

## ***Psalm 89***

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V: 1 Singing of His mercies and His faithfulness forever - sounds a little bit like heaven.

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- Testifying of His faithfulness to all generations, to anyone who will listen. Giving God the glory that is so richly due Him.

**James 1:17** “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

V: 2 God has established His faithfulness in the heavens, it’s a testimony to Him.

- When you think about or consider the faithfulness or the regularity that He’s established in the heavens - it’s a reminder of who He is and what He’s done for us.
- Think about the regularity of the sun rise and the sun set - it happens every day. Think about the way in which the planets and the stars, and galaxies move through the universe with such regular, consistent, predictable patterns. His faithfulness on display!

**Psalm 19:1** “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament show His handiwork.” (Fingerprints)

- Just as the stars in the heavens are steadfast and predictable, so is His mercy and love towards us!
- The Bible is not a scientific book per se, but the Bible is scientifically accurate where it addresses the issues of science.
- “Science” once thought that the earth was flat and that if you sailed far enough on the ocean that you would sail over the edge. Galileo was condemned for suggesting that the earth was round. This was during the “renaissance” of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

**Isaiah 40:22** “It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.”

- The prophet Isaiah who’s writings are dated 700 years before Jesus was born, aligns with modern science that knows the earth to be a sphere.
- This is 300 years before Aristotle suggested the same thing in his book on the heavens.

- The ancients, the scientists of the day declared not only was the earth flat, but that it was carried on the back of a giant tortoise through the heavens, and that the earth was the center of the solar system. We have since learned the truth which had already been declared in the Bible.

**Job 26:7** “He stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangs the earth upon nothing.”

**Job 22:14** “Thick clouds cover Him, so that He cannot see, and He walks above the circle / circuit of heaven.”

- Job was written approximately 1,500 years before the birth of Jesus.

*“His faithfulness is established in the very heavens.”*

V: 3-4 First the Psalmist speaks of God’s faithfulness generally, now he speaks more specifically - reminding God of His promises to king David.

- I too am glad that God keeps His Word, His promises in a general way - but I’m even more excited that God keeps His Word, and His promises to me personally - that is a great comfort to each of us.
- God has made promises to David about one of his descendants always reigning, being upon the throne of David - this was a specific reference to the coming of the Messiah and His reign upon the throne of David.
- This Psalm was written during the Babylonian captivity - the throne was empty which might have prompted the Psalmist to write that God’s Word, His promises had failed.
- The Psalmist is declaring the opposite; that God is faithful and that He will fulfill His promises to David, and to us in spite of what we see at times.

**2 Corinthians 5:7** “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

**2 Peter 1:19** “And so we have a more sure word / the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place...”

*“Selah.”* Indicating both the end of the thought and the encouragement to stop and consider, to contemplate or meditate in what was just communicated.

V: 5 The heavens here isn’t just a reference to the sky, but to the angels who inhabit the heavens, and to the stars. If the rocks could cry out declaring the glory of God as Jesus asserts in **Luke 19:40**, then I don’t see why the heavens couldn’t.

**Psalm 19:1** “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament show His handiwork.”

V: 6 One of the attributes or characteristics of God is that He truly is incomparable: He stands alone and unique, He is without comparison, infinite and eternal. All else is finite and lesser. The disparity between the two is so great that you can't make analogies or comparisons that would actually stand or hold.

**Isaiah 40:18** “To whom then will you liken God? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?”

- This is in part why we're not to make any graven images of God - we could never do Him justice.

**Isaiah 46:5** “To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we should be like?”

V: 7 We are reminded numerous times to fear the Lord, especially in the assembly of the saints. The church should be the very last place where God is taken lightly or casually. Those who refer to God in casual terms do so from a lack of understanding and ignorance of the awesomeness of God.

**Proverbs 3:7** “Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil.”

- There is a cause and effect relationship described here. If you fear the Lord truly, then you will depart from evil.
- We have reason for concern in these days when God is not feared by so many.

