

The Lovingkindness of God

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"God is light" (1 John 1:5), "God is love" (1 John 4:8). We need from time to time to dwell and meditate on His goodness and mercy. God did for His people:

Isaiah 63:7-12. I will mention the *lovingkindnesses* of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His *lovingkindnesses*. ... to make for Himself an everlasting name..."

The word *lovingkindness* was invented by Miles Coverdale, who was a 16th-century Bible translator who produced the first complete printed translation of the Bible into English. His words were carried over into the English versions generally. It is one of the words he used in the Psalms (23 times, plus Hosea 2:19) to translate the Hebrew word Strong's <2617> חֶסֶד *kheh'-sed* when it refers to God's love for His people Israel. Paul speaks of the church as the Israel of God.

Galatians 6:16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

God showed us great mercy and lovingkindness by sending His Son Jesus Christ to pay for the penalty of our sins. Our sins is what separates us from God.

King David recognized this quality of God when wrote in Psalms 36,

Psalms 36:7. How precious (excellent) is Your lovingkindness <02617>, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

Psalms 36:10. Oh, continue Your lovingkindness <2617> to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

King David shows us how he appealed to God.

Psalms 119:41. Let Your mercies <2617> come also to me, O LORD — Your salvation according to Your word.

Psalms 119:64. The earth, O LORD, is full of Your mercy <02617>; teach me Your statutes.

Psalms 119:76. Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness <2617> be for my comfort, According to Your word to Your servant.

Psalms 119:88. Revive me according to Your lovingkindness <02617>, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

Psalms 119:124. Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy <02617>, And teach me Your statutes.

Psalms 119:149. Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness <02617>; O LORD, revive me according to Your justice.

Psalms 119:159. Consider how I love Your precepts; revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness <02617>.

God used His prophets to remind the people to treat others as He treats us.

Hosea 12:6. So you, by the help of your God, return; Observe mercy <02617> and justice, And wait on your God continually.

Zechariah 7:9. "Thus says the LORD of hosts: `Execute true justice, Show mercy <02617> and compassion Everyone to his brother.

The weightier matters of the Law:

Matthew 23:23. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: *justice and mercy and faith*. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Paul writes a letter to the Hebrews reminding them of what Jeremiah wrote in Jeremiah 31:31.

Hebrews 8:6-12. But now He [*Jesus Christ*] has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. ... For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws [*the word in Jeremiah 31:31 is the Hebrew word Torah*] in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ... and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Psalms 136 was very probably composed by David, and given to the Levites to sing every day, see 1 Chronicles 16:41. Solomon his son followed David's example, and made use of them in singing at the dedication of the temple, see 2 Chronicles 7:3,6; as Jehoshaphat seems to have done when he went out to war against his enemies, 2 Chronicles 20:21.

Every verse of **Psalm 136** contains the word ***kheh'-sed*** translated as mercy.

- Verse 1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy <2617> endures forever.
- Verse 2 Oh, give thanks to the God of gods! For His mercy <2617> endures forever.
- Verse 3 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords! For His mercy <2617> endures forever:
- Verse 4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 5 To Him who by wisdom made the heavens, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 6 To Him who laid out the earth above the waters, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 7 To Him who made great lights, For His mercy <2617> endures forever—
- Verse 8 The sun to rule by day, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For His mercy <2617> endures forever.
- Verse 10 To Him who struck Egypt in their firstborn, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 11 And brought out Israel from among them, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 12 With a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 13 To Him who divided the Red Sea in two, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 16 To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 17 To Him who struck down great kings, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 18 And slew famous kings, For His mercy <2617> endures forever—
- Verse 19 Sihon king of the Amorites, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 20 And Og king of Bashan, For His mercy <2617> endures forever—
- Verse 21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 22 A heritage to Israel His servant, For His mercy <2617> endures forever.
- Verse 23 Who remembered us in our lowly state, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 24 And rescued us from our enemies, For His mercy <2617> endures forever;
- Verse 25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His mercy <2617> endures forever.
- Verse 26 Oh, give thanks to the God of heaven! For His mercy <2617> endures forever.