declared...

Psa 66:5 Come and see the works of God;
He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.
Psa 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land;
They went through the river on foot.
There we will rejoice in Him.
Psa 66:7 He rules by His power forever;
His eyes observe the nations;
Do not let the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah

Here in the second section of this Psalm - we find the author - encouraging his audience - to consider the awesome works of God.

And he began by reminding us that - the works of God are wonderful to behold...

...and the acts that He has accomplished for humanity are awe-inspiring.

And just to be clear - the Psalmist provided us with a short list...

...of the wonderful works that God accomplished for the children of Israel.

Notice with me again - there in verse 6 - where he declared...

Psa 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land;
They went through the river on foot.
There we will rejoice in Him.

Here in this verse - we find the Psalmist - referring to the Red Sea crossing - as they left the land of Egypt...

...as well as the Jordan river crossing - as they entered into the land of promise.

In both cases - the Lord performed a miracle that enabled them to cross over - on dry land.

I should also remind you that - it was there at the Red Sea - where the Lord drowned the Egyptian Army...

...as they pursued the people of God - into the wilderness of Sinai.

In the way - the Lord not only provided a way for the children of Israel to escape...

...but - He also used the same sea - to destroy their Egyptian enemies.

And it was after the Lord enabled them to cross the Jordan river on dry land...

...when He also empowered them to defeat the fortress city of Jericho.

It's for this reason that the Psalmist rejoiced in the Lord.

That word - rejoice - found there at the end of verse 6 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which was used of those who are full of Joy.

Now - as we consider the way that he rejoiced in the Lord
- as he considered the wonderful works of God...

...I believe that we too will be filled with joy - as we
take the time to fix our focus...

...on the wonderful works that God has
accomplished for us.

I like the way that Paul put it - in Colossians chapter 3 - beginning at
verse 1 - he declared...

Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things
which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of
God.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the
earth.

Col 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in
God.

Col 3:4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also
will appear with Him in glory.

Christian - listen - if you're struggling to sing the praises of
God - with a heart that is filled with joy...

...then - the reason why is because - you're probably
focusing on all of the issues of this world.

And as we focus on the trials and troubles of
this world...

...the joy of Jesus is suppressed by our
depression.

If this sounds like your struggle - then I encourage you to
spend time every day - setting your mind on things above.

Take the time to remember what Jesus accomplished
for us on the cross.

And with a focus on the future - let's remember
how those who trust in Jesus...

...will enjoy pleasures forevermore - as we
dwell in the house of the Lord.

Let's consider how the Psalmist put it - here in our text tonight - look with
me again - there at verse 7 - where he declared...

Psa 66:7 He rules by His power forever;
His eyes observe the nations;
Do not let the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah

As we take another look at this verse - we can see how the Psalmist
rejoiced - as he looked forward into eternity future.

And while I have no doubt that we all struggle with the fear of
earthly leaders - who rule in unrighteousness...

...we can rejoice in knowing that there's coming a day -
when the Lord will rule the world in righteousness..

...AND that HE will rule with almighty power
forevermore.

I like the way that the angel Gabriel described it - in Daniel chapter 9 - it's
verse 24 - where we learn about the day when God will...

Dan 9:24b ...finish the transgression,
make an end of sins,
make reconciliation for iniquity,
bring in everlasting righteousness,
seal up vision and prophecy,
And anoint the Most Holy.

Here in this prophecy - we find the angel Gabriel - describing the
day when our Messiah - will bring in everlasting righteousness.

And what this means is that there's coming a day - when we
will never again need to worry about another election.

And we will never again need to fear the future - know in that the King of kings will rule the world in righteousness.

That being the case - let's proclaim the praises of the Lord today...

...as we look forward to the future with hope.

Until that day - we can also rejoice in knowing that the Lord is going to sanctify us by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let's consider how the psalmist put it - here in the 66th Psalm - look with me beginning there at verse 8 - where he declared...