*Speaking of Jeshurun who'd grown fat and sassy:*

**Deuteronomy 32:15** “... then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.”

V: 8 Almost a summary of what we've read thus far in the Psalm: “Who is mighty like you, O Lord? - To whom or to what can we compare you? The implied answer is that there is no comparison.

- You are surrounded by faithfulness, by the proofs of it; the heavens themselves.
- Also an introduction into the following verses.

V: 9 Keying on verse 8, a demonstration or example of His might. God rules or reels in the ragings of the sea.

*Jesus calmed the sea:*

**Matthew 8:26b** "... Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm."

V: 10 Second example of His incomparable might: "Rahab" referring to Egypt - who was destroyed through the 10 plagues, then finally Pharaoh himself and his army, scattering them across the bottom of the Red Sea.

V: 11-12 The earth and all of its fullness belong to God who created it.

- From the North to the South, from Mount Tabor & Mount Hermon - from the East and the West, we rejoice in Your name.

V: 13-14 Justice and judgment are the foundation of His throne, that is what it is based on - God's righteousness.

- Mercy and truth go before His face, that is what comes out of His mouth He speaks mercy and truth.

**John 1:17** "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

V: 15 Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound - of what? Of that which He speaks, of His mercy and of His truth.

V: 16-18 Rejoicing in His name: we do.

- <sup>18</sup>Who is the "Holy One of Israel?" King Jesus!

*"For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king."* KJV

V: 19-20 God is awesome and wonderful, He is faithful and true. The Lord established David as king and anointed him with the holy oil.

- Samuel was directed by the Lord and went to the house of Jesse, he examined each son, one by one and the Lord rejected each in turn until David was finally brought in.

**1 Samuel 16:13** "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward..."

V: 21-24 God's promise, His blessing and favor upon David and his reign.

V: 25 God will expand David's reign, his territory - over the sea, his right hand over the rivers.

- David's conquests extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River.

V: 26-27 The Psalmist moves from talking about David directly to the seed of David, Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

*“27I will make Him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth”*

- As in King of kings and Lord of lords.
- From a Jewish cultural perspective first born isn't always firstborn chronologically but first in prominence.
- Remember Ephraim and Manasseh? Manasseh was the oldest of the two brothers. When Joseph brought them to be blessed by his father Jacob he arranged them so that Jacob's right hand of blessing would be upon Manasseh, the oldest. Yet when Jacob began to pronounce the blessing he crossed his hands so that Ephraim would receive the blessing of the first born.
- Joseph tried to correct his father, but Jacob replied that he knew what he was doing, and was doing so intentionally. Ephraim was the one who excelled above his brother.
- David was the 8<sup>th</sup> son of Jesse, yet God made him His first born because he excelled above the others.
- Just as Jesus would not be the firstborn descendant of David from a chronological standpoint, but He would excel beyond all Davids other descendants, beyond David, and beyond all man kind.

Speaking of Jesus:

**Colossians 1:18** “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.”

V: 28 The promise, the covenant that God made with David regarding his descendants will stand forever, and is eventually realized through Jesus.

V: 29 The seed spoken of here is that of Jesus:

**1 John 3:9** “Whoever has been born of God does not sin (practice habitually, life style of sin), for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”

- I am born of God, born again through Jesus Christ and thus His seed also will I make to endure forever. I'm going to live forever with my Lord - a glorious promise!

V: 30-37 *“If”* - that has already happened. David’s descendants did forsake the Law, the judgments, and the statutes, and the commandments of the Lord - and when a child of God is disobedient there is the chastening of the Lord, God has and will deal with His disobedient children. All with the intent of bringing them / us back into fellowship with Himself, restoring a right relationship with Him.

- At the same time their disobedience doesn’t negate the promises of God. He pointedly says that He will not break His covenant with David, He won’t lie to David - He will fulfill His promises - that is what He does.

