

PRAYING PSALM 146

“While I live will praise the Lord” (Psalm 146).

The last five psalms are a celebration for liturgical use in the services of the second temple. Each begins and ends with the word “Hallel-Jah,” meaning “Praise Yah.” This is the second Hallel group (cf. Psalms 113-118). 1. WHOM TO PRAISE (1-2). While I live, I will praise the Lord. I will praise the Lord with all my being. 2. WHOM NOT TO TRUST (3-4). Not princes. Not a son of man. Man is mortal, and unless he is regenerated he will perish. 3. WHOM TO TRUST (5-9). The God of Jacob. The Maker of heaven and earth and the sea. The one who keeps truth forever. The one who gives food to the hungry and freedom to the prisoners. The one who opens the eyes of the blind, raises those who are bent beneath their loads, loves the righteous, watches over strangers, relieves the fatherless and widows, and who turns the way of the wicked upside down. 4. WHOM TO PRAISE (10). The psalm ends where it begins, with praise to Yah, who reigns forever.

Praising the Lord is to be done in this body, in this life, with our whole being. It is the purpose for which we were created. Praise is an activity of the body, soul, and spirit. There will not be such complete praise after death until we are resurrected to our completed state. The psalmist warns us not trust unregenerated people in spiritual matters. That is a good reason for continually praising the Lord. Here He is referred to as the God of Jacob. If God was willing to help Jacob, He will help anyone. Jacob means supplanter or heel grabber. He was manipulative and self-seeking to the core. Yet God changed Jacob to Israel, meaning God’s prince. If you trust the God who created you, who saved you, who wants to perfect you, you will learn to praise Him. You can trust this God who promises to supply all your needs according to His riches. You can trust Him who loves righteousness and hates wickedness, and while you trust Him he will lead you in that righteousness. Praise the Lord of this psalm! Do it every day. Just as the psalm begins and ends with praise, try to begin and end every day the same way. Praise is used about 300 times in the Old Testament and 34 times in the New Testament. Praise has the same root as “price,” meaning to ascribe value and worth to another. When you praise the Lord, you attribute value and worth to the very God who gave you the privilege to live and breathe. Praising is living and breathing for Him.