

Psalm 89 Continued

Psalm 89:19 "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon [one that is] mighty; I have exalted [one] chosen out of the people."

"Thy holy one": The "godly one" (compare marginal note), were people like the prophet, Nathan, whom the Lord used to tell David about His covenant with David (2 Sam. 7:4).

In the physical, the holy one on the earth at this time would have been the prophet Nathan. He represented God to the people. He would even be the one to speak of God to king David. Of course, David was chosen out of the people and anointed to be king. I believe this Scripture to be prophetic as well. The true Mighty One who came to help us all is our Lord Jesus Christ. He too, was assumed to be out of the people. He had a somewhat normal boyhood in the home of His mother Mary and her husband Joseph.

Psalm 89:20 "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:"

Not David literally; but his Son and antitype, the Messiah, who is sometimes called by his name (see note on (Psalm 89:3). And his "finding" him does not suppose any ignorance of him, nor anxious concern in seeking him, nor any unanticipated event; but is attributed to God by an ascribing of human feelings or passions to a non-human being, or speaking after the manner of men. For it is an act of the highest wisdom, and richest grace, to find out, that is, to pick and appoint, in council and covenant, his own Son to be his servant, to be the Redeemer and Savior of sinners, and to be a ransom for them (Job 33:24). The Apostle Paul seems to refer to this passage in (Acts 13:22).

"With my holy oil have I anointed him": Not with material oil, as David, his type (1 Sam. 16:13). But with the Holy Ghost, which may well be called holy oil, in allusion to the holy anointing oil under the law. The oil of gladness with which Christ was anointed above his fellows. And without measure, at the time of his conception and birth, at his baptism and ascension to heaven, and even, in some sense, from all eternity. For so early is he said to be anointed, and to be possessed with all fulness of grace, being invested with and installed into his office as Mediator. And from this anointing he has the name of Messiah and Christ, both which signify anointed (Acts 10:38).

We know that David was just a shepherd boy when Samuel sought him out and anointed him to be king. He did not immediately take over as king. He lived with Saul (the present king), at first. David knew and loved God, while he was yet a shepherd. This oil was not just any oil, but a special oil that only appointed servants of God could use. Let us look at a picture of the prophetic meaning of the Scripture above. Jesus Himself spoke this, because it is in red in our Bible.

Luke 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Psalm 89:21 "With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him."

A promise of God's gracious presence with Christ, as man and Mediator, which is his work. Of a communication of grace and strength from him, to carry him through it. And of his supporting and upholding him under it; which hand of his power and grace would be always prepared and ready for him, as the word signifies. And stable and firm with him, so that he should have success in it; the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand. So the Targum, "for my hands are prepared for his help;" the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, and all the eastern versions, "mine hand shall help him"; and which is confirmed in the next words:

"Mine arm also shall strengthen him": In the human nature, subject to and encompassed with infirmities. This shows the greatness of the work of man's redemption, which no creature could effect. It required the arm and power of the Lord to be exerted, and by which Christ was made strong by the Lord, both for himself, and for the working out of salvation for us. Which he did when he travelled in the greatness of his strength, standing up under the mighty weight of our sins, and the wrath of God. And yet failed not, nor was he discouraged, till his own arm brought salvation to him (see Psalm 80:17).

The Hand and the Arm are Jesus, as we said before.

Psalm 89:22 "The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him."

The enemy is the devil, as in the interpretation of the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:39), the implacable enemy of Christ and his church. And yet, notwithstanding all his enmity and malice, he could not "exact", or get more inflicted on him, than the law and justice of God required of him, as the sinner's surety. Or could not "exact" a tribute of him, or make him tributary to him. Or, in other words, conquer him, and subject him to him: so far from it, that he was conquered by Christ, and all his principalities and powers spoiled. Or could not "deceive" him, in which sense the word is sometimes used. And so the Targum here: though he deceived Eve, he could not deceive the Messiah, the seed of the woman. He tried it, in person, by his temptations in the wilderness, and by his agents and instruments, the Scribes and Pharisees. But in vain, and to no purpose; he could not succeed.

"Nor the son of wickedness afflict him": At least not always. He was indeed afflicted, as by wicked men, and by Satan the wicked one, yet not so as to be overcome by any. And as Christ personal, so Christ mystical, or his church and people, are afflicted by the sons of wickedness. Yet, sooner or later, they are delivered out of all their afflictions. Antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that wicked one, that is eminently so, and may be well called "the son of wickedness", has long and greatly oppressed the people of Christ, and his interest. But he shall not always; he shall be destroyed with the spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming (2 Thess. 2:3). This passage is applied to the Messiah by the Jews.

We know that this is speaking in one sense, about David who had been hunted of Saul and had really no place of rest. In the latter days of David, his enemies did not dare to come heavily against him, for fear of what God might do to them. Speaking prophetically of this verse, we

know that the enemy, Satan, never had any power over Jesus. Satan did not take the life of Jesus on the cross.

