

Psalm 146: 1-10 (ESV): Put Not Your Trust in Princes

Main point: Trust in God, not in man.

Open with a short prayer, inviting God to teach us.

Background: A praise song.

Focus of the study:

Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord, O my soul!

² I will praise the Lord as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

³ Put not your trust in princes,

in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.

⁴ When his breath departs, he returns to the earth;

on that very day his plans perish.

⁵ 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 lifts up those who are bowed down;

the Lord loves the righteous.

⁹ The Lord watches over the sojourners;

he upholds the widow and the fatherless,

but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

¹⁰ The Lord will reign forever,

your God, O Zion, to all generations.

Praise the Lord!

Questions:

- 1. What is the instruction that the writer gives at the beginning?*
 - a. Praise the Lord! And he repeats "praise" 4 times in the first 2 verses
- 2. Who does he tell to praise the Lord?*
 - a. My soul
- 3. For how long is he going to praise the Lord?*
 - a. "as long as I live"
 - b. "while I have my being"

4. So that's his attitude as he starts this psalm: Praise God! That's the most important thing I can do in my entire life!
5. *What does he tell the reader next?*
 - a. v. 3: put not your trust in princes or men – *I wonder what that means? Who are "princes" and "sons of men"?*
 - i. people who appear to be powerful here on earth
6. *But what is true about every single human being?*
 - a. v. 4: "when his breath departs, he returns to the earth" – in other words, when a man dies, that's it. He has no more power.
7. *Then the writer turns from human rulers (princes) to God: what does he say is true about God?*
 - a. v. 6: Made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them
 - i. *What does this include? Look around ... use descriptions...*
 - b. Keeps faith forever
 - i. *How faithful is God? For how long will he be with you?*
 - c. v. 7: Executes justice for the oppressed
 - i. *Who is the only one who judges fairly every single time, who looks out for the downtrodden?*
 - d. Gives food to the hungry
 - i. *Who created food?*
 - e. Sets prisoners free
 - i. *What does it mean to be a prisoner? (Literal and figurative.) What is it like when you're chained up? And then how does it feel to be freed?*
 - f. v. 8: Opens the eyes of the blind
 - g. Lifts up those who are bowed down
 - i. *How does God take care of people?*
 - h. Loves the righteous
 - i. v. 9: Watches over the sojourners
 - i. *What's a sojourner? Traveler, wanderer, someone not at home.*
 1. *Where is our true, eternal home? With God in heaven*
 - j. Upholds the widow and the fatherless
 - i. *What's it like for widows and fatherless? Sadness, powerlessness, feeling alone.*
 - ii. *What does God do for those people? Upholds them – in the palm of his hands – safe, secure, seen, taken care of*
8. *Will any president, dictator, king or queen on this earth rule forever? What has eventually happened to every president, dictator, king or queen since time began?*
 - a. They all pass away – "When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish"
9. *So why do you think we should not put our trust in earthly rulers?*
 - a. They are temporary and cannot save in any permanent way
 - i. v. 3: "in whom there is no salvation"
 - b. They only have power over this earth, not over the eternal kingdom of God
10. *Who will reign forever and ever?*

- a. v. 10: "the LORD will reign forever, to all generations"
11. *So how trustworthy and safe is God for your eternal salvation?*
12. Response: Praise the Lord! *What would you praise the Lord for today?* (generate as many ideas as possible)
13. Ask for any other prayer requests for today.
14. Close in prayer, naming people and needs listed.
15. End with a song, e.g., first verse of Amazing Grace