



For His Lovingkindness is Everlasting

From Pastor Jim

Want a great head start to memorizing an extended portion of Scripture? Try Psalm 136—by learning one short clause you have already memorized half of the 26-verse psalm!

Another advantage for us in reading and contemplating this psalm is that we can easily and confidently know its main idea. When a thought is expressed 26 times in 26 statements, it is hard to miss! The psalm was written to prompt our praise of the Lord in light of His everlasting lovingkindness. Every verse in the psalm is either a call to acknowledge the lovingkindness of the Lord God or a description of His attributes and ways in which the lovingkindness of the Lord has been demonstrated and evidenced by His wonderful works.

So His goodness (verse 1) and greatness (verses 2-3) are confessed. Then begins a description of some of His great wonders seen in creation (verses 4-9). It is not difficult for us to connect God’s work of creation with His lovingkindness toward man. After all, He made the earth for our dwelling place, and He did so in wonderful fashion by providing atmosphere, water and light sources for both daytime and night.

So far, so good. However, then we come to verses 10-22, which continue to tell us what the Lord in His lovingkindness has done in history. It is at this point that the psalm gets really intriguing, surprising, even shocking to many in our culture.

We are informed here (verse 10) that God’s lovingkindness led Him to smite the firstborn of the Egyptians—to put them to death! His lovingkindness moved Him to drown the Egyptian army in the Sea of Reeds (verse 15)! His lovingkindness motivated Him to destroy powerful kings and their armies (verses 17-20), such as Sihon with the Amorites and Og with the Bashanites!

At first glance, these actions seem incompatible with lovingkindness. How can anyone claim that killing people is an act of lovingkindness?

The question that helps us understand the connection is, “To whom is the Lord showing lovingkindness when He performs such acts?” It seems quite clear that He is not showing lovingkindness toward the Egyptians, the Amorites or the Bashanites. In fact, His treatment of those kings, nations and armies is a good example of what we are told about Him in Psalm 5:5 (The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity) and Psalm 11:5 (The Lord tests the righteous and the wicked, and the one who loves violence His soul hates).

So to whom is the Lord showing lovingkindness when He destroys armies and kills off the firstborn of Egypt? Psalm 136 leaves no doubt about the fact that those acts of God were for the sake of His people. He destroyed those who were bent on harming or destroying His people, rescuing His people from their adversaries (verse 24). The lovingkindness of the Lord is His compassion, mercy, grace and protection of those whom in love He has taken to Himself as His own.

We can certainly understand this at one level. We would go to any length possible, even extreme measures, to protect those whom we love. While I have determined that I do not want to take another’s life in order to save my own, I would not hesitate to take drastic action against a person who is about to harm or kill someone I love.

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At another level, what sets God's lovingkindness toward His people apart is that His people in no way deserve or merit it. Both His lovingkindness and the deeds of provision and protection to which it leads Him are purely of His grace. My willingness to provide for and protect my loved ones has within it elements of merit (from my perspective, they deserve it) and responsibility (it is my duty to do so). Neither of those are involved in the Lord's lovingkindness toward His people. His is a lovingkindness motivated solely out of who He is (He is good – verse 1), not prompted by anything in those toward whom He shows His lovingkindness nor by any outside force compelling Him to act on their behalf.

Which leads us to consider the most astounding act of God's lovingkindness ever displayed: it is the lovingkindness of the Lord which moved Him to crush His own beloved Son under the weight of His people's sin and His wrath at Calvary. This is the extent to which His lovingkindness for us led Him.

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?” “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:31, 38-39).

“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.” (Psalm 136:1).

