

## Psalm 146

If you have been with us in our afternoon services, you know that we have been working our way through the Gospel of Mark. We have been in that study for some time and we have quite a bit more to go, so I have endeavored to bring something different every 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday. I must admit that is always seemingly harder than it seems. Expository preaching may mean you have to preach something next week that is not joyful to the flesh, but at least you know what you are going to preach.

When I come to these fifth Sunday's I find myself struggling to know exactly what to preach because the Bible is such a big book so like normal, I have found myself back in the Psalms.

That, in itself, is probably a good thing as well because I know that I have probably neglected the Psalms throughout the years in my preaching. They are a wealth of knowledge and wisdom to grow by, but it seems my mind tends to focus on the historical and doctrinal books in my studies. So, this has been good for me to look to the Psalms as we have been going through Mark as well.

So if you haven't already, turn with me to the 146<sup>th</sup> Psalm. We have before us a relatively short Psalm of praise and wisdom. Starting with David's final Psalm in 145 through the end of the book we see Psalms of high praise. Sometimes we need to be reminded that it is our duty to praise ye the Lord.

You heard me right. It is the duty of all mankind. The duty of all creation in fact to praise the Lord. We were created to give God glory above all things. We often forget that. We often think of what the Lord can do for us and certainly he does, but you know we ought to in all things seek to praise the Lord. Looking at

Psalms like this reminds us of our duty before God.

Let's read our 10 verses together.

*Psa 146:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.*

*Psa 146:2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.*

*Psa 146:3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*

*Psa 146:4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.*

*Psa 146:5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:*

*Psa 146:6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:*

*Psa 146:7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:*

*Psa 146:8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:*

*Psa 146:9 The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*

*Psa 146:10 The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.*

Great Psalm isn't it? Now, you will notice that it doesn't begin with the words of David to someone or on the occasion of. We don't read that it was written by the sons of Korah or even by Solomon. We don't know who wrote this Psalm although it does resemble Psalms 145 to some degree which we know was written by David. But keep in mind that David really created the Psalm format. So, others were following his style.

Let's look to verse 1.

*Psa 146:1 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.*

Perhaps when you were growing up in Sunday School if you were fortunate enough to grow up in Sunday School you might recall singing the song Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelu, Hallelujah and the girls or boys would shout Praise ye the Lord. That was always one of my favorites growing up especially in the days of Bible School.

The reason the song goes that way is both parts are saying the same thing. The word praise in Hebrew is Hallel. The word Lord is Yah. Hallelujah is the same as saying praise ye the Lord.

So as the Hebrew person would read this Psalm it would start off sounding like Hallelujah, Hallelujah O my soul. Don't you like the sound of that today? The writer of this Psalm desires to praise the Lord with his soul.

Brothers and Sisters when you came into the house of the Lord today did you come with a desire to should Hallelujah? Did you come with a desire to sing praises to the King of kings and Lord of lords- the Sovereign of the universe? Was that on you mind or were you like so many who come to church and never pray for the service, never mentally prepare for the service, but yet come in and sit down and think to yourself, "Lord I made it- now bless me."

That brothers and sisters is the wrong way to come into the house of the Lord. We ought to be coming into the house of God first and foremost with the desire to give him praise. When we make that priority number one through the direction of our heart, through the songs that we sing, through the messages that we preach. When we seek to praise the Father, praise the Son , praise the great Three in One folks those blessings that we are seeking from God will come. They will.

It may sound strange, but the more se seek to praise him by doing things his way, the more it will come back on us as blessings.

Now here is the thing folks, this psalm is not just about coming into the house of the Lord. It is speaking about every day of our lives. The truth is many who claim to be Christians check their Christianity at the door on Sunday when they leave and there is no prayer life, no life in the word, no praise of God through the week. There might be references to God. There might be casual talk about the word, you might even say a little prayer before your eat giving thanks, but outside of that no direction of praise in life to God.