John 10:17-18 "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Jesus was never under the control of Satan.

Psalm 89:23 "And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him."

In Judea, and in the Gentile world; more especially in Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal. In the most public manner, before his Gospel, and the ministry of it by his servants. And they shall either submit unto it, or be broken to pieces as a potter's vessel. For he must reign till all enemies are put under his feet (1 Cor. 15:25).

"And plague them that hate him": That would not have him to reign over them, the unbelieving Jews, and all the followers of antichrist. Who are either plagued with the judgments of God here, or with everlasting punishment hereafter, with which they will be tormented for ever and ever (Luke 19:14). Or "strike" them with a rod of iron, with his wrath and vengeance; strike them down to the ground, and to the lowest hell.

Look with me to the promises that God made to David in the next few verses.

2 Samuel 7:8-10 "Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheeppcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:" "And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great [men] that [are] in the earth." "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,"

Read all of this chapter to get the whole idea.

Psalm 89:24 "But my faithfulness and my mercy [shall be] with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted."

The "faithfulness" of God was and is with Christ, in performing promises made to him respecting his work, and strength to do it, as man, and the glory that should follow. And also those made to his people in him, relating to grace here, and happiness hereafter. And though there was no "mercy" shown to Christ, as the surety of his people, but he was dealt with in strict justice. Yet, as Mediator of the covenant, the special mercy of God is with him, even every blessing of it, called "the sure mercies of David"; and is only communicated through him. He is the mercy seat, from whence mercy is dispensed, and the propitiation through whom God is merciful to men. The words may be rendered, "my truth and my grace", as they are by the Targum. And both are

with Christ, the truth of doctrine, and all the fulness of grace, justifying, sanctifying, pardoning, adopting, and persevering grace (John 1:14).

"And in my name shall his horn be exalted": Or "his glory", as the Targum. His power and dominion, of which the horn is an emblem; and his glory is displayed in having the same name his Father has. His name is expressive of his nature, being, and perfections, the name Jehovah. And his name of title and office "King of Kings, and Lord of lords". Or his name the Word of God, as the Targum; who, as such, is the brightness of his Father's glory. Or the sense is, that by the power of God, he should be raised from the dead, and have glory given him, and be exalted at his right hand, and made Lord and Christ. Or by means of the Gospel, which is the name of the Lord (John 17:6). His kingdom and dominion should be spread in the world (see 1 Sam. 2:10).

This is speaking of David, to whom the promise of the everlasting kingdom was given. The horn symbolizes strength. The throne of David, through his natural sons and grandsons, became contaminated. But the seed that is really intended is through Jesus.

Psalm 89:25 "I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers."

"Hand ... sea ... rivers": A reference to the promise of (Exodus 23:31), that the Lord would give Israel the land between the Red Sea and the Euphrates River.

The rule of David was a reign of the land of Israel. But the seed of David, Jesus, His reign was as wide as the east is to the west and the north is to the south. It reached far beyond the rivers of Israel, even across the sea.

Psalm 89:26 "He shall cry unto me, Thou [art] my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation."

He shall appeal to me, or come to me as a Father, and as his only hope and defense.

"My God": He shall come to me as God, and shall recognize me as his God, his only trust and hope.

"And the rock of my salvation" (see the notes at Psalm 18:2). The meaning of all this is, that he would at all times recognize him as his only trust and hope, and that he would be faithful on his part to God.

David prayed to the Father, and he was established on the everlasting Rock. Jesus prayed also, to the Father. Jesus was the Rock of my salvation.

Psalm 89:27 "Also I will make him [my] firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth."

"My firstborn": The firstborn child was given a place of special honor and a double portion of the inheritance (Gen. chapter 27; 2 Kings 2:9). However, in a royal grant covenant, a chosen person could be elevated to the level of firstborn Sonship and thus have title to a perpetual gift involving dynastic succession (compare Psalm 2:7). Though not actually the first, Israel was

considered the firstborn among nations (Exodus 4:22); Ephraim the younger was treated as the firstborn (Gen. 48:13-20); and David was the firstborn among kings. In this latter sense of prominent favor, Christ can be called the firstborn over all creation (Col. 1:15), in that He is given the preeminence over all created beings.

This is most assuredly speaking of Jesus, who was the firstborn Son of the Father. He alone is elevated higher than the kings of the earth. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

1 Timothy 6:15 "Which in his times he shall show, [who is] the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;"

Psalm 89:28 "My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him."

That is, for his mystical body, his church and people; for whom stores of mercy are kept with him, to be laid out in their regeneration, pardon, salvation, and eternal life. For to them the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting (Psalm 103:17). Unless this is to be understood of the "grace" and "kindness" of God, as the word may be rendered. His free favor and love to Christ, which always continues; for as he was always his dearly beloved Son, that lay in his bosom from eternity. So he continued, throughout his state, of humiliation, his well beloved, in whom he was well pleased, and still is, and ever will.