April Birthdays

April 6 - Addi Beyersdorf

April 8 - Elicora DeCaro

April 12 - Phyllis Anderson

April 12 - Jim Odens

April 14 - Helen Goldberg

April 17 - Bill Butler

April 21 - Elizabeth Smith

April 24 - Matt Plocher

April 25 - Eric Larson

April 30 - Suzy Plocher



April Bible Reading

1	Numbers 28-29	Psalm 91
2	Numbers 30-31	Psalm 92
3	Numbers 32-33	Psalm 93
4	Numbers 34-35	Psalm 94
5	Numbers 36	Psalm 95
6	Catch-up day	Psalm 96
7	Catch-up day	Psalm 97
8	Deuteronomy 1	Psalm 98
9	Deuteronomy 2-3	Psalm 99
10	Deuteronomy 4:1-43	Psalm 100
11	Deuteronomy 4:44—5:33	Psalm 101
12	Deuteronomy 6-7	Psalm 102
13	Deuteronomy 8-9	Psalm 103
14	Deuteronomy 10-11	Psalm 104
15	Deuteronomy 12:1—14:2	Psalm 105
16	Deuteronomy 14:3—16:17	Psalm 106
17	Deuteronomy 16:18—18:22	Psalm 107
18	Deuteronomy 19-20	Psalm 108
19	Deuteronomy 21-22	Psalm 109
20	Deuteronomy 23	Psalm 110
21	Deuteronomy 24-25	Psalm 111
22	Deuteronomy 26	Psalm 112
23	Deuteronomy 27-28	Psalm 113
24	Deuteronomy 29-30	Psalm 114
25	Deuteronomy 31:1-29	Psalm 115
26	Deuteronomy 31:30—33:29	Psalm 116
27	Deuteronomy 34	Psalm 117
28	Catch-up day	Psalm 118
29	Catch-up day	Psalm 119
30	Joshua 1	Psalm 120

Two-Year Bible Reading Plan

This Bible reading plan is designed to take you through the Old and New Testaments in two years, and through the Psalms and Proverbs four times during that period.



April Calendar

*I know that my Redeemer lives;
 what joy the blest assurance gives!
 He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
 He lives, my everlasting Head!*

Samuel Medley

Sunday 1	RESURRECTION SUNDAY 8:30a.m. - Resurrection Day Breakfast 10:20 a.m. - Worship Service
Monday 2	6:30 p.m. - Missions Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m. - Deacons Meeting
Tuesday 3	
Wednesday 4	9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer
Thursday 5	6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group
Friday 6	6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Meeting
Saturday 7	
Sunday 8	8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship Service 2:00 p.m. - Good Samaritan Service 4:30 p.m. - Taste & See Life/Care Group 6:30 p.m. - Conquering Through Christ Life/Care Group
Monday 9	6:30 p.m. - Elders & Deacons Meeting
Tuesday 10	7:00 p.m. - Worship Team Practice
Wednesday 11	9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study
Thursday 12	6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group 7:00 p.m. - Visual Arts Committee Meeting
Friday 13	6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Meeting
Saturday 14	8:00 a.m. - Men's Book Study

Sunday 15	8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship Service 12:30 p.m. - Emmaus Life/Care Group 6:30 p.m. - Conquering Through Christ Life/Care Group
Monday 16	3:00 p.m. - Elders Meeting
Tuesday 17	
Wednesday 18	9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer 7:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study
Thursday 19	6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group 7:00 p.m. - Men's Book Study
Friday 20	6:30 a.m. - Emmaus Men's Meeting
Saturday 21	
Sunday 22	8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship Service 4:30 p.m. - Taste & See Life/Care Group 6:30 p.m. - Conquering Through Christ Life/Care Group
Monday 23	
Tuesday 24	
Wednesday 25	9:00 a.m. - Prayer Time 6:30 p.m. - Connecting in Prayer 7:00 p.m. - Women's Bible Study
Thursday 26	6:30 p.m. - Psalm 19 Life/Care Group
Friday 27	6:30 a.m. - Men's Book Study
Saturday 28	9:30 a.m. - Worship Team Practice
Sunday 29	8:30 a.m. - Prayer Time 9:00 a.m. - Sunday School 10:20 a.m. - Worship Service
Monday 30	

Ye Servants of God - Song of the Month

Submitted by James DeCaro

Drawing from Philippians 2 and several portions of Revelation, Charles Wesley wrote “Ye Servants of God” to encourage believers in England during a time of persecution. We, too, should be encouraged as we sing these words of praise to God and recognize His place as the almighty King of the universe. And, as verse two says, our great God is close; He is with us. As we sing this month, let’s take the charge of the first verse to spread to all we know the wonderful name of Jesus.

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
And publish abroad His wonderful Name;
The Name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
His kingdom is glorious, He rules over all.

God ruleth on high, almighty to save;
And still He is nigh, His presence we have;
The great congregation His triumph shall sing,
Ascribing salvation to Jesus our King.

“Salvation to God who sits on the throne,”
Let all cry aloud and honor the Son:
The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,
Fall down on their faces and worship the Lamb.

Then let us adore and give Him His right,
All glory and pow'r, all wisdom and might;
All honor and blessing, with angels above,
And thanks never-ceasing, and infinite love.

Charles Wesley, 1744

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OCC Vision

The vision of Oakridge Community Church is to spread a joyful passion for the absolute, eternal supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things, to all peoples.

OCC Mission

The mission of Oakridge Community Church is to glorify God by delighting in, declaring and displaying the gospel of Jesus Christ.