

The challenges and trials of this life should not cause the believer to doubt about God, because God is faithful. The psalmist struggles with an apparent conflict between the promises of God to King David that his offspring and throne would be established forever (vv. 19–37, cf. 2 Samuel 7:4–17), and the reality of life, that the throne was empty (vv. 38–51). But the response of the psalmist is affirm and praise God for His steadfast love and faithfulness, giving us a model of the Christian’s duty and reasons for it.

I. *The duty of God’s people in relation to God’s faithfulness (89:1–4)*

1. *Our duty is to praise the steadfast love and faithfulness of the LORD (vv. 1–2).*
 - a. The psalmist’s conviction (v. 2) is that God’s faithfulness and steadfast love are like a building secure in heaven itself. His acts of kindness toward His people are added one stone at a time, building a structure that reveals God’s faithfulness.
 - b. This is the basis for the response of the psalmist to sing of the steadfast love of the LORD and declare His faithfulness.

Your understanding of God is the basis to interpret your circumstances. Your understanding of God gives you reason to praise Him despite circumstances. Furthermore, make a proper understanding of His steadfast love and faithfulness the topic of your conversation especially with your children, grandchildren, and younger believers.

2. *Our duty is to rely upon the faithfulness of the LORD (vv. 3–4).*
 - a. The psalmist chose to rely on the LORD’s faithfulness by believing His promises recalling the covenant which God made to King David (cf. Vv. 19–51). God had chosen and anointed David as king, promising to establish David’s offspring forever and his throne as the days of the heavens (v. 29).
 - b. But the psalmist faced a dilemma: there is no Davidic king on the throne and his city has been destroyed and plundered. If this is a reference to Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:8; 25:27, 29), then it included God’s pronouncement that no physical descendant of Jehoiachin would sit on the throne of David (Jeremiah 22:30).
 - c. Essentially in these opening verses the psalmist is calling upon God to keep His promises. When the situation seems difficult, even impossible, turn to the clear promises of God and trust God.

II. *Reasons to praise and rely upon the LORD (89:5–18)*

1. *The Lord in His faithfulness is held in awe in heaven (vv. 5–8).*

The faithfulness of the LORD is the focus of heavenly praise. The response of angelic beings to the faithfulness of the LORD is awe and fear and praise. If angels, before whom men and women fall in fear, praise the faithfulness of God in awe and wonder, how much more should we.
2. *The Lord is powerful to do what He promises (vv. 9–13).*

Building on verses 5–8 the psalmist first mentions the sea representing that which man cannot tame, but God can. Rahab (v. 10), a pagan, mythical monster of the sea, became a nickname for Egypt (cf. Isaiah 51:9–10). The crushing of Rahab is a reference to the victory over Egypt at the Red Sea crossing. Not only the sea, but the whole universe belongs to the LORD who created them and which revealed His glory (vv. 11–12) and His might (v. 13). The LORD is able, even miraculously, to keep His promises.
3. *The Lord is good, blessing His people (vv. 14–18).*
 - a. God exercises His almighty strength in conformity to His righteousness and justice. His steadfast love and faithfulness mark the path which His rule takes. He will never do what is unjust or not righteous, He will always be faithful to what He has promised.
 - b. God’s character is seen in the blessing upon God’s people (vv. 15–18). They can reflect upon His goodness in the annual feasts (v. 15). They praise their God and know that their own status and strength are due to Him and not themselves (vv. 16–17). Their king, as leader and protector, belongs to the LORD.

Though the Psalmist faced a seemingly impossible dilemma, the ultimate “anointed one” (or, “Messiah”, v. 51), was Jesus Christ. His virgin birth by Mary (a descendant of David through Nathan) and adoptive sonship to Joseph (a descendant of David through Solomon) perfectly, miraculously resolved the dilemma. God is faithful to His word, even when humanly impossible. But much more than putting a descendant of David on the throne, God provided for us a Savior from our sin, Christ the Lord.

You can trust God to be faithful to all His promises. Therefore, know Him and what He has promised so that you can freely sing of the steadfast love of the LORD.

Questions for further thought and discussion:

- How has the Lord shown His steadfast love to you? To whom have you made it known? Have you rejoiced in it with singing?
- Is it a failure in God’s faithfulness when He doesn’t give us what we pray for? Why/why not?
- How does complaining contradict a trust in the steadfast love and faithfulness of God?