

# Psalm 146:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.

## Analysis

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This verse initiates the Final Hallel (Psalms 146-150) with an emphatic summons: 'Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul.' The Hebrew 'Hallelujah' (from hallel, to praise, and Yah, the Lord's name) appears four times in this verse alone, establishing repetition for emphasis and liturgical rhythm. The first two occurrences are general calls; the shift to 'O my soul' personalizes the summons. 'Soul' (Hebrew 'nephesh') encompasses the inner self, mind, will, and emotional core. The doubling 'Praise ye the LORD' and 'Praise the LORD' creates an exhortative tone, commanding worship. This verse establishes that praise is not optional but a fundamental imperative for the complete self. By beginning with 'my soul,' the verse acknowledges that authentic praise originates in the inner self, not merely external performance. This opening creates the context for the subsequent verses' teaching about the proper objects of human trust and loyalty.

## Historical Context

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The Final Hallel (Psalms 146-150) comprised the concluding praise section of the Psalter, used in corporate Jewish worship, particularly for Shabbat and festival celebrations. Ancient Jewish sources (Talmud Pesachim 118a) record that these psalms were sung during the Passover meal, the most significant Jewish holiday commemorating liberation from Egypt. The Hebrew word 'Hallel' was later applied to Psalms 113-118 as well, designating them as special praise psalms. The structure of these final five psalms moves progressively toward cosmic praise, with Psalm 150 being the most eschatologically expansive. The emphasis on 'my soul' reflects post-exilic individual piety - personal relationship with God became

increasingly significant when corporate national worship was compromised. The use of 'my soul' also appears in Psalms 146:2, 147:1 (in context), suggesting this opening summons sets the tone for the Final Hallel.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. What does it mean to command one's own soul to praise, and is this authentic worship or mere self-discipline?
2. Why does the psalm begin with an emphatic call to praise before presenting reasons to praise (which follow in verse 3)?
3. How does personifying praise through 'my soul' differ from corporate or external acts of worship?
4. In what ways does the Hebrew 'Hallelujah' function differently than translated language in shaping worship experience?
5. What is the relationship between commanding ourselves to praise and waiting for spontaneous joy in worship?

## Interlinear Text

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| בָּרוּךְ | תְּהִלָּה   | אַתָּה | יְהֹוָה:  |
| Praise   | ye the LORD | Praise | O my soul |
| H1984    | H3050       | H1984  | H5315     |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 103:1** (References Lord): Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

**Psalms 105:45** (Resurrection): That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the LORD.

**Psalms 104:35** (Resurrection): Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

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