

# PSALMS

## Chapter 145

*Great Is the LORD*

A Song of Praise. Of David.

**I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. 6 They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds, and I will declare your greatness. 7 They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. 8 The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your saints shall bless you! 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power, 12 to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. [The LORD is faithful in all his words and kind in all his works.] 14 The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. 15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. 16 You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. 17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works. 18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. 20 The LORD preserves all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.**

**Ps 145** A hymn to the Lord, the Great King, for his mighty acts and benevolent virtues, which are the glory of his kingly rule. It exploits to the full the traditional language of praise and, as an alphabetic acrostic, reflects the care of studied composition. Between the two-line introduction (vv. 1–2) and one-line conclusion (v. 21), four poetic paragraphs develop as many themes, each introduced with a thematic line (see vv. 3, 8, 13b, 17). (CSB)

*A Song of Praise.* Lit, a word translated “psalm.” This is the only poem so labeled, though the entire collection goes by that name. It is a poetic acrostic, each line beginning with one of the letters in the Hbr alphabet (though one letter, *nun*, is mysteriously left out). Cf 9; 10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 112; 119; 146. As a psalm of David, we have a king paying homage to his King, whose dominion goes beyond Israel, to “all flesh” (v 21) and to the universe itself. This “Mission Psalm” describes the calling of God’s people to proclaim His Word. (TLSB)

Format: Vv 1–3, the Lord is great; vv 4–7, declare His works; vv 8–9, the Lord is good to all; vv 10–13a, the glory of God’s kingdom; vv 13b–20, the Lord’s works; v 21, speaking about the Lord. (TLSB)

The 145<sup>th</sup> psalm is a psalm of thanks for the kingdom of Christ, which was to come. It strongly urges the high, exalted work of praising God and glorying his power and kingdom. For Christ’s kingdom and power are hidden under the cross. If the cross were not extolled

through preaching, teaching, and confession, who could have ever thought of it, to say nothing of knowing it? But such is his kingdom and power, that he aided the fallen, called the needy to himself, made sinners godly, and brought the dead to life. Yes, he is the one who gives food to all, who hears the call of his saints, does what they desire, and protects them. (Reading the Psalms with Luther)

Psalm 145 is a bridge between the last collection of Davidic psalms and the Hallelujah psalms which conclude the psalter. (PBC)

**145:1–2** Initial commitment to praise. (CSB)

In the sections of praise David stresses both his personal devotion to praising the Lord and the devotion which the rest of God’s people share with him. This fellowship extends across space and time. David has received the message from his ancestors, and he will pass it on to the next generation. (PBC)

*king* – It is one thing to believe God exists, but another to acknowledge Him as your King, to acknowledge His authority over you. (TLSB)

*forever and forever* – Psalmist’s praise will never cease, but will continue both now and into eternity. This is an OT example of belief in eternal life. (TLSB)

**145:3–7** Praise of God’s mighty acts, which display his greatness (v. 3) and his goodness (v. 7)—as the author underscores by enclosing the paragraph with these two references. For the same combination see 86:10, 17; 135:3, 5. (CSB)

**145** *greatness is unsearchable* – We can never plumb the depths of God’s greatness; it is inexhaustible, beyond our comprehension. (Cf Rm 11:33–35.) (TLSB)

**145:4** *will commend ... will tell*. What God has done is to be told by parents to their children, passed down from one generation to another. “We saw how the declaration of the pure Christian doctrine we sent could be fortified and strengthened by the testimonies of Holy Scripture against corruptions and perversions. Then, in time, godless doctrines would not be concealed under its name. Instead, a completely unvarnished declaration of the pure truth might be passed on to future generations” (*Concordia*, Preface 13). (TLSB)

The balance between the personal and corporate aspects of worship is emphasized in this section in which David alternates between the personal “I” and the congregational “they.” (PBC)

*your works*. In creation, providence and redemption. (CSB)

**145:5-6** It is interesting to note in verses 5 and 6 in the first half of each verse the psalmist states that the people will praise, and in the second half he says he meditate on and proclaim these same wonders. (A Commentary on the Psalms - Ross)

**145:8–13a** Praise of God’s benevolent virtues, which move all creatures to celebrate the glory of his kingdom. (CSB)

The sections which proclaim the Lord’s greatness are overwhelmingly positive. The emphasis is upon the Lord’s love which moves him to provide for his whole creation. (PBC)

**145:8** Profound statement of God's grace, found throughout the OT; cf Ex 34:6; Nu 14:18; Ne 9:17; Ps 86:15; 103:8. (TLSB)

This is the proclamation of grace which the Lord gave to Moses after the idolatry at Mount Sinai. This verse appears frequently throughout the OT. (PBC)

**145:10** *All your works shall give thanks to you.* Everything God made is a witness to His love. (TLSB)

**145:11-12** God's people tell others of His glory and His redeeming acts, spreading His kingdom throughout the world. Chemnitz: "Although the heathen can see the works of God, the creation and the sustaining of the universe, yet they fail to recognize the true God, because they neglect the Word" (*LTh* 1:55). (TLSB)

**145:13-20** Celebrates what the King does for His subjects. (TLSB)

**145:13b-16** Praise God's faithfulness. (CSB)

**145:13** *kingdom...dominion* – God is the King (v 1), and His kingdom is universal, extending to all of His creation, through all generations and into eternity. (TLSB)

**145:15** *eyes of all* – Metaphor recalls hungry pets or farm animals looking up to their master to be fed. Chemnitz: "Even brutes and creatures which act by natural instinct or some other form of reasoning perceive or in some way acknowledge His preservation and sustenance" (*LTh* 1:169). (TLSB)

*due season* – God provides food at the proper time; i.e., as His creatures need it. See Luther's Daily Prayers (SC, p xli-xlii). (TLSB)

**145:16** *open your hand* – God provides for and sustains His creation. The image is of a person feeding doves. This King providentially cares for and sustains each of His creatures, from the amoeba to the angels. (TLSB)

**145:17-20** Praise of God's righteousness. (CSB)

**145:18** *the Lord is near* – God will draw close to those who pray to Him "in truth," i.e., in sincerity, honesty, and fidelity to His Word. (TLSB)

*in truth.* With godly integrity. (CSB)

**145:19-20** *those who fear Him ... all who love Him.* Both phrases refer to the same people, who trust in the Lord. (TLSB)

**145:20** *wicked he will destroy* – God's justice manifests itself in His destruction of evildoers. (TLSB)

**145:21** The praise of God must continue, and every creature take it up—forever. (CSB)

Psalmist wants everyone to praise God for eternity. (TLSB)

*all flesh*. Or perhaps “every human” (lit. “all flesh”; see 65:2, “all men”; but see also 150:6). (CSB)

Finally the whole universe is summoned to praise the Lord. (PBC)

**Ps 145** God is our King, and all generations and all the earth must hear about Him. He abounds in mercy, which extends to all His works. The Lord will draw near to those who fear Him (who have been broken by the Law). He drew near to us in Christ, our King. His Word resounds from generation to generation, bringing the kingdom of God to all the world and to us. • O Christ, our King, Your righteousness is unsearchable. Though I should be counted among the wicked, You have redeemed me. Proclaim this good news to all the world through me. Amen. (TLSB)