

Part 11 – Blessed be the Lord Forevermore

In part 10 we learned about God’s ‘visitation’ to Israel, specifically the southern kingdom of Judah when Rehoboam was king (when this Psalm was likely written). And that simply means the Psalmist (Ethan) was explaining the judgments that God brought upon Israel *for disobeying Him*. By withdrawing His protective ‘hedge’ from them, He allowed their enemies (particularly the king of Egypt) to invade, and plunder, them. And, not only was this *humiliating* to the nation – that afore time never lost their battles *because* they obeyed the Lord – but it was also very *financially* painful. For even the king lost all that was in his treasury and, sadly, even the Lord’s Temple treasury was looted too. And even though their armies had *tried* to defend the nation, they lost *so badly* it was as if they were fighting with the *blunt* side of their sword; for they simply didn’t have the vigor to fight well. Yet, in all this the Lord still *never* broke His *unconditional* covenant with David; it only *seemed* like it to the Psalmist, for he’d never seen Israel loose like that, let alone be invaded and plundered. But David’s grandson, Rehoboam, was *still* allowed to be on the throne of Israel (the southern kingdom of Judah), even though he did have to pay tribute to the king of Egypt. Thus, the Lord (YHWH) showed how He is fully capable of chastising His people *and still* keeping His *unconditional* promises to David, as well as Abraham, Issac and Jacob. But, this was still terribly hard for the Psalmist (Ethan) to see, which is why he’s now going to plead with God to removed His ‘visitation’ (judgments) - that they so richly deserved - as the ‘selah’ in the last verse taught us...

Psalm 89

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

Now, this verse uses a common figure of speech (*Erotesis*), which is the asking of questions – not for information, or even for an answer – but *to make a point*. And the reasons vary greatly. You can look at apx 6 in the *Companion Bible* to see all the reasons why. But here, he’s doing so in *lamentation* for the chastisements of the Lord (YHWH)... which they truly deserved (not Ethan *personally*, but *most* in the nation). And truly, his asking ‘how long’ – i.e. will the judgments continue (which he spoke of before) - is not hard to understand. For, haven’t we *all* asked ‘how long’ when being chastised at some point in our life? However, it’s important to remember that our punishments won’t come to an end until *after* we’ve repented. And truly, it might still take some time *after* sincere repentance. For, even though God forgives us *instantly*, *part of* true repentance is *accepting* God’s chastisements *and being willing to humbly endure them*. After all, we deserve much worse! So, as we’d say today, it’s wise to ‘kiss the paddle’ and work hard to correct (and keep corrected) our sinful ways (and heart) so we don’t end up in the same rotten situation again...

Psalm 89

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

Let's remember, by the time this Psalm was written, Ethan must have been an old man. For he was not only a chief musician in David's day, but also Solomon's time. And, when we get older, we have a tendency to think *more* about the fragility of our flesh, simply because our flesh 'reminds' us about it *more and more* as we age. So then, the words '**how short**' and '**time**' here simply mean **life** (*as a fleeting portion of time*) (#2465). And the word '**men**' here is actually a combination of two words that mean **a son** (#1121) and **a human being**, i.e. **mankind** (#120). And lastly, the word '**vain**' here means **evil** (as destructive), literally (**ruin**) or morally (especially **guile**); figuratively **idolatry** (as false, subjective), **uselessness** (as deceptive, objective; also adverbially, **in vain**) (#7723).

So, the point the Psalmist is making is that, our life in the flesh is short and, because of that, it seems 'in vain' (useless or futile) *when we only think of life from the fleshly perspective* (i.e. only think with the carnal mind). And the Psalmist's question (why God made man in vain, i.e. in the flesh) is again a figure of speech (*Erotosis*, apx 6), which is the asking of a question, not for information or an answer, but *to make a point*. Today we'd call this a rhetorical question. So, Ethan is making the point that our life in the flesh is short, and it seems useless when we don't get to enjoy it. And, at the time he wrote this Psalm, people in the southern kingdom *were not* enjoying life too much because they had been defeated in war, lost their riches and were made tributaries. Yet, Solomon – a man who had *everything* that a man could ever want – also lamented about the vanity of our flesh life, in the great book of Ecclesiastes (which you can study in full here: https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Ecclesiastes).

