

The Gospel According to the Psalms

Psalm 65 – Silence and Songs of Praise

Faith Church of Linden

By Daniel Patz on September 6, 2026

Introduction

There are certain things we experience that leave us speechless – shocked – dumbfounded (flabbergasted). Silence is where we're left — and that includes glory too great for human words to hold.

We come this morning to Psalm 65, a song for the choirmaster, from David. It may have been written after a three-year famine, a season in which David sought the Lord earnestly and God finally delivered him through very difficult circumstances — you can read about that in 2 Samuel 21. I won't dwell there this morning, because the psalm itself doesn't tell us that's the occasion. It simply opens and declares praise.

I bring up silence because of the Hebrew behind our first line. The ESV footnote gives us an alternative reading to “praise is due to you” — it reads, “praise waits for you in silence.” That waiting might be the silence of waiting for deliverance still to come, or it might be the silence of being struck speechless because what God has done is simply too great for words (silence as a form of praise). I think both are true. Both will happen in your life and mine — we will be speechless as we wait for God to work, and we will be speechless when we see him work.

We need to see God in this psalm. We need to be speechless in our praise to Him! And we need to see his Son, Jesus Christ, the true and better David. My prayer this morning is that whatever age you are, whatever season of life you're in, you would find that nothing matters more than this truth — the truth that brings both silence and song from

David, and from all who are redeemed by the Lord. We are meant to praise him from the heart – not manufactured externally but from joy inward!

Let's look at this three-part psalm with this statement:

IN BOTH SILENCE AND SONG, GIVE JOYFUL PRAISE TO GOD WHO IN CHRIST JESUS HEARS US WITH GRACE, ANSWERS US WITH MIGHT, AND VISITS US WITH ABUNDANCE.

I'd encourage you to write that down.

1. He Hears with Grace (vv. 1–4)

*1 Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion,
and to you shall vows be performed.*

*2 O you who hear prayer,
to you shall all flesh come.*

*3 When iniquities prevail against me,
you atone for our transgressions.*

*4 Blessed is the one you choose and bring near,
to dwell in your courts!*

*We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
the holiness of your temple!*

It is likely that David prayed this psalm after a long season of petition — praying earnestly and persistently for deliverance and provision, perhaps from famine. Whether the deliverance has already come, or he simply anticipates it because he knows God is faithful, he breaks into this song. This is the first reason we praise God in silence and in song, and the first reason we must too:

God hears with grace. HE IS A GRACIOUS REDEEMER.

To hear, here, means that God approves of us praying to him and is agreeable to our requests — so far as they are good for us and for his glory. There is so much grace packed into these first four verses.

God is a prayer-hearing God. Jonathan Edwards preached a famous sermon on this very text, on how God's nature as a prayer-hearing God sets him apart from every false god — gods who cannot hear at all. This is grace before we ever open our mouths: that the God of heaven bends his ear toward us.

Then in verse 3, we see the grace of atonement. "When iniquities prevail against me" — the picture is of a debt too large to pay, a flood that would swallow us and carry us under. And God himself atones. He does not overlook the debt. He deals with it.

We also see grace in his choosing. "Blessed is the one you choose and bring near" — this is calling grace, election grace, the same grace Paul describes in Ephesians 1:3–6 and Romans 8:29, where God chooses and calls a people to himself before they ever choose him. He does not merely hear us when we finally come — he is the reason we come at all.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace" (Eph. 1:3–6). "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).

And the result of all this — being heard, being atoned for, being chosen and brought near — is that we are satisfied. “We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple.” We are drawn into fellowship and worship, made a holy people in the holiness of his temple.

All of this is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is our Savior. He is our Redeemer. He is the way our sins are cleansed, for he died on the cross for us. He is the mediator, and by his blood we are heard — Hebrews 10:19–22: we have confidence to draw near, through the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, because we have a great priest over the house of God.

Do you know this grace? Do you pray believing you have a God who hears you — not because you are worthy, but because he is gracious? You have a prayer-hearing God. How amazing is that! Let us be dumbfounded by it. Let us sing of this grace forever.

