

THIS SONG'S GONNA GET STUCK INSIDE YOUR HEART

PSALM 145:1-21 OCTOBER 2, 2022

Research shows that 90% of us suffered an infection in the last week.¹ We call this bug an “earworm.” It’s when a song gets stuck in your head. The technical term is *Involuntary Musical Imagery*, and it is “a phenomenon that occurs spontaneously and without conscious control.”

One article writes, “Wandering minds and stress seem to make people more vulnerable to earworms. And, if you’re a chronic worrier, you’re not only more likely to have an internal soundtrack, but you’re also more likely to be bothered by it.”²

Whether it’s *Baby Shark* or *Mmm Bop* or *Kung Fu Fighting*, we’ve all had the experience of a song rattling around our head that we couldn’t wait to silence.

This is where Psalm 145 comes in. This was a song David *voluntarily* put into his head every day. He planned on singing it forever. Though it isn’t one of the most famous Psalms, it *is* one of the best.

It is the *last* of David’s songs - at least, it is the final Psalm to bear his name. In the superscript it is called “A hymn of David” (or your version may say a *praise* of David). J.J. Perowne writes, “This is the only Psalm which is called a *Tehillah* (a praise or hymn), the plural of which word, *Tehillim*, is the the general name for the whole [book].”³ John Phillips writes, “It brings all of David’s other [psalms] to a climax.”⁴

In the Jewish Talmud, which was used by rabbis to establish practices, customs, and culture, Jews were instructed to recite *this* Psalm three times per day.⁵

David is not only planing to sing this song forever and ever, he’s also invited all of us to join with him. And what a great song to sing! I’m glad we were able to hear it read before we go through the text. Because what stands out the most is how incredibly optimistic David is about God and life and the future. We live in pessimistic times. But God’s people *always* have reason to be optimistic. We *always* have reason for overflowing joy. Because our God is *great*. He is *good*. He is *with* us. And He is doing all that He has promised, without fail and without hesitation.

So, today, we’re all invited to get this lovely song stuck in our heads and our hearts.

Psalm 145:1-2 - A hymn of David. ¹ I exalt you, my God the King, and bless your name forever and ever. ² I will bless you every day; I will praise your name forever and ever.

¹ <https://www.tigertimesonline.com/entertainment/2018/01/the-science-of-earworms/>

² <https://www.farmersalmanac.com/earworms-22655>

³ J.J. Stewart Perowne *Commentary On The Psalms*

⁴ John Phillips *Exploring Psalms Volume Two*

⁵ Daniel J. Estes *The New American Commentary: Psalms 73-150*

This song is an acrostic. Each verse starts with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. David liked doing that. 5 of his Psalms follow this pattern.⁶ But he's not being formulaic. It's clear that he is overflowing with real excitement. Herbert Lockyer said this Psalm is "*vibrating with praise to God.*"⁷

David opens with, "I exalt you, my God the King." We don't know what part of life he was in when he wrote this, but throughout his life his heart remained in this position. Even though he was king, chosen by God, the giant slayer, the man who won the hearts of Israel, his goal was to make the Lord high and honored. Despite David's power and prestige, he understood that God alone was worthy of praise. To "bless" isn't just to say nice things, but to kneel in salute and obedience.⁸

He identifies the Lord as God and King. As God, He is the Creator, the Sustainer, the Savior. As King, He is the Decider, Director, and Commander.

David reveals a few thoughts about himself: First, he was concerned with giving the Lord glory. Second, he recognized that he, David, was going to live forever. And he wanted to worship God every day, not just in this life, but for all eternity. Phillips again writes, "*David determined never to let a day go by without discovering some way to freight it down with praise.*" What a great reminder this is for us that we are able to involve ourselves *now* in eternal activities. This temporal life can have a great *eternal* impact, not only in serving the Lord but in bringing Him worship.

Psalm 145:3 - ³The Lord is great and is highly praised; his greatness is unsearchable.

David did a lot of praising. He wrote a lot of songs. But, *every time*, when he paused to think about God his conclusion was always the same: The Lord is *great!* Great in power. Great in love. Great in redemption. Great in generosity. The more he thought, the more he came to the realization that we could never come close fathoming the greatness of God. One resource said, "*When humans utter words of praise for God, it is as though they were drawing a sunset with only a pencil.*"⁹

Psalm 145:4 - ⁴One generation will declare your works to the next and will proclaim your mighty acts.