And in the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon pointed out that he lived life to the 'fullest' in the aspect of living for fleshly pleasures. He did not withhold any fleshly pleasure from himself (as his many wives and concubines proved). Yet, in the end, he still found all the 'fleshly pleasures' *extremely... empty* (in vain) (Eccx 2). So, Solomon's point is that: living life in the flesh, *only for pleasures of the flesh*, really is 'in vain' (vanity). Because, a person can spend their whole life *only* living for the 'pleasures of the flesh' and heaping up tons of wealth and riches... but then what? Well, we will still die, just like an animal does. And we cannot take any of our earthly riches (or power and prestige) with us when we die (Ecc 5:15; 1 Tim 6:7). So, in that regards, our flesh life is truly 'vain'. And truly, there's *nothing* in this life that can give us *true* peace of mind nor *true* happiness. *Only* having a good relationship (being at peace with) our Creator (our Heavenly Father, YHVH) can bring us *true* peace of mind and *true* happiness (Ps 16:11, Isa 26:3-4).

So, the reality (truth) is that, our life in the flesh has *great* purpose. As Jesus Christ said in John 3:3-8, being born in the flesh is one, of two, *requirements* to being able to obtain *eternal* life. That's why Satan, and the other fallen angels who refused to come to earth born through a woman (Gen 3, 6), *cannot* have *eternal* life (Ezek 28, Rev 20, Jude 6). But the other requirement

is to be born ‘of the Spirit’, which means being *born of the Holy Spirit of God*. This means truly believing upon Jesus Christ (the Word of God) and allowing His Words, and Holy Spirit, to create what Paul calls a ‘new man’ within our spirit. And that means we must put off our ‘old man’ *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts* (Eph 2:22), and *not serve sin any longer* (Rom 6:6). We do this by *renewing in the spirit of your mind* (Eph 4:23) *through studying God’s Word* (Col 3:10) so the Holy Spirit will help us put on the ‘new man’, which *is created in righteousness and true holiness* (Eph 4:24). **And this internal process (of putting off the ‘old man’ and putting on the ‘new man’) truly IS the purpose for life in the flesh.** In other words, *it’s only something that can happen while we’re in the flesh*; and God has *designed it that way to save His children from spiritual death* that came about after Satan’s rebellion, which you can learn more about in **The Rebellion** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1288>] and in the **3rd Chapter of John** [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_John_and_epistle/46]. But, if you are only thinking with the ‘carnal mind’ then life *does seem* ‘in vain’. And truly our life in the flesh is pretty short, especially compared to eternity... or even to the hundreds of years people used to live, like Methuselah (Gen 5:27). But again, there **is** a *great* purpose to it. And that purpose is to teach us *what death really is* and *why* we should not rebel against our Creator!

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.

There have only been two men that have *not* died in the flesh, because God ‘took them’, which means He translated them from a flesh body, to the spiritual, so they could go to heaven and be with Him. These two men are Enoch (Gen 5:24) and Elijah (2 Kings 2:11). [And some speculate that Moses didn’t really die because the Lord ‘buried’ him and no one knows where his grave is (Deut 34:5-6)]. But, other than that, all men (and women) do eventually die. And there’s no way to stop that from happening! No amount of money, power or prestige we have will ‘save’ us from the ‘hand of the grave’, which means the power of the grave, i.e. the power that dying in the flesh has over us. *We cannot stop it no matter how hard we try.* And many *do* try, but it *still* doesn’t work. We *all* die and our flesh is either burned or buried; either way, the ‘grave’ has the power over our flesh because that’s where our flesh body eventually ends up.

Now, the word ‘**man**’ here is interesting because, while it can mean simply **a person**, it also can mean a **valiant man** or **warrior** (#1397). So, the Psalmist is pointing out that even the *strongest* men cannot stop their flesh from dying. And then the word ‘**deliver**’ means not only to **live** but also to **revive** (#2421). So, he’s pointing out that *no one* can revive their soul back into the flesh body once it’s departed; and that’s because our soul and spirit go *back to God* once it departs from this flesh body, and we *cannot* stop that process for it’s *God ordained* (Ecc 12:6-7, 2 Cor 5). And again, the only men who ever escaped this fate were Enoch and Elijah because God translated them. *Even Jesus Christ died in the flesh.* However, the ‘grave’ could not hold Him!

And thank God because that is the *only* way we can have eternal life (Rom 5:11-21). But, *we* still must put off our flesh body before we can obtain *eternal* life, as Paul points out in 1 Cor 15 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Corinthians/33, <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/263>].

And Ethan likely calls to mind the short nature of human life - and the eventuality of death - *because* his time to die was surely soon to come as he wrote this Psalm. And he *really* wanted to see the blessings of the Lord (YHVH) return to Israel *before* he dies. Now, this verse also ends with a ‘*selah*’, which means to ‘*stop and think*’ about what *has been said* with what’s *about to be said*. The ‘*selah*’ is thus connecting the fact of man’s frailty (even the strongest) with the renewed and increased fervor of his complaint...