We are gathered here today, and that gathering itself is a reminder: we are his people, and we enter his courts with praise. Someday, and forever, we will worship him in glory, and it will be better than we can imagine. It will never be boring. We cannot fully grasp what it will be, only that it will be better than anything we know now — but it will not be good news for those who have never learned to love and worship him now.

You may be here today and not yet know this grace. I welcome you to it, through Jesus Christ, who died for sinners and welcomes you into his mercy.

2. He Answers with Might (vv. 5–8)

5 By awesome deeds you answer us with righteousness,

*O God of our salvation,
the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas;
6 the one who by his strength established the mountains,
being girded with might;
7 who stills the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples,
8 so that those who dwell at the ends of the earth are in awe at
your signs.
You make the going out of the morning and the evening to shout
for joy.*

This second stanza gives us a second reason we praise God in silence and song, and it flows out of the first:

God answers with might. HE IS A MIGHTY SOVEREIGN

The Old Testament people of God looked back to the great acts of his power — the Exodus out of Egypt, the deliverance into the promised land — as the pattern of who God is. He is not only the God who hears prayer. He is the God who answers, and answers mightily. He is mighty to save. He vanquishes his enemies. Verse 5 calls him “the God of our salvation” and “the hope of all the ends of the earth” — everyone who faces injustice, everyone who hopes for deliverance, finds that hope answered only in him. Hope that is not a wish (I hope it doesn’t rain) but hope that is a confident assurance of our future because of a mighty and never changing God who has made promises to care for and protect us! You need to hear that to the depths of your soul this morning: we have a mighty, prayer-answering God.

The psalm pictures this might poetically — first in the mountains, then in the sea. He is the one who established the mountains, “girded with might.” Mountains seem unmovable, permanent, unshakable — yet it was God who put them there. The pagan nations built their high places on mountains because they believed that was where their gods dwelt. But the mountains themselves belong to the true God. He owns them. He is mightier than what the nations worshiped as mighty.

Then in verse 7, the roaring seas — a picture in the ancient world of chaos, evil, horror — and God stills them. This is the mighty rock who we hold on to and will strike back with a deadly arrow against the foe. And someday he will bring final judgment on all who stand against him — we saw that already in Psalm 64, the enemies of God given over to judgment, because salvation belongs to the Lord.

The result of this might, in verse 8, is that the ends of the earth stand in awe and give worship. “The going out of the morning and the evening” shouting for joy — every place, every hour of the day, filled with praise for what he has done.

Wherever you are this morning, whatever you’re facing, remember: Christ is our mighty warrior. He has paid for our sins with his precious blood, and he has defeated the devil. He is listening, and he is answering — on his own timetable, with perfect wisdom and perfect power. And he goes forth still, through the gospel proclaimed by you, by me, by this church. Believe that he is mighty to save. Believe too that he will someday judge all evil — that should be both a warning and a comfort, to you, to me, to the world. When everything else in our souls gives way, he is our hope and our stay. We bring our laments to the one who is mighty to answer them. “The hope that we have in Christ is incredible. As a Christian, you have no reason to be finally

discouraged. You will outlast every trouble that you will ever face” (Dever).

Romans 8:31 asks, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” And a few verses later, Romans 8:37 answers: “in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.” Jesus is our Victor, and he holds us fast. He has already won the victory.

Maybe you are here this morning not as one of his own, but as an enemy under his wrath. That is a fearful thing to be. You are in real trouble, and you need to be reconciled. But here is the amazing thing: this mighty God, who will one day bring great judgment, offers salvation to you today. He promises to wash away every sin, so that you will never have to pay for it yourself. He promises to work even your worst decisions together for your good, though you don’t deserve it. He promises never to leave you or forsake you, and to enable you to live for him. But you must accept the gift. You must believe that Jesus died on the cross to save sinners — sinners just like you. You have been on the wrong side. You need him. Lay down your arms, and accept his free gift of salvation. Jesus paid it all. Surrender to him.

