

**SBC – Feb. 19, 2023**

**Psalm 89 (NKJV)**

***“The Davidic Covenant & the Messiah – Part One”***

Psalm 89 is a Psalm about the Davidic covenant and the Davidic covenant is ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah – which makes this a Messianic Psalm.

Psalm 89 emphasizes that the Lord will establish David's seed and throne forever— in the Messiah God's Firstborn will be made higher than the kings of the earth.

After Psalm 119 and Psalm 78, the third longest Psalm in the Bible is Psalm 89. The theme is the DAVIDIC covenant showing the importance of this theme in the Bible.

We don't know the occasion for this Psalm but it relates to a time of calamity after the time God made His everlasting covenant with David. Some have conjectured that it may have been penned around the time of the Babylonian Exile. But whatever the occasion things looked bleak for Israel. It looked bleak in terms of God fulfilling the promises He made to David. It's in that context that the writer in faith emphasizes God's covenant faithfulness in spite of the dire circumstances.

The psalm is a study in the age-old apparent conflict between the promises of a faithful, loving God, and the catastrophes that often occur. – ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

Sometimes there is a conflict between our theology and our experience. The writer's theology is very clear concerning God's everlasting promises to David and the promise of an enduring King sitting on his throne. But the challenge was how to explain the current situation where there was no king and the throne was abdicated. That was the challenge.

### **Slide # 1**

#### **Key Words**

Mercy (Heb. Heseb) – 8 times

Covenant – 4 times

Forever – 9 times

Faithfulness – 7 times

Throne – 5 times

My servant David – 2 times

Anointed – 3 times

**Slide # 2****Outline of Psalm 89***Theme: The Incomparable God & His Covenant to David*

- 1-4** – God’s Covenant Faithfulness
- 5-14** – God Praised for His Attributes
- 15-18** – The Blessedness of God’s People
- 19-24** God Blessed King David
- 25-29** – God’s Covenant with David
- 30-37** – Rehearsing God’s Promises to David
- 38-45** The Covenant and the Crisis
- 46-51** – A Desperate Plea for Divine Intervention
- 52** - Doxology

**Psalm 89 (NKJV)****A Contemplation of Ethan the Ezrahite.**

There are several men named Ethan in the Scriptures. A prominent one was a contemporary of king Solomon (cf. 1 Kg. 4:31). He was a Levite who was famous for his wisdom and his musical leadership. (cf. 1 Chron. 15:19; 2 Chron. 5:12). However, some commentaries think the writer of this Psalm may have actually been a later descendant of the Ethan in Solomon’s time or someone of his ilk who wrote in his name. This is because the historical description later in the Psalm seems to indicate an occasion after the time of David and Solomon in which the Davidic covenant in practical reality seems to be in jeopardy.

**1-4 – God’s Covenant Faithfulness**

**1 I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.**

The Psalm begins on a worshipful note of faith with the writer declaring He will sing of the mercies and faithfulness of the LORD (YHWH) forever. No matter how dire the circumstances he is still convinced that God ultimately will fulfill His covenant promises.

The word “mercies” is the Hebrew word “hesed”. This is a very rich word with deep meaning related to God’s faithfulness.

It is commonly translated as “lovingkindness” but also translated as “steadfast love” or “covenant loyalty”. As seen here it is tied to the idea of God’s FAITHFULNESS!

**2 For I have said, “Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens.”**

Based on God’s covenant faithfulness He is building something that will endure forever. And specifically...

**3 “I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David:**

**4 ‘Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.’ ” Selah**

God’s mercy (covenant love) and faithfulness are linked to the covenant God swore to David. David was God’s choice, here called God’s “chosen”.

God promised David a “seed” that would be established forever and a throne that would endure for all generations.

The “seed” was introduced in Gen. 3:15 and then developed throughout the OT. The seed would come through the tribe of Judah as seen in Gen. 49:10 and then more specifically through the line of David, and ultimately more specifically of the virgin Mary. All of the specifics related to this “seed” are fulfilled to the letter in Jesus. The Davidic covenant is fulfilled ultimately in the Messiah Jesus.

### **Slide # 3**

**Luke 1:32–33 (NKJV)**

**32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**

**33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”**

Psalm 89:1-4 is a great statement deserving of “Selah” which emphasizes a musical pause giving time for reflection and meditation.

### **5-14 – God Praised for His Attributes**

**5 And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints.**

“Saints” here is literally “holy ones” and many think here it refers to angelic beings. Heaven and earth praise God for the wonder of His covenant faithfulness.