Psalm 89

49 Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy **truth**?

There’re several important words in this verse. The first of which is the word “Lord”. Now, if you look this word up in the *Strong’s Concordance*, it will show as ‘*Adonay*’ (#136). But, as the *Companion Bible* points out (apx. 32), this is one of 134 places where the ‘ancient custodians’ (Sopherim) actually *altered* God’s Sacred name to ‘*Adonay*’. So, this word ‘**Lord**’ truly is *Yehovah* (#3068), which means (the) **self-Existent** or **Eternal**. While ‘Elohim is God as the Creator of all things, Yehovah is *the same God in covenant relation to those whom He has created*. He is, therefore, the God of Israel; but *especially* the God of those who are redeemed, and are thus now ‘in Christ’. And then the word ‘**lovingkindness**’ is the same word rendered as ‘mercy’ back in verses 2, 14, 24 and 28. So, it still means **kindness** (#2617). And then the word ‘**swarest**’ means **to seven oneself**, i.e. **swear** (as if by repeating a declaration seven times) (#7650). And lastly, the word ‘**truth**’ is the *same* word that’s normally rendered as ‘faithfulness’ in this Psalm (verse 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33). It thus means **firmness**, **security** and **morally fidelity** (530). And it comes from a word that means **established**, i.e. (figuratively) **trusty**; also (abstractly) **trustworthiness** (#529). And that comes from a prime root that means **to build up or support**; to **foster as a parent or nurse**; and, figuratively, **to render** (or **be**) **firm** or **faithful**, to **trust** or **believe**, to **be permanent** or **quiet**; morally **to be true or certain** (#539).

So, after speaking of all the ‘judgments’ that the Lord (YHVH) has brought upon Israel (the southern kingdom of Judah, specifically), Ethan now asks the Lord (YHVH) where his former mercies were; i.e. the promises which He swore to David (2 Sam 7:15) *would* come to pass. But the truth was that, God’s mercy *had not gone anywhere*, nor had His faithfulness to His Word. For, just as He was faithful to bless Israel when they obeyed Him, so too was He faithful to chasten them when they disobeyed Him (Lev 26, Deut 28). And, as Moses pointed out (Heb 8:5) God is faithful to chasten us, and that’s *because* He loves us (Heb 12). So, the Lord truly was being ‘merciful’ in chastening Israel; for had He not done so, the consequences would have been *way worse*. Israel could have been *totally* wiped out instead of simply made tributaries and less

wealthy. And, as Rom 6:23 reminds us, *the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*. And, it was because Jesus Christ came (through David's lineage) and died for our sins (as well as defeating death) that God gave us the opportunity for salvation (eternal life), even though Israel *had* to be punished for many years *before* that came to pass. Moreover, let's not forget that David's grandson, Rehoboam, was *still* on the throne ruling over *some* of the tribes (Judah and Benjamin). This in itself was done *specifically* to keep His oath to David, as God pointed out in 1 Kings 11:12-13. So, God's former mercies, and oath, to David *had not gone anywhere*. They were, in fact, *being fulfilled* because Rehoboam was *still* on the throne of Israel (the southern kingdom) and Israel *was still* a nation; just not as powerful as they once were...

Psalm 89

50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people;

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

Again, the word '**Lord**' (in vs 50) shows as '*Adonay* (#136) in the *Strong's Concordance*, but it is truly God's Sacred (and covenant) name **Yehovah** (#3068), which means (the) **self-Existent** or **Eternal**. But, in verse 50, it shows up *correctly* in the *Strong's Concordance* (go figure). And then the *first* word '**reproach**' means **contumely** or **disgrace** (#2781) while the second one is not in the original manuscripts (#9999). And then the word '**mighty**' means **abundant** (in *quantity, size, age, number, rank, quality*) (#7227). So, 'mighty people' would have been better rendered as 'many peoples', which is in reference to Israel's enemies. So, in verse 50, Ethan is really lamenting to the Lord (YHVH) *how* painful it is for him to see his nation 'go down hill'. As such, he was 'bearing' (carrying #5375) the reproach *of it all in his bosom* (heart) because it pained him *so deeply* to see his people disgraced, and treated with such contempt, by the their heathen enemies. So, he asks the Lord (YHVH) *why* this is happening; but again, he's using a common figure of speech (Erotesis, apx 6) *to express his great lamentation*. Now, the word '**reproach**', in verse 51, means, figuratively, **to carp at**, i.e. **defame** (#2778). And the word '**footsteps**' here means **a heel** (as protuberant); hence, **a track**. But, figuratively, it can also mean **the rear (of an army)** (#6119). And it comes from a prim root that means **to swell out** or **up**; **to seize by the heel** and, figuratively, **to circumvent** (as if tripping up the heels), as well as **to restrain** (as if holding by the heel) (#6117). And then the word '**anointed**' does mean **anointed**. And while it's certainly used to refer to **the Messiah** (Jesus Christ), it can also be used to refer to a **consecrated person** (as a king, priest, or saint), even to God's 'chosen' people Israel (#4899).