"And my covenant shall stand fast with him": Being made with him as the head and representative of his people, it remains, and will remain, sure, firm, and immovable. Its blessings are "sure mercies", and its promises are all "yea and amen in Christ". The stability of it, and of all that is in it, is owing to its being made with him, and being in his hands, who is the surety, Mediator, and messenger of it.

The covenant was first given to Abraham, it was restated to David, and fulfilled in Jesus. David, as well as all other earthly kings, had to live by the mercy of God, because they were not perfect men. This is true of all believers in Jesus too. It is only by the mercy of God that we are heirs to the promises.

Psalm 89:29 "His seed also will I make [to endure] for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

Not a race of kings from David, which ended at the Babylonish captivity. Not the natural seed of David, not the Messiah himself, who sprung from him. But the Messiah's spiritual seed, which were given him by the Father, adopted through him, regenerated by his Spirit and grace, begotten through his Gospel, and the ministry of it, and born again in his church. And to whom he stands in the relation of the everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6). The enduring, i.e. to sit upon the throne for ever, as the next words explain it. This was accomplished only in Christ, the eternal King of the church, and of the world, who was of David's seed according to the flesh.

"And his throne as the days of heaven": A phrase signifying a great length of time (Deut. 11:21). Yea, invariable constancy and duration (Jer. 31:25). And indeed the throne of Christ is for ever

and ever, and will be when the present earth and heavens are fled away (Psalm 45:6). Christ is upon a throne now in heaven, the same with his divine Father's. And here he will sit and reign, till all enemies are put under him. And he will be on a throne of glory when he judges the world, and in the New Jerusalem state for the space of a thousand years. And, after that, he will reign with his saints, and they with him, for evermore; his throne and kingdom are everlasting (Isa. 9:7).

David's seed spoken of here, is in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal One. The days of heaven are all of eternity.

Psalm 89:30 "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments;

His posterity; his successors on the throne.

"Forsake my law": If they are not regulated by it in the administration of their government, and in their private lives. It is here supposed that they might forsake his law, or fail to observe it; but still there is the assurance that the power would not depart permanently from the successors of David, but that it would be restored ultimately to that line, and be permanent and eternal.

"And walk not in my judgements": And do not obey my commandments.

"Psalm 89:31 "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;"

Fixed, settled, appointed ordinances; such as are baptism and the Lord's supper, under the New Testament dispensation. Which are the things that are unshaken, and will remain until the second coming of Christ. These are to be kept as they were first delivered; no change and alteration ought to be made in them. So to do is to break and violate them, or "profane" them, as the word here used signifies. And which may be done by an unbecoming, irreverent, and indecent attendance on them. As was by some in the Corinthian church, of which the apostle complains, and who for it were taken notice of, and chastened by the Lord (1 Cor. 11:2).

"And keep not my commandments": Which should be kept impartially, with great affection to them, from a principle of love to the Lord. With a view to his glory, and without trusting to and depending upon an obedience to them. For they are not grievous; and, besides, "in", though not "for", keeping them, there is great reward, and a contrary behavior is displeasing to God. Now this particular enumeration of offences, that may be committed by the children of God to Christ, show that all sorts of sins may be committed by them. Sins of omission and commission; sins against the law, and against the Gospel; all but the unpardonable one; and that these, though they are observed in a way hereafter mentioned, yet are all forgiven.

This is a perfect description of the natural children of David. They did not keep the law of God. They did break His statutes and His commandments. How then can God fulfill the covenant agreement? In Jesus Christ. He was known as the son of David.

Psalm 89:32 "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes."

“Rod ... stripes”: The rod was an instrument for inflicting wounds, and the stripes were marks left by such a flogging. God’s warning reflects His knowledge of the evident potential for disobedience among the descendants of David (compare 2 Sam. 7:14). In the lifetime of David’s grandsons, for example, the kingdom was split with the 10 northern tribes leaving the rulership of the Davidic line (compare Jer. 31:31 and Ezek. 37:16-17), for the future reunification of the 12 tribes.

We do know that punishment came from God. The ten tribes broke away from the two tribes and became almost obscure. Both groups were captured by their enemies and suffered greatly. Even though for a very long time they were scattered, in the last few years they have been gathering again in the holy land.

Verses 33-37: Jesus fulfilled the promises in the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7:1-29). His is the everlasting “throne” (Acts 2:29-36).

Psalm 89:33 "Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."

“My lovingkindness”: Though the Lord might have to severely discipline David’s descendants, He would never remove His covenant from this family (compare 2 Sam. 7:15). Thus, the covenant could be conditional in any one or more generations and yet be unconditional in its final outcome (compare Ezek. 37:24-28).