**6 For who in the heavens can be compared to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to the LORD?**

**7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him.**

**8 O LORD God of hosts, Who is mighty like You, O LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.**

God is incomparable! In His greatness no one is like Him! God does what no one else can do! This reality is God’s HOLINESS. Holy means “set apart”. God is totally unique in that there is none other like Him. He is in a category all of His own. He can’t even be compared. There is none other on His level.

**9 You rule the raging of the sea; When its waves rise, You still them.**

God is sovereign over chaos! To the Jew the raging sea represented “unmanageable chaos”. God rules over unmanageable chaos! God controls nature including the waves of the sea. This had a remarkable application to the ministry of Christ as He stilled the storm on the sea of Galilee.

Every once in a while I have this cultist call me who doesn’t believe that Jesus is eternal God. He just wants to argue and flies all over the place. This one time he called and I happened to be preparing to teach out of Mark 4 where a great windstorm arose and it says the waves beat in the boat. Jesus was sleeping and the disciples were terrified. They awoke Jesus and He said to the sea, “Peace, be still!” and instantly the Bible says, “the wind ceased and there was a great calm.” (Mk. 4:35-39). The disciples then said, “Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!”

Great question. That was the question I had for the cultist. I asked him who controls the weather and this guy who has all the answers refused to answer. So I proceeded to tell him it was God and then pointed out that Jesus controlled the weather showing that He is God. That pretty much ended the conversation.

Get the flow of thought here: Who can be compared to the LORD? Who can be likened to the Lord? (v. 6). Who is mighty like Him? (v. 8). He ALONE rules the raging sea and stills the waves. Jesus did this showing that He is God Almighty – the incomparable God. No one else ever in the history of the world has ever done such a thing!

**10 You have broken Rahab in pieces, as one who is slain; You have scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.**

The word “Rahab” means “proud one” and is often taken here to personify the proud and strong Egypt (cf. Ps. 87:4).

The tumultuous sea is an image of the nations (Ps. 93:3; Isa. 17:12, 13; Rev. 13:1; 17:15) so Ethan mentioned God’s victory over Egypt (Rahab , Ps. 87:4; Isa. 51:9). – *Warren Wiersbe*

However, many point out that in Canaanite mythology Rahab was a great sea monster and is perhaps used here to personify the forces of chaos (cf. Job. 9:13; 26:12; Isa. 51:9). In that case God is shown to rule over whatever forces of uncontrollable chaos are out there.

In either case, God is shown to be sovereign over whatever these proud seemingly uncontrollable forces are.

**11 The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours; The world and all its fullness, You have founded them.**

**12 The north and the south, You have created them; Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Your name.**

**13 You have a mighty arm; Strong is Your hand, and high is Your right hand.**

**14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.**

God is praised for His power in creation. Tabor and Hermon, mountains up north are personified as rejoicing in God’s creative power. God’s power is praised but so also is His character of righteousness, justice, mercy, and truth.

The Psalmist praised God for His incomparable might, but also for His moral greatness.

**Slide # 4**

**Righteousness:** (What is Right)

**Justice:** (Judging Right)

**Mercy:** (Covenant Faithfulness)

**Truth:** (Truly so)

These form the basis of God's rule – His throne.

### **15-18 – The Blessedness of God's People**

**15 Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! They walk, O LORD, in the light of Your countenance.**

**16 In Your name they rejoice all day long, And in Your righteousness they are exalted.**

**17 For You are the glory of their strength, And in Your favor our horn is exalted.**

**18 For our shield belongs to the LORD, And our king to the Holy One of Israel.**

In view of the GREATNESS of God the Psalm now moves on to emphasize how blessed are the people of God to glory in the privilege of knowing Him. The people of God celebrate the PERSON of God, for He is everything to them.

The marvel for Israel is that this God has pledged Himself especially to them (vv. 15-17) and to their king (v. 18). This special privilege of Israel is a point frequently made in the OT (e.g., Ex. 19:15; Deut. 10:14-15). – **ESV Study Bible**

To walk in the light of God's countenance is to walk in His presence. How wonderful to have this privilege. God is His people's joy, strength, and exaltation. And we are a God-made people.

The "shield" in verse 18 is thought to be a metaphor referring to the king that God has provided as a protector for the people.

