

TBC – 1/12/03 p.m.

## THE UNSEARCHABLE GREATNESS OF OUR GOD

Psalm 145

**Intro:** Charles Simeon said of this Psalm that this Psalm is the finest exhibition of a spiritual mind that anyone can find in all of Scripture. It is the only Psalm that is called “the praise of David.” This is the last of David’s Psalms. There is nothing in this Psalm but praise and thanksgiving. David seems to have been overwhelmed with the greatness of God in all that He is and in all that He has done. He called His greatness “unsearchable.” By this he did not mean that it is impossible to know His greatness, but that it is impossible to know it fully. The greatness, the majesty of God, is a subject beyond full human comprehension. It is like a mine in which we dig and dig, but never run out of the vein of gold which we have discovered.

In the light of the greatness of the Lord there are no petitions in the Psalm. Instead David mentions what God has done, and what He continues to do, as though He does it without being asked to do it by His people, although in verse 18 and 19 David did mention those who call upon Him and those who fear Him.

The Psalm is written as an acrostic on the Hebrew alphabet. Derek Kidner, in his commentary on the Psalm, calls it, *The Alphabet of Praise*. This is the last of eight that are written that way. For some unknown reason the letter ך is missing, and so there are only 21 verses instead of 22. Arthur Clarke suggested that the absence of that letter may indicate that the praise of the people of God is not yet completed, but that is only a suggestion.

The Psalm seems to be divided into six stanzas:

- 1) Vv. 1-3.
- 2) Vv. 4-7.
- 3) Vv. 8-9.
- 4) Vv. 10-13.
- 5) Vv. 14-16.
- 6) Vv. 17-21.

This is very close to what those commentators whom I have consulted divide the Psalm.

In verses 1 through 7 David speaks directly to the Lord (with the exception of verse 3).. In verses 8 and 9 he speaks about the Lord. In verses 10

through 13 he speaks to the Lord again. In verses 14 through 16 he began to speak about the Lord in verse 14, and then spoke to the Lord in verses 15 and 16. In the final verses (17 through 21) David concluded the Psalm by speaking about the Lord.

In the first stanza we have:

### **I. DAVID'S COMMITMENT TO GOD, THE LORD (Psa. 145:1-3).**

We don't know when this Psalm was written, but as Simeon has said, it exhibits a spiritually minded man. And coming where it does in the Psalms, as the last of his Psalms (as far as we know), it may tell us, not the expression of one just starting out, but the conviction and delight of one who has experienced the greatness and faithfulness of God. He as a King recognizes that God is a far greater King, a King of kings, and David seeks to exalt Him. And he commits himself not only to praise the Lord forever, but every day now and on forever. We have here an indication of one thing that we will do throughout eternity. Because of God's greatness He is to receive great praise. And note that He calls God, "my God."

In the second stanza David wrote as a prophet of the future.

### **II. GOD'S PRAISE IN FUTURE GENERATIONS (Psa. 145:4-7).**

David knew that the work of the Lord would not die, nor would His praise for all generations. And this would be for three reasons which David mentioned in this stanza: 1) because of His greatness; 2) because of His goodness; and 3) because of His righteousness. David seems to have understood that the work of the Lord would extend far beyond the borders of Israel, and that the Name of the Lord would be praised everywhere. By faith he could only have anticipated the widespread of the Gospel throughout the world.

The third stanza focuses upon:

### **III. THE CHARACTER OF GOD (Psa. 145:8-9).**

These verses are very similar to what the Lord said about Himself in speaking to Moses when He had called Moses to go back up to Mt. Sinai to receive again the commandments on a table of stone. See Ex. 34:6-7:

## Psalm 145 (3)

6 And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

7 Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation (Ex. 34:6-7).

While the Law was not given for salvation, yet it had to do with the way the saved of Israel were to live. And so it seems that David was praising the Lord here for the Gospel. Even though David lived under the Law, yet again and again he had experienced the grace, and compassion, and great mercy, and goodness, and tender mercies of God. And since He is the Lord, the Lord does not change, and so His attributes do not change. And these attributes are never to be found among men, even redeemed men, like they are to be seen in God.

In the fourth stanza, after speaking about the Lord, David again spoke to the Lord. Here David spoke of:

### **IV. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD (Psa. 145:10-13).**

“All Thy works” is carried over from the end of verse 9. Notice the parallel expressions in verse 10. “All Thy works” must refer to God’s work in salvation, because His saints are His works, His holy ones, His redeemed from among men.

But clearly the Lord is not a God to be feared in His sovereignty, nor His power to be dreaded, but the saints will make known “to the sons of men” (the universal spread of the Gospel) “the glorious majesty of His Kingdom.” All other kingdoms will rise and fall, but the kingdom of our God will endure “throughout all generations.”

When we go to the next stanza, we need to keep in mind that David had been speaking about the saints, and the spread of the message that more might become saints. So stanza five speaks of:

### **V. THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD (Psa. 145:14-16).**

God’s care begins with His people, and extends to “every living thing.” And what a testimony this is to the greatness of our God. David probably

did not mean that men consciously wait on the Lord, but that all are dependent upon the Lord, receive His provision, and should be thankful to Him. The wicked are just as dependent upon the Lord as we are, but they do not know that they are. The Lord showed the Egyptians that they were dependent upon Him, not upon their gods. And we in America may have to learn that lesson too. The world continues to exist today, not because of the works of men, but because of the faithfulness of God.

The Psalm closes with:

## **VI. A FINAL EXALTATION OF THE LORD (Psa. 145:17-21).**

Notice that v. 17 speaks of what the Lord is. V. 18 speaks of where the Lord is. Vv. 19 and 20 speak of what the Lord does. And v. 21 gives us David's response and his call to all the world. Kidner says that David's call is "as wide as mankind and as unfading as eternity" (II, 483).

**Concl:** But what are we to do about this Psalm? What should it mean to us? Are we going to close our Bibles, put them down, and forget what we have read, or is this Psalm going to make a difference in our lives?

Hopefully it will be the latter.

The word "unsearchable" was not meant to discourage us, but to encourage us to pursue the knowledge of God. We may be able to list most of the characteristics of God which David mentioned in this Psalm, but what effect have they had on us? And do we realize that there is more for us to learn about God's grace, and His compassion, and His goodness, and all of His other attributes? In the first part of Hosea 6:3, Hosea said, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." We can't really pursue holiness unless we pursue God, to know Him better, to understand more of His greatness and glory.

What does this Psalm teach us about prayer? How often do we pray when we never ask the Lord for anything, but just revel in Who He is, and what He has already done for us, so that we can praise and glorify His Name.

May the Lord minister to our hearts through this chapter, and every chapter, that we might be prepared to live in this world for God's glory, and that the light of our lives might be used by God to point others to Him.