

## PRAISE THE LORD!

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### Psalm 146

**Praise the Lord!** Praise the Lord, O my soul!

While I live I will praise the Lord; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish. Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever, Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The Lord gives freedom to the prisoners. The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; The Lord raises those who are bowed down; The Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; But the way of the wicked He turns upside down. The Lord shall reign forever—Your God, O Zion, to all generations. **Praise the Lord!**

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It is not noted in Scripture who actually wrote Psalm 146. But one thing is for certain, the primary emphasis on this Psalm is in praising the Lord, our God, your God. The Psalm starts with "Praise the Lord" and ends with "Praise the Lord" with a couple more praise the Lord's for good measure. So I'll say it again too, Praise the Lord! Our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One by God to be the Savior of the World, said as much when He said in **John 4:23-24**, "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The 24 elders who sit before God on the throne worship & praise God saying in **Revelation 4:11**, "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created." The great prophet Moses, in what we call the Song of Moses, that he shared with the Israelites, after God had led them out of bondage to the Egyptians, and they were about to be led into the promised land, Moses said this, "Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as raindrops on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass. For I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God. He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." (**Deuteronomy 32:2-4**) Notice how Moses doesn't start off by telling the Israelites to praise God for what He has done for them. He "ascribe[s] greatness to our God", for "He is the Rock", "His work is perfect", "a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." He is praising God for who He is, not in what He has done for himself or the Israelites." After Moses then pointed out how corrupted, perverse and crooked the Israelites had

been, Moses continues by saying, "Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you?" There, He could have added another, "Praise the Lord!" Then Moses goes on to reminding the Israelites of what God had done for them and their fathers before them.

Yes, we can and should praise God for what He has done for us but can we not as God's creation, as God's people just praise the Lord for who He is and not in just what He has done for us? He is THE ROCK! His way IS Perfect! He is our Creator, and yes, He breathed the breath of life into us so that we are living right now in the miracle of His creation but can we recognize for the Great God that He is and just say "Praise the Lord!". God revealed Himself to the Israelites in leading them to the promised land by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. He revealed Himself to the Israelites in defeating their enemies along the way. God revealed Himself to the Israelites at Mt. Sinai with "thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off." Out of the fear of the Lord they asked Moses to talk with God, because they were too afraid to talk to God and said that surely they would die if God spoke with them. The fear of the Lord is a good thing. Having a respect and honoring God for who He is as THE God Almighty is as King Solomon said, the beginning of wisdom." (**Proverbs 9:10**) Since the beginning of creation and in the time of the Israelites, God has revealed Himself to His creation and now to us, through His Son Jesus the Christ, the Savior of the world, to all who will believe on Him. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) Elsewhere in Jesus' teachings He revealed to us that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and that "No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." (**John 14:6-7**) And whether we acknowledge Him or not, as it says in **Philippians 2:10-11**, "Therefore God has also highly exalted Him [Jesus] and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." We can get our practice in now saying, Praise the Lord! Jesus is Lord!

Jesus pointedly said to His followers that if they'd seen Him, (of course they had, He was right there talking to them) then they had seen the Father. The Righteousness of God has been revealed to us in Jesus, who became for us the Righteousness that reconciles us into fellowship with God our Father, cleanses us of all sin through the shed blood of Jesus, Jesus took our sins upon Himself so that we can

be cleansed of all unrighteousness, and He now sits at the right hand of the Father and is interceding for us, that is those who believe on Christ, and follow Christ. Jesus also reveals to us that He is for us "wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." (1 **Corinthians 1:30-31**) Praise God! But get this. God IS wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Praise God! Glory to God!

We experience God's Wisdom, His Righteousness, His Sanctification, and His Redemption when we are, in the Words of Jesus, "born again." It is, when we believe on Jesus as our Savior as we read in **John 3:16-17**, and we truly repent of our sins and look to Jesus as our Lord, He "places His Spirit in us a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come" (2 **Corinthians 1:22**) and then His Spirit "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (**Romans 8:16**) and then, as it says in **Romans 8:14**, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." To answer the question then on how we can worship God in spirit and truth, it is with the Holy Spirit that He puts within us, when His Spirit testifies with our spirit when we worship God. Praise the Lord!

"Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish." It could be said, "don't put your trust in any person, minister, authority, social worker, or any other kind-hearted soul." Don't put your trust in any one who appears to have the best of interest in your welfare." Trust in GOD! I am not saying not to get help or encouragement from anyone. I, and the Word of God, says to trust in God alone. He alone knows where He is taking you, He alone knows what you truly have need of, He alone knows what plans He has for you. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (**Jeremiah 29:11 NIV**) "Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them."

