Part 1 – Yehovah is the God of gods and Lord of lords

We've now come to the ***thirtieth*** chapter in the "Deuteronomy Book" (the *fifth*, and *final*, 'book' of the Psalms) which has the overall subject of "***God's Word is the Only Good***". And that means that all blessing *for man* (Genesis, 1st book), all blessings *for Israel* (Exodus, 2nd book), all blessing *in relation to sanctuary* (Leviticus, 3rd book), and all blessing for *the earth and nations* (Numbers, 4th book) **are bound up in the Living Word of God**! And that's *why* **the Living Word is the *root*, and *source*, of <u>all</u> blessings**. Now, let's also remember that, **Psalm 135** had the subject/title of "**Praise**" because reminded us of some of the (many) *reasons* we have to praise the *true* God (YHVH). For He truly is *far greater*, and *above all*, that is called 'god'. After all, He not only created heaven, and earth, but <u>us</u> too! And that's why the false gods of Egypt could not save them from the Ten Plagues the Lord (YHVH) brought upon them. Nor could the false gods of the other heathen nations save them when they fought Israel; for the Lord (YHVH) fought *for* Israel so they *could* inherit the Promise Land. And these few examples should remind us how vain (empty and useless) it is to worship false gods and idols. For, we truly *will become like what we worship*. That's why those who worship false gods, and idols, will eventually become as dead as they as they are. But those who worship the *Living* God (YHVH) will be given *eternal* life. And that's yet another reason to praise (bless) the *true* God, Yehovah!

And now we come to **Psalm 136**, which also has the subject/title of "**Praise**" because it will also remind us of some of the (many) *reasons* we have to praise the *true* God (YHVH). And, as we learned in the last chapter, Psalm 135 and 136 are linked together by a *corresponding* structure (when viewed together). Thus, this Psalm 136 is also, most likely, written by Hezekiah as well. So then, let's see just *why* this Psalm 136 is now (also) calling us to "praise the Lord" …

Psalm 136
1 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

So, this great Psalm begins *by praising* the Lord (YHVH), so we can see *why* the title of this chapter is "**Praise**". Now, the words '**give thanks**' means (in the context of this verse) ***to revere*** or ***worship*** *with extended hands* (#3034). And the word '**Lord**' here is God's sacred (and covenantal) name ***Yehovah*** [https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/946] which means (the) ***self-Existent*** or ***Eternal*** (#3068). So, His name *reveals* that our Heavenly Father (Yehovah) is the *only* one who has *always* existed and *always* will, which is why He is *eternal* (Rev 1:8, 4:9, 11:17, 16:5, 22:13). And then the word '**good**' here does mean ***good*** (#2896). And the definition of 'good' in the Webster's dictionary is *to be of a favorable character or tendency*. So, the Lord (YHVH) being 'good' simply means He is *righteous in <u>all</u> his ways, and holy in <u>all</u> his works* (Ps 145:17). And that's because *He is **a God of truth** and **without iniquity**, <u>just and right is he</u>* (Deut 32:4). And then the word '**mercy**' means ***kindness*** (#2617); and note that His mercy *endures **forever***

(always *and* into eternity, #5769). So, the Psalmist begins by praising the Lord (YHVH) and giving a couple of reasons for doing so (i.e. for He is *good* and His *mercy* endures *forever*).

And this is *not* the first time we've seen this phrase in the book of Psalms. Ps 105 began by using the first part of this verse ("*O give thanks unto the LORD*") while Psalm 106 used the *entire* verse, but *added* "*Praise ye the Lord*" at the beginning. And the first verse in Psalm 107 was *exactly* the same as this first verse (here in Psalm 136), as well as the first, and last, verse in Psalm 118. So, it's been a pretty common verse of 'praise' in the book of the Psalms. But, *why* was this such a popular verse? Because it points out a *very* important ***truth***, which is that: the Lord (YHVH) is good *because* His mercy *endures forever*. However, many people do *not* know our Heavenly Father (Isa 55:8-9, Jer 4:22). And that's because they don't study His Word. As He points out in Jer 9:6, *through deceit they* ***refuse*** *to know me*. So, the *only* way we can get to know God is to understand *the truth*; and the only way we can know what the truth *really is*, is to study God's Word (John 17:17). And, as Jesus so profoundly explained, ***this is life eternal****, that they might* ***know thee*** *the only* ***true*** *God,* ***and*** *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent* (John 17:3).

