

Psalms 136:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for ever:

Analysis

To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn: for his mercy endureth for...— Smote Egypt's firstborn - exodus liberation through judgment. **For his mercy endureth for ever** (וְכִי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ, ki le-olam chasdo). This refrain, repeated 26 times, transforms history into worship. Each event becomes evidence of God's eternal chesed (steadfast covenant love). The psalm teaches that recounting salvation history should evoke gratitude, showing God's character remains unchanging.

Historical Context

Psalm 136, the Great Hallel, recounts salvation from creation through providence. Sung at Passover and festivals with antiphonal structure (cantor and congregation), it trained Israel to see history through the lens of God's enduring mercy. Every generation learned their identity through this recitation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does repeatedly saying "his mercy endures forever" after each historical event transform your perspective?
2. What events in your life can you recount with the refrain "for his mercy endures forever"?
3. How does this psalm challenge viewing history as random versus providentially unfolding divine faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

לְמַךְ הַ	מִצְרַיִם	בְּבְכוֹרֵיהֶם	כִּי	לְעוֹלָם
To him that smote	Egypt	in their firstborn	H3588	endureth for ever
H5221	H4714	H1060		H5769
חֲסִדּוֹ:				
for his mercy				
H2617				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 78:51 (References Egypt): And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham:

Exodus 12:29 (References Egypt): And it came to pass, that at midnight the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

Psalms 135:8 (References Egypt): Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast.

Psalms 105:36 (Parallel theme): He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength.

Exodus 12:12 (References Egypt): For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

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