

Psalm 66: Thanksgiving



Psalm 66 (65) (Mode 2. 5....31 / 4.....32)

This is a hymn of thanksgiving. The psalmist invites the assembly to join him in thanking God who has heard his plea and brought him safely through a period of trial. The assembly calls on the whole world to join in thanking the God of the whole universe, who redeemed his people and who answers prayer.

Cry out with joy all the earth,
make music and sing of God's glory.
Give God glorious praise!
Sing, 'How tremendous your deeds!'

Because of your great power,
your enemies cringe before you.
Before you all the earth will bow,
praising you in song.

'At the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father'(Philippians 2:10-11).

Come and see God's wonders,
God's tremendous deeds among us.
The Lord formed dry land in the sea
to enable his people to cross.

See Exodus 14-15 for songs of thanksgiving
at the crossing of the Red Sea.

Let our joy be in God
who reigns for ever with might.
God keeps watch on all the nations.
Let rebels not raise their heads!

e.g., the pharaoh: Exodus 5:2

Bless our God, you peoples.
Let praise ring out in God's honour.
The Lord has kept alive our spirits,
and kept our feet from stumbling.

We are invited to praise God, the Lord of life.

‘For to this end Christ died and lived again,
so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the
living’(Romans 14:9).

‘Even when we were dead through our trespasses,
God made us alive together with Christ –
by grace you have been saved’(Ephesians 2:5).

You test us, O God,
you try us like silver.

You imprison us, you lay burdens on our backs.

You let others beat us down.

‘I was angry with my people, I profaned my heritage; I gave them into your hand, you showed them no mercy; on the aged you made your yoke exceedingly heavy’(Isaiah 47:6).

‘Your tormentors said to you: “Bow down, that we may walk on you”; and you have made your back like the ground and like the street for them to walk on’(Isaiah 51:23).

We passed through fire and water;
but you brought us relief.

‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you’(Isaiah 43:2).

‘They strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, “It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God”’(Acts 14:22).

I come into your house with offerings,
animals from my herd,
to carry out the promises I made you,
when I found myself in trouble.

The 'burnt offering' ('holocaust', Hebrew 'olah, עֹלָה) is distinctive in that the whole of animal was consumed by fire. Nothing was left for the person offering the sacrifice or for the sacrificing priest. The practice and the word seem to have been borrowed from the Canaanites. The symbolism is clear: the offerer was giving himself entirely over to God, keeping nothing back.

All you who revere God come and hear,
and I will proclaim what God has done for me.

‘If I had cherished evil in my heart,
let the Lord not listen.’

But truly God did listen,
heeding the words of my prayer.

Blessed are you, O God, for you did not reject my plea
or remove from me your love.

Saint Augustine comments: ‘If that for which you make
supplication is not removed from you, remain secure in
your trust, for his mercy will not be removed.’