



CHESED



STEADFAST  
LOVE

Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the lord. Ps 107:43

# THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

These short “Meditations on Mercy” are not intended to replace one’s regular reading and meditation on God’s Word. Instead, they are offered as a supplement to those times, much like one takes vitamins along with their meal. The purpose of the vitamin isn’t to replace the meal but to add to the meal something that may be missing. So also, these short glimpses of truth are intended to stir faith and love in our great God and lead to a life of surrendered and devoted worship.

For some, these meditations will prove most helpful before their regular reading of the Word. Or perhaps they will be most helpful as a brief meditation before bed. Others may prefer to meditate on these concise truths during a pause at lunch hour in order to bring their mind back to a faith-filled consciousness of God. However and whenever done, it is hoped that these short pauses over grand truths will convey a sanctifying grace on those who ponder them.

## O1

***But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. Ps 5:7***

Entering God's presence is not an easy thing. In fact it cannot be done at all unless God opens the door. How is the door opened for us according to Psalm 5:7? (see also Heb 10:19). What does an encounter with God's love produce in us according to the second part of the verse? Does this surprise you? What then does this tell us about the absence of awe and sense of God's holiness in the church, our family, or in our life?

## O2

***By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. Ps 42:8***

This verse is part of two Psalms that go together- Psalm 42 & 43. They express the anguish of a believer who has lost the sense of God's presence and favour in their life.

What we find here is that "God is omnipresent in a poem that complains of his absence, and ironically, the pain of separation is a way of feeling the presence" John Goldingay, Psalms Vol 2, p.34

Here is a command of God rarely considered. A command FOR his children. Are you aware of specific ways that this love is being shown in your life? What is the effect of this awareness? (see verse 8b)

"His song" is another way of expressing the joy of the Holy Spirit – that faith-sense of God's delight in his children. Could it be that the absence of joy in our life is not because of a lack of God's love, but because of a lack of recognition and awareness of his love?

## 03

***Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Ps 90:14***

It is not enough to be informed intellectually about God's love. We need to know its goodness in our souls—to savour its goodness. What is missed from our lives when we don't relish and enjoy the goodness of his love? (see verse 14b) According to this verse, how does one become satisfied with God's love? Note God's part and our part in this experience.

## 04

***O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. Ps. 130:7***

What is presented here as the parallel to God's steadfast love? What is the relationship between God's love and the word "plentiful"? What does this reveal to us about God that we are often slow to believe?

## 05

***Please pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now. Num 14:19***

Pardon for sin is never given without a heart of love and mercy behind it. So it is with God toward us. So it is with us toward others. The heart ready to forgive never appears out of nowhere. There is always a powerful love behind it.

Who is this prayer for? What is the significance of the words "according to"? What is the significance of the word "greatness"? Have you ever prayed like this for your family? For your church? For your family of churches?

## 06

***The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Exod 34:6***

Note the first characteristic about himself that God chooses to make known. What is significant about this? Why do you think God added the word “abounding” to the already power packed word “steadfast love”? God wants us to know something about Himself that we find difficult to fully believe. He is extravagant in his love. Lavish and generous beyond belief! This is our God.

## 07

***Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you. 2 Sam 2:6***

***Wondrously show your steadfast love. & Ps 17:7***

Have you ever prayed for God to show steadfast love and faithfulness to others in your life? Have you ever spoken this blessing over your children using these words? It honors God for his steadfast love to be seen and on display.

## 08

***I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Ps 13:5 & Ps 33:21***

According to these verses, what is the most direct pathway to joy? Why do you think this is true? What is the obvious (or not so obvious) correlation between these two? Anxiety is one of the thieves of joy. Notice how 1 Peter 5:6-7 presents the same solution as these verses to dispelling worry from our lives.

## 09

***But you, O GOD my Lord, deal on my behalf for your name's sake; because your steadfast love is good, deliver me!***

***Ps 109:21***

Here we find two very effective ways to pray:

- (1) Appeal to God's honor (see Duet 9:26-28)
- (2) Appeal to God's character

The word "because" indicates the Psalmist gave God reasons why he should answer his prayer. What is the connection between God's goodness and his deliverance in this passage? When we face times that we are tempted to doubt God's goodness, how can contemplating his great salvation help us perceive God's goodness once again?

