

Praise the LORD

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[0 : 0 0] Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. Thank you. We're going to be looking at Psalm 146. As Peter has said, it's part of the final five psalms in the Bible which are praise the Lord or hallelujah psalms.

So as I read this, before I read it, I want to just give a short explanation of what it means to praise. It's a call to worship, to honor, to love, to reverence and express deep and heartfelt appreciation for God's greatness, faithfulness, goodness, justice, mercy and grace.

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. So we're going to read now.

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, my soul. I will praise the Lord all my life. I will sing praise to my God for as long as I live.

Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground. On that day, their plans come to nothing.

[1 : 3 0] Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord, their God. He is the maker of heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them.

He remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free. The Lord gives sight to the blind. The Lord lifts those who are bowed down.

The Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the way of the wicked. The Lord reigns forever. The Lord reigns forever. Your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. So this psalm gives us many reasons to praise God. We're going to be looking at, we're going to praise him for his power.

We're going to praise him for his provision. And we're going to praise him because he's a promise keeper. And we're going to praise him for the perfection of who he is.

[2 : 4 2] So there's P's there. His power, his provision, his promise keeping, and the perfection of who he is. So we're going to come back to the praise the Lord.

We're going to look at some of the reasons why we're to praise the Lord. And I'm going to come back to those opening verses towards the end of the sermon. So we're told not to trust in princes.

So who are the princes? We don't really have princes. Well, there are some princes, but they're not really what they used to be. So the princes are people who appear powerful.

They are people we might be tempted to put our hope in. They're the human leaders. They're political regimes or parties. They're false teachers.

They're influencers. They are tech gurus. People who we might be tempted to put our trust in. And we'll discover that ultimately they are powerless.

[3 : 5 4] But putting our hope in God is where the real power lies. So I just want to contrast them. The first thing it says, do not put your trust in princes, in human beings.

Well, we're going to contrast, are you going to put your trust? In a mere human? Are you going to put your trust in God who is supreme?

Are we going to trust in the created being? Or are we going to trust the creator?

Are we going to trust the person who designed the laws of physics? Who wrote the code to DNA? Who made the smallest microbe?

Who made the galaxies? Who are we going to trust? Are we going to trust those who ultimately?

[4 : 57] It says, they cannot save. Or are we going to trust our only saviour? As we are looking through these things, does your heart begin to say, praise the Lord that I can trust in the power, the incredible and ultimate power of who our God is?

We read on. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground. If we trust in mere human beings, they die.

They are mortal. We trust and hope in him who is immortal. We trust in Yahweh.

I am the God who always was, the God who is, the God who will always be. What a powerful God.

Praise the Lord. This is who we put our trust in. It says in verse 4, if we trust in humans and the people of this world, on the day they die, on that day, their plans come to nothing.

[6 : 21] Politicians promise much. False teachers promise much. Influencers and gurus and advertisers promise much.

But we all know they often don't keep their promises. What they promise doesn't come to pass. They cannot be trusted.

They do not have the power to carry out their plans. Verse 6, oh, but he, our God, remains faithful forever.

He will keep every one of his promises. His plans will succeed. His plans must succeed. Because he is God, the great and powerful one.

So when we contrast, who are we going to put our trust in? Disappointed are those who trust in princes.

[7 : 29] Disappointed are those whose hope is in the people of this world. But blessed, happy, joyful, praising people will be those whose hope and trust is in the Lord.

No wonder the psalmist was saying, trust the Lord. Hope in the Lord. Praise the Lord. I think trust and hope and praise are very closely related.

I think the more we praise God, the more we magnify him, the more we dwell on who he is, the more we will trust him. The more we trust him, the more we will be caused to praise him.

We should be a praising people. We have so much to praise him for. So we praise him for his power, which is magnified when we consider how powerless the people are in this world who we might be tempted to trust in.

We come to then verse 7 to verse 9. God's provision. We look at this group of people.

[8 : 47] Look with me. Look at these verses. And what do we see here? We see oppressed people. We see those in need of help and comfort and protection.

We see the disadvantaged. We see those suffering from injustice. We see the marginalized. Anybody feel that they're on that list?

Anybody feel that they're amongst those people? Maybe just me? How often we can feel in need of help and protection.

We may feel disadvantaged in many ways. We may feel we've suffered injustice. But we see here God's great heart for people who find themselves in this situation and how he longs to help them.

And it says here. He upholds the cause of the oppressed. He gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free. The Lord gives sight to the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down.

[9 : 53] The Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the foreigner. And he sustains the fatherless and the widow. The Lord loves the poor. The Lord loves the poor. The Lord loves the poor. The old testament is full of laws and entreaties to look after the disadvantaged, the marginalized, the disenfranchised.

And God has the same heart for people today. How many people had something to eat today? Did you praise the Lord that he provided?

Our hearts should be tuned to this God who looks after us and provides us so well. Don't make the mistake of thinking, my hands have earned this.

It is God's gracious provision. Everything that we have is God's gracious provision and should lead our hearts to praise. God continues to have a heart for people in difficult situations.

He continues to meet all of our needs. As we see God providing for our needs, let us take the time to praise him and thank him.

[11 : 08] I think we're often not thankful, not. We take God's gracious kindness to us so often for granted. We should be praising God every moment of the day for all that he has given us.

So the people that the psalmist was speaking to, they had so much to praise God for. But can I suggest we have so much more to praise God for.

These verses that we've just read will shine even brighter in the light of what Jesus has done. In the light of the New Testament, in the light of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Let's just look through some of these things. He gives food to the hungry. Yes, he does give us our food. But there is a hunger that we have that food won't satisfy.

