

THE MERCY OF THE LORD

Psa. 136:1

Intro: On the subject of praise, this is probably the most important expression of praise ever to be used by Israel.

It seems to have been originated with the restoration of the ark of the covenant in David's time. See 1 Chron. 16:34.

Solomon continued it at the time the Temple was dedicated. Cf. 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:3, 6.

Jeremiah tells us that it will be sung by restored Israel in the last days. Cf. Jer. 33:10, 11.

Mercy is from the Heb. , and it expresses the compassion of the Lord, His love, and His goodness to His people as a zealous desire on God's part for man's blessing.

The Word makes it plain that mercy is to be seen in all of God's dealings with His people:

- 1) It has to do with the daily supply of their needs.
  - 2) It has to do with personal strength in times of trial.
  - 3) It has to do with answering prayer.
  - 4) It has to do with victory over enemies.
- And this is only a sample of other things that could be mentioned.

The mercy of the Lord has been remembered especially in Psa. 136. Here we see a fourfold way in which God's mercy was to be remembered by the people of God:

- 1) Praise to the Lord as a Person -- for His mercy (vv. 1-4).
- 2) Praise to the Lord as Creator -- for His mercy (vv. 5-9).
- 3) Praise to the Lord as Redeemer of Israel -- for His mercy (vv. 10-23).
- 4) Praise to the Lord for His continuing mercies to "us" and to "all flesh" (vv. 23-25).
- 5) The final appeal to praise the Lord -- for His mercy (v. 26).

Read responsively.

In the Psalms especially we have:

- 1) Various ways in which "mercy" is described.
- 2) Various things which "mercy" will do -- keeping in mind that it is God who exercises the mercy.

Let us look at just a few of these.

I. THREE WAYS IN WHICH MERCY IS DESCRIBED.

A. It endures forever (Psa. 136). It is everlasting (Psa.

100:5). This means that there never was a time when God began to be merciful. He always has been merciful. He is merciful now -- and He will never change from being merciful.

- B. They are new every morning (Lam. 3:22, 23). This means renewed. The supply is kept fresh and full. There is no such thing as a shortage of this.
- C. His mercy is great (Psa. 103:11). This speaks of its power. There is no problem too great; His mercy is greater. It is always effective.

## II. TWO THINGS WHICH GOD IN HIS MERCY DOES.

- A. Mercy follows us (Psa. 23:6). This means to chase, to pursue, to run after -- to go wherever we are, and regardless of the way in which we got there.
- B. It encompasses us (Psa. 32:10). This is so trouble cannot hurt us from any direction.

Concl: