

Psalm 146 • Blessed is he whose hope is in the LORD

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Psalm 146 through the end of the Psalms are known as the Hallelujah Psalms because they say it a lot. And this is another great Psalm for praising the Lord, declaring His goodness.

This one talks about God's faithfulness, which I love. When I'm praising the Lord, if I can't think of anything else to praise Him for, I latch onto faithfulness. Because God is faithful. And I need to be reminded of the fact that God is faithful. I need to remind myself that God is faithful. And I like to use that as a praise.

And as I was saying, I think it goes along with the Psalms that we find these things greatly comforting, in times of darkness and during those, what we call those valley experiences. But these hallelujah Psalms are great to remember that we need to praise God at all times, even during the mountaintop experiences.

This one goes like this.

"1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul!" (ESV)

And David, the author here, speaking directly to the soul, to the emotions, *"Praise the Lord!"*

Have your emotions ever wanted to drag along when maybe, when we're praising together. Or you feel like, I really ought to praise the Lord. But you just don't feel like it. Your emotions don't feel like it.

Well, I love how in the Psalms, the psalmist just talks right to his soul. *"Praise the LORD,"* soul! He says, get with it! It's like telling your emotions, you're not going to drag me down. You're not going to dictate whether or not I give praise to my God. Because He deserves it. And my emotions are not going to be in control here. So, *"Praise the LORD, O my soul!"*

He says,

"² I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being."

So many great worship and praise songs have come from those first couple of verses.

Verse 3, I love this.

"Put not your trust in princes, (or) in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation."

⁴ When his breath departs,"

And by the way, that could also be spirit. *"When his spirit departs,"* as it actually appears in the New American Standard Bible (NASB). The Hebrew word can mean either breath or spirit. Same with the Greek.

It says, *"When his (spirit or) breath departs," he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish."*

What is he saying here, verses 4 and 5? Don't trust in man. Why? And notice he says, don't even trust in powerful men; like a prince.

Now we don't have princes over us here in the United States of America. We have presidents, and vice presidents, and senators, and on down the line. And, same thing. Many of them are powerful individuals. But the psalmist says, don't put your trust in powerful people, even powerful people.

Because you know what? They can't even keep themselves alive. They can make all kinds of promises to you. But you know what? When they die, it's all over. All their promises are done. There's nothing they can do to fulfill their word. Right? Obviously, the Lord is telling you to trust in Him. Right?

And that's what it goes on to say in verse 5.

"Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, (Look at this,) who keeps faith forever;”

Or as the NIV says, *“who remains faithful (together or) forever.”*

I like that. And that's talking about God's faithfulness. So he says, there's a blessed condition for the person who is trusting in the Lord, whose hope is in the Lord.

Do you know why that's a blessed place to be, to hope in the Lord? Because your hope will never be disappointed. Your hope will never be dashed.

Our hope will always come to an end if it's in temporal things. And that includes people. Because people are temporal things, at least from their physical existence. If your hope is in something related to this life, I'm really hoping I'm going to get... I'm really hoping this tomorrow is going to be... I'm really hoping this person is going to... I'm really... If that's where your hope is, let me tell you something. You have a hope-less situation waiting for you; just waiting in the wings.

But if your hope is in the Lord, He will never let you down. Your hope will be steadfast. Because He is steadfast. He is faithful. And I love how that last statement in verse 6 is laid out there, *“who keeps faith forever;”* He is faithful. Our Lord is faithful.

Something else about our Lord here in verse 7,

“who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free;

8 the LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;”

And that speaks of those who are laboring under the weight of the world. The Lord lifts them up. Isn't that wonderful that we serve a God who actually invites us to come. And to offload our burden when it gets so heavy that we just can't even see straight.

He says, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Rest for your souls. He says, I'm gentle. I'm humble. He says, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for my yoke is easy, my burden is light. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Let me ask you a question. Can I do this? You don't need to answer out loud or anything like that. But just in your own heart. Is your burden right now heavy? Are you carrying a heavy burden right now? I want you to know something about that. It's not the Lord's. He already told you that, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Okay.

We put all kinds of expectations upon ourselves, other people, but all kinds of expectations on us. And we carry those things around. We carry burdens. We carry burdens for other people. We carry offenses for other people. We carry all kinds of things.

There's a lot of things in life and very few of them are any of your business. Have you ever learned that? I have. And yet we take these things and we put them on our shoulders. And we carry them around and we don't even realize it. It's kind of like that frog in the kettle scenario, where you put a burden on. You put a burden on little by little. And you don't let... It's like the frog. They turn up the heat slowly and doesn't even know he's getting cooked.

And same thing with you. You have a burden on you and you keep adding to that. And there's a slow sort of a process, but eventually you're just, I can't move. I just can't move.

And then we have this God who says, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden. Wow! What an amazing offer. Says here that He lifts up those who are bowed low; *"and the LORD loves the righteous."*

Verse 9,

"The LORD watches over the sojourners; (your Bible may say strangers. That's talking about, just what it means. Those who are passing through.) he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

10 The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, to all generations." (So what's the conclusion?) *Praise the LORD!"* Right?

What a lovely Psalm declaring God's faithfulness and our blessing to, praise His name!