

## **Praise the Lord, O My Soul**

Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1986

### **Psalm 146**

I would like very much if you would take your Bible and turn to the book of Psalms. For the message today, I want to bring a verse by verse exposition of Psalm 146. I think that this will be a blessing to you. The title of this message is: "PRAISE THE LORD, O MY SOUL."

This Psalm is written by David, "*a man after God's own heart.*" Twice the Scripture says this, "*David, a man after God's own heart.*"

Also, this Psalm is written by David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel. He wrote most of the Psalms. Moses wrote a few, but David wrote most of them. The Psalms are called the "Hymnbook of the church."

David also is referred to as the man "*whom God raised on high.*" That is the person who wrote as he was led by the Holy Spirit.

He begins this Psalm this way; I want you to listen to it in Psalm 146, "*Praise ye the Lord, and praise the Lord O my soul.*"

My friends, I want you to pull up your chair just a minute. Let me share something with you; I am genuinely appalled and troubled that these great and meaningful words like, "praise the Lord" and "Hallelujah," (praise to Jehovah), the great and meaningful words have become mere flippant, careless, meaningless, religious by-words.

You will have to confess that it is so. You will have to admit that it is so. People are just going around saying "Praise the Lord, Hallelujah, well Hallelujah, well Hallelujah," so flippantly and carelessly in a meaningless manner.

I am saying this and it is verified by the Word of God, men ought to exercise great care in the use of the name of God, lest we be guilty of taking God's name in vain. You might say, "Praise the Lord," but be careful; be sure that you are praising the Lord.

You might say, "Hallelujah," or "Praise Jehovah" or "Praise to Jehovah." This is fine if you have a heart of praise, a sincere attitude of praise, and if you really mean "Praise Jehovah and Praise the Lord."

If not, this is blasphemy. It is just as much blasphemy as that fellow down there using the name of Jesus Christ in vain. That's right; it is no more flippant or no more meaningless or careless than his taking God's name in vain, because you don't mean it either.

David says, "*Praise the Lord, O my soul.*" Listen to me, this praising of the Lord is a heart work, a soul work and is not a lip-service. That is where we get in trouble; it is with lip-service.

Our Lord said, "*These people draw nigh unto Me with their lips but their hearts are far from Me.*" It is not every man that saith unto Me, "*Lord, Lord, that shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven but he that doeth the will of My Father.*"

"*Many shall say unto Me in that day; Lord, Lord, (praise the Lord, Hallelujah). Didn't we preach in your name and cast out devils and do many wonderful works? I shall say unto them, I never knew you.*" That is lip-service.

This business of praising the Lord is a heart work. He says, "*Praise the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, praise His Holy name.*" He wrote this in Psalm 103, "*Bless the Lord.*"

Watch this now; the Lord can be and is praised in heart without a word being uttered. You don't have to say anything to praise the Lord with the heart or from the soul. You don't have to say anything.

Hannah didn't say anything. When Hannah was praying, her lips moved but there were no words. Someone said, "*She's drunken here in the middle of the day.*" No; she said, "*I'm not drinking; I am talking to God. I am worshipping God and praising the Lord God.*"

In Romans 8:26, it says; "*The Holy Spirit intercedeth for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*" So, are you with me? David said, "*Praise the Lord, O my soul, praise ye the Lord.*"

To praise the Lord, you exercise great care. Praising the Lord is a heart work, a soul work and is not lip-service. It can be done without saying a word; "*Praise the Lord.*"

When you entertain great thoughts of God, thoughts that honor God and thoughts that magnify God's name, the Scripture says in verse 2; "*While I live, I will praise the Lord.*" I will tell you this, I have good reason to praise the Lord while I live because if I live, I live by His good pleasure.

I live by His will. He gave me life. He sustains life. It says, *“In Him we live and move and have our being.”* God said in 1 Samuel 2:6, *“I kill and I make alive; I the Lord do these things.”*

Job said in Job 14, *“Man’s days are determined; the numbers of his months are with the Lord. God has set His bounds and He cannot pass.”* David said, *“While I live, I will praise the Lord.”*

I better have a reason to praise the Lord while I live because if I live, I live by the good pleasure and will of God. It is not the doctors that keep me alive; it is the will of God. It is not medicine that keeps you alive; it is the will of God.