God's love for His own never will cease. They may wander and get into all sorts of sin, but He will forgive them and help them again, if they cry out to Him. He is longsuffering, not willing that one should perish. Their foolishness does not affect God's faithfulness.

Psalm 89:34 "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."

Not the covenant at Sinai, as Aben Ezra, but the covenant of grace made with Christ, and which stands fast with him (Psalm 89:3). Which is firm, sure, and stable, and as immovable as mountains and hills, and more so (2 Sam. 23:5). Or "profane" it, though his people profane his statutes (Psalm 89:31). He will not profane his covenant; though they violate his laws, he is a God keeping covenant with them, and will not break his word with them.

"Nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips": Any promise of his, respecting either the temporal, spiritual, or eternal welfare of his people: or "not change"; as he changes not in his nature and perfections, nor in his love and affections, nor in his counsels and purposes. So neither in his covenant and promises, they are always the same, and have a certain and unchangeable accomplishment. There is a performance of whatsoever is spoken by the Lord (Luke 1:45).

This covenant that God is speaking of, is not a covenant that man has made. This is a covenant that God made. God speaks absolute truth. Once God has said something, it is fact, and He will not change it. The Word of God is true.

Psalm 89:35 "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David."

Swearing is ascribed to God after the manner of men, and is done in condescension to the weakness of his people, and to remove doubts and hesitations from them, relating to things spiritual and eternal. As to his everlasting love to them, his covenant with them in Christ, and their perseverance in his grace. And it is made by himself, or one or other of his perfections, as here by his "holiness" (see Amos 4:2). And indeed his holiness being his nature, is no other than he himself, the holy God. And because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, that as sure as he was, and was holy, just, and true, he would make good what he promises (Heb. 6:13). And this is done but once, once for all, that being sufficient; it need not be repeated, nor is it ever revoked. When he swears, he never repents of it, nor changes his mind; and it is to show the immutability of his counsel that he swears at all (Psalm 110:4).

"That I will not lie unto David": He will not lie to any, he cannot, it is impossible he should. It would be to deny himself, it is contrary to his being as God. He is not a man that he should lie; it is contrary to his character as the God of truth. He will not lie, neither in his counsel nor covenant, in his purposes nor promises; these are the two immutable things, in which it is impossible he should lie. And he has sworn to it that he will not lie to David, to David's son the Messiah, with whom the covenant is made, and stands fast. All the prophecies concerning him he has fulfilled. And all the promises made to him of help and assistance, as man and Mediator, in his work, and of the reward of it, a glory with him, he has made good.

We see from the words above, that God swore by His own holiness. God does not lie to anyone, much less David. As we said, the absolute Truth cannot lie. Whatever God says, He will do. God swore by Himself, because there was no greater.

Psalm 89:36 "His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

This is a confirmation by his oath of what he had before said (Psalm 89:29). Which may be understood either of the perseverance of particular believers, of every one of the spiritual seed of Christ; or of the duration of the church in general, throughout all ages, as before observed. And these being matters of moment and importance, and of which there are sometimes doubts in the minds of the Lord's people about them, and that they may be firmly believed by them, he confirms them with an oath. For God never swears to trivial things; and when he does swear, it is to remove the doubts of his people, and make their minds easy.

"And his throne as the sun before me": That is, shall continue as long as it does (see Psalm 89:29). Or shall be bright, splendid, and glorious as the sun, so the Targum, "and his throne light as the sun before me". Meaning his church and kingdom, of which the throne is an emblem, and which became so in Gospel times, clear and lucid as the sun (SOS 6:10). When day was made by the rising of the sun of righteousness, and by the bright shining of the Gospel ministry. And at particular periods since, as in the times of Constantine, when the church was clothed with the

sun, and at the Reformation, when Christ appeared with a rainbow on his head, and his face was as the sun (Rev. 12:1). And especially this will be the case of the church in the latter day, when the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven fold, as the light of seven days. And when the city, the church, will stand in no need of the sun, nor of the moon. And also in the ultimate glory, when the saints will shine as the sun in the kingdom of God (see Isa. 30:26). This passage is applied to the Messiah by the Jews.

The seed of David, spoken of here, is Jesus Christ and His followers. The throne is Jesus' throne. He is even now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Psalm 89:37 "It shall be established for ever as the moon, and [as] a faithful witness in heaven. Selah."

“Witness in heaven”: God’s covenant with David regarding his descendants was as certain as the establishment of the sun (verse 36), and the moon in the heavens (compare Jer. 33:14-26). The promise involved a kingdom “in the earth” (Jer. 33:15).

This kingdom may seem to weaken from time to time, but it will never fail. Jesus is eternal King. He will reign forever and ever. It appears from this that God is saying that the sun and moon are witness to His promise. We know that this world may pass away, but God's Word will never pass away. Selah means it is time to pause and think on this.

