

Title: Covenant Voided or Fulfilled

Text: Ps 89: 34-52

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God entered everlasting covenant with David. It was the covenant of redemption ordered and sure in Christ. God said concerning God's covenant with David:

**Psalm 89: 34: My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. 35: Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. 36 His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. 37: It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.**

But the psalmist (Ethan) lived in the time of king Rehoboam. Israel and Judah were divided against each other. Egypt had come against them. So he thought God broke his covenant with David. Ethan wrote,

**Psalm 89: 38: But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed. 39: Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown *by casting it* to the ground. 40: Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin. 41: All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbours. 42: Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. 43: Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not made him to stand in the battle. 44: Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. 45: The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah. 46: How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire? 47: Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? 48: What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah. 49: Lord, where *are* thy former lovingkindnesses, *which* thou swarest unto David in thy truth? 50: Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people; 51: Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed. 52: Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.**

Looking at things with carnal eyes, Ethan thought God broke his covenant with David and his people. Was that true? Could that be true? No. What Ethan beheld was God fulfilling his covenant to David.

**Proposition:** If we judge providence by carnal sense, we shall be cast down in unbelief; but if we judge providence by faith in God's everlasting covenant promise, we see things as they really are.

## THE COVENANT IN ETERNITY

God the Father and his Son entered covenant to save God's elect in Christ crucified. In that covenant of redemption—between God who cannot lie and Christ who cannot fail—the works were finished from the foundation of the world. God's eternal purpose of redemption in Christ was the founding of the world before anything was made. The everlasting covenant is the word of Christ's power by which he upholds all things (Heb 1: 3).

But as soon as God made Adam, Adam sinned and plunged us all into sin and death. If we judged by carnal sense it would appear the covenant failed. But not so! The fall was part of God's covenant of redemption. Christ was Head of his elect therefore he made Adam head of his house as a figure of Christ come to come (Rom 5: 14). Sin entered by a man and death by sin to show how God's grace does much more abound through the righteousness of the Man, Christ Jesus, to eternal life. By man we were ruined; by Man God's elect must be saved.

## THE COVENANT WITH DAVID

God's covenant with David was the same covenant God made to Abraham. It is the law God writes on the heart of each elect child when God gives a new heart.

God did for David what he does for all his people. He taught him the gospel. God sends the gospel to us and teaches us Christ. The same as God anointed David, making him a king, God regenerates us by his Holy Spirit, anointing us with the oil of gladness, making us kings and priests unto God in Christ.

The same as God made an everlasting covenant with David in Christ so God gives us faith to believe the gospel of God's covenant promises to us fulfilled in and by Christ. Christ is the Covenant. Christ fulfilled the law for his people. Christ is the Righteousness of his people. Christ is all our Salvation. Believers, ye are complete in Him!

But we have a carnal man—an earthy man—that is so bound to time and earthy things. Men give their own meanings to God's promise then are cast down because things do not happen in the earth the way they expected. The children of Israel thought God's covenant with David meant David would always have an earthly kingdom. They thought God meant there would always be a member of David's house on an earthly throne in earthly Israel. That is one reason the Jews rejected Christ when he came into the world. They thought Messiah would be a majestic earthly king. They were looking for an earthly kingdom. They assumed Messiah would give them temporal deliverance from earthly nations and set up an earthly kingdom. Even Christ's true disciples thought this.

There are multitudes today who are looking for Christ to come again and set up an earthly kingdom, exactly as they were when Christ came the first time. That is man's carnal meaning given to God's covenant promise. But that is not God's meaning.

God used material figures and types to illustrate spiritual truth. If we know God's meaning then we see that God's word stands eternally true in and by Christ. We only regard the spiritual meaning and spiritual fulfilment as preeminent over all earthy fulfillments when we regard Christ Preeminent over all in the earth. David's perpetual kingdom is Messiah's spiritual kingdom. God's salvation is spiritual. His promises are spiritual. His blessings are spiritual. His kingdom is spiritual.

John 18:36: Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Luke 17: 20: And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: 21: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

When Christ warned us that we cannot serve God and mammon, he is teaching us his kingdom, his blessings and his worship is spiritual. If we serve this world and consider worldly blessings to be evidence we are of God then when we have earthly blessings we will have confidence in those things and when God takes them away we will lose all assurance. Our heavenly Father knows we have need of temporal things. He shall provide them. But earthly things are not the important thing. Christ said, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.*" Worship God in Spirit. Seek Christ above. He is our Righteousness. Our All!

We cannot have confidence in Christ and confidence in our flesh. This world's gospel is about man, man's doing, man's keeping the law for earthly blessings of health, wealth and prosperity in the earth. Man's gospel is a carnal message of how to indebt God to give them things on earth and a reward in heaven.

God's provides temporal things we need. But those born of God, worship God in Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus have no confidence in the flesh. We walk by faith trusting Christ our Righteousness who shall keep us according to his covenant promise. Our purpose is to spread the gospel of Christ until Christ calls out the last of his lost sheep. When he has created his people a new then he shall present us to God without fault. We shall worship Christ in New Jerusalem, made up of his people that Christ alone made Righteous and Holy in him.

## **THE COVENANT IN CHRIST**

God promised Abraham—"*In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*" Paul said that Seed is Christ. "Not seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal 3:16). Christ is the

Seed promised. And all the promises of God are to Christ. By Christ's finished work all the promises to his believing child are yes and amen in Christ. His spiritual blessings are freely given to those he redeemed by his blood through faith in him. Those who rest in Christ by faith are Abraham's true children and David's true children.

