

His Mercy Endureth Forever Part 2 of 2

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Date: 17 September 2023

[0 : 0 0] Please join me in Psalm chapter 136. We started on Thursday night, but I know many of you were in Sparks or in Trek or in one of those ministries. If you were not with us on Thursday night, would you raise your hand?

It seems like, okay, there's a lot of you. Let me give you a quick review of where we were at on Thursday night. This psalm, called a psalm of praise, is designated to tell us to rejoice in the mercy of the Lord.

And we saw that the word mercy, it covers the idea of not receiving what we deserve in regards to our sin, that God has bestowed upon us a pardon, He's given forgiveness of our sins.

But it also has to do with His kindness towards us, His loving kindness towards us, His loyal covenant love for us. And that's something that we should spend all of our days rejoicing in.

Hey, there's Chris, all right? Good, we saw you in a picture. I took a picture of a picture, let's send it to you. All right? And I said last week, Chris has a daughter named Hesed, which means mercy, right? And that's the word that is used here.

[1 : 0 4] And it's just so wonderful. As I encourage you when you're studying, the best way to know what a word means is to see the other verses it's used in. So go through the Bible and look at all the times the word's used.

And when you're done, you'll have a much fuller understanding of what God wants to communicate to us about this word. And we're rejoicing in it. We rejoiced in what He did in creation.

The first line of the song spoke about that, about God showing us through creation His power and His might and how He cares for us. I didn't bring it on Thursday or the night, but a little book that Benny Christen gave me, coming back from the conference area, had a book, had different devotions.

And one of them was by George Washington Carver. And in it, he talks about nature. And he gave two examples. He said, And so Barry and Luther and Carson and Hamilton, maybe.

Sarah, a little of you on Thursday night, you were at a tree digging for worms. Isaiah was there as well. And Barry taught us that if you drown them with bubbles, then they will come to the top. All right? And they were looking at the worms.

[2 : 2 0] They were paying attention to it. And I showed a picture of that because as you get older, you get... I don't know how to... You're just not as interested in stuff. All right? We walk by the trees and we don't even look for the worms anymore.

All right? And so we can learn from them. The example of taking time to dig for some worms. And so they were looking into the windows. Some of you are offended and say, I dig for worms.

I'm cool too. Well, that's good. I'm glad that you are. But some of us have just went on and we think we know everything. And we've stopped being interested in studying like those young men that were the worms.

It's a window into seeing what God has done. We stand and wonder. That is amazing. But because we're believers, we don't just say that's amazing. We say he's amazing.

All right? That every painting, everything we will see, there's a painter. Anything that's ever formed, there was an engineer. Anything that comes together, there was an architect. Nothing happened by randomness.

[3 : 15] And so we don't just stand there wondering, but we stand there worshipping our God of heaven. So not just those little windows. We also said it was... He said it's like broadcasting stations.

All the time, God's speaking to us every hour and every moment if we would tune in and listen to say that he is powerful and he is strong. And there's a couple themes in the Bible. Psalm 104 is a great one to look at.

A psalm, there's several psalms that really focus on nature. Psalm 8, Psalm 19, 29, 65, 104, 148. Sounds like a football play, doesn't it? All right? Hike. All right.

So all those different psalms emphasize nature. And in Psalm 104, verse number 10 and 12, you're going to see how God placed springs and valleys to give water to the animals.

He sent forth the springs into the valley which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field. Wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of heaven have their habitation which sang among the branches.

[4 : 13] Our God has bathed the world in such a way that it cares for his creation. We have a dog whose name is Charlie and we're supposed to keep him alive by giving him water.

That's one of the first rules of having a dog. If you didn't know that, please leave early after and get home. All right? Your dog needs water. And so it's our job to give this dog water. He's one of the few things that it's the only life that my kids have to sustain right now is this dog.

Do we do a good job at remembering to do the things on time for Charlie? Yes or no? Come to the altar, all you kids. All right? I need a moment here with my family. We don't. We have this one animal that we're to care for and we don't always do as we should towards Charlie.

The God of heaven has made the world in which way he sustains the animals. He cares for us. God makes things grow that give food for animals and man and oil from the trees. Psalm 104, 13.

He watereth the hills from the chambers. The earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man that he may bring forth food out of the earth and wine that make it glad the heart of man and oil to make the face shine and bread which strengtheth a man's heart.