There is a great hunger in the world. People are dissatisfied. They just don't seem to be able to get what it is to satisfy them.

[12 : 27] We have a God who satisfies us at our deepest, most profound level. Jesus describes himself as the bread of life.

He fills us when we are hungry for things that really matter. He is the only answer.

And so we would say, praise the Lord, you meet my deepest needs. He sets the prisoner free. He frees us from sin, from bondage, freedom from addictions, freedom from death.

He moves us from death to life. Is your heart beginning to sing. Praise the Lord. Hallelujah. We have been moved from destruction to life.

From darkness to light. From death to life everlasting. Our hearts should be singing. He gives sight to the blind.

[13 : 32] He opens our eyes to the truth. Amazing Grace, that beautiful song, I once was blind, but now I see. Everybody who is a believer here, their eyes were darkened.

They did not see the truth. Our eyes are opened when we know the Lord. Everything, a believer said to me, the moment they got saved, everything changed.

The way they viewed the world, the beauty of the world was magnified because they knew the creator. He lifts up those who are bowed down.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Do you sometimes feel weary and burdened? Come to Jesus, who is humble, who is gentle, and will lift the burden with you.

[14 : 53] For those of you who are struggling under that awful weight and burden of sin, come. He longs to forgive. Praise the Lord.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. He watches over the foreigners. Hmm. Interesting one.

Hope you take me up right here. There are a lot of foreigners here. Now, people think that's negative. No, no. The majority of people here, I know, are foreigners.

Why? Why? Because we don't belong here. Where's our home? In heaven. And there's this beautiful thing God has done, is doing.

where most of us here are from one place heaven we may come from all the corners the others and i look down my heart sings to see people from so many nations god is building a kingdom a glorious technicolored diverse group of people to be his people look around these are your people god has done this is doing it but there's another way we don't belong here we feel this is not our place we long for the brokenness to be gone we long for justice we long for heaven so he watches over us us foreigners here who long for heaven it's beautiful to think that one day we will be in the glories of heaven when everything will be put right but in the meantime he has promised to watch over us the great god of heaven is watching over us praise the lord he sustains the fatherless and the widow he is our loving compassionate merciful gracious heavenly father he is our protector do you feel vulnerable do you feel alone sometimes praise the lord our god our great and mighty god is our protector he is our father he comes alongside us we read next the lord loves the righteous oh dear we may read something like this and think well i know i'm not that righteous anybody who knows alwyn you ask alwyn how righteous i am at times but it's not what we do we don't make ourselves righteous we can never make ourselves righteous when it says he loves the righteous it is he loves those who he has made righteous in your sin and in your failings forgiven we are the righteousness of god we are god's righteous people he loves you that's incredible the creator and sustainer of the entire universe in all your miserable failings and sins he loves you and what we're hearing about here is he keeps his promise the old testament is full of promises of one who is coming who is going to put everything right he keeps his promise god made him

[19 : 48] jesus who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of god as we were already looking at today in our catechism god is so gracious and loving in the warnings that he gives us while it says he loves the righteous he always so says he frustrates the ways of the wicked the ways of the wicked or as the sv puts it but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin while we know that the gift of god's eternal life we also know the wages of sin is death if you don't know the joy the incredible joy and the incredible peace of having your sins forgiven come come now don't wait repent and believe in jesus and start a lifetime of adoration and praise for this god who is for us and is with us there is so much hope here we have this assurance that all will be put right sin and injustice and war and oppression will be totally destroyed everything will be as it should be it will be perfect the lord as it says here he will reign forever and we'll be there with him and how we will sing his praises then do we have a lot to praise god for yeah praise the lord and hallelujah it says in those these opening verses praise my soul my soul it comes from the deep core of who we are from the deepest part of ourselves this is not lip praise this is not something we conjure up this is not something we create falsely this comes from the very core of our being because we know through god holy spirit that what we say here from god's word is true true true truth it is fact in verse two he says i will praise the lord there is a determination a commitment a deep intention to praise that isn't based primarily on how i'm feeling in a particular day it's not really to do with the circumstances we're in but our praise is based on the deep truths we have been considering today in verse two he says all my life as long as i live i will praise how long believer are you going to live forever and ever let us start praising and i know that will be nothing compared to what it's going to be like in heaven we will be really praising there but now let us praise god let us encourage our hearts let us encourage one another praise the lord just to finish i want to just look at how we

praise god for the perfections of who he is so when we say praise god we have psalms like this to help us but if we're driving along in the car how do we praise god well there's a thing that i find really helpful it's a thing we used to do with my son when he was young and all the night when we're feeling maybe we're not in a good place or we may feel not like praising god there's a thing we do we go through the alphabet and we find a word that describes something of who god is we did this in our home group just before the summer wow they were just amazing home groups we concentrated on the character of god and our hearts were just lifted in praise of who god is the perfection of who he is people love but he loves perfectly everything about god is done to perfection and i just want to just quickly go through the alphabet and just consider the beauty of who god is and let your hearts be lifted in praise god is awesome god is beautiful beyond description god has conquered death god is diversity loving god is eternal god is the friend of sinners he is gracious he is holy he is immutable he is just he is king of kings he is love he is merciful he is near he is omniscient he is powerful he quietens the storm he's our redeemer he's our savior he's the truth he understands he's victorious he's wise he's zenial that means friendly and hospitable and wants us to come he is yahweh god is was will be and he is zealous the zeal of the lord will accomplish this it says god is so for us praise the lord hallelujah let's pray lord god we have so much to be grateful for lord we thank you for your power we thank you for your provision for us lord we thank you that you are a promise keeper we thank you that you are perfect in every aspect of your person lord let us be a praising people we ask this in jesus name may your name be glorified amen amen