

Lesson 144
Psalm 136

- I. Introduction
 - A. Psalm 136 is the last "Great Hallel Psalm." There is no Psalm like this; twenty-six times the Levitical choir, or perhaps the whole congregation responded with the refrain "for his mercy endures forever." It is a Psalm that gives great comfort to his people.
 - B. We do not know the human writer of the Psalm, but David is intimated in 2 Chronicles 7:1-6. It was sung at the dedication of the temple, when Jehosaphat went to war against his enemies, and perhaps, every day by the worship directors! (2 Chron 20:20-21, I Chron 16:37,41)
 - C. Last week in Psalm 135, we praised God for his: name, goodness, election, greatness, and his distinctiveness over all idols and other God's! This week the theme of worship and praise is mercy that endures forever!
 - D. We will describe the mercy that endures forever: the praise and thanks offered to the names for God, (v1-3) the praise for the creative wonders of God, (v4-9) the praise in deliverance from Egypt, (v10-15) the wilderness protection and provision, (v16-22) the personal gratitude due a merciful God!
- II. A description of the mercy that endures forever.
 - A. Mercy-The word used twenty-six times, in every verse of this Psalm, is the Hebrew word hesed. It is a masculine noun that means unfailing love, loyal love, devotion, kindness, based upon covenant relationship. It is solely based upon the choice of God, not upon the desserts of men! Because God is sovereign, He determines all things according to the good pleasure of his will! (Ps 118:1-4, 135:4,6, 65:4; Dt 7:6; Amos 3:2; Rom 8:29-30) It is demonstrated by his creation, wonders, deliverances, faithfulness, remembrances, and it is personal to every one of his people! Thomas Scott said, " we understand this to be the LORD's disposition to relieve those whom sin has rendered miserable and base; his readiness to forgive and to be reconciled to the most provoking of transgressors, and to bestow all blessings upon them; together with all the provisions which he has made for the honor of his name, in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ."
 - B. Endures/forever-The word endures is not in Hebrew according to Strong's concordance (NIH) The translators use the Hebrew word olam which gives great understanding to both words: everlasting, forever, throughout eternity past, present, and future, from of old, ancient, lasting for a duration, forever, evermore, perpetual! Lawson states very appropriately, "the love of God towards his saints is higher, deeper, wider, and longer that anyone can comprehend. Throughout all the ages to come, God's covenant love for his people, like a mighty river, will be flowing as strong in eternity future as when it first began in eternity past. This is the awe-inspiring wonder of being the special object of his everlasting love." There has never been a time when God has not loved his elect people and there will never be a time when he stops loving us! (John 17; Rom 8:28-39; I Cor 1:26-31; Eph 1:3-14, 2:5-7; I Pet 1:3-5,18-21; Rev 21:1-4)
- III. Thankfulness for the names of God (v1-3)
 - A. LORD- (v1) This is the predominate name in the Psalms of which we have discussed for three years! A covenantal name.
 - B. God- (v2) This Hebrew name for God is Elohim, a plural masculine noun. This name focuses us on his great power, might, greatness, and his being judge over all the earth! His superiority over all earthly rulers and pagan God's.
 - C. Lord- (v3) This Hebrew name for God is Adon which signifies his authority, his ownership of, his role of master over all! (John 13:13-17)
- IV. Creative wonders of God (v4-9) The Psalmist designates six verses to praise his wonders.
 - A. Wonders-These are works of God, miracles, designed to foster emotions of amazement, astonishment, and distinguish and separate our God from everyone else! Who else can do these things? Do you remember the eclipse on April 8th? What responses did you have? What responses did lost people have?
 - B. By wisdom made the heavens-He created the universe, ex-nihilo, out of nothing, something! (John 1:3; Heb 11:3; 2 Pet 3:5; Prov 8:1, 22-31; Job 38:1-7, 36; Gen 1:14,15)
 1. Divide day and night, light from darkness.
 2. Signs
 3. Seasons
- V. Deliverance from Egypt (v10-15)
 - A. Death angel struck firstborn, institution of the Passover. (Ex 12)
 - B. Division of Red Sea. (Ex 14)
 - C. Overthrow of Pharaoh
- VI. Wilderness protection and provision (v16-22)
 - A. Provided food/water for forty years; sandals never wore out!
 - B. Defeated enemies (Num 21)
 - C. Gave the land as a heritage. This fulfilled the covenantal promises to Abraham. (Dt 7:1-3; Joshua 23:14)
- VII. Personal gratitude (v23-26)
 - A. Remembered us in our lowly state. The Psalmist includes himself personally as well as corporately. (Ezk 16:1-14)
 - B. Rescued us from our enemies. Though they were too strong for us, outnumbered us, were bigger than us, and had strong cities that were fortified against, God rescued us! (Num 13:27-32)
- VIII. Personal applications to us!