Generations are known for things. The Lost Generation gave us electricity. Baby Boomers gave us the moon. Gen X gave us the tech revolution and Millennials give us a headache. Actually, research shows that Millennials are the most optimistic generation our country has ever known.¹⁰

David wants us to think about the *spiritual* impact of our generation. We are responsible to hand the faith off from one generation to the next. We're privileged to give the younger believers after us a living faith, full of the testimony of God's power, greatness, and goodness. The Bible shows us what happens when God's people shirk this responsibility.

⁶ Derek Kidner *Psalms 73-150*

⁷ Herbert Lockyer *Psalms: A Devotional Commentary*

⁸ *Theological Wordbook Of The Old Testament*

⁹ *New American Commentary*

¹⁰ <https://www.bentley.edu/news/nowuknow-unbridled-optimism-millennials>

Judges 2:10-12a - ¹⁰ **That whole generation was also gathered to their ancestors. After them another generation rose up who did not know the Lord or the works he had done for Israel.**
¹¹ **The Israelites did what was evil in the Lord's sight. They worshiped the Baals** ¹² **and abandoned the Lord, the God of their ancestors...**

We often talk about the Christian life as a race. That's an analogy Paul used. It's a good one. But this reminds us that it's also a *relay* race. We pass the faith forward to those who will run the next leg.¹¹

Psalm 145:5-6 - ⁵ **I will speak of your splendor and glorious majesty and your wondrous works.** ⁶ **They will proclaim the power of your awe-inspiring acts, and I will declare your greatness.**

Listen to this lovely excerpt: *"To create an atom. What a mighty work! To pack within the confines of a speck of matter, so small the eye can never see it, enough power to annihilate a city. What a mighty act. To create a galaxy. To people it with suns and stars, novas and supernovas, quasars and black holes, to toss millions upon millions of stars into space like fireworks. What an act."*¹²

God has acted through history, through miracles, through creation, through revelation, through empires, and - *amazingly* - He acts through you and me.

John 14:12a - ¹² **"Truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do.**

The Lord wants to shine the splendor of His glory through the testimony of your life. *Your life* demonstrating His greatness. That is accomplished in part when we publicly praise God.

Psalm 145:7 - ⁷ **They will give a testimony of your great goodness and will joyfully sing of your righteousness.**

God is not only great in *power*, He is also great in *goodness*. There have been many powerful rulers in this world. Very few have accomplished much good. God is *altogether* good. And for the rest of the song, David focuses on the lavish, compassionate grace of the Lord.

Perhaps today you're angry at God for some situation in your life or some past suffering. God is not the cause of your sorrow. He is the *answer* for it. In another song, David wrote this:

Psalm 34:8 - ⁸ **Taste and see that the Lord is good. How happy is the person who takes refuge in Him!**

Reading Psalm 145, we conclude that to know God is to be filled up with joy and enthusiasm for Who He is. If we're *not* excited about the Lord, if we're not excited about giving Him praise, there

¹¹ *New American Commentary*

¹² *Phillips*

must be a misalignment in our hearts. It's not that Christians are to go around acting like there's no problems in life. But David - who was no stranger to real problems - says, "Every day we can overflow with joyful singing." This giving of a testimony is like the "bubbling up of a fountain of water." One source tells us this phrase indicates frequent and enthusiastic proclamation.¹³ When we find ourselves feeling like a well that has run dry, we should remember that talk Jesus had with the Samaritan woman. We should put ourselves in her position when we read:

John 4:10, 14 - ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "If you knew the gift of God, and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would ask him, and he would give you living water." ¹⁴ But whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty again. In fact, the water I will give him will become a well of water springing up in him for eternal life."

And then the Lord went on to talk to her about true worship and how God desires it.

Psalm 145:8 - ⁸ The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in faithful love.

We can not talk too much about God's grace. Christians are sometimes hesitant to *really* admit how vast God's grace is. His grace is ample enough to redeem men like Nebuchadnezzar, Saul of Tarsus, the heathens of Nineveh. Thank *goodness!* Because we are no different than any of them, not in our hearts. Romans explains how we were hostile toward God, at war with Him, but by His grace He made a way to reconcile us to Himself and make us new, giving us a hope and a future.

