

From Pastor's Desk...

God's Love Endures Forever: Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Psalms 136 is sung at the end of a Passover meal and believed that the disciples also sang this song with Jesus Christ too. It is called a "Hallelujah psalm" because it contains a list of moments where God worked in history. The leader of worship recites God's action and the congregation would respond, "His love endures forever". The powerful four-word phrase is found 40 times in the scripture. We are reminded in this Psalm that God works across the centuries to establish His purpose on the earth.

There are four demonstrations of God's enduring love in Psalm 136.

- A. God is the Sovereign Being. He is God of gods, Lord of lords. He is good and worthy to be praised by all (1-3).
- B. God is the Creator. The arena of enduring love of God is the creation (4-9).
- C. God is the Redeemer. The manifestation of His enduring love is for Israel, His own people, for they got freedom from the oppressors (10-20).
- D. God is the Provider. The persistence of His enduring love is in meeting the physical and emotional needs of the people (21-25).

Debbie Skinner writes, "Enduring love doesn't change according to the behavior of the recipients of that love. Enduring love remains strong and unyielding even in the face of misfortune, Enduring love holds on through hardship and refuses to give in". The love of God has already been revealed in the most profound ways, "By His love we know love, that he laid down His love for us" (1John 3:16). The world changes, circumstances changes, we change but God never changes.

In 1988, an Armenian earthquake killed forty-five thousand people. In the chaos, a man rushed to the school to find out his son. He heaved rocks and dug, calling for his son by name Armandi. Other parents and bystanders tried to pull him away after long hours of effort fearing continued explosions. After 38 hours, he pulled back a big rock and called his son's name loudly. He responded soon, "Dad I told my friends if you were still alive you'd save me". Father helped his son and other 13 children climb out of the rubble. In receiving the applause from the people, he said "I promised my son no matter what, I will be there for you".

God bless you.

In His Glorious Ministry,

Rev. K. P. Mathew

(Senior Pastor, IPC Hebron, Los Angeles)

Who Spread Out The Earth Upon The Waters, His Love Endures Forever."

Sherin Mathew, Sunday School Teacher

Spring-rain, bright flowers that blossom, and an overall feeling of rejuvenation is a time of new growth and renewal, whether this is in the world around us or in our spiritual lives. During this season, there is a turn of events: refreshing through the earth.

Meanwhile, we bustle on with our busy schedules and fall into daily routines, forgetting to stop and appreciate God's creation. In Psalm 19, David takes the time to look around and observe that "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." His words encourage us to take time and think on this season of renewal; to give all our cares and worries into our Father's hands, keeping in mind that He knows what is best for us.

This God, who knows all and sees our hearts, created everything for us to appreciate and know that God is working all around us. God invites us to take part and rejoice with all of creation to glorify His name. In addition to that, there are miracles happening every day, where prayers are answered and lives are changed.

Psalm 136 serves as a reminder that giving thanks is not just during Thanksgiving, it is for each and every day that we are alive and well. When we feel overwhelmed by everyone's expectations for us, be assured that our God of love has all our needs and worries in his hands and will work a miracle in our lives. So, let us approach the throne of grace of the one 'who spread the earth upon the waters, [for] His love endures forever!'

From Christ's Love, Nothing Can Be Separated

Shajee Mathew, Media Coordinator Support

The Church of God faces more difficulties and persecutions than ever in the past but it never stops its missions. The sole purpose of a church in this world is missions. Jesus never told His disciples to kill anyone nor to take the sword but to demonstrate His phenomenal love and mercy that endures forever. It was this enduring love that led St. Thomas to India, to lead the life of a martyr for the sake of Gospel. This was an exemplar for many missionaries around the world.

Fr. Tom Uzannalil, a missionary in Yemen is under the custody of ISIS since last one year. As a missionary priest his aim was to share the matchless love of God towards mankind. We all need to continue praying for his immediate release.

When missionaries go into mission fields, they face life and death situations every day of their lives. They have no personal security guards nor the support of their family/government but the heavenly protection from the cross they bear. Many at times, they have nothing to eat or drink but they still share the mercy of Christ.

A missionary's hope is in the heavenly promise—God's love and mercy endures forever. For a missionary it is not about living their lives as an ordinary man but having Christ in them and displaying the love of Christ to the world for He who spread the earth upon the waters, His Love endures forever.