So, the Psalmist (Ethan) is lamenting at how the enemies of Israel has defamed their 'footsteps' because Israel's army had been unable to ward off the Egyptian army. Thus, a heathen nation invaded Israel (for the first time in a long time) and that was absolutely *humiliating* for them, as

was being looted and made tributaries. And he (Ethan) even felt that Israel's being attacked, and subdued, by their enemies was a reproach to God's promises to David, but it really *was not*. Also note how Ethan says that Israel were *God's Servants* (vs 50). Now, this was true *when* they were actually *obeying* Him! But, when they were disobeying Him, they truly were *servants of sin*, which ultimately means serving *Satan himself*, as the 6th chapter of Romans explains very well [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Romans/37].

Psalm 89

52 Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Now, this great 'Mas-chil' Psalm ends on a note of hope, with a declaration of praise for the 'Lord', which again is God's Sacred (and Covenant) name **Yehovah** (#3068). The word '**blessed**' is used here *to bless God as an act of adoration* (#1288). And the words '**for evermore**' mean *eternity* but can also mean *always* (#5769). And then the word '**Amen**' means *sure, truly* and even *faithfulness* (#543). And it comes from the same prime root (#539) that the word rendered as 'faithfulness' (vs 1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, 49) and 'truth' (vs 49) in this Psalm come from, which essentially means to be *true* or *certain* (#530). That's quite a befitting way to end this great 'Mas-chil' Psalm, which has been teaching us now only how to *remember* God's promises, but also *how to remind* Him of them! And it also taught us how the Lord is able to be *faithful* to both His *unconditional* promises (David, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob/Israel) and *conditional* promises (Israel) *at the same time*. He perfectly balances chastising His children with keeping His promises to them as well. And, even though it was hard for the Psalmist to understand at the time he wrote this, it's quite clear to us living today, simply because we have the *history* that *proves* God was not unfaithful to His *unconditional* promise to David, nor to Abraham, Isaac nor Jacob/Israel. Further, He wasn't even unfaithful to His *conditional* promises with all of Israel. When Israel sinned He poured out the curings; more and more so the more they sinned. But, when they repented and turned back to Him (sincerely tried to do what's right) He then blessed them – which was *perfectly in line* with His promises laid out in Lev 26 and Deut 28. And *that's* what should give us *great* confidence that He will *always* be faithful to **all** of His promises, as well as to His prophecies of things *yet to come*.

Now, this chapter 89 *concludes* the 'Leviticus Book' of the Psalms. And what's neat about this, is the fact that each chapter (so far) that has ended a 'book' in the Psalms ends with a 'Benediction' (blessing) and a double 'Amen'. It was this way for the last chapter of the 'Genesis Book' (41) and the last chapter of the 'Exodus Book' (72) as well; and now for this 'Leviticus Book' too. Thus, giving us *more* proof at the Divine Hand that our Heavenly Father gave to those who worked to organize the Psalms. As the *Companion Bible* points out, on page 720, "it is certain that the present order in which we have the Psalms is the same as it was when they were in the hands of our Lord (Jesus Christ). For they were quoted repeatedly by Him and, by the Holy Spirit, through the Evangelists and Apostles. Indeed, in Acts 13:33, the Holy Spirit (by Paul)

expressly mentions ‘the second Psalm’. This puts us upon sure ground” ... that the Psalms are even organized according to the will of God at the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So, let’s close this great ‘Mas-chil’ Psalm with another imperative reminder about having great confidence in our Heavenly Father’s promises...

*35 Cast not away therefore your **confidence**, which **hath great recompence of reward**.*

*36 For ye have need of patience, that, **after** ye have **done** the will of God, ye might **receive the promise**.*

37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

*38 Now **the just shall live by faith**: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

*39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but **of them that believe to the saving of the soul**.*

Heb 10:35-39

Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore.

Ps 113:2

AMEN, AMEN!