### **19-24- God Blessed King David**

**19 Then You spoke in a vision to Your holy one, And said: "I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people.**

In the verses that follow we have an overview of the Davidic covenant that was first given through Nathan via instructions in a night vision (cf. 2 Sam. 7:17). Some manuscripts have “holy ones” (plural) in which case it would refer to both Nathan and also Samuel who initially anointed David and pointed out his special calling (cf. 1 Sam. 16:1-3).

It is shown to be God that helped David to be who and what he was. He was a God-made man. David’s position of might and exaltation was from the Lord as revealed in the Davidic covenant vision.

David was “chosen from the people” meaning he came from ordinary people with his background being a shepherd boy (cf. 2 Sam. 7:18).

In this David was a type of Christ who was born into a very humble context and grew up in the context of a carpenter’s family.

**20 I have found My servant David; With My holy oil I have anointed him,**

God found David – David didn’t find Him. God anointed David. This is all God-oriented. I have learned that “self-made” – “self-appointed” people are consistently the antithesis of God-ordained leaders.

I think if God calls a person he does put desire in their heart (cf. 1 Tim. 3:1), but yet at the same time a man of character waits on God and doesn’t trample over people to get to the head of the line. He lets God put him there. Korah tried to put himself in a position that was not ordained of God and that ended badly. Saul was the people’s choice and that ended badly. Absalom tried to force his way into leadership and that ended badly.

David was a God-made man as are all of God’s servants! When God had Samuel anoint David with oil this signified him being God’s choice for a special leadership role.

### **Slide # 5**

David was “anointed” as king but he is also a type of the Messiah (the “anointed one”) as is evident from Psalm 89:27-29 and Psalm 89:36-37. At this point Psalm 89 becomes essentially a Messianic psalm fulfilled partially in the experiences of David but ultimately fulfilled only in Christ. – **Henry M. Morris**

**21 With whom My hand shall be established; Also My arm shall strengthen him.**

**22 The enemy shall not outwit him, Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.**

**23 I will beat down his foes before his face, And plague those who hate him.**

**24 “But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, And in My name his horn shall be exalted.**

David was uniquely blessed of the Lord. God established and strengthened him as king. God protected him so that his enemies ultimately did not have their way with him. God intervened to help him defeat his enemies.

It is worthy of remark that David was never overthrown; he finally conquered every foe that rose up against him. Saul’s persecution, Absalom’s revolt, Sheba’s conspiracy, and the struggle made by the partisans of the house of Saul after his death, only tended to call forth David’s skill, courage, and prowess, and to seat him more firmly on his throne. – *Adam Clarke*

Horn in the OT is often a symbol of strength. In God’s strength, David’s position of strength would be exalted (or made high). Again, it was God behind the scenes that was the source of David’s strength and exaltation.

### **25-29 – God’s Covenant with David**

**25 Also I will set his hand over the sea, And his right hand over the rivers.**

Most commentators believe this reflects the promise in Exodus 23:31 that God would give Israel the land between the Red Sea to the Euphrates River (cf. Ps. 72:8; 80:11). So the text seems to speak to the expansion of Israel’s borders and the Lord bringing it to pass under David.

### **Slide # 6**

#### **Exodus 23:31 (NKJV)**

**31 And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea, Philistia, and from the desert to the River.** For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you.



Yet it is pointed out that David never seemed to fulfill this, leaving it to ultimately be fulfilled by the greater David in fulfillment of the Davidic covenant (cf. Gen. 15:18-21).

### **Slide # 7**



### **Slide # 8**



**26 He shall cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.’**

**You are my Father:** This was true for David, but even more true for Jesus the Messiah, who did all things looking to and in dependency on God the Father ([John 5:19](#), [8:28](#)). – **David Guzik**

**27 Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.**

The term “firstborn” can mean born first in time (cf. Lk. 2:7). But in the case of David he was lastborn son of Jesse. “Firstborn” is often used by God to designate the position of highest rank or honor. Thus, in Exodus 4:22 the LORD says, “Israel is My son, My firstborn.” This verse in Psalm 89:27 gives the sense when it says God will make him the “highest of the kings of the earth.”