From Abraham, God produced Isaac then Jacob then Judah and God promised Christ would come through the tribe of Judah.

Genesis 49: 10: The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. 11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: 12 His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

God assured Jacob and all his elect that the government of earthly Judah would continue until Christ, the Messiah came. Through David's day—through all this trouble Ethan saw—the preincarnate Christ reigned as King preserving Judah until he fulfilled his promise. Then HE, Shiloh, came. Shiloh means “the Son to whom it belongs.” God's Son is he to whom the government of his spiritual Israel belongs.

Ezekiel 21: 25: And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, 26: Thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown:...27: I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.

When Christ was born King the government in Judah ended. Christ's manifestly took the throne as the King of kings and Lord of lords. He must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet. The government of his spiritual kingdom is on his shoulder. He is growing it right now as he calls his people to faith in him through this gospel. And Christ's kingdom shall have no end. But mark well it is Christ who shall perform this.

Isaiah 9: 6: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7: Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

That was the everlasting covenant promise to David in Christ. But in our Psalm, Ethan saw the tribes divided. He saw Egypt taking over. Later Babylon took them captive. But that was not contrary to God's covenant. It was part of it, even as the fall of Adam.

In the covenant of grace to Abraham and David, God also promised to chasten his elect. That is what he was doing with those nations, the same as he does to his children personally today by ordering things in providence. But what we see coming to pass in the earth, in our lives, is not against the covenant, it is God fulfilling his covenant faithfully as he promised.

**Psalm 89: 30: If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; 31 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; 32: Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. 33: Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. 34: My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.**

Under the old covenant, God's elect were regenerated by the Spirit, given faith and worshipped Christ as we do in this gospel age. God gave them the ten commandments to show them their sin and need of Christ, as he does us. The ceremonies was their way of worship. It typified Christ in whom the law is fulfilled and by whom the sins of God's elect Israel are put away. True worshippers in that day came to God confessing their sins and believing his covenant promise in Christ who they saw in type in the the high priest and in the blood of the lamb. That was their form of worship given by God.

Natural Israel, political Israel, forsook the law of God's everlasting covenant in Christ. They never had it in their hearts so they really did not forsake it. But they forsake even the carnal ordinances showing that

they hated God in their hearts. What they really forsook was the gospel of the covenant of redemption promised in Christ. *The statutes they broke* were the ceremonies in Jerusalem typifying Christ in whom all the law is fulfilled. They set up places to worship other than God's temple in Jerusalem.

For that God gave the nation to captivity to enemy nations. But as God did that to the carnal men in Israel, God was chastening his true elect among them. Ethan only saw God fulfilling his covenant, chastening his elect for their spiritual good and Christ's glory.

It was much like our day. We see God's hand upon this nation, even the whole world. When that happened in Israel, natural sinners went on worshipping their idols and God let them. Some returned with God's elect but they never were God's elect and never believed on Christ in Spirit. But God effectually chastened his true elect among them. God kept them looking to Christ alone, worshipping Christ in spirit as all their Righteousness. So the Psalmist saw God fulfilling his covenant promise, not breaking it.

The things we see going on this world is God's hand upon the reprobate. But even God's elect suffer when these things to come pass. But God makes it effectual in our own lives by God's chastening hand upon his own elect. It is God fulfilling his everlasting covenant promise to us. He turns us from our temporal idols and carnal lusts to keep us walking by faith in Christ, worshipping in Spirit and having no confidence in our flesh. He does so because God promised it in Christ, saying, *v34: My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*

## **CHRIST ON THE CROSS**

When Christ was crucified, it appeared to the disciples as it did to Ethan, that God made void his covenant. Their hopes were dashed because even his regenerated disciples were still looking for an earthly kingdom with an earthly king. So when Christ was crucified and buried they thought God had made void his covenant. We see in them how wrong we can be when we look at things with carnal eyes. Christ on the cross is God fulfilling his everlasting covenant for his people.

God did not abhor his anointed; God is pleased with Christ's one offering because Christ established justice and justified us. God did not profane his crown; the cross is God's crowning glory. God broke down the hedges so the enemy afflicted Christ; yet by satisfying justice, Christ built up our eternal walls of protection in righteousness. All his enemies rejoiced in his crucifixion; but Christ conquered all our enemies by his death.

Use spiritual discernment to judge God's providence by his covenant promise. God does not chasten his children in wrath because Christ quenched his wrath in justice and truth. God's chastening is his love fulfilling his covenant, keeping his redeemed walking in his statutes of faith constrained by his love. When you or your brethren suffer affliction, remember that. **USE SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.** Have you ever heard a preacher tell you that? It means look to Christ above. Judge what God brings to pass below by what God has promised in his everlasting, unbreakable covenant. Discern that God is fulfilling his covenant by correcting his children and keeping us looking only to Christ. Be more concerning about you yourself turning to Christ above than about putting your hand to Christ's work by trying to correct your brethren. It may be you God is correcting. Use spiritual discernment but judge not by carnal sense.

Look to Christ, worship Christ in spirit, have no confidence in the flesh. Keep pointing one another to him. Christ fulfilled the everlasting covenant of redemption when he satisfied justice for his people so that we can rejoice in mercy toward one another even as he does toward us for Christ's sake! He will keep his gospel going forth until the day he brings all his redeemed to stand face to face with him. Right now and at every time of chastening, when God makes us see it is God fulfilling his covenant to us, then God shall bring us to sing **v52: Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.**

**Amen!**