Verses 38-52: Sometimes it is not easy to reconcile God's providences with his promises, yet we are sure that God's works fulfil his word. When the great Anointed One, Christ himself, was upon the cross, God seemed to have cast him off, yet did not make void his covenant, for that was established for ever. The honor of the house of David was lost. Thrones and crowns are often laid in the dust; but there is a crown of glory reserved for Christ's spiritual seed, which fades not away. From all this complaint learn what work sin makes with families, noble families, with families in which religion has appeared. They plead with God for mercy. God's unchangeableness and faithfulness assure us that He will not cast off those whom he has chosen and covenanted with. They were reproached for serving him. The scoffers of the latter days, in like manner, reproach the footsteps of the Messiah when they ask, “where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter 3:3-4). The records of the Lord's dealings with the family of David, show us his dealings with his church, and with believers. Their afflictions and distresses may be grievous, but he will not finally cast them off. Self-deceivers abuse this doctrine, and others by a careless walk bring themselves into darkness and distress. Yet let the true believer rely on it for encouragement in the path of duty, and in bearing the cross. The psalm ends with praise, even after this sad complaint. Those who give God thanks for what he has done, may give him thanks for what he will do. God will follow those with his mercies, who follow him with praises.

Verses 38-45: The discipline of God seemed to endure “for ever” (89:46), but He would never permanently renounce His “covenant”.

Psalm 89:38 "But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed."

The poem takes a new departure here. God is reproached for violating the covenant, and the contrast between the actual condition of things in Israel at present, and the glorious destiny promised, is feelingly set forth. The boldness of this expostulation has scandalized the Jewish expositors. But see exactly similar language (Psalm 44:9; 44:22). The point of the poem, indeed, is gone if we soften down these expressions. The stronger the conviction of the inviolability of God's promises, the more vehement becomes the sense of right to expostulate at their seeming violation, the delay of the fulfilment of the covenant.

"But thou hast cast off": Literally, Thou hast treated as a foul, offensive thing; thou hast treated him to whom these promises were made, as if he were a vile and detestable object. As that which one throws away because it is worthless or offensive.

"And abhorred": Hast despised; that is, as if it were an object of aversion or contempt (compare Psalm 60:1, 60:10).

"Thou hast been wroth": Literally, "Thou hast suffered (thine anger) to overflow," or to pour itself forth (see Psalm 78:21, 78:59).

"With thine anointed": With him who had been anointed as king. Anointed as thine own to administer justice, and to rule for thee (1 Sam. 16:1, 16:13). This might seem to refer to the time of Absalom, when David was driven from his throne and his kingdom.

God has promised that David's throne would last forever, and yet He sees all of the troubles coming on the anointed of God. God is angry and with good cause. Just because he is anointed, does not give him license to sin. The anointed of God should be a good example to all the rest, not caught up in fleshly sin. There is more expected of the anointed, than of the people who have not been trained of God.

Psalm 89:39 "Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown [by casting it] to the ground."

"Made void the covenant": The Hebrew word behind "spurned" is rare, and it may better be translated "disdained". It seemed to the psalmist that the condition of Israel indicated that God was neglecting His covenant with David (compare Ezek. 37:1-14).

"Profaned his crown": This depicts a serious insult to the dynasty because it is of divine origin.

It appears to the servant of God, that God has broken covenant with him. He does not know His God very well, or He would know that God does not break His covenant. The king, because of the sin in his life, had suffered much humiliation. Sometimes he felt as if God had taken his crown and thrown it to the ground. David deserved this for the sin in his life. The sad thing is that Jesus felt, and is still feeling, that rejection, and He did nothing to deserve such punishment. Jesus, who created everything and everyone, must truly feel pain when His very creation denies that He is God the Son.

Verses 40-45: The ruin is depicted in several images: left with broken hedges, thus defenseless; a stronghold whose ruins invite invaders; a weakling plundered by all his enemies; a soldier with a useless sword; and a youth prematurely old.

Psalm 89:40 "Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin."

Round about his vine, the church (see Psalm 80:12). A famous church was raised at Jerusalem, quickly after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, which seemed to be well filled, fenced, and protected. But on a sudden a violent persecution arose, and the members of it were made havoc of, and the ministers of the word were scattered abroad, and which was the breaking down of the hedges. And what was done to the church was taken by Christ as done to himself, as it is here spoken of him see (Acts 8:1). And this might seem contrary to the word and oath of God, that his seed should endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven (Psalm 89:29), when the first Christian church was used in this manner. But that providence was overruled, for the spread of the Gospel, and the interest of Christ, in other parts (see Acts 8:4), and so no objection to what is before said.

"Thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin": The same as before, the church of Christ, which seemed to be so well built and fortified (see Isa. 26:1).

