

**64B* THE TIMELESS PSALMS:
A CALL TO WORSHIP
AFTER PENTECOST 24B [ORDINARY 31B] & [PROPER 26B] 2018
PSALM 146**

God of hope and God of glory, we gather today to sing our praises to God!
God of unmeasurable compassion and care: we gather now to praise you!

God of patience and God of joy, we gather to offer you our reverent prayers!
God of unequalled powers of comfort and peace: we gather to worship you!

God of faith and God of mercy, we gather together in shared fellowship; and
to discover more about the Eternal One; whom we worship with all our being.
**God of uncharted depths of love and grace, of mercy and forgiveness; we
gather to rejoice in our Gracious and Holy God; and to offer you our thanks. Amen.**

PSALM 146

1 Praise the LORD!

Let all that I am praise the LORD.

2 I will praise the LORD as long as I live.

I will sing praises to my God with my dying breath.

3 Don't put your confidence in powerful people;
there is no help for you there.

4 When they breathe their last, they return to the earth,
and all their plans die with them.

5 But joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper,
whose hope is in the LORD their God.

6 He made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them.

He keeps every promise forever.

7 He gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry.

The LORD frees the prisoners.

8 The LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are weighed down.

The LORD loves the godly.

9 The LORD protects the foreigners among us.

He cares for the orphans and widows, but he frustrates the plans of the wicked.

10 The LORD will reign forever. He will be your God, O Jerusalem,
throughout the generations. Praise the LORD!

**PRAYERS OF PRAISE:
AFTER PENTECOST 24B [ORDINARY 31B] & [PROPER 26B] 2018
PSALM 146**

God of hope and God of glory, we gather together today to sing our praises to God! We celebrate for this opportunity to offer God our praises with joy and with thankful hearts and minds as a shared sacrifice on the altar of God's love. God of unmeasured compassion and care: we gather now to acknowledge that we will never understand or properly appreciate the quality and quantity of God's involvement with humanity and all of creation; yet we do offer you our heart-felt praises. We praise God too, for the reassurance that God "...keeps every promise forever..."; and that at the heart of God—there is only love, mercy, grace and forgiveness. Praise be to God, who reigns forever! *"God of mercy, God of grace, shine upon us...shine, and fill your church with light divine..."*^[1]

God of patience and God of joy, we gather to offer you our reverent prayers, confident in the hope and belief that God hears and answers our prayers of petition; and accepts our thanks and praises. God of unequalled powers of comfort and peace: we gather to worship you: because you offer us forgiveness for our confessed sin; and in addition, you offer each of us your healing grace when we are vulnerable, alone, weary or grieving. *"...Let the people praise you, Lord! Be by all that live adored; let the nations shout and sing glory to their Saviour King; at your feet their tribute pay, and your holy will obey..."*^[1]

God of faith and God of mercy, we gather together in shared fellowship; and to discover more about the Eternal One, whom we worship with all our being – body, mind, strength and soul. God of uncharted depths of love and grace, of mercy and forgiveness - we gather to rejoice in our Gracious and Holy God; and to offer you our sincere thanks for the many blessings you have showered upon us. We praise you for family and friendly love; for the joy of healthy relationships; and for the freedom to together worship you in our familiar sanctuary. We celebrate in hope the Eternal God, who has promised us to reign forever. *"...Let the people praise you, Lord! Earth shall then its fruit afford; God to us his blessing give...your saving health extend...we to God devoted live...one in joy and light and love..."*^[1] Amen.

**A PERSONAL MEDITATION:
AFTER PENTECOST 24B [ORDINARY 31B] & [PROPER 26B] 2018
PSALM 146**

Psalm 146 opens with a loud burst of praise, which joyfully celebrates the psalmist's relationship with the LORD God: *"Praise the LORD! Let all that I am praise the LORD. I will praise the LORD as long as I live. I will sing praises to my God with my dying breath..."* Professorial brothers Rolf and Karl Jacobson writing about the psalms and to introduce the chapter *"Who is the King of Glory?"* write thus: *"The psalms are about life. But even more so, the psalms are about the life of faith. They are about life in relationship with God, about life in the midst of God's good-but-fallen creation, about life in the midst of God's good-but-sinful people...the psalms consistently assert that God does see, God does hear, God does perceive, and God does act..."* The psalmist urges us not to *"...put your confidence in powerful people..."*. It is a waste of time!

Creative pause: *"...The psalms are about...life in relationship with God..."* [1]

"...The psalms maintain, again and again, that God is the active agent in the world. God answers prayers, God is at work, guiding history toward a final chapter that God has authored. At times this means that God intervenes in history in order to accomplish what the psalms often call God's 'wondrous works'..." Those 'wondrous works' include: *"...the LORD...keeps every promise forever. He gives justice to the oppressed and food to the hungry. The LORD frees the prisoners. The LORD opens the eyes of the blind. The LORD lifts up those who are weighed down. The LORD loves the godly. The LORD protects the foreigners among us. He cares for the orphans and widows..."* [2] The reality of those promises were all realised and completed by Jesus.

Creative pause: *"The psalms maintain...that God is the active agent in the world..."* [2]

The psalmist was quite blunt in his understanding of God's reaction to the collective wickedness and evil in the world; and individually in human hearts and minds, the LORD God: *"...frustrates the plans of the wicked..."* *"...But God's activity in the world is not always disruptive. God's interventions are not always in the midst of crisis for the purpose of making a major course correction. The psalms also affirm activities such as blessings, forgiveness, and covenant keeping as actions God regularly takes. God's blessing activities are powerful actions whereby God transfers his own power into another party for the sake of life...In forgiveness, God re-knits a relationship that has been torn in half. God restores community and thus provides a means by which relationships can thrive..."* [3] *"...joyful are those who have the God of Israel as their helper, whose hope is in the LORD their God...The LORD will reign forever. He will be your God, O Jerusalem, throughout the generations. Praise the LORD!"* Amen and Amen!

Creative pause: *"...joyful are those...whose hope is in the LORD their God."*

[1] From *"Together in Song"* #452
"God of mercy, God of grace"
© Words by Henry Francis Lyte
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[2] Text by Professors Rolf A & Karl N Jacobson From
"Invitation to the Psalms – a readers guide for discovery & enlightenment" © 2013 Chapter 6, Page 149,
Baker Academic, a Division of Baker Publishing Group
Grand Rapids MI 49516-6287, USA

[3] *ibid* Chapter 6, Page/s 172/3

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