So, those who reject God's Word also reject the truth - and thus, they also *refuse to know Him.* Rather, they love the deception (deceit) of lies (2 Thess 2:10-12). For, of a truth, when you study God's Word (the Bible) you *cannot help* but come to understand *how* 'good' the Lord (YHVH) really is - for His 'mercy' (kindness) is shown (over and over again) throughout the Bible. While some think the 'God of the Bible' is a 'God of hate', that's *totally* incorrect. And they *usually* think that because of people who *pervert* God's Word, and teach 'traditions of man' instead of the *pure* (unadulterated) Word of God [https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/212]. So, the truth is that: our Heavenly Father is *not* 'out to get' *anyone*, i.e. He's not looking for people to 'burn in hell' - as some teach, in an attempt to get (and keep) more converts, i.e. more money to 'pad their pockets'! Rather, our Heavenly Father is *merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth* (Ex 34:6). However, **there is a stipulation**! He's *only* this way to those who fear, love *and obey* Him (Ex 20:6). But to those who *hate* Him (rebel against Him, i.e. disobey Him *willingly*) He punishes them *fairly* (Ex 20:5), which means He punishes them *according to their sins* (Deut 7:9-13; Isa 59:18, Ps 18:5-6, etc.), which is *exactly* how Jesus Christ judges too (Rom 2:5-8; Jude 14-15, 2 Cor 5:10, etc.).

So, this first verse (here in Ps 136) points out the *timeless truth* that our Heavenly Father's mercy *always* exists and even endures *forever*. But again, that's *only* to those who are willing to face themselves, repent for their sins, seek Him (via His Word) and strive *earnestly* to obey Him. With those who refuse Him (His Word) He doesn't show mercy (kindness or forgiveness) *because* they are *not* repentant (Prov 1:31). Thus, they *have* to be punished for their sins and, He *always* punishes people ***righteously***. As Prov 1:31 says, *therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices*. And, in Ps 18:26, David points out that, "*with the forward* [#6141] *thou wilt shew thyself forward* [#6617]", which means the Lord

(YHVH) fights against (punishes) those who do evil things! So, the *only* reason the Lord (YHVH) God Almighty is ever *not* merciful to someone, is *because* they are *doing wickedly* and they *refuse to change*! And truly, it **is** a righteous thing for the Lord (YHVH) to punish evil (2 Thess 1:6), for *not* doing so would be *condoning it* - which is something our Heavenly Father will *never* do. That's why it's written that He is no 'respecter' of persons (Deut 1:17, Acts 10:34, Rom 2:11, 1 Pt 1:17, John 12:46-48, Col 3:24-25). In other words, the Lord (YHVH) cannot be bribed, threatened, or coerced (in any way, shape or form) into allowing people to get away with *unrepentant* sin. Now, if they *earnestly* repent (and strive to change their wicked heart and ways) He *will* forgive them **but**, He usually still chastises them *because* that is *for our good* (Heb 12). So again, this first verse (here in Ps 136) points out the ***timeless* truth** that our Heavenly Father's mercy *always* exists and *endures* forever. But we must *never* forget what *we must do* in order to obtain His great mercy, i.e. *earnestly* repent for our sins, *diligently* study His Word (2 Tim 2:15) and strive *to obey* it (Mth 5:6, 19, 7:24-27; Rom 2:7; 1 Pt 4:1-2, etc.)!

Further, this phrase ("*His mercy endureth forever*") will be used in *every* single verse of this Psalm 136. Thus, it is used **twenty-six** times! And, whenever something is repeated in the Scriptures, it's *always* done to ***add emphasis***… clearly, the Psalmist is adding *great* emphasis to the fact that the Lord's (YHVH's) mercy (kindness) is 'always and forever'! However, when we look at the meaning this number (26) carries in **Biblical Numerics**, you'll see that it signifies "***The Gospel of Jesus Christ***"! [https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/960]. Indeed, the Gospel of Jesus Christ **is** truly about God's '*mercy*' being shown towards those who *earnestly* accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, put away their sins (repent) *and* work to obey the Lord (YHVH), *from the heart*! The father of John 'the Baptist' (Zacharias) explained this quite well (via the Holy Spirit within him) when his son, John ('the Baptist') was born (Lk 1:68-79).