It is not what you eat that is keeping you alive. It doesn’t matter if it is health food, or whatever it is; it is still the will of God. God uses means; I know that. Ultimately, it is the will of God. It is by His will that we live or die.

I have a greater reason to praise the Lord if I live spiritually. The Scripture says, *“You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.”* In Adam I die but in Christ, God made me alive. *“By man came death, by Christ came life.”*

So, while I live physically, and while I live spiritually; I will praise the Lord; *“Every good gift and perfect gift cometh from God.”*

You see, in Him is life. *“The Son quickeneth whom He will.”* Life is in Him. I live spiritually and I am going to praise Him. I am not going to praise men; I am going to praise the Lord.

If I live spiritually, I will live eternally. I will praise the Lamb of God forever. That is the song of Heaven; *“Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, unto Him be the glory both now and forever.”*

David said this, *“I will sing praise unto my God while I have any being.”* While I live, I will praise the Lord. I live physically and I live spiritually by His grace. By His grace, I will live eternally. While I have any being, whatsoever, I will praise the Lord.

I will tell you this, there’s a whole lot more here than just rejoicing over a new car. There is a whole lot more here than just rejoicing over the house payment being made. There is a whole lot more here than just rejoicing over your leg being healed.

I will tell you, this is eternal praise to God. David said, *“Praise the Lord, all that is within me, O my soul, while I live; I will praise the Lord. While I have any being; I will praise the Lord forever.”*

Look at verse 3: Watch this; *“Put not your trust in men.”* It doesn't matter how high they are. David said, *“Don't put your trust in princes”* (in kings) and men, no matter how high they are. Don't put your trust in how high they are politically, nor matter how high they are financially or economically or how high they are in religion; don't put your trust in men.

In them *“there is no help,”* there is no help in the arm of the flesh. There is no hope in men and no salvation in men. What David is saying here is this, “I don't want you to trust me or to put your confidence in me.”

Don't put your trust in the nobles or the kings, one another, or even in yourself. There is no help, no hope, and no salvation in human flesh.

Have you ever noted that the creature has failed under ever dispensation? It doesn't matter about his environment; it doesn't matter about what he has seen or heard or participated in. The creature has failed under every test and under every environment and every dispensation.

Let's start way back there with the angels, when the angels fell. That's right, the Scripture says that one third of the heavenly host sinned against God. That is under perfect circumstances.

Lucifer, whose heart was lifted up within him, said; *“I will be like God. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will reign in the high places.”* The angels fell with him.

Then, God created a man called Adam and put him in the Garden with perfect surroundings. He talked with him, walked with him and communed with him. He had everything that he needed, wanted, or could possibly want. Yet, he fell.

God sent a flood and destroyed the world. He saved one man and his family. He saved Noah, his wife and his three sons and their wives. Noah saw all of this destruction about him and when that ark came down upon the mountain, he was the only person left alive with his family. And when he stepped out of that ark, it wasn't any time before he had sinned against God in drunkenness and misled his own son.

You can take Israel, after their deliverance from Egypt. Think how they were delivered from Egypt; think how God had His hand on that one nation. Jacob and his sons (70 of them) went down into Egypt. Now, 400 years later there were two or three million of them.

God miraculously led them out of slavery, even as He brought judgment upon the house of Pharaoh by the death of the first-born throughout Egypt. Yet, Israel sinned for 40 years in that wilderness. Most of them died in unbelief and didn't enter the Promised Land.

Take the apostles; look at Judas, who walked in the presence of Christ the Lord for 3 ½ years. Yet, he sold Him for 30 pieces of silver.

Peter, the apostle, denied that he ever knew the Lord. Demas, who was the companion of the apostle Paul wrote and said; *"He has just left me, having loved the world."*

You can take any environment or any circumstance and the creature will fall. This is what David is saying, *"Don't put your trust in men."* Don't do it no matter how high they are politically, financially or religiously. Just don't trust the flesh; there is no help in the flesh or no salvation.

Paul said in Philippians 3:3; *"Here is the true circumcision; (here is true Israel); we worship God in the Spirit; we rejoice only in Jesus Christ and we have no confidence in the flesh."*

Actually my friend, for a man to trust another man or another creature, for a man to put spiritual confidence in another creature, himself or anyone else is like a beggar going to another beggar trying to find something to eat.

