

Week 11 - “Psalm 136 – God’s Love Endures Forever”

The Aim of the Session

Endurance used to be a game show on Japanese TV which put the contestants through the most awful things to find out who could survive the longest. What a contrast with God’s love! So how does “enduring” love really work in reality?

- **Welcome**

What is your greatest sporting endurance achievement?

- **Worship**

If possible, have a candle and a cross available for people to see. Play some quiet music and read Matthew 26:36-41. The leader might say some words about the endurance of Jesus through the hours of that night, through torture and death that followed. Spends some time thanking God for Jesus’ endurance – you might like to finish with the words of “When I Survey The Wondrous Cross”.

- **Word**

- ❖ How would you define the word “endurance”?
- ❖ Give some practical examples.
- ❖ How good are you at endurance? Why?
- ❖ What are the factors involved?
- ❖ Can we change? If so, how?

Read Psalm 136:1-3

- Why do you think the Psalmist uses the same refrain throughout this Psalm?
- What do these three verses say about God?

Read Hebrews 13:8, Ephesians 3:18-20, Exodus 3:14 and 1 John 4:8

- Why can we celebrate God’s enduring love in these verses?
- In this section of the Psalm, how do you see God’s enduring love expressed?

Read Psalm 136:4-9

- How do we see God’s love in Creation?
- How does our response to Creation show our response to his love?

Read Psalm 8:3-4. How does this say about our relationship with God?

- What happens when we treat God as our equal? What goes wrong?
- In this section of the Psalm, how do you see God’s enduring love expressed?

Read Psalm 136:10-22 and list the events in these verses.

- What do they say about “the big picture” – when we stand back and look at what God has done for us?
- How did the people see God at the time of each of these events?
- How did God see them?
- In this section of the Psalm, how do you see God’s enduring love expressed?

Spend some time thinking back to times when you have not been able to understand God's love at the time but have been able to see it in the longer term, in the bigger picture.

Read Psalm 136:23-26

- What enemy has God freed us from in his love?
- What does that freedom mean in terms of our ability to experience his love... ?
- ... And respond to it?
- Jesus says that we should pray "Give us today our daily bread". How does v25 assure us of the answer to that prayer?
- How can we "Give thanks" v26?
- In this section of the Psalm, how do you see God's enduring love expressed?

- **Works**

Read John 13:34-35

- Whose love is it that we share?
- How can we best share it?
- What does that mean in practical terms?

The leader may want to take a few minutes to sum up the different aspects of this study and then in another moment of quiet (possibly with music) spend time thanking God for his love and asking him to help you to experience and bathe in it more and more each day – with the expressed understanding that it will encourage you to endure in your love for God as he has enduring love for you.



Next Time ...

Psalms: Seeking God Through Honesty and Reality

12 – Psalm 137 "The God who Promises Salvation"