Additionally, this exact phrase ("His mercy endureth forever") was *also* used in a song, by David, in the celebration when the Ark of the Covenant was first brought to Zion (1 Chron 16:7, 34). And it was used again, at the dedication of the Temple that Solomon built (2 Chron 7:3). So, the Psalmist of this 136th chapter (likely Hezekiah) makes a call to 'give thanks' (praise, revere and worship) the Lord (YHVH); and then he also gives us a couple of reasons for doing so, i.e. because he is 'good' and His 'mercy endureth forever'. And, indeed, the Lord (YHVH) is good to those who love, fear, revere and obey Him. As the Lord (YHVH) Himself testified, "*The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth*" (Ex 34:6)! Further still, Ps 103:8-14 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Psalms/1367] gives an excellent explanation of how the Lord (YHVH) is *so very* good to us who love, fear and obey Him…

Psalm 136
2 O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

So, while the first verse called us to 'give thanks' to (*to revere* or *worship,* #3034) the Lord (YHVH), the Psalmist (likely Hezekiah) calls us to do the *same* to the 'God of gods' (who IS Yehovah), *because* His "mercy endureth forever" (an important point he'll keep reinforcing to us). And this phrase 'God of gods' is really interesting *because* the word 'God' and 'gods' are both the *same* Hebrew word! So, this verse shows us the *vital* importance of understanding the 'titles' of Yehovah [https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1218]. And, as we learned back in Ps 135:5, the Hebrew word ***'Elohiym*** (#430) can mean **'gods'** ***in the ordinary sense;*** and, can even refer ***to magistrates***, i.e. ***rulers on earth*** or, ***someone who had authority*** or ***power*** (Ex 7:1, 22:28, Ps 82:1,6, John 10:34-36). And, it is in the sense of ordinary 'gods', and rulers on earth, that the second word 'god' (with a *small* 'g') is being used. However, when it's being used to refer to Yehovah (#3068), the word ***'Elohiym*** means ***the Supreme God***, who is our ***Creator*** (#430). So, the term "god" (#430) is *not* a specific name for YHVH. It is a *generic term* that has been applied to Him; and rightly so because YHVH is the God *above* all gods just as He is the Lord above all lords (another generic title) and the King above all kings (another generic title). And, while there *are* some 'gods' (rulers) He delegates (ex: Ex 22:28, Deut 1:12-17, etc.) there are *many* 'gods' that are *not* delegated rulers by YHVH. Yet, even though God did commission earthly rulers ('gods') to govern His children, they still were ***not*** *to be worshiped* (nor are the *un-authorized* 'gods' to be worshipped), as the First Commandment (Ex 20:3) so clearly explains.

So then, the use of God's Sacred (and covenantal) name points out we *should* 'give thanks' (worship and revere) Him because Yehovah is *Eternal* and *self-existent*. And the use of His 'title' *'Elohiym* (#430) points out that we should 'give thanks' (worship and revere) Him because He is the *Supreme* God, who is *greater* than, and *above all,* others called 'god', both on earth *and* in heaven (PS 135:5). And that is because He is our *Creator*! So, do you see what the Psalmist is doing? He's using God's Sacred Name (Yehovah, i.e. YHVH), *and* a 'title', to teach us different *reasons* that He (alone) is to be praised, revered, and worshiped. And so, while he repeats the same ending phrase ("for His mercy endureth forever", which is yet *another* reason to praise, revere and worship Him), the Psalmist is also revealing *different aspects,* or *characteristics,* of our Creator, to teach us *more reasons* **why** He alone should be praised and worshiped…

