

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Date: 11.22.26 | His Love Endures Forever
Scripture: Psalm 136

CENTRAL TRUTHS



PRESCHOOL:

God loves us, cares for us, and His love never ends.

YOUNGER KIDS (K5-2ND GRADE):

God shows His never-ending love by caring for His people and keeping His promises.

OLDER KIDS (3RD-5TH GRADE):

God's steadfast love never ends. We can trust and thank Him because He faithfully creates, delivers, provides for, and keeps His promises to His people.

STUDENTS:

God's steadfast love is seen throughout His story of creation, deliverance, provision, and fulfilled promises, and is ultimately displayed through the salvation He provides in Jesus.

ADULTS:

God's steadfast love endures forever, revealed throughout redemptive history in His faithful acts of creation, deliverance, provision, and promise-keeping, and ultimately fulfilled in the salvation and eternal life secured through Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever." Psalm 136:1



DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

What hope does everlasting life hold for us? It reminds us that this fallen world is not all there is; soon we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new city, in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be fully and forever freed from all sin and will inhabit renewed, resurrection bodies in a renewed, restored creation. NCC q. 52

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

Psalm 136 is a hymn of thanksgiving that calls God's people to remember who He is, what He has done, and the steadfast love He has continually shown His people. Each of the Psalm's 26 verses ends with the same refrain: "for His steadfast love endures forever." This repetition makes the central message impossible to miss—God has been faithful to His people throughout their entire story, and His love will never end. The psalm may have been sung responsively, with a priest or worship leader declaring the first line and the congregation responding together, "for His steadfast love endures forever."

Psalm 136 looks back across Scripture, reminding God's people of many of the events we have studied from Genesis through Joshua. The psalmist does not simply remember these events as interesting pieces of Israel's history; he points to them as evidence of God's character and His enduring covenant love.

Praise God for Who He Is — **Psalm 136:1–3**

The psalm begins by calling God's people to thank the Lord because He is good. He is the "God of gods" and "Lord of lords" (**Psalm 136:1–3**). Before the psalmist celebrates what God has done, he begins with who God is. God alone is worthy of His people's worship, praise, and gratitude.

Praise God for His Creation — **Psalm 136:4–9**

The psalmist next praises God for the great "wonders" He performed in creation (**Psalm 136:4–9**), using language that points back to Genesis. God made the heavens, spread out the earth, and created the great lights—the sun, moon, and stars. The God who saves His people is the same God who created and rules over all things. From the very beginning of the Bible, creation reveals God's power, wisdom, goodness, and authority.



Praise God for His Deliverance — *Psalm 136:10–16*

The psalm then turns to the Exodus, remembering how God rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt. He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, brought His people out “with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,” divided the Red Sea, brought Israel safely through it, and overthrew Pharaoh and his army (*Psalm 136:10–15*). God then faithfully led His people through the wilderness (*Psalm 136:16*). These verses echo the language and events of Exodus and Deuteronomy, reminding us that Israel could not rescue itself—God was their Deliverer.

The Exodus also points forward to the greater rescue God would accomplish through Jesus. Just as Israel needed God to deliver them from slavery, we need God to rescue us from our slavery to sin. Jesus came to accomplish the salvation we could never accomplish for ourselves.

Praise God for His Gift — *Psalm 136:17–22*

God’s faithfulness continued as Israel approached the land He had promised them. He defeated great and mighty kings and gave their land to Israel “as a heritage” (*Psalm 136:17–22*). The Promised Land was ultimately a gift from God, not something Israel could claim because of their own strength or goodness. God kept the promises He had made to His people.

This pattern of grace points us toward the gospel. Just as Israel received an inheritance they could not secure for themselves, salvation and eternal life are gifts we cannot earn. Through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, God provides salvation to all who trust in Him.

Praise God for His Continuing Care — *Psalm 136:23–26*

The final verses move from Israel’s earlier history to God’s continuing care for His people. God “remembered us in our low estate,” rescued His people from their enemies, and provided food for every creature (*Psalm 136:23–25*). The psalm closes where it began: “Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His steadfast love endures forever” (*Psalm 136:26*). God’s faithfulness was not limited to creation, the Exodus, the wilderness, or the conquest. His people continued to experience His loving care.

Psalm 136 helps us see the Bible as one unfolding story of God’s faithfulness and redemption. The God who created, delivered, provided for, and kept His promises to Israel is the same faithful God who fulfilled His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. The clearest

demonstration of God's steadfast love is seen at the cross, where Jesus gave Himself to rescue sinners and bring them into an eternal relationship with God. Because Jesus rose from the dead, God's people have the promise of everlasting life with Him.

