

Psalms 100:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Analysis

For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. This concluding verse provides the theological foundation for all preceding worship imperatives. The connecting "For" (ki, ִ) introduces three essential attributes motivating praise: goodness, mercy, and truth. These aren't abstract qualities but covenant realities Israel experienced throughout history.

"The LORD is good" (tov Yahweh, טוב־יהוה) declares God's essential beneficence. Tov encompasses moral goodness, beneficial actions, and pleasing character. God's goodness is not capricious but consistent—He delights in His creatures' welfare, provides abundantly, and works all things toward redemptive purposes. This contradicts pagan deities who were unpredictable, malicious, or indifferent.

"His mercy is everlasting" (l'olam chasdo, לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶד) uses the covenant term chesed (חֶסֶד)—loyal love, steadfast kindness, faithful commitment. Chesed is God's covenant loyalty despite Israel's unfaithfulness. "Everlasting" (olam, עוֹלָם) denotes perpetuity without termination. God's chesed doesn't expire when violated or become exhausted through repeated forgiveness.

"His truth endureth to all generations" (v'emunato l'dor vador, וְאֶמְנָתוֹ לְדֹר וְדֹר) emphasizes God's faithfulness (emunah, אֶמְנָה) across time. Emunah means reliability, trustworthiness, and steadfastness. "To all generations" assures each generation that God's promises remain valid. He doesn't change character or revoke commitments (Numbers 23:19).

Historical Context

Psalm 100:5 echoes refrains throughout the Psalter, particularly 'His mercy endureth forever' which punctuates Psalm 136's every verse. This liturgical repetition reinforced covenant theology—despite Israel's repeated failures, God's chesed persists.

For Israel facing exile, these truths were lifelines. When Jerusalem lay in ruins, when Temple worship ceased, when it appeared God had abandoned His people, Psalm 100:5 declared unchanging reality: Yahweh's goodness, mercy, and truth transcend historical circumstances. Even judgment served redemptive purposes rooted in divine faithfulness.

Ancient Near Eastern treaties featured 'loyalty' clauses requiring vassal kings to maintain faithful commitment to suzerains. Israel's covenant with Yahweh inverted this pattern—while Israel owed loyalty, the covenant's foundation was God's prior, persistent chesed. When Israel broke covenant, God initiated restoration (Hosea's marriage metaphor epitomizes this).

The New Testament reveals God's chesed supremely in Christ, the ultimate expression of divine goodness, mercy, and truth (John 1:14, 17). The cross demonstrates both God's goodness (providing salvation), His mercy (forgiving sin), and His truth (fulfilling promises). These attributes are not separate divine moods but unified in God's redemptive character.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do God's goodness, mercy, and truth work together in salvation history and personal experience?

2. What obstacles prevent people from believing God is truly good, especially when experiencing suffering or injustice?
3. How should the everlasting nature of God's mercy inform both evangelism (offering grace) and discipleship (resisting presumption)?

Interlinear Text

H3588	is good	For the LORD	is everlasting	his mercy	H5704	endureth to all
H2896		H3068	H5769	H2617		H1755
כִּי־בְּרַאַת־הָרָאָה			לְעוֹלָם־מִסְּמָדָה־יְמִינָה			
אָמֹנוּתָנוּ:			תְּדַבֵּר־אֶת־הַמְּשִׁיחָה			
endureth to all			and his truth			
H1755		H530				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 36:5 (Grace): Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

Psalms 106:1 (Grace): Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 107:1 (Grace): O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 86:5 (Grace): For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Jeremiah 33:11 (Grace): The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

1 Chronicles 16:34 (Grace): O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

Psalms 103:17 (Grace): But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

Luke 1:50 (Grace): And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

Nahum 1:7 (Good): The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Psalms 119:68 (Good): Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

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