

Psalm 89 and the Kings of Israel



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Key Insight of Psalm 89

The disobedience of future Kings of Israel cannot cancel God's Covenant promise to David, which implies a future for national Israel.

This also supports the idea that premillennialism is the correct understanding of the future kingdom.

Superscription: Maskil

- **BDB – contemplative or didactic poem**
- **HALOT – meaning unclear**
 - Kittel – Cult Song
 - Mowinckel – Wisdom song performed to music
- **Vulgate – *intellectus***
- **LXX – understanding or knowledge**
- **General idea appears to be a “thoughtful meditation”**

Superscription: Ethan the Ezrahite

1 Kings 4:31

For he [Solomon] was wiser than all men, than **Ethan the Ezrahite**, Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was known in all surrounding nations.

- Likely contemporary of Solomon
- Likely witnessed the divided kingdom

A -- Praise God for His Faithfulness to David (1-4)

B--Thank God for His Faithful Character (5-18)

C—Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)

C'--Further Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant: Disobedience of the Kings of Israel cannot cancel the covenant (30-37)

B'--Complaint Concerning God's Faithfulness to the Covenant (38-45)

A' -- Prayer for God to Return to His Original Faithfulness (46-51)

Praise God for His Faithfulness to David (1-4)

➤ Praise Statement (1 & 2)

Lovingkindness = hesed

Faithfulness = Emunah

Permanence

- To all generations (v. 1)
- forever (v. 2)
- In the heavens (v. 2)

Praise God for His Faithfulness to David (1-4)

- Example of God's Faithfulness (3 & 4)
 - God's covenant with David (v. 3)
 - Chosen
 - Servant
 - Content of covenant – David's descendants will occupy the throne of Israel forever (to all generations)

Thank God for His Faithful Character (5-18)



Faithfulness demonstrated
before the angelic creatures
(5-8)

- assembly of holy ones (5)
- sons of the mighty (6)
- council of the holy ones (7)

Thank God for His Faithful Character (5-18)



Faithfulness demonstrated
in God's works (9-14)

- Rules the sea (9)
- Crushed Rahab [Egypt] (10)

Rahab

Psalm 87:4

I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me.

Job 9:13

God will not turn back His anger; beneath Him crouch the helpers of Rahab.

Isaiah 30:7 (note context)

Even Egypt, whose help is vain and empty. Therefore, I have called her “Rahab who has been exterminated.”

Rahab

Psalm 51:9-10

**Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD;
Awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago.
Was it not You who cut **Rahab** in pieces, who pierced the
dragon?**

**Was it not You who dried up the sea, the waters of the
great deep; who made the depths of the sea a pathway for
the redeemed to cross over?**

[Defeat of Egypt in the Exodus]

Thank God for His Faithful Character (5-18)

Faithfulness demonstrated in God's works (9-12)

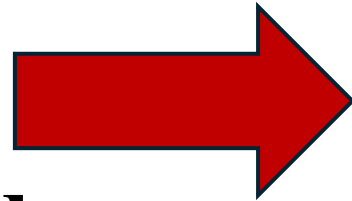
- Rules the sea (9)
- Crushed Rahab (10) = Egypt?
- Creator of the universe (11-12)

Thank God for His Faithful Character (5-18)

**The Benefits of God's
Faithful Character
(13-18)**

God's Character (13-14)

- **Strength (13)**
- **Righteousness**
- **Justice**
- **Lovingkindness**
- **Truth (14)**



Benefits for God's People (15-18)

- **Happiness & Joy (15-16)**
- **Walk in God's light (15)**
- **They are exalted (16)**



Kingdom

(17, 24)



Protection

(18)



King

(18)

Basis: God's Righteousness & Glory

Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)



- Once you spoke in vision (19)
 - 2 Sam. 7:4-17
 - God appeared to the prophet Nathan
 - Initial giving of the content of the Covenant

Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)



➤ **David is...**

- **Mighty (19)**
- **Chosen (19)**
- **Anointed (20)**
 - ❖ **1 Sam. 16:1-14**
- **Victorious (21-25)**
- **God will faithfully exalt David's kingdom (24)**

Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)



- God establishes a Father-Son relationship with David as king (26) – cp. **2 Sam 7:14**
- God makes David the most important king on earth (27)
- God promises hesed forever
- God confirms the covenant with David (28)

Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)



- **Content of the covenant (29):**
1. David's **descendants** will endure forever
 2. David's **throne** will endure forever

Confirmation of the Davidic Covenant (19-29)



**Is this Davidic
Covenant
conditional or
unconditional?**

Disobedience of the Kings of Israel

- If the sons of David (presumed kings of Israel) disobey God's Written Word
 1. Forsake the law (30)
 2. Don't walk in God's judgments (30)
 3. Violate the statutes (31)
 4. Don't keep the commandments (32)

Disobedience of the Kings of Israel

➤ God will punish sinning sons of David (v. 32)

1. Punish >> transgression >> rod

2. Punish >> iniquity >> stripes

3. This all implies serious punishment

What the disobedience cannot do?

- Cause God to abandon hesed (33)
- Make God stop his faithfulness (33)
- Lead God to violate his covenant (34)
- Incite God to alter his promises (34)

Once I have
sworn by my
holiness
(35)



I will not **lie** to David

Restatement of the Davidic Covenant (36-37)

- David's descendants will always exist (36)
- David's [earthly] throne will exist as long as the sun exists (36)
- The moon also witnesses to the permanence of the covenant before God (37)

Important Implications

- 1. A literal, grammatical-historical understanding of the Davidic Covenant must believe in a long-term future for national Israel on earth with a Davidic King, the descendant of David.**
- 2. It is virtually impossible to fit a literal understanding of these verses into an amillennial or postmillennial scheme for the kingdom.**

Complaint Concerning God's Faithfulness to the Covenant (38-45)

Cast off

Rejected

Wrath

Spurned the covenant

Profaned the crown

Broken down

Ruin

Plunder

Defeat

**Cast the throne
down to the ground**

**Shortened the days
of his youth**

Shame

When did this happen?



- **Shishak – 10th century BC leader of Egypt**
- **Attacked Jerusalem in the time of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25-28)**
- **Ethan the Ezrahite might still be alive at that time**
- **This might correlate to the earlier reference to Rahab**

Prayer for God to Return to His Original Faithfulness (46-51)

How long?

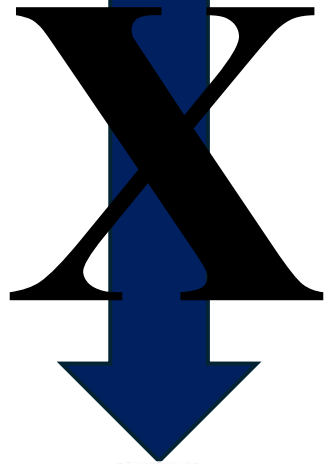
Remember

**Where is your
hesed?**

**Where is your
faithfulness?**

**Remember, O
Lord the
reproach of
Your servants**

Historical Progression of the Davidic Covenant

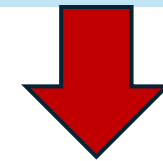


An individual's sins can remove him from the place of blessing under the Covenant.



Individual Under the Covenant

But God's plan to fulfill the Davidic Covenant throughout history cannot be cancelled. Fulfillment is unconditional.



There is a national future for Israel

Doxology (52)

- **Rather abruptly...**
- **Blessed be the LORD forever!
Amen and Amen.**
- **Serves to end Book Three of the
Psalms.**