

May 24

Scriptures: Read Psalm 89

Key Verse: “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.” (Psalm 89:1)

Overview

Psalm 89 is a lament over the downfall of the Davidic dynasty. The psalmist pleads for God to restore it according to His promise. The identification of the psalmist, named Ethan, is uncertain, but he may have lived at the time when Babylon defeated the southern kingdom of Judah and when king Jehoiachin, a descendant of David, was put to shame and taken prisoner while still in his youth (vv. 38-45; 2 Kings 24:8-16). The psalmist, however, knew of God’s covenant with David to give him an enduring dynasty; in fact, he quotes a condensed version of the promise the Lord spoke to David (vv. 3-4; 2 Samuel 7:11-16).

Ethan is concerned and yet confident, because he knows that God is faithful and full of loving-kindness which had been proved over and over again by His delivering the nation in the past, such as from Rahab (a name which refers to Egypt). He also knows that nothing can be compared to God, who is the Creator and sole Sovereign over the whole world. Those who serve Him and know the joyful sound of His praises are blessed with the light of His countenance upon them and are thus continually joyful, strengthened, and exalted by Him, as was king David (vv. 14-18). Ethan affirms that the foundation of God’s throne is righteousness and justice, and that mercy and truth are His emissaries (v. 14). God could never have spoken falsely to David, and therefore the psalmist believes that God will indeed fulfill His promise to David; but he was confused to see that there was no longer a king from the line of David reigning in Jerusalem.

The promises of God to David, His chosen and anointed one, have been fulfilled in the great Son of David, Jesus Christ. He was the ultimate “anointed one” (meaning “Messiah”) who came as the first-born of God (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15,18; Heb. 1:6; 12:23; Rev. 1:5) and who cried out to Him: “You are My father” (vv. 26-27; John 17:1, 5,11, 21, 24-25). With the fuller revelation of God in Jesus Christ, we understand how God fulfilled His promise to David, but the psalmist could only hope and pray. Ethan understood that God was chastising the sons of David, but he also knew that His loving-kindness would not be utterly taken away, for the Lord declared, “My covenant I will not break”, and truly, God cannot lie (v. 34). The big question in Ethan’s mind, as is often seen in the psalms, is: “How long, Lord?” (v. 46) When would God’s wrath cease? All they could do was wait expectantly for the salvation of the Lord, which later came to be their hope for the Messiah. Truly, God did not break His covenant with David. The first chapter of the New Testament shows how Jesus the Messiah was the Son of David, and the early church taught that He was the fulfillment of God’s promises in the Holy Scriptures (Romans 1:2-4).

Prayer

Thank You, Father, for the precious promises You have given us in Your Word, which You are always faithful to keep. We desire today to sing Your praises and declare Your faithfulness to a world that knows the heartache of only broken promises.