

Summer Psalms
HALLELUJAH CONNECTION

Friday, July 25

Reading: Psalms 146-147

Psalm 147:1 *Praise the LORD. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him!*

As legend tells it, King George II attended the London premiere of George Frederic Handel's *Messiah* in 1743. During the "Hallelujah Chorus" the king was so moved that he stood up – and when the king stands the audience must follow suit. And that is the reason that people stand when they hear the first strains of this wonderful piece of music. Whether this legend has any basis in fact is debatable, but the awesome message of the "Hallelujah Chorus" continues today. ¹

The final five psalms all begin and end with Hallelujah, translated into English as "Praise the Lord." As we come to the close of Israel's songbook we are reminded that all of life and creation is here to give glory to the Lord.

The themes of Psalms 146 and 147 intersect in several ways. The first theme is a warning not to put our trust in people. To hope for salvation from human beings is worthless. They will fail us. When they die their plans and power die with them (146:3-4). True strength does not come through armies and soldiers but through fearing God and putting our hope in His unfailing love (147:10-11). That is why the psalmist quickly proclaims: "Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God" (146:5).

One reason we can trust in the Lord is because He is the Creator, another theme shared by these psalms. The title "Maker of heaven and earth" is again applied to the Lord and shows His faithfulness (146:6). Creation also proclaims God's care as He calls each of the stars by name (147:4) and provides rain and food to His creation (147:8-9). His Word is like the snow and ice bringing trouble to those who disobey but "refreshing breezes and cool water" to His saints (147:15-18).

A third shared theme is that of God as Protector and Healer. He protects the oppressed, the fatherless, and the widow who cannot help themselves (147:7, 9). He "heals the brokenhearted" (147:3) and "sustains the humble" (147:6). He gives "sight to the blind" and "lifts up those who are bowed down" (146:8).

A final theme expressed in these psalms is how God builds His people (146:10; 147:2). Zion and Jerusalem describe more than just a city. They stand for the people of God. The Hebrew word for "build" also means "to establish." God wants to put His people on a firm foundation (147:13-14). He does this by revealing His Word (147:19-20).

What should be our response to all that God is and does? We should praise the LORD with all our lives (146:1) because it is pleasing and beautiful. It is the proper response to God's work in our lives (147:1). How will you praise Him today?

¹ <https://www.wqxr.org/story/why-do-we-stand-during-messiahs-hallelujah-chorus/>