God's Faithfulness to His Word and Character

1 Kings 8:56 & Psalm 89:1, 30-37
(FBC's 50th Anniversary - 7-6-2024)

People change; vacillate; move; prone to change; especially when put under pressure; Mere mortals go back on their promises; People break their vows; However, God, by contrast is consistently reliable; He remains true to His character and His Word.

The word "Faithful" or "Faithfulness":
The Hebrew word: - אֱמוּנָה 'emuwnah refers to firmness, fidelity, steadfastness, steadiness; The word implies reliability/dependability; trustworthiness; consistency.
The N.T. Greek word: πιστός pistos *pis-tos'*- means to be trustworthy; believable; reliable; dependable. It is related to the word "faith" or "belief" (Pistis). God is believable. He is worthy of our faith.

God is true to Who He Is and to What He Says!

I. God is Faithful to His WORD *(1 Kings 8:56)*
(He is reliable in what HE SAYS)

1 Kings 8:56 - Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

He keeps His covenants
Examples:

- God's promise as evidenced by the **rainbow** Gen.9:16

- God's promise **to Abraham** to give him a land, seed, and blessing (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:5-6)

- God's promise to give the **believer eternal life**
  Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." cp.II Cor.1:20

II. God is Faithful due to His CHARACTER *(Psalm 89:1, 30-37)*
(He is reliable because of who HE IS)

God's character demands His faithfulness: Faithfulness is who He is. God is clothed with the attribute of faithfulness (Ps. 89:8; Is. 11:5). Faithfulness is not just something God does, it is part of His very nature/character.

- *His immutability (changelessness; constancy; consistency) demands that He remain faithful; (Heb 13:8)*
- *His omniscience allows Him to know all things (past, present, and future) and thus to never lack the knowledge necessary to fulfil a promise.*
- *His perfect wisdom allows Him to devise the best plan of action and to carry it out with absolute precision*
- *His omnipotence allows Him to do anything He says He will do;*
- *His righteousness requires that He always does what is right*
- *His trueness demands that He remain faithful to what He promises*

The theme of Psalm 89 centers around God's faithfulness.

Because of Who He IS . . .

A. God is faithful
Despite the unworthiness of His people (v. 30-31)

B. God is faithful
To discipline the rebellion of His people (v. 32)

C. God is faithful
Not to break His promise to His people (v. 33-37)

What should our response be to God's faithfulness?

1. Rest in His faithfulness (Lamentations 3:21-23)
2. Tell others about His faithfulness (Psalm 89:1)
3. Always keep your word (do what you say you will do)
4. Be faithful (dependable; consistent) Prov.20:6
5. Step out by faith (trust and obey whatever God says, and leave the results to Him)
6. Simply Trust Him!

God's faithfulness to His Word should bring:

- Security to the saved (our assurance of salvation is based on God's faithfulness)
- Terror to the wicked (Hell is real; the Lake of Fire is real; Unbelievers will go there!)

When we say God is faithful, we are saying "God is worthy of my faith" or "I can have full faith in Him."

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(He is reliable in what HE _____)

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  Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." cp.II Cor.1:20

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2. _____ about His faithfulness (Psalm 89:1)
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God's Faithfulness

Proverbs 20:6 - Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

People change; vacillate; move; prone to change; especially when put under pressure; When threatened or placed into a stressful situation. People may have the best of intentions, but when the heat is turned up, they often brake the promises they made or become inconsistent in their actions.

- Mere mortals go back on their promises;
- People break their vows;
- Fail to follow through on their commitments;
- Change in their character;

God, by contrast is consistently reliable; He remains true to His character and His Word.

The word "Faithful" or "Faithfulness":

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1 Kings 8:56 - Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

In 1 Kings, King Solomon has finished a project that was in His father David's heart. He has seen the Temple (God's House) through to completion. He is now dedicating that Temple to God with sacrifice, prayer, and praise.

Having prayed that God would always hear and answer prayers prayed both at the Temple and toward the Temple, he now praises God for fulfilling His Word.

"Blessed" – worthy of acknowledgment and praise

"Given rest" – Just as He had promised to Israel centuries prior via Moses

"according to <u>all</u> that he promised" – Not just some promises, but every last one of them; Every single promise has been kept (some were conditional promises [example: blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience] and some were unconditional.

