



HIS LOVE NEVER FAILS



Psalm 136:1–26

PREVIEW

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy endures forever.

To Him who alone does great wonders, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who by wisdom made the heavens, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who laid out the earth above the waters, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who made great lights, for His mercy endures forever—the sun to rule by day, for His mercy endures forever; the moon and stars to rule by night, for His mercy endures forever.

To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn, for His mercy endures forever; and brought out Israel from among them, for His mercy endures forever; with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who divided the Red Sea in two, for His mercy endures forever; and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for His mercy endures forever; but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who led His people through the wilderness, for His mercy endures forever; to Him who struck down great kings, for His mercy endures forever; and slew famous kings, for His mercy endures forever—Sihon king of the Amorites, for His mercy endures forever; and Og king of Bashan, for His mercy endures forever—and gave their land as a heritage, for His mercy endures forever; a heritage to Israel His servant, for His mercy endures forever.

Who remembered us in our lowly state, for His mercy endures forever; and rescued us from our enemies, for His mercy endures forever; who gives food to all flesh, for His mercy endures forever. Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 136, NKJV)

PRAISE

Reading through Psalm 136 may make you think you're listening to a broken record. Why did the writer repeat that phrase twenty-six times (once in every verse)? Because to him the concept of God's unfailing mercy was extremely important, and he didn't want God's children to ever forget it.

Just imagine the cascading waters of Niagara Falls. Twenty percent of the world's fresh water is in the Great Lakes, and most of it tumbles over the falls in a deafening tumult—up to 3,160 tons per second! This water cycle has been in existence for thousands of years and has never failed. Yet this image would be only a small depiction of God's love and mercy for us. Jesus was crucified, mocked, pierced with a crown of thorns, denied His power, and nailed to a tree, yet His love for us never fails. Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV) states, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed." His love was so great for us that even knowing we were going

to turn our backs on Him and kill Him, He still loved us enough to die for our sins. As the psalmist pointed out, His love and mercy never fail.

PARABLE

If there was one word we have distorted, it is the word “love.” We often say we love Chick Fil A, Popeyes, tacos, pizza, and so on. We even say we love Disney, NetFlix, a particular movie, or a certain brand of clothes. Do you get the picture? The word “love” has been so overused—repeated so many times without purpose—that the term is losing its value. It’s meaning is no longer worth what it originally was.

PRESENT

The real meaning of love is how we feel about others with whom we have a relationship. For instance, the word “love” describes how we feel about God. The Bible gives us examples of how God exemplifies His love for us. God’s love for us is beyond our knowledge. Although we fail from time to time, God never stops loving us. The kind of love that God has for us is unconditional. We don’t deserve it, and we can’t earn it. In Greek, the word for this kind of love is “agape.”

Here’s a humorous story that illustrates my point. A young boy sat down to write the following love letter to his girlfriend: “Dear Sarah, I love you so much! I will climb the highest mountain to see your smile. I will swim the longest river just for one of your kisses. I will cross the broadest sea for one of your hugs. I will pass through a burning desert to look upon your face. With never-ending love, Bobby. P.S.: I’ll be over to see you next Tuesday if it doesn’t rain.”

How should we use the word “love”? Love is a simple four-letter word that has the power to do many things. It has to be applied at the proper time and in the right context. Love is both an emotion and an action. We can’t just verbalize our feeling without showing it as well. This is how God feels toward us. His love is unconditional; He loves us in spite of our mistakes. He loves us enough to correct us when we are wrong. He loves us enough to let us go through some things so we can discover how dependent we are on Him. He loves us so much that He won’t let anything separate us from that love.

PRACTICE

Create a list of things you love, then create another list of what you think God loves. Now compare the two lists. Do the things on the first list look trivial compared to the second?

PRAY

God, give me a true understanding of Your unconditional love, like the prodigal son’s father who welcomed his son back after he left home and wasted his inheritance on worldly things. Show me what that kind of love looks like. I want to love others with unconditional love like You did.

PLUS

Find someone in your school to whom you can show that same kind of unconditional love.