**Jeremiah 33:20-22** *“<sup>20</sup>Thus says the Lord: if you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, <sup>21</sup>then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. <sup>22</sup>As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.”*

- <sup>37</sup>Like the faithful witness in the sky: **V: 2** His faithfulness being established in the heavens.

*“Selah”* - consider that.

V: 38-45 *“But...”* there is a great contrast here. Lord you’ve made these glorious promises but all I’m seeing is your fury and wrath.

- You have apparently renounced your covenant because the things you’ve said have not come to pass, in fact it is just the opposite.
- The crown has been profaned, the hedges or protections are destroyed, we’ve been plundered and have become a reproach, our enemies are victorious, you have not sustained us in battle we’re covered in shame.
- The long and short of it is “I know what you said, but here we are captives in Babylon, Israel & Jerusalem have been destroyed and I don’t see you keeping your promise.”
- Ethan the Ezrahite who wrote this Psalm is giving us his assessment of things, considering the realities around him, but he’s doing so based on incomplete information.
- He thought that their current circumstances were their final circumstances and that was not the case. The fat lady hasn’t sung yet, God wasn’t and isn’t finished yet.

- To me it is always fascinating how having one more piece of information can change a situation.
- The Psalmist is judging from incomplete knowledge, something we are prone to do at times.
- We need to get all the facts before making a hasty judgment, and in the process condemning God because of the things that are transpiring in our lives that we don't understand at that moment in time, again for lack of knowledge or incomplete information.
- At this point the Psalmist is unable to reconcile the promises that God has made to David with the realities and circumstances that he's dealing with presently.
- He's described the faithfulness of God, the mercies of God, the promises of God, the greatness of God, the power of God and the covenant of God, and yet here is Jerusalem torn down, the throne is empty, the place is in ruins, and they are in captivity.

*Selah*... again

- All of this leads into the final stanza's of this Psalm.

V: 46-48 *"How long, Lord?"* The same cry that many of us have cried out to the Lord.

- Will this ever end? You may not be running out of time, but I think I am.
- For what futility, what purpose does this serve? Venting his frustration towards God.

V: 49-51 Where are your former loving kindnesses? We are bearing the reproach of your enemies - who seem to have the victory.

- Where is the fruition of your promises to David? I'm not feeling the love here!
- This isn't the end he was looking for, and it's not, he just doesn't know it.

V: 52 He doesn't understand exactly what is going on, but he's resolved - "Blessed be the Lord forevermore! Amen and Amen."

- Coming to those things we don't understand we fall back on what we do understand.

- God is Good! God loves us! God's will is perfect! God's Word is true! I may not understand how God will work something out, but I know that He will never let His Word go un-fulfilled.
- Mary and Martha were watching their brother Lazarus die, they'd set a deadline, they'd sent for Jesus - but He came too late, their brother had already died, their deadline had passed and now Jesus was come, but too late.
- Their thinking was that while Lazarus was still alive Jesus could do something, while he was alive there was still hope.
- Jesus told them "Your brother will rise again." Martha responded "I know in the last day in the great resurrection."

Jesus told her

**John 11:25-26** "25... I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

- As Jesus asked her this question she was faced with a decision: to believe the words of Jesus in spite of what she was seeing played out in front of her - her brother was dead and buried.
- That is pretty much where the Psalmist is, and where we often find ourselves as well.
- The decision is to trust Him, to trust His Word more than our circumstances, more that our limited understanding of things.

**Hebrews 11:1** "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen."

**Hebrews 11:6** "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

**2 Corinthians 5:7** "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

**Genesis 49:10** "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people."

- 10 AD the Roman empire removed the Jews power of capital punishment, the scepter had departed and Shiloh had not come is what they thought.
- They didn't know that the Messiah was growing up in Galilee, Shiloh had come but they didn't know it - their information was incomplete.



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