

## PSALM 146

### *The Lord an Abundant Helper*

#### INTRODUCTION.

- A. From Roy H. Enoch (3-12-97). "Praise the Lord For What He Does."
- B. When we studied Psa. 113-118, we noted that they are called "Hallel" in the Jewish tradition because they usually begin and end with "Praise the Lord," which is the Greek word "Hallelujah." These last five Psalms are also in the same class.
- C. Psalm 146 has two points of emphasis: the first is to not put confidence in men, and the second is to trust the Lord. The emphasis is typical of Bible teaching: first, point out what must be avoided, and then admonish the behavior that is best. Some call this "negative teaching" and claim that it is bad, but they use it in any area that is important to them.
- D. We do not have any indication of who wrote these psalms, but the time is usually thought to be after the Babylonian captivity.
- E. Coffman quotes M'Caw in the *New Bible Commentary Revised*, on these five psalms:  
"They have no word of petition or any suggestion of personal need; and there is a minimum of historical allusion. All is focused upon God who alone is worthy to be praised. Each of the five brings to light some particular aspect of the praise of God; and Psa. 146 strikes the characteristic note of individualism. 'If I do not praise God, then the praise of God is incomplete.'"
- F. Coffman uses Leupold's divisions:
  - 1. A summons to praise God (146:1,2).
  - 2. The negative warning, "Put no trust in princes" (146:3,4).
  - 3. Positive counsel to trust in the Lord (146:5-9).
  - 4. The everlasting kingdom of the Lord (146:10).

#### THE TEXT.

- 146:1** Praise the LORD!  
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
- 2** I will praise the LORD while I live;  
I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.
- 3** Do not trust in princes,  
In mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.
- 4** His spirit departs, he returns to the earth;  
In that very day his thoughts perish.
- 5** How 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;  
Who keeps faith forever;
- 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 raises up those who are bowed down;  
The LORD loves the righteous;
- 9** The LORD protects the strangers;  
He supports the fatherless and the widow,  
But He thwarts the way of the wicked.
- 10** The LORD will reign forever,  
Your God, O Zion, to all generations.  
Praise the LORD!

## COMMENTS.

A. A Summons to Praise God (146:1,2).

**[v1]** Clyde Miller points out that the first phrase is a plural imperative in the Hebrew, which would be a command for the congregation of Israel to praise the Lord, and the second phrase is a singular imperative, as he is commanding himself to praise, also.

**[v2]** This is not a promise to praise God as long as he lives on earth, but as long as he has existence, he will praise God. This is in harmony of the NT descriptions of heaven as a place of eternal praise.

B. A Negative Warning, "Put no trust in Princes" (146:3,4).

**[v3]** "...princes" Miller points out that the word means "conspicuous or influential ones," and not just rulers. "...in whom there is no help." The word "help" means salvation rather than mere assistance.

**[v4]** "His spirit departs..." Man is not even able to save himself, much less others, whether ruler or slave.

C. Positive Counsel to Trust in the Lord (146:5-9).

Miller points out that this is the last of 26 beatitudes in the Psalter, sometimes translated "happy is" and sometimes "blessed is."

**[v5]** In contrast to man who cannot "help" or save, God is able and a reliable source of "hope" for "help."

**[v6-9]** These verses give God's qualifications as our hope for help:

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|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. He made everything.             | 6. He loves the righteous. |
| 2. He is just.                     | 7. He protects strangers.  |
| 3. He provides food and freedom.   | 8. He relieves the needy.  |
| 4. He opens the eyes of the blind. | 9. He punishes the wicked. |
| 5. He lifts up those cast down.    |                            |

D. The Everlasting Kingdom of the Lord (146:10).

**[v10]** "The Lord shall reign forever..." Here is the most important characteristic of the Lord for salvation and hope.