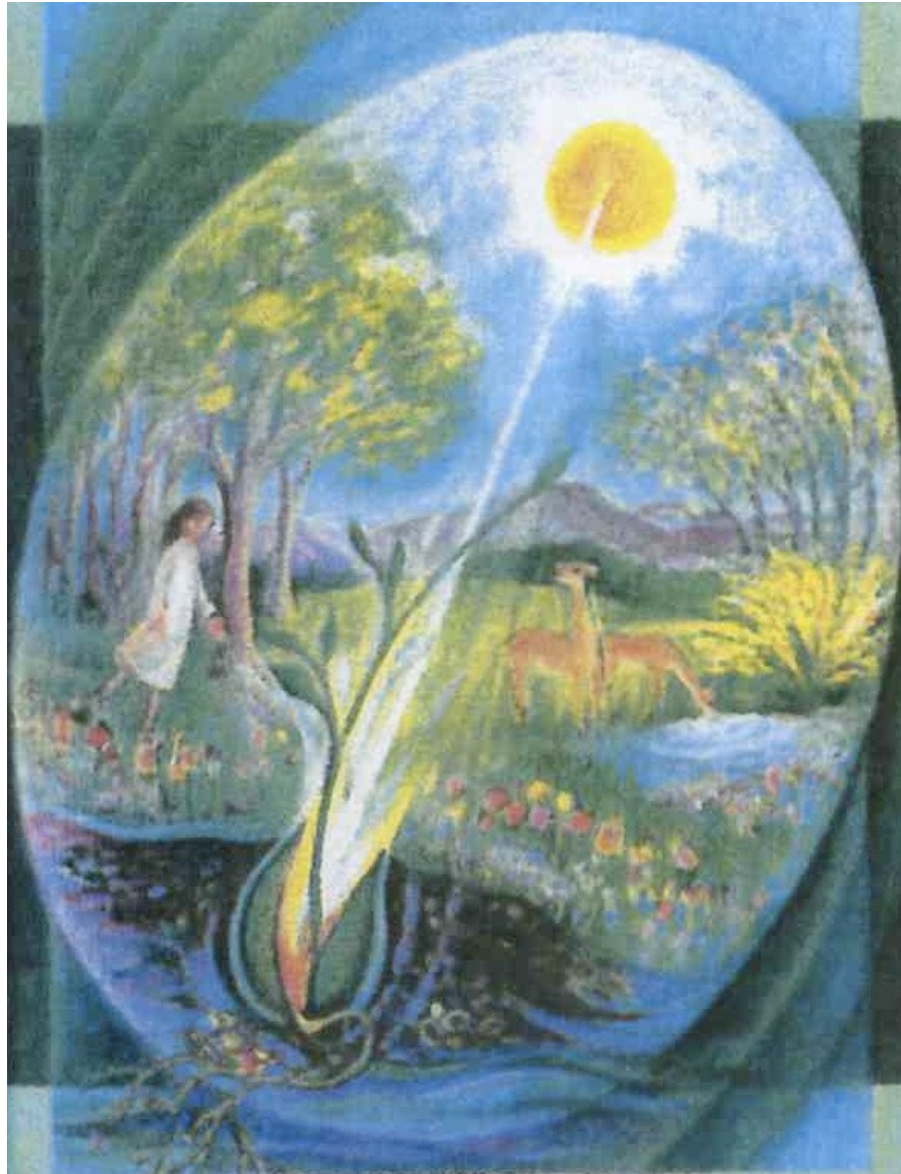


Psalm 65: God and Nature



Psalm 65 (64) (Mode 3. 3....12 / 4...271)

From David's city, the psalmist praises the Lord of the universe and the Lord of history for God's providence in forgiving sin and in making the earth fertile to meet our needs.

To you our praise is due,
to you who dwell in Zion.

We make our vows to you, our God,
to you who answer our prayer

We all come to you
with our burden of guilt.
Our transgressions overwhelm us,
but you continue to pardon.

‘All flesh shall come to worship before me,
says the Lord’(Isaiah 66:23)

‘Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth.
For I am God and there is no other’(Isaiah 45:22).

‘Pardon’ translates the Hebrew kpr [כַּפֵּר]. Used for ‘pardon’ in only four psalms: 49:7, here, 78:38 and 79:9.

It means ‘to cover’ and a special instance is on the Day of Atonement when the high priest enters the Holy of Holies and approaches the ‘mercy-seat’, the golden ‘cover’[Hebrew kaporet, כַּבֹּדֶת] of the ark, the throne of God’s invisible presence.

Sin cannot be in the presence of God. Brought to the ‘cover’ it is consumed in the fire of God’s merciful forgiveness.

Truly blessed are those
whom you bring near to live in your courts.
We are filled with the goodness of your house,
with the graces of your holy temple.

The psalmist is filled with gratitude that he has
been chosen to be in the temple where he is
showered with God's gifts.

We reflect on Jesus' words:

'You did not choose me but I chose you'(John 15:16).

By awesome deeds you answer us with justice,
O God our saviour.

You are the hope of the ends of the earth
and of the far distant isles.

By your power you establish the mountains,
you who are girded with might.

You silence the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples.

Those who live at earth's farthest bounds
are overawed by your signs.

The lands of sunrise and sunset
you fill with your joy.

You tend the land, providing it with water.

How wonderful the harvest!

Your river in heaven brims over
to give the earth what it needs.

You water abundantly the furrows,
levelling their ridges,
softening them with showers and blessing their growth.

You crown the year with your bounty.

Your furrows overflow with abundance.
The pastures of the wilderness flourish.
The hills are girded with joy,
the meadows are clothed with flocks,
the valleys are decked with grain.
They shout for joy, yes, they sing.

‘The land that you are crossing over to occupy is a land of hills and valleys, watered by rain from the sky, a land that the Lord your God looks after. The eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year’(Deuteronomy 11:11-12).