

In Psalm 136 the congregation gives thanks for 7 demonstrations of God's covenant faithfulness.

We give thanks for God's covenant faithfulness as seen in His:

- I. Character (v. 1).
- II. Sovereignty (vs. 2-3, 26).
- III. Creation (vs. 4-9).
- IV. Redemption (vs. 10-16).
- V. Inheritance (vs. 17-22).
- VI. Deliverance (vs. 23-24).
- VII. Provision (v. 25).

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, November 20, 2016

Passage: Psalm 136

Memory Passage: Psalm 136:1

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Psalm 136.** This is the only Psalm which contains a repeated refrain in every verse. In Hebrew the refrain “for his steadfast love endures forever” is made up of 2 Hebrew words, transliterated *‘olam*, which means “forever, everlasting” and *chesed*, which means “lovingkindness, goodness.” *Chesed* is used to describe God’s covenant faithfulness and love for His people. So, “His love is forever” or “His love has no end” are good translations.

(b) Describe God’s *chesed* and why its eternity is important for His people.

(c) Notice that vs. 1, 2, 3, & 26 begin with “Give thanks.” This implies that every verse that begins with “to him” is preceded by the unwritten command to “give thanks.”

(d) Write a short paragraph explaining what the Psalmist is expressing about God by using the superlative terms found in 1a, 2a, 3a, & 6a: “good,” “God of gods,” Lord of lords,” and God of heaven.”

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Psalm 136:4-9, Gen. 1, & Prov. 3:19-20.** Verse 4 speaks of “great wonders” (described in vs. 5-25) only being done by God. Why is this an important confession? Who else was claiming power for “great wonders?” (cf. vs. 2-3, 26, and Ps. 135:15-18, one of many connections between Psalms 135 & 136)?

(b) Why is God’s “understanding” (as well as “wisdom” and “knowledge,” according to Prov. 3:19-20) central to the Psalmist’s remembrance of God’s creative power?

(c) In what ways is God’s act of creation a visible demonstration of His eternal covenant love for His people?

(d) How does pondering God’s creation help you grow in your understanding of God’s *chesed*, especially if the Psalmist refers to both His original creation and His continuing care (the verbs in vs. 4-9 are participles, which could carry this idea)?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Psalm 136:10-16, Ex. 12:29-39, & 14:19-31.** It is easy to see how Israel’s redemption from slavery in Egypt is a visible expression of God’s *chesed*, but how are the death of Egypt’s firstborn and the death of Pharaoh and his armies visible expressions of this same covenant love & faithfulness?

(b) The psalmist follows God’s work in creation with His work in salvation, which are two closely related themes in Scripture. Explain the connection between creation & salvation (for help, see Isaiah 43:18-19; 65:17-25; 66:22-23; Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Cor. 4:6; 5:17; Eph. 2:10, 15; 4:24; et. al.).

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Psalm 136:17-25, Numb. 21:21-35, Deut. 2:26-3:11.** Explain the historical situation mentioned in vs. 19-20.

(b) The “great” and “mighty” kings mentioned in vs. 17-18 are the kings conquered by Moses & Joshua as Israel took possession of the Promised Land (Ps. 136:21-22) listed in Joshua 12. What do all of these kings have in common with Pharaoh, his armies, and the firstborn of Egypt, all of whom were “struck down” (vs. 10, 17), “overthrown” (v. 15), or “killed (v. 18)?

(c) To what “land as a heritage” do believers look forward, and how is this future hope grounded upon God’s *chesed*?

(d) When God “remembers” is He merely *thinking* about his people or is there more? What else is involved? In what “low estate” have you been in which you were remembered by God, and how do you know you were remembered?

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

(a) **Read Psalm 136:1-26.** What do you learn about God’s attributes and character in this Psalm?

(b) What “great wonders” has God performed in your life that give evidence of His eternal covenant faithfulness (don’t forget the obvious answers!)? In what ways might you regularly recount these wonders in order to teach your children and other believers about that same eternal covenant love and faithfulness, as well as the attributes and character of God?

DATE: November 20, 2016

PASSAGE: Psalm 136

God’s Eternal Covenant Faithfulness