

Steadfast Love (“hesed”)

- Throughout the psalms, His lovingkindness is remembered, considered, invoked, and praised.
- The word “hesed” appears 127 times across the collection in 54 separate psalms.
- The characteristics of God are certainly not specific to any group. He is no respecter of persons (Rom. 2:11).
- However, this word is most often used referring to those enjoying His covenant benefits. One author described it as “God’s steadfast love for His covenant people”.
- Often use alongside faithfulness, truth, covenant.
- Lamentations 3:16-26, 31-32, 40-42

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3. Look at the translations you have available to you. List the different words you find for “hesed”.

- Steadfast love (ESV, RSV)
- Lovingkindness (ASB, NASB, AMP)
- Mercy (KJV & NKJV)
- Love (NIV & HCSB)
- Loyal love (NET)
- Faithful love (NLT)

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4. In order to get a sense of the “faithfulness to a covenant” aspect in which the word is sometimes used, to what situation was “hesed” applied in each passage? (NASB translation in parentheses)
- a) Gen. 32:10 (lovingkindness)
- Reunion of Jacob and Esau
 - Isaac blesses Jacob (Gen. 28:3-4)
 - God’s promise to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-17)
 - Instructed to return by God (31:3)
 - Jacob’s prayer (v. 10-12)

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4. In order to get a sense of the “faithfulness to a covenant” aspect in which the word is sometimes used, to what situation was “hesed” applied in each passage? (NASB translation in parentheses)
- b) Gen. 47:29 (kindness)
- Jacob asked to be buried with his fathers
 - “Promise to deal kindly and truly with me” (ESV)
 - Fulfilled faithfully in Gen. 50:5-7

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4. In order to get a sense of the “faithfulness to a covenant” aspect in which the word is sometimes used, to what situation was “hesed” applied in each passage? (NASB translation in parentheses)
- c) Ex. 15:13 (lovingkindness)
- Upon deliverance from Egypt
 - Covenant promises (Ex. 6:3-8)
 - Sung as if they had already happened as the journey began (Ex. 15:13-18)

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4. In order to get a sense of the “faithfulness to a covenant” aspect in which the word is sometimes used, to what situation was “hesed” applied in each passage? (NASB translation in parentheses)
- d) Ex. 20:6 (lovingkindness)
- Giving of the ten commandments
 - God establishing His covenant with Israel (19:3-6)
 - As He describes Himself and His faithfulness to those honoring that covenant (20:5-6)

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4. In order to get a sense of the “faithfulness to a covenant” aspect in which the word is sometimes used, to what situation was “hesed” applied in each passage? (NASB translation in parentheses)
- e) Deut. 7:9-12 (lovingkindness)
- Moses’ instructions to Israel
 - “When you enter the land... make no covenant with them.” (v. 1-2)
 - Jehovah chose them, not as a great nation, but because of the covenant made with their fathers. (v. 6-12)
 - “The faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love...” (v. 9 & 12)

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- f) 1 Sam. 20:8, 14-15 (kindly, lovingkindness)
- Covenant between David and Jonathan
 - David asks Jonathan to honor covenant (v. 8-9)
 - Jonathan asks for the same mercy and “steadfast love of the Lord” once David is king (v. 14-15)
 - A covenant entered (v. 16-17) and fulfilled (2 Sam. 9)

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- g) Isaiah 54:7-10 (lovingkindness)
- God promises renewed blessing through Isaiah
 - Lest we think “hesed” will preclude judgement
 - Israel’s judgement compared to the flood
 - God’s covenant after the flood (Gen. 8:21; 9:11)
 - He will remember His covenant people, just as He did Noah (Isa. 54:8b, 10b)

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The Psalms Proclaim His Steadfast Love

5. From the groups of psalms listed, what leads the psalmist to remember, extol, or invoke God's steadfast love?
- a) It is His nature/character
- As God of gods, Lord of lords, God of heaven (136:2-3, 26)
 - Good (107:1; 136:1; 109:21)
 - Abundant (36:5-9)
 - Righteous judgements (48:9-10)
 - Merciful and gracious (86:15; 145:8)
 - All of the above (103:6-14)

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5. From the groups of psalms listed, what leads the psalmist to remember, extol, or invoke God's steadfast love?
 - b) His power
 - Over nature (107:23-32)
 - As creator (136:4-9)
 - As provider through His creation (147:7-11)
 - Incomparable for all these reasons (89:5-14)

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5. From the groups of psalms listed, what leads the psalmist to remember, extol, or invoke God's steadfast love?
- c) Remembering what He has done
- Despite Israel's unfaithfulness (106:4-46)
 - "Let them thank the Lord for His steadfast love, for His wondrous works to the children of man" (107:4-22)
 - As He brought them out of Egypt (136:10-16)

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5. From the groups of psalms listed, what leads the psalmist to remember, extol, or invoke God's steadfast love?
- d) God as rescuer and redeemer (106:44-107:3)
- Let the wise consider His steadfast love (107:33-43)
 - The righteous find comfort and shelter in His steadfast love (Ps. 5; Ps. 6; Ps. 17)
 - As he considers God's redemption of those who are His in the past (77:5-15; Ps 85)
 - Not only redeemed, crowned (surrounded) with love and mercy (103:1-5)

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