



## ***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

### **Psalm 65**

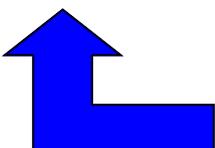
## **“Praise awaits you, O God, in Zion”**

This Psalm is one of the many written by David, the shepherd boy who became the great King David of Israel, forefather of Jesus. It was possibly written at a time when his people were celebrating what they saw as a return to God’s favour after a time of famine, and promising again to walk in God’s ways, and was probably intended for the Temple in Jerusalem (Zion).

This is a Psalm often read at this time of year, at harvest-time, because it speaks of bountiful crops and God providing for his people. It is, however, one which can be read at any time of year because it reminds us just how many reasons we have to praise God. Our God is a wonderful, powerful creator, he provides for us daily, and in his grace he is willing to forgive our sins. It also raises very topical questions as to why, in the face of such generous provision, people go hungry.



Follow the words of this passage round the church, beginning on the north wall of this little building. We are using the New International Version of the Bible, which you can find on the internet under Bible Gateway, and the whole “Word for Today” is on the church website, which is [www.libertonkirk.net](http://www.libertonkirk.net) You can also find meditations on other Bible passages in previous “Words for Today” which can be accessed through the website.



*Turn immediately left to find the first verse of the Bible passage on the bench*

*“Praise awaits you, O God, in Zion;  
To you our vows will be fulfilled.  
O you who hear prayer,  
to you all men will come.”*

**1**



These opening lines remind us how praiseworthy a God we have! A God who inspires us to keep all the promises we make to him, because he is always faithful to us. A God who will one day draw all men to him, because he is not a God made of stone or wood, but a hearing, accessible God.

Have you ever stopped to think just what that means? When we pray, we are speaking to someone real, someone who came to earth as a human being in the shape of Jesus. He lived through human joys and sorrows and taught us the value of prayer for our daily lives. We don't pray wondering if anybody is listening; we can be sure that God is there. We don't pray wondering if he can possibly understand; we can be sure that he does. How comforting that is!

*Lord, you are a stable rock in an unstable world.  
Thank you for being always there to listen.  
Keep me faithful to you in prayer.*

*(No. 2 is on the bench facing us at the corner of the church building)*



***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

*“When we were overwhelmed by sins,  
you forgave our transgressions.*

*Blessed are those you choose  
and bring near to live in your courts!*

*We are filled with the good things of your house,  
of your holy temple.”*

**2**



David and the people of Israel had reason to thank God for his forgiveness—they strayed from God’s ways more than once. They thought that they were chosen for this special attention. Through Jesus we have come to know God’s grace as being available to all who confess their shortcomings, because Jesus paid the price for us all by his death on the cross. God’s grace accepts us back as his children as we were created to be. We are part of his family, where we are indeed blessed.

*Lord, give me the courage to admit my failings to you  
and receive your forgiveness and your welcome to your family.  
Thank you that through Jesus’ death on the cross I can know this joy.*

*(Turn round the side of the church to find No. 3)*



***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

# 3

***““You answer us with awesome deeds of righteousness, O God our Saviour, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas, who formed the mountains by your power, having armed yourself with strength, who stilled the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, and the turmoil of the nations.”***



**“Awesome” really applies when it comes to God. It isn’t just his grace but his power too, power to create wonders, and power to bring peace when that is way beyond our capabilities! When we pray for peace, we are praying to someone who really can achieve it. He is our hope.**

***Lord, we praise you for being a truly awesome God.  
Where this world is in turmoil, we pray for peace.  
Where this world’s beauty is destroyed, we pray for restoration.  
Lord, we know that you alone have the power.***

***(No. 4 is further along this side of the church)***



## ***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

*“Those living far away fear your wonders;  
where morning dawns and evening fades  
you call forth songs of joy.”*

**4**



Every moment of our day and night there are people around the world waking up to the delight of a new day, and acknowledging God’s creative hand in the ordered beauty of each 24 hours and the seasonal changes of each year. It is one of the joys of being a Christian to know the community of the Church, whether that be the local church family or the worldwide church. On top of that, to know community with those who have gone before us and who worship God in Heaven. We call it “the communion of saints” - a close relationship with those who know and love Jesus, wherever they may be.

*Lord, thank you for your church around the world,  
and in the life to come on another shore.  
Help me to cherish this family of close friends.*

*(Walk along the back of the church and turn left to find No. 5)*



***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

*“You care for the land and water it;  
you enrich it abundantly.  
The streams of God are filled with water  
to provide the people with corn,  
for so you have ordained it.”*

**5**



We have read about a gracious and powerful God and now we hear of a bountiful God.

Read the first two words in these verses again—“You care”. They are vital in our understanding of God our Creator. He made this world for us, and continues to nourish it day by day to provide us all with our daily bread.

This is ongoing loving care to each and every one of us from a Creator who loves us.

*Lord, thank you for your daily care for us.  
Teach us to have the same love and care  
for the world, its creatures and its people, we pray.*

*(Walk towards the front of the church, past the cairn, and turn left—No. 6 is on the first bench.)*



***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

*“You drench its furrows and level its ridges;  
you soften it with showers and bless its crops.  
You crown the year with your bounty,  
and your carts overflow with abundance.”*

**6**

Garden produce has been great this year. If you are a gardener, have you shared some of it with your friends and neighbours?



If God’s world was created to produce an abundance of food, why are so many people going hungry? You don’t have to be the Brain of Britain to see that what disrupts God’s plan of food for all is the action of human beings.

Whether it is wars, corruption, lack of care for the planet, greed or selfishness, we have managed to prevent a large proportion of the population of the world from having enough to eat. This is not how it was meant to be and surely not how we would like it to be.

*Lord, give us all a new awareness of what we can do  
to care for our planet and to share its resources fairly.*

*Keep us praying for peace and justice for all.*

*Keep us from selfishness and greed.*

*(Walk to the centre of the front of the church to find No. 7 on the central bench.)*



***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

*“The grasslands of the desert overflow;  
the hills are clothed with gladness.  
The meadows are covered with flocks  
and the valleys are mantled with corn;  
they shout for joy and sing.”*

**7**

As Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on what we now call Palm Sunday, the crowd was shouting for joy and praising him. The Pharisees wanted him to shut them up, but Jesus said “I tell you, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”



All through the Bible there are references to the whole of creation joining in the praise of God, and there are times when we can imagine quite easily that the world around us is shouting for joy—it is so beautiful!

Perhaps that is a lesson for us not to be reluctant to be joyful and to praise God for our lives and the world around us. There is a time for complaining, a time for protesting, a time for sadness, but there is also a time for joy.

*Lord, help me to appreciate my life in the world around me.  
Give me joy deep down in my heart.  
Bring those who do not yet know you to the joy of your presence.*

If anything you have read has prompted questions you would like to discuss, please contact John Young on 664 3067 or [jyoung@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:jyoung@churchofscotland.org.uk)



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