Psa 66:8 Oh, bless our God, you peoples!
And make the voice of His praise to be heard,
Psa 66:9 Who keeps our soul among the living,
And does not allow our feet to be moved.
Psa 66:10 For You, O God, have tested us;
You have refined us as silver is refined.
Psa 66:11 You brought us into the net;
You laid affliction on our backs.
Psa 66:12 You have caused men to ride over our heads;
We went through fire and through water;
But You brought us out to rich fulfillment.
Psa 66:13 I will go into Your house with burnt offerings;
I will pay You my vows,
Psa 66:14 Which my lips have uttered
And my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble.
Psa 66:15 I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat animals,
With the sweet aroma of rams;
I will offer bulls with goats. Selah

Here in the third section of this Psalm - we find the author encouraging his audience to bless the Lord with proclamations of praise.

And it's here in these verses - where we find the Psalmist presenting three good reasons...

...for why the children of Israel - were right to rejoice in the Lord.

The first reason is found there in verse 9 - where the Psalmist described the Lord - as the One...

Psa 66:9 Who keeps our soul among the living,
And does not allow our feet to be moved.

In other words - the God of Israel was the One - Who established them in the land of promise...

...and He was the One Who was able to keep their feet from stumbling.

And what this means is that - those who trust in the Lord should sing His praises...

...because - He is the solid foundation of those who are standing by faith.

The second reason to rejoice in the Lord - is found there in verse 10 - where the Psalmist declared...

Psa 66:10 For You, O God, have tested us;
You have refined us as silver is refined.

Here in this verse - we find the Psalmist - singing the praises of the One - Who not only put their faith to the test...

...but - He also turned up the heat - in order to refine their faith - like silver is refined in the fire.

And while I'm sure that we would all like to avoid the refiners fire...

...we should rejoice in knowing that the Lord works all things together...

...for the good of those who love Him.

The third reason to rejoice in the Lord - is found there in verses 11 and 12 where the Psalmist declared...

Psa 66:11 You brought us into the net;
You laid affliction on our backs.

Psa 66:12 You have caused men to ride over our heads;
We went through fire and through water;
But You brought us out to rich fulfillment.

Now - there are those who believe that the Psalmist was describing the Babylonian captivity.

It's also possible that the psalmist was referring to the days when the children of Israel were enslaved in Egypt.

In both cases - the Lord was the One Who brought them out of their bondage...

...and then established them in the land of promise.

From this - we can see that - there are times when the Lord allows us to suffer the pain of affliction.

Thankfully - our afflictions will always give way to victory...

...as the Lord sets us free from the trials and troubles of this fallen world.

And it's for this reason that the Psalmist rejoiced as he brought his offerings to the temple.

With this as our focus - let's consider how he put it - beginning there at verse 13 - where the Psalmist declared...

Psa 66:13 I will go into Your house with burnt offerings;
I will pay You my vows,

Psa 66:14 Which my lips have uttered
And my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble.

Psa 66:15 I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat animals,
With the sweet aroma of rams; I will offer bulls with goats. Selah

Here in these verses - we find the Psalmist - describing the way that he brought his offerings to the house of the Lord.

And while this reference to the house of the Lord could be a reference to the temple that King Solomon built...

...the Psalmist could also be referring to the post exilic temple - which was built after the Babylonian captivity.

Not only that - but - he could've been referring to the pre-temple tabernacle.

We just can't say for sure.

What we do know is that - the psalmist was a man - who ready to worship the Lord...

...according to the sacrificial system of the Old Covenant.

And now that the Lord Jesus has fulfilled the purpose of those atoning sacrifices...

...we will do well to realize that - Christians have been called to offer the sacrifice of praise...

...as we gather together - here at our fellowship of faith.

Here's how Paul put it - in Hebrews chapter 13 - it's beginning at verse 12 where he declared...

Heb 13:12 Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

Heb 13:13 Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

Heb 13:14 For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.

Heb 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Now that the sacrificial system has been fulfilled by our Savior Jesus...

...those who trust in Him - have been called to continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God...

...as we sing the praises of the One Who has provided us with the grace - by which we are saved.

And with this as our calling - let's become those believers...

...who proclaim the sacrifice of praise to God - as we express our gratitude...

...for the grace - by which we are saved.

With this as our calling - let's consider how the Psalmist encouraged us to this same spiritual discipline.