[5 : 25] I'm thankful for bread. All right? I don't use many oils to make my face smooth, but if I needed them, they're there for us and I'm glad for that. All right? And other people use them. But all the things, speaking about the totality of man, all the things that we would need are provided to us by God and we say thank you.

I love Sunday nights because I love having the kids in here and getting talked to them. Thaddeus, the God of heaven takes care of you and your family. All right? The rain comes down.

It goes to the farmers. It grows. He gives the people the understanding and place so that you can eat, so that me and you can have french fries together, which is one of our favorite things to do.

Wherever we're at is to have french fries. So we are thankful for that. My voice cracked. They got excited about french fries. All right? And so also, He provides for us. God also provides a dwelling place for animals and birds.

Psalm 104, 16. The trees of the Lord are full of sap. The cedars of Lebanon, which He had planted, where the birds make their nest. As for the stork, the fir trees are her house. The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats and the rocks for the conies.

[6 : 33] Kind of like a badger, like a honey badger. All right? The conies. You have those in South Africa, don't you, Clark? Kind of neat, aren't they? And so God has made provision for them and we ought to stand and wonder at what He has done.

He sustains us. And so we find, and then the second thing, I said there's two major themes in the Bible. One is that God is actively sustaining. The world would fall into chaos unless God holds it together.

And then secondly here, it's a dependable order. There is a plan, there's a purpose, and there's an intentionality. We've all got to a place where we're not grateful as we should be. There's something that we're reaching for that we can't get.

And we would stop, do good, look back and say, look at all these things that God is providing for us. The sun came up this morning and he went down and I wasn't responsible for it. Parents in here, sometimes you just feel like you're responsible for everything.

Isn't that one of the worst things about being an adult is the problems of your life? You don't, nobody solves them for you. You come home and it's there waiting for you and it never seems ending. Take a moment and think about all the things that God just provides for us that He has, that none of us have anything to do with.

[7 : 39] He's sustaining us. And so we say, thank you, Lord, for your kindness for us. Thank you for the way in which you have made the earth. Thank you for your creation. And then we get in verse number five, which said, To Him by wisdom made the heavens, for His mercy endureth.

God in His wisdom has made the heavens. And the first four days of creation is spoken about verses six through nine. So what we're doing here is when the verse comes up, all of you have a job in here.

For His mercy endureth forever. That's the only time I'm going to say it. It's your turn from here on out, okay? When we get to that expression in this psalm, it was written in such a way that the Levite priest, he would say it, and the people would respond to it.

Twenty-six times in this psalm. And so we're going to do that here for the four days of creation. To Him that stretched out the earth above the water, To Him that made great lights, The sun to rule by day, The moon and stars to rule by night.

And so they would say this expression of His never-ending love. They were celebrating this together. Acts 14, 17, Paul is speaking to unbelieving people there. And he says, Nevertheless, He, God, left not Himself without a witness that He is good.

[8 : 58] And how did God show us that He was good? And how did He give us a witness? He gave us rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, And filling our hearts with food and gladness. God has been good to us.

And there's been a testimony of that. And so through nature, we see it. So I want to look at particularly some ways in which We see that God has revealed Himself to us in nature. Matthew 5, 44 says that He made His Son to rise on the evil and on the good, And He sends rain on the just and the unjust.

Creation is a testimony of God's grace to us. That rain comes down upon the fields of people who do not worship Him. That rain comes down and His goodness is showed to people Who have never worshipped Him, Who have not bowed their knee to Him.

Because He is long-suffering, and He is patient, And He is gracious. And His creation testifies of what type of God that we have That is merciful and kind.

Creation witnesses the God's attributes of His power and His divine nature. We looked at it Thursday, But it's invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, Romans 1, 18, Are being understood by the things that are seen.

[10:09] Through creation, we see His power, And we know Him. He made Himself known unto us through what we are able to see. Creation witnesses the God's faithfulness in caring for His creatures.

In Matthew 6, where the disciples are all worried about everything, And can you make yourself any taller by thinking about it? Can you do any of these things? The answer is no. And then they point to, Jesus points to here, He says, And you take thought for your raiment, Consider the lilies of the field, How they grow and how they toil, Neither do they spin.

God's faithfulness to us is demonstrated in His care for His creation. Nature reveals His infinite knowledge. He knows all that is going on, And He sees it.

Luke 12, 6, And not five sparrows sold for two farthings, And not one of them is forgotten before God. These are little birds that are sold, Five of them for a couple pennies.