"there hath <u>not failed</u> one word…" –

Failed – to fall down; to be cast down as dead so as to rot and become invalid

Not one word which exited God's mouth would fail to accomplish what He said or promised.

"of all his <u>good</u> promise" – Here Solomon applies God's faithfulness to all of His "good" promises (words); God is equally faithful in fulfilling every single warning and judgment; But here Solomon is praising God for carrying out every single positively good promise.

What God says is very often linked to His faithfulness:

- 2 Timothy 2:11 *It is* a **<u>faithful</u>** <u>saying</u>: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:
- 2 Timothy 2:13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth **<u>faithful</u>**: he cannot deny himself.
- Titus 1:9 Holding fast the **<u>faithful</u>** <u>word</u> as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.
- Titus 3:8 *This is* a **<u>faithful</u>** <u>saying</u>…
- Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* **<u>faithful</u>** that <u>promised</u>;)

Mt 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, **<u>one</u> <u>jot</u>** or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. God's Word as originally given will be fulfilled right down to the finest detail.

GOD IS FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISES
(He keeps His covenants)

Examples:
God's promise as evidenced by the **rainbow**
Gen.9:16 - "And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."

God's promise **to Abraham** to give him a land, seed, and blessing (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:5-6)

> Rom. 4:19-21 - "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform."
>
> Abraham did not become weakened in his confidence in God; that is, he (literally) "did not lose strength" in his faith even though he was 100 years old and Sarah's womb was decades beyond child-bearing years.
>
> **V. 20**
> "He staggered not" - He did not waver. He was not divided in his thinking.
>
> Abraham did not vacillate in two directions between faith and unbelief.
>
> NOTE: Abraham had some misconceptions in his faith, but not mistrust.
>
> He at first was ignorant of how God would give him a son (EX: he wondered if Eliezer his servant was whom God intended to be the promised seed -Gen. 15:24).
>
> After he found out that the seed would come from his own body (v. 4), he thought that Ishmael through Hagar was the promised seed (Gen. 16:17:18); but when he was told that the child would come from Sarah, though amazed (17:17), he believed.
>
> "Was strong" = lit. infused with strength, or empowered with strength by faith.
>
> That which gives glory to God (v. 20b) is our assurance in Him.
>
> We bring God glory by being fully persuaded (or filled with complete assurance) that what God promises, He is able to perform.

To not believe God is to question His truthfulness, to doubt His faithfulness, and to call Him a liar.

Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6).

Heb. 11:11 - "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, <u>because she judged him faithful who had promised</u>."

Although Sarah initially laughed at the thought that she, an elderly woman, would give birth to a son, she afterward believed, and because of that faith in the God of the impossible, she received the power to conceive.

Faith is simply trusting a God who is faithful. Such a faithful God is worthy of our full faith.

"Great is Thy Faithfulness!"

The billions of Jews who lived throughout history and the millions on the earth today all stem from the one old man and old woman who lived some four millenia ago.

Do you trust God to do what you cannot do?

What may seem humanly impossible is possible for God.

His ways are not our ways; He will often allow our faith to be tested and tried, and will often delay a promise. But in the end, He will always keep His Word.

God's promise to give the **<u>believer eternal life</u>**
Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." cp.II Cor.1:20

The believer's security in his/her salvation rests squarely upon God's faithfulness

1 Peter 4:19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a **<u>faithful</u>** Creator.

What is the one prerequisite for Salvation from man's standpoint? Obviously The Gospel must be presented; God must draw by His Spirit; But man's standpoint the response must be faith in what God has said; and faith in God/Christ Himself. God requires faith.

II. God is Faithful due to His <u>CHARACTER</u> *(Psalm 89:1, 30-37)*
(He is reliable because of who HE <u>IS</u>)

God's character demands His faithfulness: Faithfulness is who He is. God is <u>clothed</u> with the attribute of faithfulness (Ps. 89:8; Is. 11:5). Faithfulness is not just something God does, it is part of His very nature/character.