The protection, that he had known for so long, is now gone. Anyone can take a shot at him. This is surely true of the church today. It seems the hedge is gone, and every wind of doctrine can creep into the church. It is really difficult to tell the church from the rest of the world.

Psalm 89:41 "All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbors."

His church, his members, which are himself, when made havoc of by their persecutors, and they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods (Heb. 10:34). So the church of Christ may be spoiled, however, attempted to be spoiled, by false teachers, who are the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines. Crafty seducers, who spoil Christians of their peace and comfort, through philosophy and vain deceit (SOS 2:15). Christ himself may be said to be spoiled, when he was stripped of his clothes by the Roman soldiers, who also parted his garments, casting lots for his vesture. When they that passed by his cross, as he hung upon it, reviled him, and robbed him of his good name, and of his kingly and priestly offices. And he is also spoiled by false teachers, who rob him of his deity, his divine and eternal Sonship, and of his satisfaction and righteousness, by whom he is trodden under foot, and his blood counted as an unholy thing. And so the Targum, "all that pass by the way tread upon him" (see Heb. 10:29). These are they that walk not in the right way; but go out of it, and choose their own way. They are such as pass over the right way, or cross it; they are they that transgress, and abide not in the doctrine of Christ, that so use him (2 John 1:9).

"He is a reproach to his neighbors": His name and character were reproached by the Jews, his countrymen, who called him a glutton and a wine bibber; and represented him as a notorious sinner. Said his miracles as done by the help of Satan. His doctrine as hard sayings, novel opinions, contrary to common sense and reason, and tending to licentiousness. And his followers

and members as the off scouring of all things. But all this has been or will be rolled off, and is no objection to the glory promised him.

When the hedge was gone the king was spoiled by those who passed by, and even members of his own family who wanted to destroy him. This is pretty much the way it is in the church today. It is ridiculed on television. People even think you are not all with it, if you love and worship God. The worst is not the world attacking the church, it is members inside the church who are tearing at the fabric of true belief.

Psalm 89:42 "Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice."

Suffered them to become powerful, and to prevail against him; as the wicked Jews, and Satan, and his principalities and powers, at the time of Christ's apprehension, crucifixion, and death. For then were their hour, and the power of darkness (Luke 22:53). Death also had dominion over him, and held him under the power of it for a while. The enemies of his interest, Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, have, in their turns, had their right hands set up, and have had power, and prevailed over it. And the latter will again, at the slaying of the witnesses: all which, though it seems contrary to (Psalm 89:21), yet is not. For Satan, though he bruised Christ's heel, yet Christ bruised his head, destroyed his works, and him himself, and that by dying; and spoiled his principalities and powers; and death could not hold him long. Nor has it now any dominion over him, and is abolished by him; and antichrist, and all the antichristian powers, will be destroyed by him before long.

"Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice": As they did when they had got him on the cross; and especially when he was laid in the grave (Psalm 22:7). And as the antichristian party will when his witnesses are slain (Rev. 11:10). But as the joy of the former was short lived, and was soon turned into sorrow, so will be that of the latter.

He is pointing a finger at God and saying that God Himself, has caused this calamity to come upon him. He is really saying, God, you have broken your covenant with me. This is the opposite of what Job said in his troubles. God may have removed the blessing for a moment, but He has not broken His covenant.

Psalm 89:43 "Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle."

Or the "sharpness" of it blunted it, so that it could do no execution. The disciples of Christ were not allowed the use of the temporal sword to defend their master; and his house, his kingdom, not being of this world (Matt. 26:51). Other weapons were put into their hands. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And the edge of this was blunted, with respect to the Jews, being of little or no efficacy among them. It was turned off by them, and put away from them. But then it was turned towards the Gentiles, and was powerful and effectual among them. Christ girt it on his thigh, and rode forth in his glory and majesty, conquering, and to conquer, and by it subdued many, who fell under him, and gave up themselves unto him (see Eph. 6:17). And before long, with the twoedged sword, which proceeds out of his mouth, will he smite the

antichristian nations. And the remnant of those that escape at the battle of Armageddon shall be slain with it (Rev. 19:15).

"And hast not made him to stand in the battle": But to fall in it, being delivered up into the hands of wicked men, of justice, and death. And yet, by dying, he put away sin, finished it, made an end of it, and destroyed it. He conquered Satan, and led him captive; overcame the world, the spite and malice of it, and its prince; and abolished death itself.

When he realizes that God is not fighting his battle for him, he loses his confidence in battle. It seems as if even his weapons are not up to par. This is a man longing for the presence of God.

Psalm 89:44 "Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground."