And when that happens, None of them went off of God's spreadsheets. None of them went off of His mind. He knew completely. He never lost track of them.

[11:18] And that's wonderful. Because sometimes you feel forgotten. You forget that you are cared for. And God gives this most extreme example Of how five little birds, Sowed for a couple pennies, He doesn't even overlook them.

Nature reveals God's holiness. Holiness speaks of His distinction from us. He is higher than us. He is different than us. He is perfect. Exodus 19, 16, And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, There were thunder and lightning And a thick cloud upon the mount, And the voice of the trumpet exceedingly loud, So that all the people in the camp trembled.

Those children that were on a wand on Thursday, I told a story about Brother Greg over here. I came in in the morning, And he was standing outside drinking his coffee. And that's what people who don't trust the Holy Spirit Need every morning.

And he was, Just kidding, all right, All you coffee drinkers. And he was out there drinking his coffee, And he was all serious. And I said, What's going on? And he said, It's just so beautiful. It's a double rainbow.

And he was just emotional out there, Looking at it. But he was just saying, It's sobering to recognize That God does what we can't do. That God brings in the rain.

[12:25] That's how we ought to look at it. We ought to pause and reflect. And that's what happens in Exodus. The thunder and the lightning came, And everybody stood back and said, There is someone bigger in this universe That is powerful.

And you need that reminder. Nature reveals God's glory to us. The heavens declare the glory of God, And the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Brother John, We were in Burkina Faso with the teenagers. We slept out underneath the stars.

And I don't know which one of them. I think it might have been one. Unplugged my air mattress in the night. So I slept on the ground. And I appreciate that. All right. And when we were out there, though, It felt like a planetarium.

I mean, I've never seen stars like that. And you've been there before. But there's no place in the world Where you can't go out And you can't see something. You have to go outside of the city To see them a little bit better.

But they're there. They're testifying. A constant witness to the fact That there is a God in heaven. And that he is good. He is powerful. It reveals that he is righteous. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness For God himself For God is judge himself.

[13 : 28] The heavens declare that God is righteous. And the nature reveals a certain standard of conduct. The Bible says in Romans 127 Likewise also men, Leaving the natural use of the woman, Burdened in their lusts one toward another, Men with men, And that which is unseemly, Receiving themselves recompense of their error, Which was meat.

That even nature understands That there is order in this world. And that we ought to submit ourselves to God. And then, So we get through creation.

In verse number 4 it says, To him alone doeth great wonders, For his mercy endureth forever. So we looked at creation, But there's also another way In which God shows his mercy.

And it has to do with his great deliverance. His mercy is also shown in deliverance. It's also seen upon the smile of the face Of a new believer That knows that God has forgiven them Of their sins.

The deliverance that you and I rejoice in. That we gather on the first day of the week To celebrate what God has done for us. And so we're going to read together As we end here tonight A little more responsibly Once again, You know your part, right?

[14 : 38] For his mercy endureth forever. Starting in verse number 10, Psalm 136. To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn, For his mercy endureth forever. And brought Israel from among them, For his mercy endureth forever.

With a strong hand and with a stretched out arm. For his mercy endureth forever. He speaks about how God had taken them out of Egypt, How the blood was put over the door, How the firstborn was killed, And as they left, And they were leaving there, And God brought protection for them.

They were in captivity, And God delivered them, Because he is good and he is kind. Verse 13, To him which divided the Red Sea in the parts. For his mercy endureth forever.

And made Israel to pass through the midst of it. For his mercy endureth forever. But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. For his mercy endureth forever. He pauses and reflects on that story Of how were they going to ever get away.

They were completely outnumbered. They get to the Red Sea, And God opens it. And why? Because God is kind, And he is merciful to his people. He opens it up. The children of Israel begin to pass through.

[15 : 48] Now they come in, And it is closed. And that was an expression of God's kindness, And love and mercy. Verse 16, To him which led his people through the wilderness. For his mercy endureth forever.

Through those 40 years, God provided for them, And took care of them, And showed his kindness. To him which smote great kings. For his mercy endureth forever. And it speaks here, Our closing verses will speak of these kings.

And what good is fame? That's what Spurgeon says, What good is fame? As they opposed God, They became infamous rather than famous. Their deaths made the Lord's fame increase among the nations, While their fame ended in disgraceful defeat.