## 10

***All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. Ps 25:10***

***With the merciful you show yourself merciful; with the blameless man you show yourself blameless; with the purified you show yourself pure; and with the crooked you make yourself seem tortuous. For you save a humble people, but the haughty eyes you bring down. Ps 18:25-27***

We could add the words "perceived to be" between the words "are" and "steadfast love" to give the sense of Ps 25:10. In other words, we become more aware of God's activity and presence as we submit to him. The submitted one "sees" more clearly. Note this also in Ps 18:25. The opposite pattern also holds true – God seems dark and crooked to the person who is wrong inside (see Ps 18:26). Ps 18:27 gives us the root cause of this. The proud man never sees God accurately.

## 11

***Your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in your faithfulness. Ps 26:3***

Conscious awareness of God is a ministry of the Holy Spirit. From our side it evidences itself as a gentle faith that calls to mind and recognizes God's presence with us. What is the connection between living with a sense of God's love and "walking in faithfulness"? (compare Eph 3:16-19 with Eph 4:1-3)

## 12

***I will rejoice and be glad in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have known the distress of my soul. Ps 31:7***

What do we discover here about steadfast love? How does God's intimate knowledge of our suffering make us glad? It is not the absence of trials that give us joy but the presence of God. Knowing that he knows and cares lifts the burden.

## 13

***Though I walk in the midst of trouble...The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands. Ps 138:7a, 8***

A proclamation and a prayer. Since God is loving, he has a purpose for each one of us. His steadfast love includes a personal and providentially unfolding plan – even when we walk in the midst of trouble. Note what the word "work" refers to! (compare with Eph 2:10)

## 14

***We have thought on your steadfast love, O God, in the midst of your temple. As your name, O God, so your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness. Ps 89:9-10***

It seems that most people are perpetually busy. So much to do, so little time. No time to even think or reflect. But if we dare to push the pause button and think—really think—our world might suddenly appear very different. What is the close connection between our contemplation of God and our praise of him?

## 15

***I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress. O my Strength, I will sing praises to you, for you, O God, are my fortress, the God who shows me steadfast love. Ps 59:16-17***

A good way to start the day, regardless of the quality of our voice. Some of us can't sing well, but we can sing heartily! We need to reach outside of ourselves, outside of our circumstances – out and up to God to get that kind of joy. Verse 16 speaks of God's attributes. Verse 17 speaks of those attributes being shared with the Psalmist. What words in verse 17 convey this? What is the relationship between our experience of God's attributes and our praise of him?

## 16

***Appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him! Ps 61:7***

These two attributes of God are often paired together- God's steadfast love and faithfulness. Here we find a prayer where these two attributes are personified. They are compared to two mighty sentries that will guard and protect. Pray this prayer for some of the people in your life.



## 17

***I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. Ps 63:2-4***

In what ways is God's steadfast love better than life itself? Compare the following verses:

***But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. Acts 20:24***

***For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Phil 1:21-23***

## 18

***Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Ps 77:8***

Here we see a close relationship between God's love and God's promises. It is good for us to remember the character of the One behind the promises in scripture. It is good for us to remember the motive of the One making the promises. His promises will come to an end when his steadfast love comes to an end. What hope is found in tying God's promises to his undying steadfast love? How does this help us when the promise seems long delayed in coming?

## 19

***But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness. Ps 69:13***

God is not in as hurry. Nor are his delays because of a cooling of his affections. The Psalmist speaks of the “abundance” of God’s steadfast love – yet the answer has still not come. Have you been able to say with contented resignation, “At an acceptable time, O God” when faced with a delayed answer to prayer? Perhaps God is also waiting for something from us – our yielded trust in him! (see also Ps 102:13)

## 20

***I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever. For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. Ps 86:12-13***

Every day is a good day if we know Christ. To be able to say, “you have delivered my soul from the depths” is to be compelled to also say “great is your steadfast love toward me”. No matter what the disappointment, defeat, or trial. Have you taken time today to thank God for saving you? Have you contemplated what your salvation implies about God’s personal interest in you?

## 21

***Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you. Blessed are the people who know the festal shout, who walk, O LORD, in the light of your face. Ps 89:14-15***

Note the foundational pillars of God's sovereign rule. Then marvel at what emanates outward from the throne towards us! What a picture of the cross! This is no mere static doctrinal affirmation. It is to affect us deeply because it has massive implications.

