

¹ Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD, O my soul! ² While I live I will praise the LORD; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. ³ Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. ⁴ His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; in that very day his plans perish. ⁵ Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God, ⁶ Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; Who keeps truth forever; ⁷ Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners. ⁸ The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; the LORD raises those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous. ⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow; but the way of the wicked He turns upside down. ¹⁰ The LORD shall reign forever – your God, O Zion, to all generations. Praise the LORD!

Text: Psalm 146 A 3-2-25 1 Samuel 16:1-13 Luke 18:31-43 Psalm 28 Responsive Psalm: 9
Hymns: 17, 66, 26, 437

PRAISE THE LORD!

Praise the Almighty, my soul, adore Him! Yea, I will laud Him until death.
With songs and anthems I'll come before Him As long as He doth give me breath.
From Him my life and all things came; Bless, O my soul, His holy name.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Trust not in princes, they are but mortal; Earth-born they are and soon decay.
Naught are their counsels at life's last portal, When the dark grave doth claim its prey.
Since, then, no man can help afford, Trust ye in Christ, our God and Lord.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (TLH #26:1-2)

Dear fellow believers in Christ,

We're told, "*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.*" That's sincere praise, praise coming from our heart. We tend to dwell on the things that are troubling us. We need to redirect our thoughts to reasons to thank and praise God. When we're feeling down, praising God helps to pick up our spirits. Try it. It works.

Praise the Lord for the gift of life. Praise the Lord for giving us parents who valued us and wanted us, who didn't abort us, but let us live. One of the reasons God has you and me here is to thank Him and praise Him each day.

We're told, "*The LORD shall reign forever – your God, O Zion, to all generations.*" Eleven times in our short text God refers to Himself as "*the LORD.*" One of the things emphasized by that name is that our God is the living God. A church sign near our home read, "Our God still lives, sorry about theirs." God is eternal. So many things in our lives change. God and His

Word never change. We can place all of our hope and faith and trust in God and His Word. God and His Word will never disappoint us.

We're told, *"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."* The idea from the original is that we can't really feel safe if we place our trust only in human beings. Where human beings are involved, disappointments can and do happen. Sometimes there's human error. Other times circumstances beyond human control happen. Loved ones die. But we know there is One on Whom we can always depend, One in Whom we can place all our trust. *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever"* – Hebrews 13:8. *"The Word of God stands forever"* – Isaiah 40:8. We place our trust in God and His Word, and we are safe.

We're told, *"Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help...."* "Happy" in the Bible doesn't refer to having everything I want, and having everything work out the way I want it to. My outward circumstances may be difficult, and yet God makes me happy. God always loves me. Jesus died for my sins. When I tell God I'm sorry for my sins, He forgives me. God cares about me. God helps me face all of my problems in life, and brings me through them all. And God has a home in heaven waiting for me (Jn. 14:1-3). These things make me "happy." As Christians, our happiness is in God.

"Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help...." When we read about Jacob in the Bible, we find that he made mistakes that made his life harder, sometimes much harder. But we also see God remaining faithful to Jacob, leading him to repentance, leading Jacob to follow Him. You and I have *"the God of Jacob for [our] help,"* and that makes us "happy," too.

"Happy is he ... whose hope is in the LORD his God." As we were reminded, we can place all of our hope in God and His Word. God is always true to us and to all of His promises in His Word.

"[God] made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them...." God made everything. The God who made everything can help me with whatever problem or need I have. As we confess in our Communion liturgy: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" – a quote of Psalm 124:8.

"[God] keeps truth forever...." Jesus says, *"If you abide in My Word ... you will know the truth"* (Jn. 8:31-32). The Bible is the Word of God. Everything the Bible says is the truth. Jesus says, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (Jn. 14:6). Jesus Christ is the only Savior of the world. Only by faith in Jesus are we saved and have eternal life with God in heaven.

"[God] executes justice for the oppressed...." The Bible says that when Jesus was wrongly condemned and crucified, He *"committed Himself to Him who judges righteously"* (1 Pet. 2:23). Like Jesus, we trust in God Who brings about justice in His own way and His own time.

“[God] gives food to the hungry.” Jesus has taught us to pray, *“Give us this day our daily bread”* (Mt. 6:11). We use the abilities God has given us, and place our trust in God to provide our food and all our needs.

“The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners.” God did this literally when He freed His people from their slavery in Egypt. Jesus says, *“If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ... Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed”* (Jn. 8:31-32, 36). Jesus sets us free from our sins. We sin, but in Jesus we’re not slaves to sin. Jesus died for all of our sins on the cross, and rose again. Jesus forgives our sins, and takes away our guilt. As the Bible says, *“The blood of Jesus Christ [God’s] Son cleanses us from all sin”* (1 Jn. 1:7). Jesus gives us the strength to resist temptation, and do what He wants us to do. Again the Bible says, *“It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”* (Philip. 2:13)

“The LORD opens the eyes of the blind” so that we know that the Bible is God’s Word, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and our Savior. Praise God that He has opened our blind eyes!

“The LORD raises those who are bowed down....” Jesus lifts all of our sin and guilt off of us, telling us, *“Be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven....”* (Mt. 9:2)

“The LORD loves the righteous.” What beautiful words! We know we are sinners. But by faith in Jesus He covers us with His righteousness. God doesn’t look at our sins, but at Jesus’ righteousness covering us. For Jesus’ sake God declares us to be righteous. And *“the LORD loves the righteous”!*

“The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow....” We may be forgotten by others, but we are never forgotten by God. God tells us, *“I have called you by your name; You are Mine.... You [are] precious in My sight”* (Is. 43:1b, 4a). As Moses assured Joshua, *“The LORD ... is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.”* (Dt. 31:8)

We are warned, *“The way of the wicked [God] turns upside down.”* Those who turn their backs on God go their own way. Without Jesus and His forgiveness, a person’s way ultimately ends in eternal death in hell.

Our text begins and ends with the same words: *“Praise the LORD!”* God deserves our thanks and praise. God is good, ALL THE TIME.

Praise, O mankind, now the name so holy
Of Him who doth such wondrous things!
All that hath being, to praise Him solely,
With happy heart its “Amen” sings!
Children of God, with angel host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen. (TLH #26:6)