

Psalm 66

Psalms 66:1-4 [New King James] *“Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honour of His name; make His praise glorious. Say to God, ‘How awesome are Your works! Through the greatness of Your power Your enemies shall submit themselves to You. All the earth shall worship You and sing praises to You; they shall sing praises to Your name.’”*

This Psalm was obviously designed for public worship and to celebrate some national deliverance.

Note the world outlook of this Psalm. The experience of God’s people, Israel, has a worldwide significance, [Psalms 47:1-2].

This arises **not** merely from the preservation of God’s people so much as from the disclosure of God’s glorious being, *“His name,”* in and through historical events.

Hence all people are to proclaim the divine nature in their praises.

This is a prayer for the universal knowledge of the One true Creator God.

Psalms 66:5 [New King James] *“Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.”*

As a cause and stimulant of such praise all the earth is invited to come and see what God has done.

Psalms 66:6 [New King James] *“He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the river on foot. There we will rejoice in Him.”*

Two significant events are indicated in this verse; the parting of the Red Sea to allow Israel to cross dry footed during their exit from Egypt, that is symbolic of a Christian’s coming out of sin by the power of the Creator God, [Exodus chapter 14].

Also, the crossing of the Jordan into the promised land following the ark of God, [Joshua chapters 3 and 4].

Psalms 66:7 [New King James] *“He rules by His power forever; His eyes observe the nations; do not let the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah”*

This Psalm affirms that God is ever the same, His rule is now as wide and His eye as watchful as ever, therefore let the rebellious people not exalt themselves. Note the word *“Selah”* telling us to pause and meditate.

These two major events are significant events that the Creator God desires every human being to experience, [2 Peter 3:9] to repent and be freed from sin and to enter into the promised world tomorrow and eternal life.

Psalms 66:8-12 [New King James] *“Oh, bless our God, you peoples! And make the voice of His praise to be heard, who keeps our soul among the living, and does not allow our feet to be moved. For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined. You brought us into the net; You laid affliction on our backs. You have caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but You brought us out to rich fulfilment.”*

Just as fire refines silver in the smelting process, trials refine our character, [James 1:2-4] and bring us a new and deeper wisdom, helping us to discern truth from falsehood, [James 1:5-8] and giving us the discipline to do what we know is right, [Hebrews 12:5-11].

Above all, trials help us realise that life is a gift from God to be cherished, not a right to be taken for granted.

Psalms 66:13-17 [New King James] *“I will go into Your house with burnt offerings; I will pay You my vows, which my lips have uttered and my mouth has spoken when I was in trouble. I will offer You burnt sacrifices of fat animals, with the sweet aroma of rams; I will offer bulls with goats. Selah. Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul. I cried to Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue.”*

People sometimes make bargains with God saying, for example, “If You heal me, I’ll obey You for the rest of my life.” However, as soon as they recover, the vow is forgotten and they return to their old lifestyle.

The writer of this Psalm remembers the promise and was prepared to carry it out.

God always keeps His promises and wants us to follow His example.

Psalms 66:18-19 [New King James] *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.”*

Our confession of sin must be continual because we, in our human weakness, continue to do what is wrong.

Romans 7:18-25 [New King James] *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”*

True confession requires us to listen to God, through meditation on His Word, the Christian Bible, and a desire to stop doing what is wrong, through the active presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, both persons of the Triune God.

Psalms 19:12-14 [New King James] *“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”*

David knew that God’s Word [verse 7] along with a fear of God [verse 9] were needed to reveal secret sins and presumptuous sins, the result of human pride, for him to make a full confession to God.

When we refuse to repent or when we harbour and cherish certain sins we place a wall between us and the Creator God, [Isaiah 59:1-2].

Psalms 66:20 [New King James] *“Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, nor His mercy from me!”*

The final word of gratitude is not only for answered prayer, but for an unbroken relationship with the Creator God, which is always a gift of His grace.