Imagine if you will, a man who marries a woman all because she makes the best grilled cheese sandwiches. You could say she makes a mean grilled cheese. There's just something about those grilled cheese sandwiches that lift the man up, makes him feel whole again, and gives him strength, vitality, and makes him feel like he can conquer the world. One day the man, we'll call him OT for being a one-track minded man. Grilled cheese, that's all he thinks about because it empowers OT and at the core of it all it gives him his worth. One day, OT is sitting on the sofa in the living room, and of course, he's thinking about those wonderful grilled cheeses that his wife makes. Just then, she comes home from work and gives a huge sigh and says, "oh, what a rough day I had. I really had a rough day at the

office..." Yet before she could continue OT blurts out, "great you're home. Honey, please make me a couple of those wonderful grilled cheeses. I really need them now." So extreme is OT in his love for her grilled cheeses he really doesn't know his wife for anything other than that. OT sings his praise for his wife to the neighbors and to anyone who will listen, that his wife is so awesome, "she makes a mean grilled cheese." Yeah, my examples a lot of the times are way over the top but think on this. We consume ourselves with what we want, thinking and worrying about our problems, how we can be filled and rejuvenated, in Christ I might add, that we don't get to KNOW God for who He is. In heaven then, I can assume, we will praise God for who He IS not for what small things He has done for us on earth. Now is the time to get to know our God, our Lord, our Savior! Praise the Lord!

You may say, "what's wrong with praising God for He has done for me" or "what's wrong with praising my wife for her grilled cheeses?" Nothing of course, for we are to be thankful in all things.

**(Philippians 4:6)** Let's look at the rest of our Scripture to see what the psalmist had to say about God and how they praised God. "Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them" Yes, God is our Help! God is our Hope, in Christ Jesus! But we can praise God "Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them." The contrast in what I'm getting at is in recognizing that God is God Almighty, Creator of all things, and that "all things were created through Him (that's speaking of Jesus) and for Him."

**(Colossians 1:16)** and not the other way around. God's creation doesn't revolve around us, we were created for His purpose and as Isaiah the prophet said, "everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made." Therefore, let all the people praise Him! Amen? Once again, as Moses said, "He is **THE Rock**, His work is **perfect**; For all His ways are **justice**, a **God of truth and without injustice**; **Righteous and upright is He.**"

Then, as we have the right perspective, we can also praise the Lord, "Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The Lord gives freedom to the prisoners. The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; The Lord raises those who are bowed down; The Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; But the way of the wicked He turns upside down. The Lord shall reign forever—Your God, O Zion, to all generations." How is that distinction important in knowing God for who He is, and praising God for who He is, and **then** recognizing "justice for the oppressed", "food to the hungry", He "raises those who are bowed down", He "loves the righteous", He "watches over the strangers", and "He relieves the fatherless and widow". It is God doing those works because that is who He IS! It is not to the praise of the people who God uses to facilitate His Ways. God doesn't need

me, you, or anyone else to show who He is. He has already revealed Himself through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! He chooses to use each of us for His purpose, for His ways, for His pleasure, in showing His Love, and Mercy, and Goodness, and even in His justice> Praise the Lord!

**Proverbs 3:5-6** says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." As Moses said, ""He is THE Rock, **His work is perfect**; For all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." Not everything makes sense all the time, but God, in His perfect ways, IS working out the plans He has for us, even to the smallest of details. In His perfect character the ways of man are weighed in the balance of His character and purpose, not just for our well-being. The trouble begins when we don't wait on the Lord for His Ways and we make our circumstances about our ways. He is perfect. We are not. When God says in Romans 8:28 "that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." That good is based on God's character not our perceived wants and needs. God is PERFECT in all His Ways!

"But the way of the wicked He turns upside down." Yes, God promises us in His Word that the wicked will be dealt with, in His time, according to His perfect Ways. Many times throughout the Old Testament God allowed wicked rulers to reign and prosper in order to deal His justice on His people who had turned from God and His Ways. In our present time we see much evil seemingly not being dealt with by God. But, we can also testify to many, many examples to God intervening and "turning the wicked upside down." Sometimes God's Ways don't make sense to us, but one thing is for certain. God's Ways ARE Perfect! Praise the Lord!