As you teach, look back at what we have learned from Genesis through Joshua and recognize the same truth again and again: God is the Creator, Deliverer, Promise Keeper, and Sustainer of His people. His faithfulness throughout Scripture gives us every reason to trust Him, worship Him, and give Him thanks. His steadfast love endures forever.

TELL THE STORY

Psalm 136

God's people had a lot to remember—and a lot to be thankful for! *Psalm 136* is a song that looks back at the incredible things God had done for His people. Every single verse ends with the same reminder: "His steadfast love endures forever." No matter what part of their story the Israelites remembered, they could see that God had been faithful to them.

The psalm begins by telling God's people to give thanks to the Lord because He is good. He is the "God of gods" and the "Lord of lords" (*Psalm 136:1–3*). No one is like Him, and He alone deserves our worship and praise.

Then the psalm takes us back to creation. God made the heavens and the earth. He made the sun to rule over the day and the moon and stars to rule over the night (*Psalm 136:4–9*). Everything exists because God created it. The same God who created the entire universe loves and cares for His people.

Next, the psalm reminds us of how God delivered His people from Egypt. The Israelites had been slaves and could not rescue themselves, but God could! With His mighty power, God brought them out of Egypt, divided the Red Sea, led His people safely through it, and defeated Pharaoh and his army (*Psalm 136:10–15*). Then God continued to lead and care for His people as they traveled through the wilderness (*Psalm 136:16*).



God didn't stop there. He had promised His people a land of their own, and He kept His promise. God defeated powerful kings and gave the Promised Land to Israel as their inheritance (*Psalm 136:17–22*). The Israelites did not receive the land because they were powerful enough to earn it. It was a gift from their faithful God.

The psalm then reminds us that God's care for His people continued. When they were weak and needed help, God remembered them and rescued them. He provided for His creation and continued to show His people His steadfast love (*Psalm 136:23–25*).

Finally, the psalm ends the same way it began: "Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His steadfast love endures forever" (*Psalm 136:26*).

When we look back at everything we have learned from Genesis through Joshua, we can see the same truth. God created His people, delivered them, cared for them, kept His promises, and gave them what they could never provide for themselves. And all of these stories point us toward the greatest way God would show His steadfast love—Jesus.

Just as the Israelites could not rescue themselves from slavery in Egypt, we cannot rescue ourselves from sin. God sent Jesus to do for us what we could never do for ourselves. Jesus died for our sins and rose again so that everyone who trusts in Him can be forgiven and have eternal life with God.

From creation, to the Exodus, to the Promised Land, and all the way to Jesus, the Bible tells one great story of our faithful God. He is our Creator, Deliverer, Promise Keeper, and Sustainer—and His steadfast love endures forever!

REBUILD THE STORY

1. What does Psalm 136 tell us to do, and why should we do it?

Psalm 136:1

2. What phrase is repeated in every verse of Psalm 136, and what does it teach us about God? *Psalm 136:1–26*



3. What are some of the wonders God did when He created the world? *Psalm 136:4–9*
4. How did God show His steadfast love by delivering the Israelites from Egypt? *Psalm 136:10–15*
5. What did God do for His people after He rescued them from Egypt? *Psalm 136:16*
6. How did God keep His promise to give Israel the Promised Land? *Psalm 136:17–22*
7. How do verses 23–25 show that God continued to care for His people? *Psalm 136:23–25*
8. How does Psalm 136 end, and what does this remind us to do when we remember everything God has done? *Psalm 136:26*
9. Why do you think the phrase “His steadfast love endures forever” is repeated after every single verse in Psalm 136? What does the repetition help us remember about God?
10. Psalm 136 reminds the Israelites of things God had done long before they were born. Why is it important for us to remember what God has done in the past when we are trying to trust Him today?
11. What do creation, the Exodus, the wilderness, and the Promised Land teach us about who God is? What characteristics of God can you see throughout these events?
12. The Israelites could not rescue themselves from Egypt or earn the Promised Land. How does that help us understand our need for Jesus and the salvation God gives us?

GOSPEL EMPHASIS

God's steadfast love endures forever! Throughout *Psalms 136*, we see God's love displayed through His creation, deliverance, provision, and faithfulness to His promises. The greatest demonstration of God's steadfast love is found in Jesus. We could never earn God's love or rescue ourselves from sin, so God sent His Son to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we can be forgiven, brought into relationship with God, and given the promise of eternal life. Just as God was faithful to His people throughout their story, we can trust that He will always be faithful to us. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever! (*Psalms 136:1*)



WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true change the way we live in Christ?

PRAYER PROMPTS

God, thank You for who You are and what You have done! We praise You as Creator, Deliverer, Promise Keeper, and Sustainer. Help us to be continually mindful of Your presence in our lives. We love, praise, and thank You!



THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READING

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:46-56

