

His Steadfast Love Endures Forever

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[0 : 0 0] Psalm 136, verses 1 to 26. So this is kind of written as like a responsive psalm. So I was wondering if you guys are open to it, you could read the second half of each verse.

It's basically, for his steadfast love endures forever. So you can just try it. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

For his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever.

To him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever. To him who by understanding made the heavens, for his steadfast love endures forever.

To him who spread out the earth above the waters, for his steadfast love endures forever. To him who made the great lights, For relative love endures forever.

[1 : 0 3] The sun to rule over the day. For relative love endures forever. The moon and stars to rule over the night. For relative love endures forever. To him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt.

For relative love endures forever. And brought Israel out from among them. For relative love endures forever. With a strong hand and an outstretched arm.

For relative love endures forever. To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, For His steadfast love endures forever. And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His steadfast love endures forever.

But overthrew Pharaoh and His host in the Red Sea, For His steadfast love endures forever. To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His steadfast love endures forever.

To Him who struck down great kings, For His steadfast love endures forever. And killed the mighty kings, for his steadfast love endures forever. Sihon, king of the Amorites, for his steadfast love endures forever.

[2 : 0 6] And Ag, king of Bashan, for his steadfast love endures forever. And gave their land as a heritage, for his steadfast love endures forever. A heritage to Israel his servant, for his steadfast love endures forever.

It is he who remembered us in our lowest state, for his steadfast love endures forever. And rescued us from our foes, for his steadfast love endures forever. He who gives food to all flesh for his steadfast love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of heaven for his steadfast love endures forever. It's a psalm of thanksgiving, as you can tell. And every verse, the second half of the verse is for his steadfast love endures forever.

So it's really recounting his steadfast love for us throughout the whole thing and really praising God. And so the main point of the psalm really is that as we remember the steadfast love of the Lord, we are filled with thanksgiving toward him.

And so it begins verses one to three. Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Give thanks to the God of gods for his steadfast love endures forever.

[3 : 15] Give thanks to the Lord of lords for his steadfast love endures forever. And then it ends by saying in verse 26, give thanks to the God of heaven for his steadfast love endures forever.

So it begins with the proper name of God in verse one, the Lord in all caps, give thanks to the Lord. And then it tells us that he, the Lord, the God of Israel, is the God of gods, verse two, and Lord of lords, verse three.

So those are not, those verses are not acknowledging that the so-called gods of nations are actual gods or lords. Rather, it's a superlative expression saying that God is, God does not have any equal, anyone who is his equal.

He has no parallel. He's the God of gods, the Lord of lords, worthy of all praise for his steadfast love endures forever. And then he gives us these great reasons going through the passages.

First in verses four to nine, he tells us about God's steadfast love displayed in his creation. And then verses 10 to 16, his steadfast love displayed in his redemption in Exodus.

[4 : 21] And then in verses 17 to 22, his steadfast love displayed in the conquest and the giving of the promised land. And so it says in verses four to nine, verse four is kind of the heading to him who alone does great wonders.

It's wonders in creating. And verses five to six confirm that. To him who by understanding made the heavens, to him who spread out the earth above the water. So he made heaven and earth, meaning he made all creation.

He's the one who did those wonders. Similar in verses seven, verse seven is the heading to him who made the great lights. And then verse eight and nine kind of fall under that, the two great lights, the sun to rule over the day, the moon and stars to rule over the night.

Day and night, sun and moon, stars, God is the one. The Lord is the one rather that created all of these things. And he has demonstrated steadfast love in that.

And he is to be praised, which we feel with thanksgiving for it. And then even though God deserves this thanksgiving and praise from all of creation for what he's done here, more specifically, what he's done to Israel, for Israel, his people is remembered in 10 to 22.

[5 : 33] First, the Exodus in verses 10 to 16, to him who struck down the firstborn of Egypt. Verse 11, brought Israel out from among them. 12, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm.

13, to him who divided the Red Sea in two. Verse 14, and made Israel pass through the midst of it. 15, but overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. 16, to him who led his people through the wilderness.

So it's recounting the major events of the Exodus from the Passover and the striking of the firstborn of Egypt to the splitting of the Red Sea and their redemption from slavery. And then 17 to 22, follow that pattern and instead talk about the conquest of the promised land, Canaan.

To him who struck down great kings, killed mighty kings, Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan. And so those are the two kind of, the first kings to be conquered as Israel was entering the promised land.

And so they kind of become this literary trope kind of for remembering who, how God delivered the nations to him. So they represent all the nations that God delivered.

[6 : 40] And he gave their land as a heritage and a heritage to Israel, his servant. And this gets summarized, this creation and redemption, verse 23 to 25.

It is he who remembered us in our lowest state for his steadfast love endures forever and rescued us from our foes for his steadfast love endures forever.

He who gives food to all flesh for his steadfast love endures forever. And ultimately, this is fulfilled in what Christ has done for us, remembering us in our lowest state.

In the Magnificat, Mary remembers that God's people were in lowest state and yet God remembered us, his people.

We were laid low by sin, by our own rebellion. We were, instead of conquering, conquered and exiled because of our sins, figuratively and literally for Israel.

[7 : 45] And yet God remembered because of his steadfast love, his unchanging love, his enduring love, the covenant love that endures through all of those things.

And because of that, he rescued us from our foes and he provided for us. And we can see how Christ fulfills all of these commands in Romans 6, 17 to 18.

It says, We were slaves to sin as Israelites were slaves in Egypt, yet the God who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, he brought Israel out through the Red Sea.

He brought us out from our slavery to sin. And likewise, similar to the conquest, how he talks about God struck down the great kings, Colossians 1, 13 to 14, says, He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

And then later on, Colossians 2, 15, it says, He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him. The nations, the mighty nations that were standing in the way of inheriting the promise that God had given to the Israelites, God struck down and to bring about his kingdom.

[9 : 09] And likewise, that's ultimately fulfilled in Christ who strikes down, who, and it establishes his kingdoms through his victory in his death and resurrection. And it's because of that we who are laid low are rescued.

And when we remember that, we can't help but to be full of thanksgiving for the steadfast love of God demonstrated for us. And that's why we are exhorted in 1 Thessalonians 5, 18 to give thanks at all times in all occasions.

In Christ, that's what's appropriate for us. So let's sing another song in response to that and then we can pray.