- *His <u>immutability</u> (changelessness; constancy; consistency) demands that He remain faithful; He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.)*

- *His <u>omniscience</u> allows Him to know all things (past, present, and future) and thus to never lack the knowledge necessary to fulfil a promise. We may make a promise, but due to a lack of knowledge fail to accomplish it.*

- *His perfect <u>wisdom</u> allows Him to devise the best plan of action and to carry it out with absolute precision*

- *His <u>omnipotence</u> allows Him to do anything He says He will do; We often say that we will do something by a certain date, but we may become sick or simply lack the strength to get the job done*

- *His <u>righteousness</u> requires that He always does what is right; It is always right to keep one's word.*

- *His <u>trueness</u> demands that He remain faithful to what He promises*

  God's faithfulness is an extension of His truthfulness. It is called "transitive truth". God's faithfulness is His truthfulness in action.

  The words Faithful and True go together!
  Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called **<u>Faithful</u>** and **<u>True</u>** (Christ's very name is Faithful and True)

  Revelation 21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are **<u>true</u>** and **<u>faithful</u>**.

  Revelation 22:6 And he said unto me, These sayings *are* **<u>faithful</u>** and **<u>true</u>**: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

Ps 89:1 «Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite.»

Verses 1 - 29

This psalm emphasizes the phrase "for ever" (or "for evermore") (v. 1, 2, 4, 28, 29, 36, 37, 52)

Not many things last forever. God's faithfulness is eternal as He is.

The theme of Psalm 89 centers around God's faithfulness.

--God's faithfulness is made known (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.

--God's faithfulness is established (v. 2)
Ps 89:2 For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy **faithfulness** shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

--God's faithfulness is praised (v. 5)
Ps 89:5 And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD: thy **faithfulness** also in the congregation of the saints.

--God's faithfulness is incomparable (v. 6 - *8)
Ps 89:8 O LORD God of hosts, who *is* a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy **faithfulness** round about thee?

--God's faithfulness is experienced by the seed of David (v. 20-29)
Ps 89:24 But my **faithfulness** and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

--God's faithfulness is unfailing (v. 33)
Ps 89:33 Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my **faithfulness** to fail (never to prove false; In character, God cannot lie).

*READ Verses 20-29

V. 25
The picture is of David measuring the land allotted to him with his hands. His left hand reaches into the Mediterranean Sea, and his right hand straddles the Jordan River to the east, the Nile to the South, and the Euphrates to the North (cp. Ex. 23:31; Ps. 72:8; Zech. 9:10).

V. 26
The cry shall be heard when multitudes of Jews repent in the future Trib. (Zech. 12:8-14).

V. 27
Redeemed Israel will be treated with honor.

"Firstborn" = a position of honor and privilege given by God.

V. 29
"His seed" = David's seed (Israel) will never be wiped out.

The perpetual existence of the Jewish race up to today is a miracle!

David's throne will perpetually endure. Reason: Because Christ will sit on it, and He is eternal.

Whereas the Abrahamic Covenant primarily dealt with the seed of Israel (Gen. 12:1-3; chap. 15). . .

And the Mosaic Covenant with the Law of Israel (Deut. 27-29) . . .

The Davidic Covenant dealt with the throne of Israel (II Sam. 7:12-16).

NOTE on II Sam. 7:12-16 -

"The covenant did not guarantee uninterrupted rule by David's family (and, in fact, the Babylonian Exile interrupted it), but did promise that the right to rule would always remain with David's dynasty. Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of these promises (Luke 1:31-33); and, although at this present time He is not ruling from the throne of David (Heb. 12:2), at His second coming He will assume the throne (See Mt. 1:11, 19:28; Acts 15:15)." (Ryrie note).

The faithfulness of the Davidic Covenant - SEE: Isaiah 55:1-5 *v. 3

Is. 61:8 - "For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them."

Acts 13:34 - "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

Despite the seeming breach of God's consistency in His goodness to Israel (v. 38-51) - the theme of Psalm 89 is: GOD IS FAITHFUL!

***God abides faithful**.

A. God is faithful
<u>Despite the unworthiness</u> of His people (v. 30-31)

V. 30

"His children" = the sons from the line of David

"Forsake ... walk not ... brake ... keep not ..." - four different ways to describe <u>disobedience</u>.

II Sam. 7:14 - "I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men."

"Law ... Judgments ... Statutes ... Commandments" - four different ways to describe the <u>Word of God</u>.

II Tim. 2:13 - "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself."

"If we believe not" = if we are unfaithful.