He does so because of His faithful love. Most of us know the Greek word "agape" which is defined so well in 1 Corinthians 13. We're less familiar with an important Old Testament term for God's love: *hesed*. It speaks of when a weaker party is in desperate need, unable to help themselves and then a stronger party willfully chooses to act on their behalf out of a loyal, caring love.¹⁴ When God describes His *hesed* love for us, He uses *this* image of being slow to anger and great in compassion. Verse 8 repeats what God said in Exodus 34. As Moses stood on the mountain, God came down and passed before him, and in that moment, of all the things the Lord *could* have said, what He chose to reveal was this: "I am a God of compassion and grace, slow to anger, abounding in love. And *I* am the One Who maintains this love to a thousand generations."

God has every right to be angry at any one of us. He is altogether right, we are altogether wrong. Each one of us has gone astray in blasphemous rebellion against our Creator. But instead of revenge, God acts to redeem. His great, gracious, compassionate love endures *forever*.

Psalm 145:9 - ⁹ The Lord is good to everyone; his compassion rests on all he has made.

An unbelieving world scoffs at this. People love to blame God for every difficulty and tragedy. But they do not consider the fact that it is our *sin* that has brought death, sorrow, and suffering into the

¹³ *New American Commentary*

¹⁴ *Theological Wordbook Of The Old Testament*

world and that God stands ready at every moment of every day to rescue anyone who calls to Him. This week the news was full of reports on Hurricane Ian in Florida - the need for rescue and help. God has made Himself available to rescue *any* soul of any person in any place and any time. He is *not* a God Who loves some and hates others. And *even while* people reject Him, He still pours out common grace for them. The sun rises on the evil and the good. The rain falls on the righteous and the unrighteous. The breath of the Almighty gives each of us life day by day.¹⁵

Psalm 145:10-13a - ¹⁰All you have made will thank you, Lord; the faithful will bless you. ¹¹They will speak of the glory of your kingdom and will declare your might, ¹²informing all people of your mighty acts and of the glorious splendor of your kingdom. ¹³Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your rule is for all generations.

There is a day coming when all will be made right on earth as it is in heaven. We'll all be on the same page. The King will be ruling all the earth from His throne in Jerusalem. It's a great thing to know King Jesus is coming back to do all He's promised. We talk about great leaders from the past. We learn about the great things Lincoln did and said. But he's never coming back to be president again. We may *wish* he would, but it's not going to happen. But Jesus is alive and He is returning and His reign will be established on this earth and His Kingdom will have no end.

Psalm 145:13b-16 - The Lord is faithful in all his words and gracious in all his actions. ¹⁴The Lord helps all who fall; he raises up all who are oppressed. ¹⁵All eyes look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. ¹⁶You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Our leaders don't keep most of their promises. We're used to it. The Lord keeps *them all*. There's nothing good He can't do. And what He does is kind and generous. Generally speaking, kings are not known for helping the oppressed, they're known for *being* the oppressors. They are not the ones doing the feeding of the hungry. They're typically the ones piling up things for themselves. But the King of kings places His gentle hands on each of us to help and to lift and to provide. The Lord gives support to all who fall. The term speaks of someone who is stumbling or failing or being defeated. God sees us collapsing and says, "I will *Personally* take you in My hand." And He is mindful of every aspect of our lives. It's not *just* about eternal salvation. He also genuinely cares about our daily needs. Jesus invites us to go to Him, asking: "Give us this day our daily bread."

God loves to satisfy. The old Coverdale Bible of 1535 says He opens His hand and fills all living things with *plenteousness*. But we also note that the Lord does His work "at the proper time." Ultimately, every need *will* be met in the Kingdom. In the here and now, the Lord still meets needs, but we wait in expectation for the total fulfillment of His rescue and provision. Meanwhile, God works in our lives, bringing spiritual fruit in its season. There are going to be spiritual seasons in our lives as God's plan unfolds. Not every season is the same. Not every season is as fruitful. Not every season will have the same number of storms. But we can be sure God is mindful of every day, every need, every situation we find ourselves in.

¹⁵ Matthew 5:45, Job 33:4

Psalm 145:17 - ¹⁷The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all his acts.