The glory of his deity, though it did not properly cease, yet it seemed to do so, being covered, and out of sight, and seen but by a very few, while he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh. And the glory of his humanity was made to cease, in which he was fairer than the children of men, and his visage was more marred than any man's, and his form than the sons of men. And the glory of his offices, prophetic, priestly, and kingly, which were reproached and vilified, and disputed and contradicted by the Jews (Matt. 26:68). It may be rendered, "his purity", which seemed to cease when he was clothed with our filthy garments. Or had all our sins laid upon him, and imputed to him, by his Father; and he was made sin for us, who knew none. The Targum is, "thou hast made the priests to cease who sprinkle upon the altar, and purify his people".

"And cast his throne down to the ground": This seems contrary, and is an objection to (Psalm 89:29), but is not. For notwithstanding the usage of Christ by the Jews, who rejected him as the King Messiah (see note on Psalm 89:39). Yet he is now upon the same throne with his Father, and will sit upon a throne of glory when he comes to judge the world, and so in the New Jerusalem church state, and to all eternity.

The once mighty powerful rule, that was known for its greatness, is gone. Even the world around him realizes that God has left for a while.

Psalm 89:45 "The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah."

"The days of his youth hast thou shortened": This is a figure for the relative brevity of the Davidic dynasty. The dynasty was cut off in its youth.

Shame really comes from guilt. It seems to him as if suddenly he is an old man. His shame is in that he feels he has failed God and God has removed his blessing. It is time to pause and think on these things, Selah.

Psalm 89:46 "How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?"

"Hide thyself for ever": By God's seeming refusal to answer prayer and restore the Davidic kingship, it seemed as though God was hiding Himself. Of course, the discipline of disobedient kings had been foretold (verse 32). According to the prophets, God would eventually restore

Israel and the Davidic throne in an earthly kingdom (compare Hosea 3:4-5). Never in the Old Testament is there a sense that this Davidic promise would be fulfilled by Christ with a spiritual and heavenly reign.

He does not deny that he deserved to be punished, but now he is saying, LORD, how long will your presence and blessings of the past be gone? You won't hide yourself from me forever, will you? Always the person feeling the chastisement of God, feels that it lasts too long. Even the martyrs in heaven are asking, how long until the reign of Jesus will take place?

Psalm 89:47 "Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?"

The prosperity of the Davidic kingdom is linked to the welfare of all people (compare Psalm 72:17; Isa. 9:7; 11:1-10). If the kingdom fails, who can survive (verse 48).

He is trying every excuse, now he says, you know you allotted me but a short time on this earth. He is saying that without the blessings of God, he has lived in vain. We all feel that we would like to accomplish something good in this life, before it drifts away and is gone.

Psalm 89:48 "What man [is he that] liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah."

Every living man must die; as sure as a man lives, so sure he shall die. Be he strong and mighty, as the word signifies, or weak and sickly. Be he high or low, rich or poor, prince or peasant, righteous or wicked; persons of all ranks, states, and conditions, age or sex, must die. For all have sinned; and it is the appointment of God that they should die, and very few are the exceptions; as Enoch and Elijah, and those that will be found alive at Christ's coming.

"Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave": Either from going down into it, or coming under the power of it. So the Targum, "what man is he that shall live, and shall not see the angel of death (Heb. 2:14). Shall he deliver his soul from his hand, that he should not go down to the house of his grave?" Or deliver himself from the power of it, when in it; that is, raise himself from the dead: none ever did this, or ever can. Christ indeed undertook, and has promised, to redeem his people from the power of the grave, upon which they have believed they should be delivered (see Hosea 13:14). But if Christ rose not himself, which was the thing now in question, how could it be? The case stands thus; every man must die; no man can raise himself from the dead; if Christ rise not, everyone must continue under the power of the grave; for then there could be no resurrection.

He is saying, Lord we all must die in this life. He knows that if God does not turn back to him in this life, it is too late to get forgiveness in the tomb. Again, think on these things.

Verses 49-51: Here is a final plea for God to come to the help of His people, so as to avoid reproach (compare Isa. 37:17-35).

Psalm 89:49 "Lord, where [are] thy former loving-kindnesses, [which] thou swarest unto David in thy truth?"

The spiritual blessings said to be in Christ; the grace said to be given to us in him. The sure mercies of David, such as redemption, justification, remission of sins, and eternal life; so called because they flow from the free favor and love of God. And, being many, are expressed in the plural number; and which were former or ancient ones, even promised and secured in Christ before the world began. Springing from the love of God, which, both to Christ and his people, was from everlasting, and provided for in a covenant, which was as early.

"Which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?" Which were promised to Christ, the antitype of David, and that with an oath, by the truth or faithfulness of God, for the certainty thereof. But now where are all these? Or how will they take place, if Christ rise not from the dead? Where will be the redemption of his people, the justification of their persons, the remission of their sins, and their everlasting salvation? And what will become then of the covenant, oath, and faithfulness of God?