For a man to trust another man is like a cripple man leaning on another cripple man hoping that he can hold him up. He can't hold himself up. It would be like a blind man being led by another blind man; *"they will both fall into the ditch."*

So, David said; *"Praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live I will praise the Lord; for as long as I have any being I will praise the Lord."* You can't praise the flesh; you can't boast in the flesh; you can't trust in the flesh; you can't put any confidence in men. Why not?

All right, he tells us in verse 4: Why not trust men, why not put confidence in the flesh? *“Man’s breath goeth forth and he returns to the dust.”* He returns to his earth. *“In that day, his thoughts perish.”*

What is David saying? He is saying this, *“Don’t put any confidence in the flesh.”* There is no hope or help in the flesh because the flesh dies.

Do you know how he refers to death and what he calls it? He says, *“His breath goes forth.”* In other words; when his breath leaves his body, he is a goner. I don’t care how rich a man is, the only thing that keeps him out of eternity is one breath, just one breath. I don’t care how strong a man is. It doesn’t matter how muscular or how powerful he is; when his breath stops, he leaves here.

I don’t care how religious a man is or how high he stands politically or the other way. When his breath leaves, he dies. That shows the weakness of the flesh. We boast about our strength, our stamina and our power. I am telling you this, the only thing between you and the grave is a breath. If God stops your air that is all there is to it; *“his breath goes forth.”*

Then, it says this; *“There is no hope in man because he returns to the earth.”* He returns to *“his earth.”* Did you notice that personal pronoun in there? The Scripture says that is *“his earth;”* it belongs to him. That is the only thing that belongs to him; it is his dust.

The dust is his because he was made from it. He goes back to the dust. The grave is his home. All that an earthly king has awaiting him is a hole in the ground. All that the millionaire has awaiting him is a hole in the ground.

All you have waiting on you is a piece of property, 6 feet deep, 6 feet long and about 4 feet wide. Even that won’t be yours for very long. You will go back to the dust and a few years will go by and there won’t be anything left there. You will just be part of the environment, part of the dirt and part of the ground.

Don’t you trust in a man; don’t put your confidence in men. *“His breath goes forth and then he goes to his earth.”*

Notice the third thing and watch this because it is good. I love this; David said, *“There is no hope in man because he dies. His breath goes forth. He goes back to the dust and when he does, his thoughts perish.”*

In other words, all of his great plans, when he goes to the earth; they are all over. All of his plans, all of his programs, all of his ambitions, and all of his expectations die when he dies. When he is gone they are gone.

King Solomon said this, *“Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.”* You know, we are foolish to trust in men. We are foolish to put our confidence in the flesh. Here is the three-fold reason; man dies, man returns to the dust and all of his plans perish with him.

If he has left any memorials, it won't be long until they are forgotten also. What a bleak outlook, what a hopeless outlook that is. Wait a minute! I want you to look at verse 5 and watch this: Happy is that man; *“happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help.”*

*“Happy is the man who has the God of Jacob for his help.”* His help and hope is not in the flesh, not in men, or in all their purposes, plans and all of their programs; *“His help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.”* His hope is in the Lord his God.

I want to break that down just briefly, simply, but very briefly. He is happy, twice happy, *“Blessed is the man whose help cometh from the God of Jacob.”*

Why did he call God the God of Jacob? Have you thought much about that? He said, *“He is the God of Jacob.”* Look at the life of Jacob; are you with me?

First of all: The God of Jacob is the God of sovereign election. When he mentions Jacob, he says this in Romans 9; *“The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election, (Covenant mercies), might stand.”*

It was said to the mother of the twins in her womb; *“The elder shall serve the younger; Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.”* Oh, the God of Jacob is the God of purpose! The God of Jacob is the God of Covenant mercies. The God of Jacob is the God of everlasting love.

*“Happy is the man whose help cometh from the God of Jacob”* who basis his help and mercies on His Covenant and His purpose. That's rich!

Do you remember when Jacob was out there at Bethel? What is Bethel? Bethel is the (House of God). *“God's in this place,”* the House of God. Jacob lay down and God showed him the way to glory.