The word translated "festal shout" could also be translated as "battle cry" or "joyful acclamation". It is the same word used in Joshua 6:5. It is the declaration of faith in God when as yet his action is still unseen (Heb 11:1). Does the sense of God's presence impart this kind of faith, or does this kind of faith make one aware of God's presence? (lit. "the light of Your face")

## 22

***My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted. Ps 89:24***

This is a promise regarding the Davidic Messiah King that was fulfilled in Jesus. (see Ps 89:27-29) Again we see God's faithfulness coupled with his steadfast love. God promises exaltation to this king in His name. How are God's faithfulness and steadfast love now also with us "in Christ's name"? See 1 Cor 1:9 & Rom 8:38-39

## 23

***My steadfast love I will keep for him forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him. Ps 89:28***

We learn two vital truths about God's steadfast love in this verse. What are they? How are these same two realities experienced "in Christ"? See Matt 26:28 & Jer 31:3

## 24

***For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you. Isa 54:10***

How does knowing that God is compassionate make the promise of this verse all the more meaningful? One of the sad realities of living is the loss of people from our life. People that we love die. Friends move away – sometimes not only physically but relationally. Nothing seems to last. In this precious verse God assures us that we can count on something to last. Never to depart. Never removed. More sure than the ancient Rocky mountains, Alps, or Himalayas. Something that will not change at last!

## 25

***This I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lam 3:21-23***

These verses are written in the middle of darkness and sorrow (Lam 3:18). Yet even while “hope has perished”, the writer says, “But this I call to mind and therefore have hope”. Hope when hope is gone! What is it that injects such hope into a hopeless situation? “Ponder anew what the Almighty can do if with his love he befriend thee”.

## 26

***Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Mic 7:18-19***

Have you ever thought about what brings delight to God’s heart? How is steadfast love defined in this verse? Does it not leave us in awe exclaiming, “Who is a God like you!”. Because God delights in steadfast love he devised a way to “cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (vs 19). He did this by “treading our iniquities underfoot” even as His own Son was tread underfoot for a time on that cruel cross.

## 27

***For the Lord will not cast off forever, but, though he cause grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. Lam 3:31-33***

In these verses we find two truths that sustain us in the middle of deep suffering. First, we need to know that our suffering is not random and meaningless. Verse 32 tells us that God sometimes “causes grief”. It comes by design.

But that truth alone is not enough to comfort. What if the God who designs these things for us is cold and cruel? What if we are only small pawns on His cosmic chessboard that are easily disposed of? We need to know not only God’s awesome sovereignty but also of his infinite goodness and love. Amazingly, verse 33 says, “God does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men”.

Put the two verses together and we are faced with an incredible reality about God. He causes grief but not willingly. He wills in one way what he doesn’t will on another.

According to verse 32, what is the core of God’s heart toward us in the midst of suffering? Remember that “compassion” is a feeling word. Why is this truth so comforting to know? What conception about God, common in suffering, does this adjust and answer?

## 28

***Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory, for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness! Ps 115:1***

What can the creature give to God? “nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything” (Acts 17:25)

God, then, does not need glory given. His glory is undiminished whether we acknowledge it or not. Who, then, is giving the glory in this verse? Think carefully. There is a speaker, the one spoken to, and the request. It does not say “to your name be glory” which would be a word of praise. It is instead a request. Think how grand God’s steadfast love is, if it brings honor and praise from the heights of heaven itself!

## 29

***When I thought, “My foot slips,” your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up. Ps 94:18***

Another way God’s steadfast love impacts our life! Here is a clear example of “being transformed by the renewing of our mind” (Rom 12:2)

How does God’s steadfast love “hold us up” when we are aware we are slipping in our thoughts?

## 30

***Who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. Ps 103:4-5***

Most of us are aware that we are saved from something. Wonderful as that is, it can remain very impersonal. The fireman may rescue someone from the fire, but have no relationship with the rescued one afterward. Not so with God. Think of a coronation. God is the one placing the crown on your head. And what exactly is that crown? It is all that he is in himself—a giving of HIMSELF to you. According to verse 5, what is the result of this extravagant gift?

## 31

***Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the LORD. Ps 107:43***

The wise govern their thought life. Years ago, in college, I studied Hydraulics and Pneumatics. Pneumatics is the use of pressurized air to accomplish tasks too difficult for a person to handle alone. Thoughts are like air. Air can be undirected blowing, this way and that, or it can be like pneumatic air – focused and put to good use. Spiritually speaking, our thoughts are most useful, productive, and wise when they are contemplating God. This past month has been dedicated to pondering and “considering the steadfast love of the Lord”. What truths about this theme are lingering in your mind? Has there been any insight discovered that has caused new faith to rise up in your heart? How are you expressing that faith to your heavenly Father?







**SOVEREIGN GRACE**  
CHURCH TORONTO