

EXECUTING JUSTICE Sunday School- August 5, 2012

Unifying Topic: PRAISE FOR GOD'S JUSTICE

Lesson Text

I. A Lifestyle Of Praise (Psalms 146:1-2)

II. The Failure Of Human Trust (Psalms 146:3-4)

III. The Psalmist Blessed Hope (Psalms 146:5-10)

The Main Thought: Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God... Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners: (Psalms 146:5, 7, KJV).

Unifying Principle: People appreciate receiving lasting justice. Where can we look to find unshakable justice? God is the source of steadfast justice.

Lesson Aim: To understand that the psalmist is describing God as working against the injustice that exists in the world.

Life Aim: To strengthen Christians' resolve to help those who are on the edge (or the outskirts) of society.

146:1 Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HISTORY:

¹This is the first of the Psalms called Hallelujah Psalms, of which there are five, (*Psalms 146-150*) and which conclude the book. No author's name is prefixed to this, either in the Hebrew or Chaldee. But the Syriac, Vulgate, Septuagint, Aethiopic, and Arabic, attribute it to Haggai and Zechariah. It was probably written after the captivity, and may refer to the time when Cyrus, prejudiced by the enemies of the Jews, withdrew his order for the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. David wrote 73 psalms; Asaph wrote 12; the sons of Korah wrote 9; Solomon wrote 2; Heman (with the sons of Korah), Ethan and Moses each wrote 1; and 51 psalms are anonymous (*Life Application Bible*).

The theme is a call for men to put their trust in God, rather than in princes.

LESSON:

Psalms 146:1-2 A Lifestyle Of Praise

146:1 Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. Praise goes to none other than the Lord. Why?...

1. ²Praise takes our minds off our problems and shortcomings and focuses them on God.
2. Praise leads us from individual meditation to corporate worship.
3. Praise causes us to consider and appreciate God's character.
4. Praise lifts our perspective from the earthly to the heavenly

Our soul can praise Him; that is our will, emotions, and attitude, lifting Him up; acknowledging and paying tribute to only Him.

146:2 While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. Living in the natural, our bodies will not go on forever. It is our moral duty to praise God while we have life, for no man shall praise Him from the grave. "*For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day...*" Is.38:18-19. This should be a lifestyle for those who have been the recipient of such an awesome God.

¹ http://www.bibleinsong.com/Song_Pages/Psalms/Psalm146/Psalm146.htm

² <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/psalms-1461/>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

Psalms 146:3-4 The Failure Of Human Trust

146:3 Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. This is the theme of this psalm. Israel was always guilty of trusting those nations around her (i.e. Egypt or Assyria) instead of trusting God. As we live life, we know there were times we trusted in man and it didn't work out; they were no help. If anything it caused great conflict. ³All people on this earth are "*sons of man*," until they receive Jesus as their Saviour and become sons of God. It really does not make any difference how important a title they have on this earth, people cannot be the help you need. They will ultimately let you down. Your trust should be in God, who will never let you down. This is how God has made us; Him to be our Savior because we couldn't save ourselves; we couldn't help ourselves or others.

146:4 His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. We're talking about man. He's not here to stay. The breath of man is the life that God placed in each of us when He breathed the breath of life in us. When the breath of life {spirit} leaves the body, the body is returned to the dust from whence it came. There are no more thoughts to come forth from his body, and his thoughts have perished.

Psalms 146:5-10 The Psalmist Blessed Hope

146:5 Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: "*Happy*" means blessed. When trusting in man you can become depressed, however, when trusting in God you are happy and blessed. This is a strong contrast between man and God. ⁴"*The God of Jacob*" may mean the God of the people of Israel; but it may mean just the God of the man Jacob. The God of Jacob is none other than the LORD. He gives help to the people that asks of Him. He is to be our only hope! Jacob's hope was in the Lord God Jehovah where we will find happiness. "*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*" Titus 2:13.

146:6 Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever: God is the Creator of all things: heaven, earth, the sea, and all therein. Truth is stored in Him. He is truth which makes it easier for Him to keep truth eternally.

146:7 Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The Lord looseth the prisoners However, He also executes judgment for the oppressed; people that are browbeaten, broken, exploited. He takes care of those in need when hungry. God is able to loose prisoners from the dungeons: Jeremiah from his dungeon (Jere.37:16-17); Daniel from his lions' den (Dan.6:23); or Peter from the prison (Acts 12:7-10); and you from your conflict. This is the God we should trust in. This is the same Jesus that fed the hungry, and set the captives free. From verses 7-9 God always shows His goodness to eight groups of people who are not strong: • the oppressed • the hungry • the prisoners • the blind • the bowed down • the strangers • the fatherless • the widows.

146:8 The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind: the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down: the Lord loveth the righteous: God opens physically blinded eyes and spiritually blinded eyes. On numerous occasions in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus both gave sight to the physically blind and discernment to the spiritually blind. He also raised those that were bowed down physically and bowed down spiritually. There is a difference between the self-righteous and the righteous. The righteous are in Christ Jesus. Such who are righteous through Christ's righteousness are loved by Him; not for any righteousness that's in them, or done by them, but the righteous bear God own image. He has sought us from the very beginning to love.

146:9 The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down. ⁵"*I was a stranger, and ye took me in...*" Matt.25:43. The Lord had a real compassion for the stranger,

³ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/psalms/146.html>

⁴ <http://www.easyenglish.info/psalms/psalm146-taw.htm>

⁵ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/psalms/146.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net//pitwm-sundayschool.html>

and even promised to bless us, if we would take the stranger in. The story of the "*Good Samaritan*" is a story of someone helping a total stranger. The Mosaic Law made provisions for the fatherless and the widows. We are cautioned to take care of the fatherless and widows. The wicked are those who will not help those less fortunate than themselves. God has no tolerance at all for this type of person. This is a contrast from the above verse of the righteous. God's divine protection for His saints stems from the same character that leads Him to overturn the plans and schemes of the wicked. The words "*turneth upside down*" (*Heb 'awat*) means to bend or curve, to make crooked or distort. As they have made their paths perverse, God will distort and overturn their evil plans. No one seeks to destroy the fatherless or widow without coming under the condemnation of God's wrath.

146:10 The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord. This should⁶ encourage us to trust in God at all times, that the Lord shall reign forever, in spite of all the malignity (*desire to do harm*) of the powers of darkness. Zion is symbolic of the church. Therefore in every generation the God of Zion reigns. Christ is set King on the holy hill of Zion, and his kingdom shall continue in an endless glory. "*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*" Ps.2:6. It cannot be destroyed by an invader; it shall not be left to a successor, either to a succeeding monarch or a succeeding monarchy, but it shall stand for ever. **Praise ye the Lord.**

SUMMARY:

⁷In this excellent psalm of praise,

- I. The psalmist engages himself to praise God (1, 2).
- II. He engages others to trust in Him, which is one necessary and acceptable way of praising Him.
 1. He shows why we should not trust in men (3, 4).
 2. Why we should trust in God (5), because of His power in the kingdom of nature (6), His dominion in the kingdom of providence (7), and His grace in the kingdom of the Messiah (8, 9), that everlasting kingdom (10), to which many of the Jewish writers refer this psalm, and to which therefore we should have an eye, in the singing of it.

APPLICATION:

This is really a time for exuberant praise unto God... you fill in the blanks!

⁶ <http://www.studyLight.org/com/mhc-com/view.cgi?book=ps&chapter=146>

⁷ http://www.bibleinsong.com/Song_Pages/Psalms/Psalm146/Psalm146.htm

<http://www.pitwm.net//pitwm-sundayschool.html>