Again, while application is made to David, the ultimate fulfillment will be found in relation to the greater David, the Messiah – the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Slide # 9**

#### **Romans 8:29 (NKJV)**

**29** For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the **firstborn** among many brethren.

#### **Colossians 1:15 (NKJV)**

**15** He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** over all creation.

#### **Colossians 1:18 (NKJV)**

**18** And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the **firstborn** from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

### **Slide # 10**

#### **Hebrews 1:6 (NKJV)**

**6** But when He again brings the **firstborn** into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”

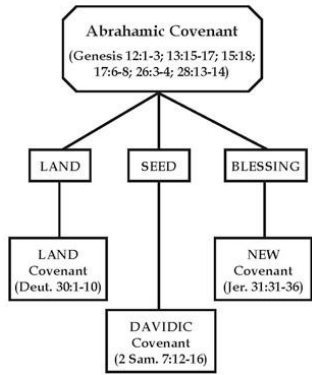
#### **Revelation 1:5 (NKJV)**

**5** and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the **firstborn** from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

**28 My mercy I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall stand firm with him.**

The covenant relationship with David will stand forever. God’s loyal covenant love with him will never be broken.

### **Slide # 11**



## Slide # 12

**Davidic Covenant**

- **House**
  - dynasty, ruling monarch, posterity
- **Kingdom**
  - A king must have a kingdom
  - A sphere of rule
- **Throne**
  - Seat of Government

**29 His seed also I will make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven.**

David's seed here refers to an individual Whose throne will endure forever. The phrase, "as the days of heaven" is a poetic way of saying "forever". This is clearly Messianic and finds fulfillment in Jesus.

This psalm, because of its several references to the Davidic Covenant (vv. 3–4, 27–29, 35–37, 49), affirms that the Messiah, a descendant of David, will sit on David's throne and rule over Israel. This, taken literally, supports the position that Christ is not *now* sitting on David's throne in heaven but *will* rule on his throne on the earth (cf. comments on 2 Sam. 7:5–16).

– ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

What glorious promises God made to David in the Davidic covenant, but alas David's sons proved unqualified to be the fulfillment of what God ultimately promised and so the throne was vacated.

A key reason for the judgment period of "***the time of the Gentiles***" is because of a lack of godly kings to sit on David's throne.

The Davidic line comes through the tribe of Judah which is the tribe God ordained to rule. Of the 19 Davidic kings of Judah only 8 of them were good kings. The last 4 were bad and the situation had deteriorated beyond the point of recovery. The last king to sit on David's throne in Jerusalem was King Zedekiah.

### **Slide # 13**

#### **Ezekiel 21:25–27 (NKJV)**

**25** 'Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel [**Zedekiah**], whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end,

**26** thus says the Lord God: "Remove the turban, and **take off the crown**; Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted.

**27 Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown!** It shall be no longer, **Until He comes whose right it is**, And I will give it to Him." '

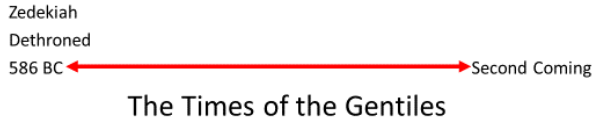
This is a prophecy telling us that Zedekiah would be the last king of David's line to rule from David's throne in Jerusalem **UNTIL** the Messiah comes. This period from the fall of Zedekiah UNTIL the enthronement of the Messiah is the period of "***the times of the Gentiles***". And note it is characterized as a long period of time with no king sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem.

Thus, there would be a break from Zedekiah until the Messiah comes who has the real right to the scepter. When Jesus showed up and presented Himself as the rightful king, Israel rejected Him. But when He comes the Second time, repentant Israel will then receive Him. In the meantime, "***the time of the Gentiles***" continues on with no king sitting on David's throne.

Following David, the line of David continued until finally the Messiah, the greater Son of David arrived in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was qualified!

He was the legitimate King of Israel legitimately offering the kingdom to Israel on the condition of repentance. But alas they rejected Him and He went to the cross leaving the throne of David still unoccupied as it still is until this day.

### **Slide # 14**



1. David's THRONE in Jerusalem – Unoccupied

They say that if you see a turtle on a fence post the one thing you know is that someone put it there.

### **Slide # 15**



David did not put himself in this exalted position – it was God! And God will yet fulfill all He has promised to David and through David by yet establishing His eternal throne.

Psalm 89:29 is yet to be fulfilled. Today there is no king sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem. But one day there will be. It will yet be fulfilled in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Slide # 16**

#### **Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)**

**6** For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**7** Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, **Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom**, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. **The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.**

Even though it is still unfulfilled God's people know that God has made a covenant promise and because of this it will yet be fulfilled. And so we sing with Ethan...

**Psalm 89:1 (NKJV)**

**1** I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.

The FAITHFULNESS of the LORD will bring it to pass. Keep singing!