

# Psalm 145

## Overview and Structure

### 1. Acrostic

Each verse starts with a different letter of the Hebrew Alphabet if you include v13b as a different verse. Eg grace – God’s riches at Christs expense  
It is one of only 8 of these in the psalms and

Why

- As an aid to the memory
- As a metaphor for totality
- A reflection of the full range of human expression

‘...the entire alphabet, the source of all words, is marshalled in the praise of God. One cannot acutally use all the words in a languarg but by using the alphabet one uses all potential words. So, the form is made to serve the message.’ (Adele Berlin; The Rhetoric of Psalm 145)

### 2. Antiphonal

It is a psalm that is designed to be sung or recited by two groups.

Known as Ashre: It is used in prayer twice in the morning and forms the basis for afternoon prayer. This Psalm appears in the Jewish Prayer book more than any other Psalm in the Psalter.

### 3. All/Every

Hebrew word kol – the whole or all appears 17 times in this Psalm v9, v12, v13, v14, v15, v16, v17, 18, v19, v20, v21

This builds up speed through the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Psalm

## Main Themes

### God is great (v1-6)

- We should praise him for his greatness
- He is sovereign. In charge. Unsearchable. Majestic. Glorious. Mighty deeds.
- 'My God – the King'

### God is good (v.7-21)

- We need to praise him for his abundant goodness
- He is a caring king
- Gracious. Merciful. Slow to anger. Steadfast love. Compassionate. Faithful. Upholds all who are falling. Raises up bowed down. Feeds and satisfies. Just. Kind. Close. Listens. Saves. Watches.

In response to God's goodness and greatness what are we to do?

Bless/kneel

Hebrew: barak – to adore with bended knee

## An Exploration of verse four

v.4. One generation commends your works to another they tell of your mighty acts (NIV/UK)

The word here is more than tell it is declare/acclaim/praise/laud(old word): high praise/extravagant praise. Literally it means to 'sing their praises'

The works of this Great, Good God are to be 'lauded', declared, narrated to others, talked about, remembered and recounted.

Today however few or many you are gathered with 'laud' God praise or use Facebook or other social media.

v.4. One generation commends your works to another they tell of your mighty acts (NIV/UK)

One generation – those who live/dwell in this age  
To another – those who live/dwell in a different period  
Shall praise – address in a loud voice  
Your works – the deeds, action, activity, achievements, art, workmanship (of God)  
And Your mighty acts – the might (of God)  
Shall declare – publish (especially the power, wisdom and loving kindness (of God))

## Application

Am I like the psalmist declaring the works of the Great, Good God to another generation?

Am I allowing another generation to speak to me – or do I believe I have all the answers and experience?

Study resources

C. Hassell Bullock, *Encountering the Book of Psalms* (Baker Academic, 2001)

Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms* (Fortress Press, 2002)

Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150* (IVP, 1975)

Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart, *How to read the Bible for all its worth: 4<sup>th</sup> ed* (Zondervan, 2014)

Martin Manser (ed), *Open Your Bible* (CLC, 2012)

Mike Parsons, *How to read the Bible ... so that it makes a difference* (BRF, 2020)

Pete Phillips, *Engaging the Word* (BRF, 2019)