

# B.A.S.I.C.

*Brothers And Sisters In Christ*

## A Psalm of Thanks

By Pastor Matthew Ude



**For His  
mercy  
endures  
forever.**

[ A note for our international brothers: November 23 was Thanksgiving, an national holiday in the US ]

Psalm 136 is a psalm giving thanks to the Lord in which the Hebrews recounted the things that God has done for them. This Thanksgiving is good chance to reflect on how He has done similar things for us and give thanks to Him with the ancient Hebrews.

**136** Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for *He is good!*

For His mercy *endures* forever.

<sup>2</sup> Oh, give thanks to the God of gods!

For His mercy *endures* forever.

<sup>3</sup> Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords!

For His mercy *endures* forever:

Why has the Lord done these things? The Hebrews sung after each phrase “for His mercy,” but not just because of his mercy but because His mercy “endures forever.” It isn’t enough that the Lord is merciful. If He were merely merciful we would still be doomed. But the mercy of the Lord is everlasting, as Jeremiah reminds us “it is new every morning.” Despite all our sins day after day the Lord continues to act in mercy towards us.

<sup>4</sup> To Him who alone does great wonders,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>5</sup> To Him who by wisdom made the heavens,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>6</sup> To Him who laid out the earth above the waters,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>7</sup> To Him who made great lights,  
For His mercy *endures* forever—

<sup>8</sup> The sun to rule by day,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>9</sup> The moon and stars to rule by night,  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Nothing made by man can ever compare to the beauty of God’s creation. Certainly we should give thanks for the sun and moon

and stars, for the autumn leaves and the winter snow, for the life in our bodies and the life of all the animals that live on this earth, for the full wonder and beauty of all creation.

Is there anything about God's creation which you are specifically thankful for? Perhaps you have a favorite season, or a favorite time of the day? Maybe you really like sitting on the side of a lake or hiking a forest? Maybe you love mountains? Or have a favorite animal? Perhaps you are a farmer and are thankful for the soil and the rain that allows you to grow food? Is there anything else these verses remind you to be thankful for?

<sup>10</sup>To Him who struck Egypt in their first-born,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>11</sup>And brought out Israel from among them,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>12</sup>With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>13</sup>To Him who divided the Red Sea in two,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>14</sup>And made Israel pass through the midst of it,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>15</sup>But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

A lot of these things are unnecessary. God had no need to strike down the first born. He had no need to open the red sea. He could have easily lead the Israelites around it. Why then did he do it? To show

his great strength, to leave no doubt in the mind of the people of Israel that He was true God so that they would trust in Him always.

Are there some things that you can think of that were unnecessary, and yet God did them for you anyway?

What are some of the way in which God has reminded you that He is the one true God and there is no other?

One thing that the Lord did for Israel was to separate them from the people of the world. He put up a wall between them and the nations to keep them separate and to keep them from the temptations of the world. God has given us a far more difficult challenge, He has not separated us from the world but has mixed us among them, and so we are often tempted to be jealous of the world. We are often tempted to live the way they live.

What are some of the reason that you can be thankful that you are not a part of the world?

What are some of the benefits of being the people of God that you can give thanks for?

<sup>16</sup>To Him who led His people through the wilderness,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>17</sup>To Him who struck down great kings,

For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>18</sup>And slew famous kings,

For His mercy *endures* forever—

***Is there anything about God's creation which you are specifically thankful for?***

*The Lord set before  
them an impossible  
obstacle, and yet  
He delivered them.*

<sup>19</sup> Sihon king of the Amorites,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>20</sup> And Og king of Bashan,  
For His mercy *endures* forever—

<sup>21</sup> And gave their land as a heritage,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>22</sup> A heritage to Israel His servant,  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

The wilderness was not a fun time, it was a difficult place and it was full of suffering. Yet the Lord lead them through it, remained with them the whole time, and brought them out into something far better on the other side.

Have there been times of suffering in your life during which the Lord remained with you?

What good things has the Lord brought about through the suffering which you can give thanks for?

The people in the land were strong and mighty, a people that the Israelites could never hope to conquer. The Lord set before them an impossible obstacle, and yet He delivered them.

What are some of the obstacles the Lord set before you, which maybe you thought were beyond your ability but through which the Lord brought you for which you can thank the Lord?

<sup>23</sup> Who remembered us in our lowly state,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>24</sup> And rescued us from our enemies,  
For His mercy *endures* forever;

<sup>25</sup> Who gives food to all flesh,  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

<sup>26</sup> Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven!  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

All these things the Lord did for the Israelites was nothing they deserved, or could hope to ask for on their own, but in His mercy the Lord granted them.

All the things we have already talked about are things we do not deserve and yet the Lord has given to us anyway. Perhaps however there are a few things in specific that you know you don't deserve, for which you can thank the Lord?

For all these things and for many we give thanks to the Lord, for indeed His mercy does endure forever.