



Calvary Presbyterian Church
Sunday, JULY 16, 2023

Indelible Presence: Reflections on Psalm 65
Rev. Eyde Mabanglo

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Prepare our hearts, O God, to accept you Word.
Silence in us any voices but your own,
so that we may hear your Word and also do it; through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 65:1-13 (NRSV)

*Praise is due to you,
O God, in Zion,
and to you shall vows be performed,
 ²O you who answer prayer!
 To you all flesh shall come.
 ³When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us,
 you forgive our transgressions.
 ⁴Happy are those whom you choose and bring near
 to live in your courts.
We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house,
 your holy temple.
 ⁵By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,
 O God of our salvation;
 you are the hope of all the ends of the earth
 and of the farthest seas.
 ⁶By your strength you established the mountains;*

*you are girded with might.
⁷You silence the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.
⁸Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.
⁹You visit the earth and water it;
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.
¹⁰You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
¹¹You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.
¹²The pastures of the wilderness overflow;
the hills gird themselves with joy;
¹³the meadows clothe themselves with flocks;
the valleys deck themselves with grain;
they shout and sing together for joy.*

SERMON

Psalm 65 as a summary of our summer sermon series at Calvary, called **Spirit Tastings: *the exquisite pairing of heaven and earth in the Psalms.***

It is about Zion...heaven and it is paired with our life on Earth.

Here is my paraphrase of this song by David.

Every everything.

Every everyone.

*Will stand up in awe and praise you where you are, oh God.
in expectant silence, humble waiting, and a sacred stillness.*

Our silent praise, and our solemn vows will be heard and carried out.

*You hear them all! And all of humanity will come to you.
In your presence
We are overwhelmed by our sins,
By our injustice,
Our hurt from one to another.*

*In your presence
You restore us and bless us.
What an honor! What a privilege!
to be inside your heavenly home.*

*Festive in our hearts,
Content in our minds and bodies
Feasting on your goodness
Drinking in your abundant grace*

*For this reason, you are our only hope. We put our trust in you.
Our humble silence quickly turns to expressing jubilant joy.
Because you blow us away.
Because you put everything right In us and in the world*

*From sea to sea and to the ends of the earth
We see your mighty strength.
Revealed in the mountains erect.
And in the raging oceans you calm.*

*As you muzzle the storms,
you also quiet the raging riots within us
And throughout all the nations.
Every person of every tribe.*

*Their mouths drop open in awe
out of astonishment in your presence
Out of wonder at your power and might
And in their seeing and understanding your indelible presence*

*In the rising of the sun,
and in the setting of the same*

*All the earth will respond with shouts of joy.
The dawn and dusk take turns calling: "come and worship"*

*And this is how we pray the prayer of your heart.
May your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven
You visit every everything
You invite every everyone*

*To join you in the song of blessing
And in the dance of joy
Your living water drenches the droughts
around us and within us.*

*You touch every living thing
and fill it all with the fertility and bounty of yourself.
The whole earth, including the land dwellers.
Is blessed with the exquisite pairing of heaven and earth.*

The concept of Zion, as a heavenly destination, is expressed in Hebrews 12:22-24. In the New KJB, we hear about the context of this exquisite pairing of heaven and earth.

Hebrews 12: 1-2, 22-24, and 28 (The Voice Translation)

***12**So since we stand surrounded by all those who have gone before, an enormous cloud of witnesses, let us drop every extra weight, every sin that clings to us and slackens our pace, and let us run with endurance the long race set before us.*

***2**Now stay focused on Jesus, who designed and perfected our faith. He endured the cross and ignored the shame of that death because He focused on the joy that was set before Him; and now He is seated beside God on the throne, a place of honor.*

***22**No, instead you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to heavenly messengers unnumbered, to a joyful feast, **23**to the assembly of the firstborn registered as heaven's citizens, to God the righteous Judge of all, and to the spirits of all the righteous who have been perfected. **24**You have come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant between God and humanity...*

²⁸Therefore, let us all be thankful that we are a part of an unshakable Kingdom and offer to God worship that pleases Him and reflects the awe and reverence we have toward Him.

We are on a journey. Our prayers are a journey, our worship is a journey, and our life is a journey.

All of these Scriptures this morning help us to move on this journey—

From silence to summons.

From prayer to proclamation.

From ambivalence to exuberance.

From kneeling to dancing.

“With its wide ranging portrayal of an undefiled, joyful creation, along with peoples delivered, at peace, and praising God, it provides a vision counter to what we tend to see in the world today.” (Scott Shauf, **Working Preacher**)

*Our hearts are filled with joy as the land is filled with heavy harvest.
The hardest impacted earth has become multiple pathways.
For the carts that carry your unstoppable abundance to the people.
Pastures, fields and hillsides are dressed for celebration and blossom with Joy.*

*And our gaze captures the meadows filled with flocks of frolicking sheep.
And the valleys are draped with a carpet of harvest green.
We are invited into the exquisite pairing of heaven and earth.
As we can now see ourselves as the sheep of your pasture.*

*All of it shouts in joyous celebration.
All of the earth sings.
All of us sing.
Let us all shout, shout, shout.*

May it be so. May it be so.

