

## GOD'S DEPENDABILITY DESPITE DISAPPOINTMENTS: Psalm 89

### The Outline of the Psalm

- 1A. THE PRAISE OF THE PSALMIST: 1-18
  - 1b. Praise for God's covenant with David: 1-4
  - 2b. Praise for the God's character: 5-18
- 2A. THE PROMISES OF GOD TO DAVID: 19-37
- 3A. THE PROBLEMS OF THE PSALMIST: 38-45
- 4A. THE PETITION OF THE PSALMIST: 46-51



### The Occasion for the Psalm

The occasion of the psalm seems to have been the defeat and deposing of a king in the Davidic line, possibly Jehoiachin (2 Ki. 24:8-17). The disaster and disappointment caused the psalmist to question God's fidelity to His promise to David (2 Sam. 7:8-16). The comments of Allen P. Ross are very much to the point,

The psalmist is not without hope, however. He begins his lament with a hymn that praises God for his loyal love and faithfulness; he recalls the marvelous acts of God in the past; and most importantly, he restates the promises of God . . . the covenant that he swore to David, a covenant that promised an eternal dynasty. On the basis of all this, the psalmist pleads with God to intervene once again and fulfill the promises that he made to David, and therefore to the nation. The prayer is certainly the focus of the psalm; but it is an informed prayer and not a desperate cry out of darkness. Believers down through the ages have been in similar situations; and their prayers are most effective when they are based on the character of God and on his sure promises (*A Commentary on the Psalms*, II, 2013, 840).

The introductory verses stress the key words which occur throughout the psalm:

God's steadfast, loyal love - **חֶסֶד** (**chesed**) (transl. as *mercies* and *mercy*, *lovingkindness*, *lovingkindnesses*)

God's faithfulness - **אֱמוּנָה** (**'amuna**)

Both terms appears seven times:

**Chesed**: mercy/loving kindnesses Ps. 89:1, 2, 14, 24, 28, 33, 49

**'Amuna**: Ps. 89:1, 2, 5, 8, 24, 33, 49 (truth)

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These important divine attributes are placed in proximity. They helped the psalmist survive dismay, disappointment, indeed, disaster. As the believer focuses on the divine perfections he will be able to endure the trials of life, with confidence that God knows and cares, that this loyal love and faithfulness are a constant despite life's conflicts.

With the psalmist let us meditate on and magnify God's faithfulness. One recalls that the distraught prophet Jeremiah, just as the psalmist, was encouraged by God's faithfulness and mercy: May God's faithfulness be our confidence as well.

### ***Lamentations 3:21-23***

<sup>21</sup> This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

<sup>22</sup> It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

<sup>23</sup> They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

## **An Overview of God's Faithfulness in Psalm 89**

1. Faithfulness endures for all generations, therefore **REJOICE**.

v. 1- I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy **faithfulness** to all generations.

2. Faithfulness is established in the highest heavens, therefore **REFLECT**.

v. 2 - For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy **faithfulness** shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3. Faithfulness is extolled by the angelic assembly, therefore **REVERE**.

v. 5 - And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy **faithfulness** also in the congregation of the saints.

4. Faithfulness envelops the supreme Savior, therefore **REST**.

v. 8 -LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy **faithfulness** round about thee?

5. Faithfulness is experienced by the selected sovereign, therefore **RESPOND**.

v. 24 - But my **faithfulness** and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

6. Faithfulness is extended to the sinning saint, therefore **REPENT**.

v. 33 - Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my **faithfulness** to fail.

7. Faithfulness engenders confidence in the suffering believer, therefore **REMEMBER**.

v. 49 – Where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest to David in thy **truth** {literally, **faithfulness**}.

His **faithfulness** and **loyal love** are manifested everywhere and to everyone.

1. To the Saints v. 1
2. To the Stars v. 2
3. To the Spirit beings v. 5
4. To the Savior v. 8
5. To the Summits v. 12 (Mt. Hermon and Mt. Tabor)
5. To the Sovereign v. 24
6. To the Sea v. 25
7. To the Sinners v. 33

We therefore, despite life's distractions, disappointments and disasters, conclude with the psalmist, "**Blessed be the Lord, forevermore. Amen, and Amen**" (v. 52)

### **APPLICATIONS:**

1. The psalm inspires the faithful to pray that God might fulfill His promises.
2. Disappointments and dismay are common elements in human experience.
3. The believer in a desperate situation should contemplate God's mercy and faithfulness.
4. In the midst of disappointments the Christian needs to realize that there is hope and help.
5. Because God's love toward the believer is unconditional, it will never cease.
6. If mercy and faithfulness are some of God's main attributes, then we believers should emulate them in our lives and thus glorify God.

