

The Psalms
(Lesson 23)

Introduction:

1. The book of Psalms is a collection of 150 poems, songs, and prayers.
2. Although the Psalms were composed by a number of people over a long period of time, certain similarities can be recognized.
3. To illustrate:
 - a. 15 psalms (120-134) are designated as "songs of degrees"
 - 1) These psalms are relatively brief; however, they emphasize God's goodness in various ways.
 - 2) By reciting these psalms and meditating upon their messages as they traveled to Jerusalem, the Israelites would have been prepared for worship when they arrived.
 - b. the last 5 psalms (146-150) are designated as "Hallelujah Psalms."
 - 1) They begin and conclude with the same exhortation: "*Praise ye the Lord*" (146:1,10; 147:1, 20; 148:1, 14; 149:1, 9; 150:1, 6).
 - 2) These psalms contain information that relates to offering praise to God.
4. In this lesson we are concentrating on the information presented in Psalm 146.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1-2) GOD IS TO BE PRAISED
 - A. The writer exhorted all of God's people to praise Him (vs.1a, 10b).
 1. This exhortation is given throughout the Psalms; however, praising God is not limited to the Psalms.
 2. In the New Testament Christians are also exhorted to praise God (Hebrews 13:15).
 - B. (vs.1b-2) The writer made a personal resolution to praise God.
 1. (vs.1b) In addition to exhorting others, he exhorted himself.
 - a. Note that he mentioned praise coming forth from his "*soul*."
 - b. Praise involves an outward expression, but it actually comes forth from the heart (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).
 2. (vs.2) He determined to praise God and sing praises to God as long as he lived (104:33).
 - C. While all of God's people are to praise Him, each person must fulfill his own responsibilities.
- II. (vs.3-5) GOD IS TO BE TRUSTED
 - A. (vs.3-4) God's people must avoid putting trust in man.
 1. A similar warning is given in Psalm 118:8-9.
 2. King Asa illustrated the folly of trusting man over God (2 Chronicles 16:1-12).
 - B. (vs.5) Those who trust God are described as "*happy*."
- III. (vs.6-10a) REASONS WHY GOD IS TO BE PRAISED AND TRUSTED
 - A. (vs.6a) God is the Creator -- He made heaven, the earth, the sea, and everything in them (Genesis 1; Exodus 20:11a; Psalm 148:1-5).
 - B. (vs.6b) God keeps truth forever (Psalm 19:9b).
 - C. (vs.7-9) God is both compassionate and righteous.
 1. He cares for the needy.
 2. He blesses the righteous.
 3. He will punish the wicked.
 - D. (vs.10a) God will reign forever (90:1-2).