I personally would be afraid to talk to God like this psalmist did. He reminds God Almighty that He promised to bless David. Not only did He promise, but He swore to help David. He really is saying, where is this God that I once knew that was so kind and loving?

Psalm 89:50 "Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; [how] I do bear in my bosom [the reproach of] all the mighty people;"

The apostles of Christ, his servants, and the servants of the living God, that showed unto men the way of salvation. And other saints with them that believed in Christ, and were made willing to serve and follow him. These were now reproached by the Scribes and Pharisees for believing in him, and professing him. And were scoffed and laughed at, when they had crucified him, and laid him in the grave. Triumphant over him and them, believing he would never rise again, as he had given out he should, and for which his followers were reproached. And therefore desire the Lord would remember the reproach cast upon Christ, and them, for his sake, and roll it away.

"How I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people": The ecclesiastical and civil rulers of the Jews, their chief priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, who poured out their reproaches very plentifully on the followers of Christ, whom the psalmist here represents. Which fell very heavily upon them, as a very great weight and burden, and pressed them sore. And went to their very hearts, and therefore said to be "in their bosom"; and which is mentioned to excite the divine compassion. That he would appear for them, and raise his Son from the dead, as was promised and expected. That their enemies might have no more occasion to reproach him and them. It is in the original, "I bear in my bosom all the many people"; which some understand of the people of God, and of Christ's sustaining their persons, and making satisfaction for their sins. But the other sense is preferable. Kimchi supplies the words as we do. And so the Targum, which renders them thus, "I bear in my bosom all the reproaches of many people."

We see the psalmist is saying, that all the people around were mocking not only him personally, but his nation as well. This sounds just like a child complaining to a parent, that others are laughing at them.

Psalm 89:51 "Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed."

Which carries in it another argument why the Lord should take notice of these reproaches; because they come not only from their enemies, but from his also. And the enemies of his Son, who would not have him, the King Messiah, to reign over them, and are said to reproach him in the next clause.

"Wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine Anointed": Or thy Messiah; so Aben Ezra and Kimchi interpret it of the Messiah. Jarchi renders it "the ends of the Messiah"; and all of them understand it of the coming of the Messiah, as in the Talmud. Which, because delayed, or was not so soon as expected, was scoffed at and reproached by wicked men (see Malachi 2:17). But it rather designs the ways and works, actions, and especially the miracles of Christ, which were reproached, either as done on the Sabbath day, or by the help of Satan. And he was denigrated in his kindest actions to the bodies and souls of men, as a friend of publicans and sinners, and himself as a sinner. And it may have a particular view to the latter end of the Messiah, the last part of his life, his sufferings and death, and when he hung on the cross. At which time he was, in the most insolent manner, reviled and reproached by his enemies. The words may be rendered "the heels of the Messiah", and are thought by some to have reference to the promise in (Genesis 3:15). And may regard either the human nature of Christ, which was both reproached and bruised; or his members suffering disgrace and persecution for his sake, and which he takes as done to himself.

Now the psalmist goes back and reminds the Lord, that these are His enemies as well. He is saying, your enemies are attacking your anointed.

Psalm 89:52 "Blessed [be] the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen."

"Blessed be the LORD": This blessing, indicating retuning confidence, closes not only Psalm 89, but all of Book III (Psalms 73-89), of the Psalms.

Thank goodness, he finally gets back to praising God in the end. God always deserves our praise. Amen means, so be it.

Psalm 89 Continued

1. In the physical realm, who was the holy one they were talking about in verse 19?
2. David had been chosen out of the people and anointed to be _____.
3. Who is the true Mighty One?
4. Jesus had a somewhat normal boyhood in the home of his mother _____ and _____.
5. Who anointed David?

6. What was David, before he was anointed?
7. Who are the Hand and Arm in verse 21?
8. Did Satan ever have any power over Jesus?
9. What were some of the promises God made to David?
10. What type kingdom was David promised?
11. Where did David rule?
12. Where is the rule of Jesus?
13. Who is the Rock of my salvation?
14. Who is God's firstborn mentioned in verse 27?
15. What is He called in 1 Timothy 6:15?
16. The covenant was first given to _____, it was restated to _____, and fulfilled in _____.
17. What does, days of heaven, mean?
18. What were the natural children of David like?
19. What punishment soon came to the 12 tribes of Israel?
20. Their foolishness does not affect God's _____.
21. The Word of God is _____.
22. Why did God swear by himself?
23. The seed of David, in verse 36, is who?
24. What were two witnesses of God's promise?
25. In verse 39, how was the crown profaned?
26. What is his protection called in verse 40?
27. The world is not the worst threat to the church, what is?
28. Has God broken covenant, as the psalmist thinks He has?
29. What does shame come from?
30. What did the Psalmist remind God of in verse 47?

31. In verse 51, what does the Psalmist remind God of?

32. Thank goodness, he finally got back to _____.