Truth is, we ought to wake up in the morning praising God with a hallelujah. Praising him for another day of life and breath. Praising him for the greatness of his creation that morning by morning awaits us.

Could you imagine for a moment being in charge of the stars, the sun, the rain, the everything that God does that we don't even think about? I mean I have to be reminded of something I sat my mind on doing the night before. If I were in control, I would forget to make the sun to rise, the seasons to change. If I were in control, we would be in a mess pretty quick. Thank God I'm not! But Hallelujah he is and he has done all things well. He needs to be praised every day.

Let's read on.

*Psa 146:2 While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.*

Our verse goes along with what we were just saying. Praise of God is not a Sunday or even a Wednesday thing, but an everyday thing and the writer of this Psalm speaks about praising the Lord as long as he has life.

You know in the morning service we are going through the book of Ecclesiastes. Being in that book and reading a verse like this, you can't keep from associating Solomon's words of encouragement to serve the Lord.

Solomon says:

*Ecc 12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;*

The Psalmist said he desires to give the Lord praise as long as he has breath and Solomon says remember your Creator from the days of your youth. Do it as much as you can while you can.

You know last week as we were in our afternoon service there in Mark and Jesus was talking about children, I told you that the Jews in that day and time didn't place a lot of value on young children. Jesus encouraged the children to come. What a picture for us folks!

You know sometimes Nancy or Jess will ask if I care if the little ones sing a song or something. Let me tell you something, I will never mind if these little ones get up here and sing praises to God or recite scripture.

I say let them come because Jesus said let them come. Let us encourage them in praising the Lord while their young and let us endeavor to encourage them to praise the Lord all of their lives. Teach them when they are young the way they should go so when they are older they won't depart from it. Teach them not just by words but by example. They need to see us praising the Lord in church and out of church.

I tell you I get excited when I see our ladies on the back pew get those hands up a little bit and maybe clap a little bit when we are singing. They aren't doing it for show because you all don't see them. They are doing it to praise ye the Lord and I pray that they might do it till life's final breath.

My prayer is that we all might seek to praise the Lord!

Let's read on. I tell you we need to hear this next verse sometimes.

*Psa 146:3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*

This verse following our verses of praise warns us about misguided faith. Our faith should be in God whom we praise and the psalmist will show us why in just a moment, but here he warns us not to put your faith and praise in princes. That is don't put your faith in government.

You know we have too many Christian's that are just a little too political. We have too many that put a lot of faith in one party or the next. Listen if it is one thing that we all should have learned by now is that the Republican party isn't going to make this nation great and neither are the Democrats.

The only thing that will make a nation great is repenting of its sins and seeking to serve God. That is the only thing that makes a nation great before God. That is a nation that will be blessed of God, but this nation or any nation for that matter will ever be saved through politics and those that rule.

That doesn't mean we don't pray for godly leaders. Doesn't mean we don't support our president and on down the line, but there are too many Christians that spend more time watching Fox News than meditating and reading the word of God and prayer all put together.

As a matter of fact, you could probably add in the time they spend in church a week and it would still come up short compared to the time dedicated to watching and listening to politics.

I've been there folks I know. Start adding up how much time you spend in the things of God

compared to how much news you follow and you will start to see where you are putting your trust and where you are probably putting your praise.

The little phrase “son of man” here is speaking of one who raises up from the people as a leader. You might think of Martin Luther King or someone of that nature. People put all kinds of faith in these men, but in the end, they are men. They fall often quicker than their rise to power and influence.

Now I will say there is one Son of Man that you should put your trust in and that is the God man Jesus Christ. He is the one who gives help to the hurting. He is the one who brings redemption to those in chains.

There is no deliverance by any prince on this earth or by any leader from the bondage of the souls of man except through Jesus Christ the Son of Man and my prayer is that you know him.

Now let’s read on again.

*Psa 146:4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.*

This verse begins with the word, “his”. This is not referring to God in whom we should be praising, but rather the princes or the son of man that men put faith in instead.