Psalm 136
3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

So, after using God's Sacred (and covenantal) name (Yehovah, #3068) and His 'title' of 'Elohiym (#430), the Psalmist now uses another 'title'. And yet again the words "Lord" and "lords" are the *same* Hebrew word. And, as with the phrase "God of gods", the *capital* letter verses the *small* letter is important because this Hebrew word for "Lord" has more than one meaning. And the capital letter tells us what the Psalmist is referring to. So, the word "Lord", and "lord", are both the Hebrew word ***'Adown*** or (shortened) ***'adon*** (#113), which simply means ***sovereign***, i.e. ***controller*** (human or divine). So, while there are many sovereign rulers on earth

("lords"), there is only one Sovereign Ruler over **all** the earth. As the *Companion Bible* (in Apx 4 iii [1]) tells us, '*Adown* (or '*Adon*) is ***the Lord*** (Yehovah) ***as Ruler in the earth***. So, this 'title' teaches us that He is the *only* Sovereign Ruler over all the earth - all others who have sovereignty on the earth only control *parts* of the earth – not *all of it* as Yehovah does. And the reason for this is because Yehovah *is our Creator*; and He thus has *full control* over all the earth; no one else is 'above' Him in any way, shape or fashion.

So, the Psalmist has given God's Sacred (and covenantal) Name (Yehovah, #3068) and two 'titles' ('Elohiym, #430 and 'Adown, #113) to teach us that *only* Yehovah is **Eternal** (because He is self-existent), the **Supreme God**, **our Creator,** and the **Sovereign Ruler** over all the earth (and heaven too). And these are *all* reasons we should praise, revere and worship ('give thanks', #3034) Him! This is why the **First Commandment** [https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/869] tells us, "*Thou shalt have **no** other gods before me*" (Ex 20:3). While we will have others who rule over us on earth, we are subordinate to the Lord (YHVH) *first and foremost*. This means, if rulers on earth tell us we should do something that is *contrary* to God's Word, we must ***not comply*** with their *illegal* demands, as Rom 13 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Romans/44] *clearly* explains **if** you *actually* read the *entire* chapter. Many 'Pastors' twist this (wittingly or unwittingly) when teaching their congregations that we must obey the government *no matter what*. The point to Romans 13 is *not* that we are to be *blindly* obedient to earthly governments (or rulers) but, that we are *not to be* insurrectionists, *nor* rebel rousers. We *should* obey our earthly governments (as well as bosses at our jobs, etc.) *as much as we can* ***while still obeying God's Word***. But, once they try to demand we *disobey* God's Word, then they have *crossed* a 'red line'. For *no one* has the right to demand we *disobey* our Creator, Yehovah!

For good examples of how to behave during times like this (i.e. when the government demands we *disobey* our Creator, Yehovah), we should look at how David behaved when he was chased (for *years*) by Saul (who was trying to *kill* David) even though he had done *nothing* wrong. He didn't try to get revenge, nor did he try to overthrow Saul as the king; he was *not* a rebel rouser *nor* an insurrectionist (despite what Saul accused him of). Rather, David prayed to God for help but, he did *not* try to take 'judgment' into his own hands because (at that time), he didn't have the authority to do so (1 Sam 24:3-15). Yet, we can also look at how Daniel handled himself when the heathen king, he worked for, *demanded* that he **not** pray to *his* God (YHVH). Despite knowing (full well) that the consequence for praying to any God (or man) for thirty days (except the king Darius) was to be cast into a den of lions (Dan 6:7), Daniel was still faithful to pray **openly** to *his* God, Yehovah (Dan 6:10-11). And we can also look to the 'three Hebrew children' (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Dan 3:12) who, despite being threatened with death by a fiery furnace (Dan 3:5-6), also refused to bow to the golden image the king of Babylon set up. And what they said, when the king asked why they wouldn't bow to his golden image, is something we should never forget, "***If it be so***, *our God whom we serve* ***is able to deliver us*** *from the burning fiery furnace,* ***and he will deliver us*** *out of thine hand, O king.* ***But if not***, *be it*

*known unto thee, O king, that we will **not** serve thy gods, **nor** worship the golden image which thou hast set up*" (Dan 3:14-18). So, they boldly declared that they knew their God (Yehvoah) *could* deliver them – both from the king *and* from the fiery furnace. However, they also acknowledged that it *might not* be His will to do so. But, *either way*, they were **not** going to worship *any other* God than *their* God (Yehovah). They truly were ready to be murdered in order to remain loyal to the one-and-only true God, Yehovah!