God has conquered the infamous kings of history, Because he has been kind to his people. Verse 18, And slew famous kings, For his mercy endureth forever.

Sihon king of the Amorites, For his mercy endureth forever. And Og the king of Bashan, For his mercy endureth forever. And gave their land for a heritage, For his mercy endureth forever.

[16 : 51] Even a heritage unto Israel is servant. For his mercy endureth forever. And so it speaks about those before they came out of Egypt, And then after the wilderness wandering, The kings that God allowed them to overcome.

And he remembers them in their lowly state. There's a transition here in the psalm. The psalm makes this, It shows how skillful that God's great wonders of the past, But he is still faithful to us.

Who remembers us in our low estate, For his mercy endureth forever. Or who's now presently remembering. These aren't just wonderful things he did in the past. That same God that was kind, Is our God still today.

Two more verses, And hath redeemed us from our enemies, For his mercy endureth forever. Who gives food to all flesh. For his mercy endureth forever. So as we looked at him in creation, And looked at his deliverance, And we see it, And we rejoice as we come out of our sin and bondage, And he has saved us in his kindness, We are told what we are to do, And it is to give thanks unto him.

And God never asks us to worship him, Where he does not give us an understanding, Of what is worthy about him. The praise. And the reason why you have to do, What is always rooted in, Is who he is, And what he has done, And what he is doing.

[18 : 05] As it started off, Oh give thanks unto the Lord, For he is good, For his mercy endureth forever. And so God gave three reasons for us here, To praise him.

He is Lord, He is good, And he is loving kindness. So there's a day when our prayers and petitions will end, But there will never be a day when our praises end. So in summary, Psalm 136, It teaches us many things about God's mercy and kindness.

It tells us, Past, present, and future, His mercy will never end. The same God that you rejoice in in Old Testament, Is the same God as the day, And you can count on not being the same God in the future.

You can rest in that. The storms of life will not end His mercy. No set of circumstances will make Him anything but merciful. Distance from loved ones will not end His mercy.

Death itself will not end its mercy. God's never ending mercy should make us merciful to others. His never ending mercy should make us hopeful for others. His never ending mercy should make us hopeful for ourselves.

[19 : 05] This is a quick story before we stand and sing. Dylan, I hope you have a good one for us. We need to sing. I need it to include, His mercy on earth forever. You got 30 seconds. Just kidding. It doesn't have to.

All right. But there is a song. That is a song. And so there's a story in 358 A.D. How many of y'all remember those days? Good days, right? Jared, you got that? 350 A.D. Athanasius, which Athanasius, he fought to help people see the eternal sonship and deity of Jesus in a time where people didn't recognize, they were arguing about, was Jesus deity?

Yes, he was man, but was he the son of God? He is leading the Christians because he knew how important it was. He had many enemies for his political, even more than theological reasons.

And they moved the power of the Roman government against him. And that night, the church was surrounded by soldiers with drawn swords. People were frightened. And with calm presence of mind, Athanasius announced the singing of Psalm 136.

You picture this? The church is surrounded with people that hate them, and they gather together, and they said, Church, we're going to sing Psalm 136. And the vast congregation responded, thundering forth 26 times, His mercy endureth forever.

[20 : 20] And when the soldiers burst through the doors, they were staggered by the singing. Athanasius kept his place until the congregation dispersed, then he too disappeared in the darkness and found refuge with his friends.

That night, many of the citizens of Alexandria were killed, but the people of Athanasius' congregation never forget that although man is evil, God is good. His superiority is far better good, and that his mercy endures forever.

His mercy endures forever. One last time as we, let's stand together. Will you stand with me as I pray, and then we'll sing together. Psalm 136, verse 1, I'll say my part, and you say yours as well.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. For his mercy endures forever. Heavenly Father, I thank you for this reminder in the Psalm, 26 times that you remind us that you are good and merciful.

Lord, I pray that we will be people that remind each other of that in this coming week. No matter what opposition we face, Lord, we have a testimony through creation that you are sustaining us and that you are loving us and that you are good and that we are not forgotten.

[21 : 34] No matter what need of deliverance we have, Lord, if we're in a place that seems impossible, we've been at many years, as Egypt, Lord, you will deliver them because your mercy endures forever. When we come upon new enemies, enemies, as we follow you and go through a time of wilderness, wondering, Lord, we know that your mercy endureth forever and we give thanks tonight, Father, because you are good.

in Jesus' name I pray. Amen.