The thought of this verse is that one in whom we trust in goes forth to and fro on this earth and people put their trust in him and then he dies. That’s one of the problems with trusting in rulers more than God and that is you don’t know how long they are going to be around.

People put their faith and hope in a man named Abraham Lincoln until an assassin’s bullet was lodged into his head. People followed Kennedy like he was the greatest leader since Lincoln, and

he faced the same fate. Robert Kennedy the same. Martin Luther King the same. You get the picture. When we put our trust in man, we are trusting in someone who might not be around for tomorrow.

Let’s keep reading. Now the Psalmist directs us from man to where our hope should be and why.

*Psa 146:5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God:*

Men fail us. The best of presidents sometimes fall through scandals of one sort or another. Some come to power and die. Putting trust in men leads often to hopelessness and sadness.

The psalmist here tells us who we can trust in that will bring happiness. Where is that hope? The God of Jacob. Who is that? The God we come and serve today. That great three in one that I mentioned earlier. That is the fullness of the one that we trust in today.

Scripture says here he is our help. I think about all the Psalms that David wrote. I think about all the times he cried out for help and found that that Lord was there to deliver him.

Folks that same God that was a help to David is our help today. The same God that the psalmist writes of here in this Psalm is our help today. He is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. He is a God that knows our needs. In times of sorrow he is the God of all comfort. In our times of weakness, he is our rock and strength. In times of need, he is our supplier who desires to give good gifts to his children.

Truly there is none like him and he is worthy of praise daily for the help that he is to us.

We also see in this verse as well that he is our hope. Again, men may fail us but God does not. He has never made a promise he didn’t keep. Can man say that? Not even close.

There has never been a time that God tried and failed. Did you ever think about that? He is omnipotent and sovereign over all. God never tries and fails. There is no plan B. There is only plan A. What he has decreed he will bring to pass.

When we put our hope in the things of this earth and the people of this earth we end up disappointed. If you put your hope in me you will end up disappointed, but if you put your hope in the one who already holds tomorrow you will find yourself a happy soul and you ought to give him praise for it not just every now and then but truly daily.

Now the psalmist begins to give us several reasons that we can put our hope in God. Things that should make us happy and praise the Lord.

Look here:

*Psa 146:6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:*

You know one of the things I always find amazing about the word of God is that it doesn't begin by trying to give us the background of how God came into being. There is no Genesis story of how we got God. You'll find those origin stories with the gods of this world. Not with God. He never had a beginning as hard as that is for us to fathom.

So instead of beginning with how we got God, instead what we get from verse one is how God decreed creation. Out of nothing God spoke the heaven's and earth into existence. By the sound of his voice the waters were gathered into their places. The Psalmist says we ought to trust in him because he made the universe and everything in it.

Now folks that is sobering thought. If God can speak the world into creation, don't you think he

can navigate us through our problems here on this earth? Don't you think he can move those metaphorical mountains from our lives? Are we not reminded in the word of God that the things that are impossible with men are possible with God? Did God himself not say to Abraham in Genesis 18:14, "is there anything to hard for the Lord?"

Let that sink in folks. There is nothing too hard for God. There is nothing that is impossible with man that isn't possible with our creator God. Folks that ought to make you happy and give the Lord praise.

The last phrase of this verse is that he keepeth truth forever. What does that mean? It means my God is a faithful God. He is a God that once he has said it, there will be no changing of his mind.

In the New Testament. James says it so lovely when he says:

*Jas 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

Did you get that? There is no changing with God. No variableness. We are told in scripture that he is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We are also told in scripture that God cannot lie. So, we know we can trust everything he says. He keeps truth forever and folks that should make you happy enough to praise the Lord for it.

Let's read on.

*Psa 146:7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners:*

The Psalmist goes on to declare even more why we should be happy in God and in turn give him praise.

Number one he executes judgment for the oppressed. I think of Israel down there in Egypt land working in blood, sweat, and tears. The chosen people of God working in bondage as the slaves of Egypt. Yet scripture tells us that God heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters. That he knew their sorrows.