He doesn't cut corners. He doesn't pick favorites. He doesn't take bribes or flip flop on His principles. He doesn't ignore inconvenient problems or follow the trends. He is always righteous and He has pledged Himself to us, not out of obligation, but out of love and loyalty.

Psalm 145:18 - ¹⁸The Lord is near all who call out to him, all who call out to him with integrity.

We've heard all of these amazing things about God's power and His activity and His dependability and His generosity and His character. Now, most wonderful of all, we're told He is *near* to us. The most mighty, most important Being that has ever existed has taken the trip to show up at the door of *your* heart. And He comes to that door and He knocks, hoping you'll open the door and let Him in so that He can dwell with you in love and friendship forever.

He is near to those who call. He will not invade a closed heart. He will not force a person to receive all this grace we've been talking about. He waits for you to *choose* to allow Him in.

If you are not a Christian and you hear all this great talk about the Lord's goodness and you think, "I want access to these things," you can have it all! The Lord is waiting for you to call out to Him in faith, turning from your sin and believing in your heart that Christ is the Son of God.

Romans 10:9 - ⁹If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Revelation 22:17 - ¹⁷Both the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Let anyone who hears, say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come. Let the one who desires take the water of life freely.

But be warned: The more you reject this invitation, the more you ignore the Lord's knocking on your heart, the further you push God away and the door seals more and more tightly.

Isaiah 55:6-7 - ⁶Seek the Lord while he may be found; call to him while he is near. ⁷Let the wicked one abandon his way and the sinful one his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, so he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will freely forgive.

Psalm 145:19 - ¹⁹He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry for help and saves them.

The point is not that we get whatever we *want*. This is not a verse that proves the health-and-wealth heresy. Take the verse together. What is it that the people want? They are crying out for rescue. They call out for deliverance. And God fulfills that desire. He is always able to hear and to save.

Psalm 145:20 - ²⁰ The Lord guards all those who love him, but he destroys all the wicked.

God's wrath is just as real as His grace. Grace doesn't mean everyone is saved. It means anyone *can* be saved. But those who refuse to be hidden in Christ await judgment without the protection of grace. Some folks in Florida decided not to evacuate, but to face the hurricane themselves. And some paid with their lives because they were no match for the fury of the storm.

You are no match for God's wrath. All you and I deserve is death because of our sin. We are *wicked*.

That's not a word we use much anymore. What makes a person wicked? To be wicked is to be guilty. It means to be a person whose sins have not be washed away. It means to deny Christ and to refuse to bow in worship to Him. It means to ignore the offer of salvation God is graciously making to you. He says, "I will cleanse you of your sin and give you a new heart." So, repent and turn back, so that your sins may be wiped out. If you won't, then you will be destroyed. Only those who do the will of God can enter His Kingdom.¹⁶

Psalm 145:21 - ²¹ My mouth will declare the Lord's praise; let every living thing bless his holy name forever and ever.

David ends where he began. This was going to be the song he put into mind again and again, day after day. And he invites us to join the chorus. He closes his final Psalm, essentially saying, "This is my every day reality. God is great. God is good. God is gracious. God is near. I can worship."

David wasn't being naive. It's just that he was a *praiser*. We can look at some of the openings to his Psalms and see that he kept this praising mindset in some of the most trying circumstances. We find him writing songs of praise in caves and in the wilderness, at his baby boy's funeral and when on the run from another son who is trying to kill him. He's praising when he seized by Philistines and when his house is under surveillance. He's praising on his bed and under the stars. Morning and evening, in danger and deliverance. David's choice was, "My mouth will declare the Lord's praise."

A large scale study found that *Don't Stop Believing* is one of the most common earworms.¹⁷ Of course, we don't know the original melody for Psalm 145, but the next time *Don't Stop Believing* finds it way into your brain, remind yourself to believe this final song of David. The greatness of God's power and work and majesty and mercy and compassion and generosity and faithfulness and goodness are worthy of our praise every day because *every day* He is pouring out His grace for us and we have the joy of pouring back a hymn to Him, every day, forever and ever.

¹⁶ Matthew 7:21-23

¹⁷ <https://www.sciencefocus.com/the-human-body/why-earworms-get-stuck-in-your-head/>