Let's turn our attention to the final section of the 66th Psalm - beginning there at verse 16 - where the Psalmist declared...

Psa 66:16 Come and hear, all you who fear God,
And I will declare what He has done for my soul.

Psa 66:17 I cried to Him with my mouth,
And He was extolled with my tongue.

Psa 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.

Psa 66:19 But certainly God has heard me;
He has attended to the voice of my prayer.

Psa 66:20 Blessed be God,
Who has not turned away my prayer,
Nor His mercy from me!

Here in the final section of this song - we find the Psalmist - describing the way that he extolled the Lord - with the words of his mouth.

That word - extolled - found there in verse 17 - was translated from a Hebrew word...

...which speaks of the exaltation expressed in songs of praise.

And we must not fail to notice that the Psalmist wanted everyone to hear him extolling the name of the Lord.

Notice with me again - beginning there at verse 16 - where the psalmist declared...

Psa 66:16 Come and hear, all you who fear God,
And I will declare what He has done for my soul.

Psa 66:17 I cried to Him with my mouth,
And He was extolled with my tongue.

The Psalmist wasn't satisfied with singing songs of praise - solo.

He wanted everyone to hear about the way that the Lord had blessed him.

And in light of his example - we too should become those believers...

...who are ready to encourage one another with
psalms and hymns and spiritual songs...

...as we sing with grace in our hearts to the
Lord.

At the same time - we must also make sure that we are quick to confess the sins that are hidden within our hearts.

And the reason why is because - the Lord isn't interested in the praise that's proclaimed - by those who are living in sin.

Let's consider how the Psalmist explained it - there in verse 18 - where he declared...

Psa 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.

Psa 66:19 But certainly God has heard me;
He has attended to the voice of my prayer.

Christian - listen - the Lord isn't listening to those who are secretly living in sin.

And it's for this reason that He rejects the praise of those who regard iniquity in their hearts.

I like the way that King Solomon explained it - in Proverbs 15 - it's verse 29 - where he declared...

Pro 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked,
But He hears the prayer of the righteous.

Christian - listen - those who are living in sin - are ignored by the Lord.

That being the case - those who trust in the Lord should walk in the power of the Holy Spirit...

...so that we can worship the Lord - in Spirit - and in truth.

With this as our goal - we should also consider how the Psalmist sought to bless the Lord - with his songs of praise.

Look with me again - there at verse 20 - where he declared...

Psa 66:20 Blessed be God,
Who has not turned away my prayer,
Nor His mercy from me!

Here in the final verse of this song - we find the Psalmist proclaiming the blessing of God.

And I would argue that this is yet another reason to sing the praises of the Lord.

With this as the goal - I wanna take a moment to point out that - true praise isn't about the way the music makes us feel.

And true praise isn't about the way WE are blessed - as the Praise-team plays our favorite songs.

No - instead - true praise should be about blessing the Lord - as we proclaim the praises that are due to His name.

And listen - this is still true - even when we don't like the song selection - or the style of the music.

If it were up to me - all of our praise music would be much more aggressive.

I personally don't care for contemporary Christian music - as a style.

But - I love to sing the praises of my Savior - - and yes - even when I don't care for the style of music.

You see - true praise isn't about me - - and my musical preferences.

We should sing the praises of God - in order to bless Him.

I like the way that David put it - in the 103rd Psalm - it's beginning at the 19th verse where he declared...

Psa 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven,
And His kingdom rules over all.

Psa 103:20 Bless the LORD, you His angels,
Who excel in strength, who do His word,
Heeding the voice of His word.

Psa 103:21 Bless the LORD, all you His hosts,
You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.

Psa 103:22 Bless the LORD, all His works,
In all places of His dominion.
Bless the LORD, O my soul!

Rather than singing the praises of the Lord - for our own blessings...

...let's become those believers who sing the praises of God -
so that He might be blessed by our devotion to Him.

And listen - if you're a believer who is embarrassed about
your inability to sing...

...then - I'll remind you that - we've been called to
make a joyful shout to God.

And so - regardless of whether we can sing - or
not...

...let's bless the Lord - as we Sing out the
honor of His glorious name.

COMMUNION