B. God is faithful
<u>To discipline the rebellion</u> of His people (v. 32)

1. The <u>certainty</u> of God's discipline

"<u>Will</u>" - refers to the absolute certainty of God's chastisement (SEE: Heb. 12:5-11; Psalm 119:65-71, 75)

Job 5:17-18 - "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For He maketh sore, and bindeth up: He woundeth, and His hand make whole."

2. The <u>cause</u> of God's discipline

God is faithful to never spank without cause.

"Then" - refers back to the <u>disobedience</u> described in Verses 30-31.

"Their transgression" - to deliberately overstep God's boundaries.

"Their iniquity" -

God <u>disciplines</u> His children, but never permanently <u>divorces</u> them.

C. God is faithful
<u>Not to break His promise</u> to His people (v. 33-37)

A. He cannot <u>take away</u> His promise (v. 33a)

"Lovingkindness" = God's steadfast loyal love (this word is indicative of <u>faithfulness</u>)

B. He cannot <u>fail in delivering</u> His promise (v. 33b)

Is God's relationship to Israel over? NO!

This nation has been under the chastening hand of God for 2,000 years. This chastisement will culminate in the Tribulation.
(Rom. 11:1, 22-29)

C. He cannot break His promise (v. 34a)

One reason why the covenant of marriage must not be broken (Mal. 2) is because marriage is an illustration of Christ's faithfulness to His bride.

D. He cannot change His promise (v. 34b)

E. He cannot lie about His promise (v. 35)

The fidelity of God's promises are based on:

1. God's oath (cp. Heb. 6:13-19)
"Once have I sworn" - God does not have to give a promise more than once to be faithful to it!

2. God's holiness
His character forbids lying - Titus 1:2 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

V. 36
"His seed" = His descendants

V. 36-37
Just as the sun and moon are consistent (in coming up and going down), so is God consistent with His promises!

V. 37

"Selah" = the O.T. poetic equivalent of Amen! or Truly!

Again, a word that exclaims God's faithfulness.

CONCLUSION:

What should our response be to God's faithfulness?

1. Rest in His faithfulness

   Lamentations 3:21-23 - This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. *It is of* the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness.

2. Tell others about His faithfulness

   Ps.89:1 - *"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations."*

3. Always keep your word (do what you say you will do)

4. Be faithful (dependable; consistent)

   Prov.20:6 - *"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?"*

   Examples of faithful men:
   1) Moses was said to be "faithful in all his house" (Heb. 3:2, 5).
   2) David - Abimelech the priest said this to King Saul: "Who is so faithful among all thy servants as David?" (I Sam. 22:14).
   3) Hananiah - Nehemiah put Hananiah in "charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man and feared God above many" (Neh. 7:2).

   EX: the faithfulness of Micaiah, who, when asked to tickle the ears of the king like all the other prophets had done, said: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (I Ki. 22:14).

   Be faithful in little things. Luke 16:10 - "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

   Be faithful in your stewardship (I Cor. 4:2).

   Mt. 25:23 - "Well done, good and faithful servant."

   ILLUS: The consistency of a man to church attendance saved his life (Knight's, p. 120).

5. Step out by faith (trust and obey whatever God says, even if it looks impossible, and leave the results to Him)

If Israel had understood God's faithfulness, they would not have murmured.
If Thomas had believed Christ, he would not have doubted.

6. Simply Trust Him!

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- Security to the saved (our assurance of salvation is based on God's faithfulness)
- Terror to the wicked (Hell is real; the Lake of Fire is real; Unbelievers will go there!)

When we say God is faithful, we are saying "God is worthy of my faith" or "I can have full faith in Him."

"Trust Him when dark doubts assail thee,
Trust Him when thy strength is small;
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all."

"God is greatly honored when, under trial and chastening, we have good thoughts of Him." (Pink, Attributes, p. 56).

Many times we trust man more than God!
We trust forecasters to predict accurately.
We trust airplanes not to crash.
We trust elevator cables not to snap
We trust social security to provide for retirement.
We trust the U.S. military to protect our country.

"Trust God's wisdom to guide,
Trust His goodness to provide;
Trust His saving love and power,
Trust Him every day and hour;
Trust Him as the only light,
Trust Him in the darkest night;
Trust Him in sickness, trust in health,
Trust in poverty and wealth;
Trust Him living, dying too,
Trust Him all the journey through."