So many times in Israel's history they found themselves under the control of other groups, but he never stopped hearing their cries. Never stopped becoming acquainted with their afflictions.

I think of the saints that were hauled in and killed for the faith in the New Testament and yet Jesus said to Saul, "why persecutest thou me?" God knows what we are going through and he takes it as though the offense was directed at him and folks God will not hold guiltless those who have oppressed his people.

Aren't you glad the Lord is on your side today brothers and sisters? We ought to be happy in it and give him praise.

The psalmist says that the Lord gives food to the hungry. I'm reminded of the words of Jesus.

*Mat 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*

Folks is it not an amazing thing to you that the one who is the creator of the universe is concerned with feeding the fowls of the earth. How many billions of birds are on this earth? Yet God cares for them and he reminds us are we not better than them.

God gives us daily our daily bread and we ought to be happy in what he has provided and praise him for it.

The last thing in this verse is that the Lord looseth the prisoners. I suppose the immediate context is speaking about those that have been wrongfully imprisoned like Joseph there in Egypt.

But we certainly know that the New Testament has revealed to us of how we were in bondage to sin and through Christ Jesus who has paid our sin debt we are made free and free indeed.

Folks the fact that God brings you salvation from the yoke of sin ought to make you happy and you ought to shout Hallelujah sometimes to praise him for it.

Let's read on:

*Psa 146:8 The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:*

This verse gives us three more reasons to be happy in the Lord. I hope you aren't getting tired of reasons to be happy in the Lord.

The first of these is that he opens up the eyes of the blind. In the New Testament we are shown that Christ physically opened the eyes of the blind. Scripture in the Old Testament made it clear that this would be a sign of the Messiah, but here we are likely looking more at the spiritual blindness that is upon all man to the things of God that he frees us from and causes us to see who he is through the written word. He did that through the Old Testament and he does that through the New Testament as well.

The next thing in this verse is that he raises up them that are bowed down. That is speaking of those who are crushed and need to be comforted.

The word reminds us:

*Psa 145:14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.*

In the New Testament Jesus exhorts us to cast our cares upon him. Truly he is a God that lifts up the broken hearted and gives them rest and we should be happy because of it and praise his name for it.

The last thing this verse tells us we should be happy in is that the Lord loves the righteous. That is the one who is seeking the commandments of God is one that delights in his law. Scripture tells us if we love him, we will keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous to us. In fact, we should delight in them and give him praise for it.

Let's read on.

*Psa 146:9 The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.*

Here we have two more reasons we should be happy in the Lord and give him praises. The first here is that he preserves the stranger. Traveling in this day and time was often dangerous especially to one who was alone. It was easy to find oneself in distress among perils and thieves. God gave many rules for how to treat strangers in the word of God and the psalmist says we should be happy in the protection he gives to us as we go from place to place.

Another thing the word of God shows us in the both the Old and the New Testament is how we are to treat orphans and widows. His word regulates how they should not be oppressed but visited and cared for. Truly he is a good God who cares for his creation and as such it should make us happy and praise him.

Likewise, this verse tells us that God turns the way of the wicked upside down. It's not to say the wicked never succeed, but folks were it not for the withstraining hand of God we could not imagine the evil that would be done on this earth.

And now our last verse.

*Psa 146:10 The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.*

The last thing that we should delight in the Lord over is knowing that he is on his throne. A throne that will never come to an end. If I should die before my grand children and great grandchildren shall walk this earth, I will die knowing that the same God that the psalmist here praises for being on his throne from generation to generation will still be on his throne for the generations to come.

Folks knowing that gives me reason to praise him, because I know that all these things the Psalmist declared we should be happy in are things that I find happiness in and the next generation will find happiness in.

We truly worship a wonderful God. He is so good to us. He is so good to us daily. Have you praised him today for what he has done for you? The things the psalmist brings out here in scripture to be happy over, this is just a partial list. Truly there is so much more. What do you have to be happy in the Lord over today?