**Thought for the Way:** *How merciful and faithful am I?*

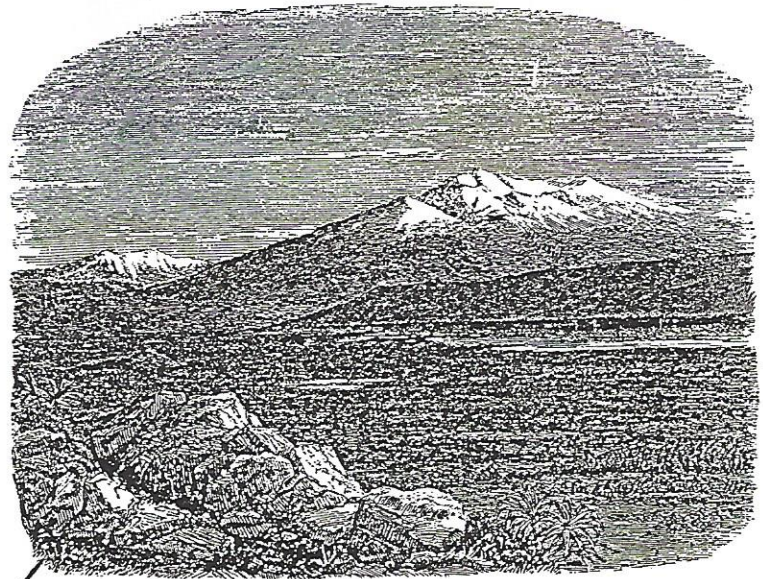


## PSALM 89

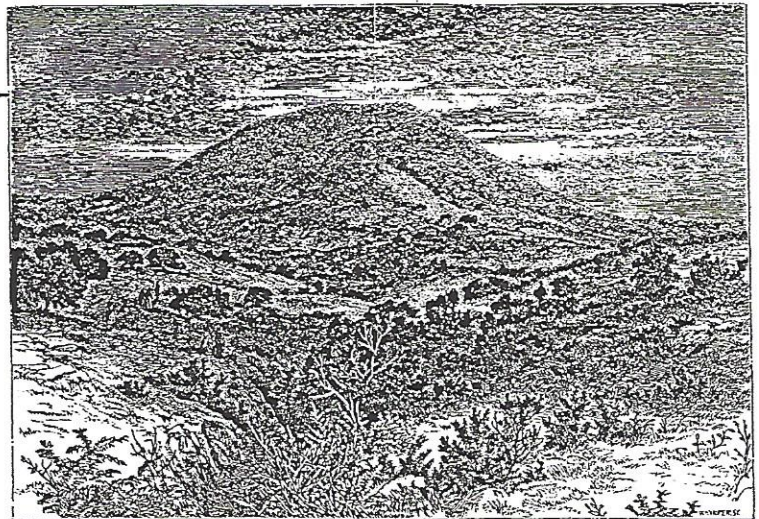
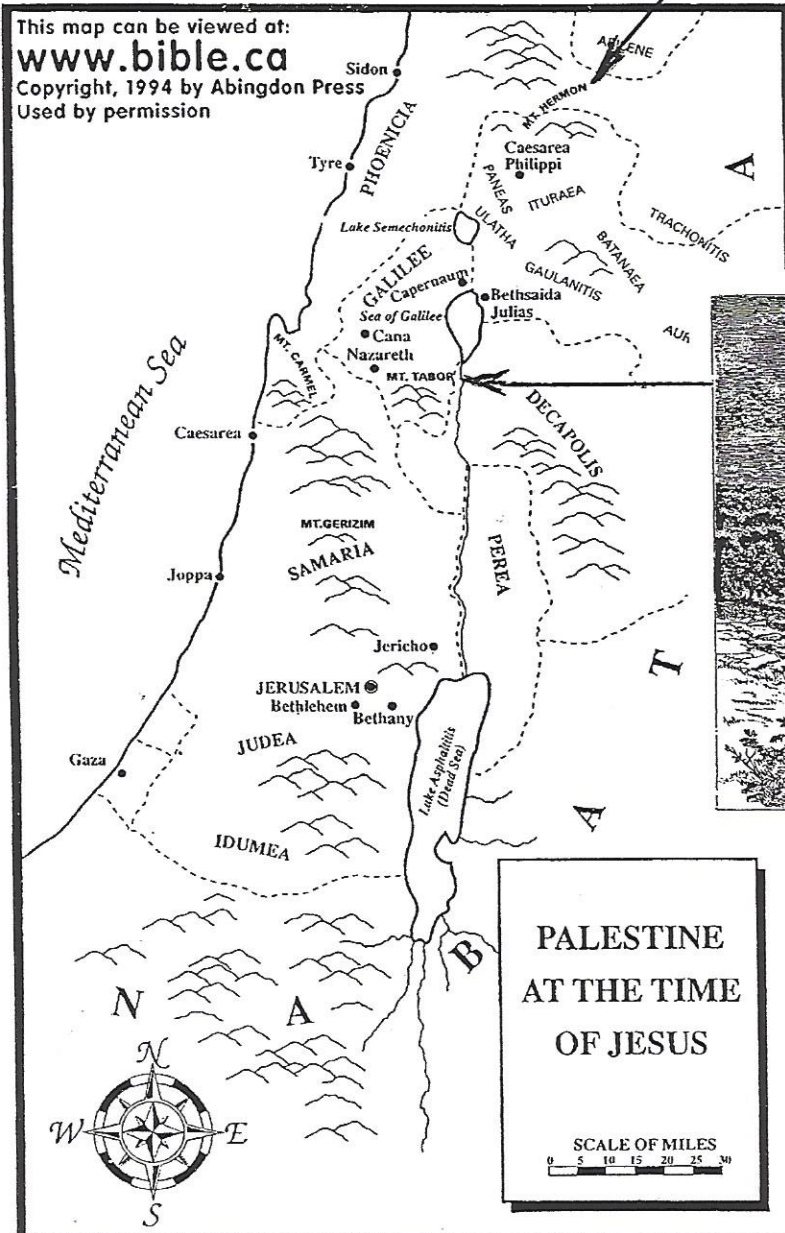
11 The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

12 The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.



HERMON FROM THE NORTHERN SHORE OF LAKE HÜLFH.



TABOR