There was the ladder from earth to heaven, do you remember? That ladder is Christ. That way is Christ. God revealed Himself right there to Jacob. He said, *"I am the God of Bethel."* Go back to Bethel, Jacob. Go back there where I revealed Myself to you, where I said, *"I will be with you, help you and will never leave you."* Go back there.

I will tell you this, *"Happy is that man whose God is the God of Jacob,"* the God of purpose. I'm not talking about the god of chance, the god of fate, the god of luck or accident. I'm talking about God's purpose, Covenant mercies and elective grace in Christ. He is the God of revelation. He revealed Himself to Jacob.

He did also on another occasion; he wrestled with Him. Do you know what he did? Here is the third thing: He is not only the God of Covenant mercies and the God of revelation; but He is also the God of a new name. He wrestled with Jacob and Jacob said; *"I will not let you go unless you bless me."* He said, *"What is your name?"* Jacob said, *"My name is Jacob,"* (cheat, swindler). Jacob had taken advantage of Esau.

The Lord said, *"I'm going to change your name; you are no longer Jacob; you are Israel, a prince of God."* What is a prince of God? A prince of God is a son of God.

Now then, *"I praise the Lord, O my soul, while I live and while I have any being I will praise the Lord."* I'm not going to trust you, me, or anybody else who spells his name A-d-a-m. I'm not going to rest on the flesh or lean on the arm of flesh.

*"My help cometh from the God of Jacob,"* the God of Covenant mercies is the God of purpose, the God of revelation and the God of a new name.

Then, our hope comes not only from the God of Jacob but from the *"Lord our God."* Did I say, *"The Lord our God?"* Yes; that is Jehovah, Saviour, *"a just God and a Saviour. He is a very present help in time of trouble"* and He is a hope, a blessed, eternal, hope in the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, *"who loved us and gave Himself for us."*

My hope is built on nothing less, (anything other than Christ is less)  
Than Jesus' blood and His Righteousness.  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But holy lean on Jesus' name.

His name is the name of redemption, sanctification, justification and mercies in a redeeming Lord.

His oath, His covenant, His blood,  
Will support me in the whelming flood.  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He is my only hope and stay.

Now then, these last five verses tell us why we can find all of this help and all of this hope in the God of Jacob, in the Lord our God.

Verses 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, if you have your Bible there, first of all it says:

We can trust Him. You can't trust man because His breath is all that he has. I may finish this telecast and I may not finish it. I may step down here and drop dead if my breath stops. Then, they will put me in a hole in the ground and I will go back to the dust.

All of my great plans, programs and purposes will die with me but not God. It says in verse 6, *"He made the heavens and the earth. He made the seas and all that therein is."*

So, He is not only the author of creation; He is the author of the new creation. He can speak life into being and He can give you life, new life, and eternal life.

The next verse says, *"He keepeth truth forever,"* He never changes. He said, *"I am the Lord; I don't change. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"* (without change).

You change, I change and everybody changes. Denominations change, the churches change and everything changes but God does not change. I don't want someone pronouncing me "saved or unsaved." I want to hear from God. His truth is forever; *"He never changes."*

The Scripture says, *"He executeth judgment. He gives food to the hungry. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness; they will be filled."*

*"He sets the prisoner free. If the Son will make you free, you will be free indeed."* You will be free from the covenant of works, from the curse of the Law and free from the penalty of sin if He sets you free.

Somebody might slap you on the back at an altar and say, "You're free son!" You are not free until God frees you. He will free you. *"The truth will make you free indeed."*

*"The Lord opens the eyes of the blind."* That is the reason you can hope for help in Him. *"He raiseth them that are bowed down."*

*“The Lord loves the righteous.”* Who is the Righteous one? He loves the Righteous one; that is Christ. He loves Christ and He loves those who are in Christ. He loves them as He loves Him.

That’s not all; the Word says; *“He will preserve the strangers.”* That is talking about the Gentiles, strangers to the Covenant of Israel, aliens.

*“The Lord relieves the orphans and the widow.”* He provides for His people. *“He will turn the wicked upside down and the Lord shall reign forever.”*

*“The LORD shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.”*

That is the reason that you can trust Him. His name is forever.

*“All flesh is grass and the glory of man is the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth but the Word of the Lord shall endure forever!”*