

## Did God Break His Promise to King David?

Psalm 89

*The importance of a promise...*

*"My steadfast love I will keep for him [David] forever, and my covenant will stand firm for him. I will establish his offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens." (Psalm 89:28-29, see also 89:34-37)*

- But what if David's throne and kingship are long gone?

*The structure of Psalm 89*

1. Introduction: this psalm is about God's promise to David (89:1-4)
2. Praise: God's power and faithfulness in nature and this world (89:5-18)
3. Review: this is what was promised by God to David (89:19-37)
4. Question: why does it look like the promise to David has been broken? (89:38-45)
5. Plea: remember your promise to David, and quickly! (89:46-52)

*Four covenants in the Old Testament:*

1. With Noah (Gen 8:20-9:17): The preservation of life. The sign of the covenant is a rainbow.
2. With Abraham (Gen 12:1-3, 17:1-4): The promise of descendants, a land for them, and that Abraham would be a blessing to the nations. The sign is circumcision.
3. With Israel at Mt Sinai (Exodus 19-24, Lev 26): The promise of full and rich life in many ways. The sign is the Sabbath.
4. **With David (2 Sam 7, Ps 89:19-37): The promise of an eternal dynasty. The sign is not stated but implicit: the presence of the king himself on the throne.**

Q: But what if the son of David is a faithless and evil king?

A: "If they violate my statutes, and do not keep my commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes, but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness." (Ps 89:31-33)

- But to the psalmist Ethan it looked like God HAD removed his steadfast love from David
- Keep in mind the Davidic kingship disappeared in 586 BC– and has never returned to this day.

**What Ethan didn't live long enough to see was God fulfilling his promise in Jesus Christ, who is the Son of David and the eternal king!**

- See Matt 1:1, Rom 1:3, Luke 1:32, Matt 22:42, etc.
- Correctly understanding the curse of the covenant (punishment with the rod) is key. It really did mean that there could be a lengthy interruption in the Davidic rule, as foreign kings humbled David's line through the "rod."

*Let's look again at the four covenants and how Jesus receives the curses/punishments of all of them (see the slides)*

- Wait, why was Jesus cursed/punished? For you and me!

Further Questions for Reflection and Application:

1. Is there a promise that you think God broke? What is it?  
A. First, did He really promise it? Sometimes we assume this.  
B. Could it be fulfilled in the future? That's the case in Psalm 89.
2. Read Psalm 89 and get inside Ethan's experience, as well as the Jewish people as a whole.  
A. Why was the covenant with David so important?  
B. Why don't we feel the same weight of the problem today? Does this encourage you?