And that is *exactly* the mindset we too *must* have. For we know that the Lord (YHVH) *can* deliver us out of *all* trials and tribulations (as well as temptations, 1 Cor 10:11). Yet, that doesn't mean it's always going to be within His will. When it's our time to die, the Lord (YHVH) will let us do so. But, if it's not, He will deliver us – just as He did for David, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego – for all those men He still wanted to stay on earth. Why? Not so they could 'live it up' and party all the time! No, it was because they still had things He wanted them to do. So, when we **serve** the *Living* God (YHVH), He'll make sure we *don't* die until it's "our time to go". But, either way, we must be mentally (spiritually) prepared to suffer the consequences for remaining faithful to the *one and only* **true** God (YHVH). As Jesus said, "*Whosoever therefore **shall** confess me before men, him **will I** confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever **shall** deny me before men, him **will I** also deny before my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt 10:32-33). So, we cannot ever deny our faith in Jesus Christ, nor 'go along to get along' when anyone (even our boss our government) tries to get us to disobey our Heavenly Father (YHVH).

As Jesus so well asked, "*what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*?" (Mth 16:26). Is your flesh body *really* so important that you'd be willing to exchange a bit more time in it *in exchange* for having your *soul* **completely** ***blotted out of existence*** (Rev 20:10-15)? No, there is *nothing* in this life worth our own soul; and that's why we must be willing to '*not* comply' with *any* orders given by 'other gods' despite what consequences might come of it. Again, never forget our examples, such as David, Daniel and the three Hebrew children. For they well knew that Yehovah is the *only* Eternal one, the Supreme God, our Creator, and the *only* One who has *full* control (sovereignty) on the earth and in heaven… which is *exactly* what this Psalmist has been pointing out in these first three verses (in Ps 135). And, by examining what this truly means – that we must obey Yehovah, first and foremost – we can see just *why* knowing God's Sacred Name (Yehovah), and His 'titles' ('Elohim and 'Adown) is *so very important*. For, if we are not *deeply* committed to the Eternal God, the Supreme God, our Creator who has full control on earth (and in heaven) … then we are *not going to have the kind of internal conviction needed to remain loyal to Him* when 'push comes to shove'.

While we've seen a recent example of the government overreaching their authority [https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/285], what is soon coming will be *far* worse. And that's

because it will be 'supernatural' entities (i.e. Satan and his fallen angels) who will be on earth trying to get us to *disobey* God's Word. And Jesus calls this the 'great tribulation' (Mth 24:21) because the nature of it is *so deceptive*. As Paul warned us, in 2 Cor 11:13-15, Satan 'transforms' (i.e. disguises, #3345) himself into an 'angel of light', i.e. he claims to be righteous but, is *far from it*. And that means, when he comes to the earth (*before* the true Jesus returns) he will be *pretending* to be "God" our 'Savior' who has come to 'save the world'… just as *all* major religions are waiting for (Rev 12, 2 Thess 2, etc.)! And again, if we are not knowledgeable of what God's Word *actually* says we should do (and *not* do), we will *easily* be fooled by Satan's lies and miracles (Dan 11:21-34; Rev 13:14, 2 Thess 2:1-10). And *this* is *why* it is ***so*** important to know *who* the Eternal God (Yehvoah) is. And why it's so important to know the difference between the *true* 'God' verses other 'gods'. And why it's ***so*** important to know the difference between the *true* 'Lord' verses other 'lords'… for we must know the difference else we *will* be fooled into worshiping false gods (Satan himself, Rev 13:4,14) and idols ('the image of the beast', Rev 13:4), which Paul calls the 'falling away' but, in the Greek means '*defection from the truth*', i.e. **apostasy** (2 Thess 2:3) [https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/499]…

*22 Let us draw near with a true heart **in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*
*23 Let us **hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering**; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
*26 For if we sin **wilfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,*
27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.
28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:
29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?
30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.
*31 **It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God**.*
Heb 10:22-31

We'll pick this up in part 2…

AMEN.