3. He Visits with Abundance (vv. 9–13)

9 You visit the earth and water it;

you greatly enrich it;

the river of God is full of water;

you provide their grain,

for so you have prepared it.

10 You water its furrows abundantly,

settling its ridges,

softening it with showers,

and blessing its growth.

*11 You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with abundance.*

*12 The pastures of the wilderness overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,*

*13 the meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.*

As we move through the psalm to this third stanza, we come to a third reason for silence and song — one that builds on the first two.

God visits with abundance. HE IS A GENEROUS PROVIDER

One commentator states that this final section is one of the most beautiful portraits of God's blessing on the land in all of Scripture. God visits to judge, but he also visits to bless. And for those of us in Christ Jesus, every spiritual blessing is ours.

Isaiah 66 gives us this same picture — a new heavens and a new earth — and Revelation 21 gives it to us again, fulfilled. Judgment turns to blessing because King Jesus is on the throne, and he has conquered. He was the Lamb who was slain, and he is now the Lion of Judah who comes — like Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, breaking a land bewitched by the White Witch out of its perpetual winter. He comes, and he waters the earth. He comes, and he stirs our souls, and he changes us. Here is a picture of a never-ending source of nourishment — the river of God, full of water, because God blesses his people.

What was once a desert, a land of famine, is now an Eden, a paradise. Because God has visited, his shadow lights up the land with

fruit and abundance. “You crown the year with bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with abundance” — the picture is of a harvest wagon so full it cannot contain what it carries.

We need to imagine it: a scene that was dark, black-and-white, wilderness and desolation, now turned bright and vivid — full color, full detail, alive with sight and smell and everything that would satisfy a hungry heart. And notice — in all three sections of this psalm, we end the same way: they are satisfied, or they sing together with joy.

Remember why Jesus Christ came: that we might have life, and have it abundantly. He has not come with a thimbleful of his goodness. He pours it out, again and again, until we cannot imagine more. He is the Shepherd who anoints our head with oil, whose cup for us overflows. He is the great Shepherd who is host for his people.

Friends, in this life, things may not look like verses 9 through 13 in every external way. As the end of Habakkuk 3 puts it — the fig tree may not blossom, there may be no fruit on the vine — and yet we rejoice in the Lord. Someday he will make all things new. In the meantime, he makes them new in our souls. He restores our souls. He shows us his goodness. He hears our prayers, draws us to satisfaction in him, is mighty to save, and is our hope now, in life and in death.

Dear friend, Jesus Christ is this Shepherd. He intends for you to bow before him in trust and worship. He died on a cross and rose again to bring you into this bounty. In this brief life we taste it — just enough to show it to others, and to believe that the best is yet to come. We will taste it fully, experience it fully, in the age to come.

Oh, may we shout for joy — and bow in humble, awe-filled silence.

Conclusion

Faith Church, give joyful praise to God. Give praise to God! To God, and to Jesus Christ, we give our praise. Let his name ring in your heart, and tell it to others. Praise him to your children. Praise him to each other. Praise him at work, and praise him to the world. Do we need more reasons than this? May the Holy Spirit take these truths we already know and cause them to ring in our hearts.

He is a God who has heard us, and he has displayed his grace and saved us. He is mighty to save, and he will destroy all his enemies, including Satan. Death itself will someday be destroyed, for Christ has risen from the dead, and he is the Conqueror.

And he is so generous. That may not be a word I've used enough this morning, so let me say it plainly here: he is so generous. That generosity flows from who he is, and from his love for us. He loves you because of Christ. He loves you, and he sent Christ. Christ loves you because the Father loves you. Why does he love you? There is no good reason in ourselves — it all comes from his choosing. And so we sit silently in awe, humbled by this amazing grace.

Non-Christian friend, do not resist his offer. Praise is due him from you, and from every creature. Your sins prevail against you, and you cannot atone for them — but he can. Once for all, he died on the cross, and it is applied to all who put their faith in him and receive his gift.

Let us praise, and let us pray.