

**Biblical Passages That Refer to God’s Fulfilling the Abrahamic Covenant
And a Brief Explanation of Each One**

by
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Part 2

2 Samuel-Psalms

**THE GREATNESS OF ISRAEL AND THE ETERNAL BLESSING OF ABRAHAM AND OTHERS IN
THE WORLD ARE FOUND IN GOD’S PROMISE TO DAVID OF AN ETERNAL KING
WHO WILL RULE OVER THE GREAT NATION OF THE JEWS IN THE PRESENT REALM AND
PROVIDE ETERNAL FORGIVENESS OF SINS THROUGH HIS SUFFERING
TO ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIM**

Psalm 89:3 “I have made a covenant with My chosen;
I have sworn to David My servant,
4 I will establish your seed forever
And build up your throne to all generations.”

2 Samuel 7	1 Chronicles 17
<p>7:1 Now it came about when the king lived in his house, and Yahweh had given him rest on every side from all his enemies, 7:2 that the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within tent curtains.” 7:3 Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that is in your mind, for Yahweh is with you.” 7:4 But in the same night the word of Yahweh came to Nathan, saying, 7:5 “Go and say to My servant David, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “Are you the one who should build Me a house to dwell in?” 7:6 “For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt, even to this day; but I have been moving about in a tent, even in a tabernacle. 7:7 “Wherever I have gone with all the sons of Israel, did I speak a word with one of the tribes of Israel, which I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’” 7:8 “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. 7:9 “I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name,</p>	<p>17:1 And it came about, when David dwelt in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, “Behold, I am dwelling in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of Yahweh is under curtains.” 17:2 Then Nathan said to David, “Do all that is in your heart, for God is with you.” 17:3 It came about the same night that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, 17:4 “Go and tell David My servant, ‘Thus says Yahweh, “You shall not build a house for Me to dwell in; 17:5 for I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up Israel to this day, but I have gone from tent to tent and from one dwelling place to another. 17:6 “In all places where I have walked with all Israel, have I spoken a word with any of the judges of Israel (שֹׁפְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), whom I commanded to shepherd My people, saying, ‘Why have you not built for Me a house of cedar?’” 17:7 “Now, therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says Yahweh of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be leader (נֹגֵיד) over My people Israel. 17:8 “I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from</p>

<p>like the names of the great men who are on the earth.</p> <p>7:10 “I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly,</p> <p>7:11 even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Yahweh also declares to you that Yahweh will make a house for you.</p> <p>7:12 “When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you (וְהִקְיִמֹתִי אֶת־יִרְעָךָ אַחֲרָיִךְ), who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom (וְהִכְיִנֹתִי אֶת־מַמְלַכְתּוֹ).</p> <p>7:13 “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish (וְכִנְנֶהָ) the throne of his kingdom forever (עַד־עוֹלָם).</p> <p>7:14 “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men,</p> <p>7:15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.</p> <p>7:16 “Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever (עַד־עוֹלָם); your throne shall be established forever (עַד־עוֹלָם).”</p> <p>7:17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.</p> <p>7:18 Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh, and he said, “Who am I, O Lord Yahweh, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far?</p> <p>7:19 “And yet this was insignificant in Your eyes, O Lord Yahweh, for You have spoken also of the house of Your servant concerning the distant future. And this is the custom of man, O Lord Yahweh.</p> <p>7:20 “Again what more can David say to You? For You know Your servant, O Lord Yahweh!</p> <p>7:21 “For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness to let Your servant know.</p> <p>7:22 “For this reason You are great, O Lord Yahweh; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.</p> <p>7:23 “And what one nation on the earth (בְּאַרְצוֹ) is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people and to make a name for Himself, and to do a great thing for You and awesome things for Your land (לְאִרְצְךָ),</p>	<p>before you; and I will make you a name like the name of the great ones who are in the earth.</p> <p>17:9 “I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place (וְשָׁכַן תַּהְיֶינָּהּ) and not be moved again; and the wicked will not waste them anymore as formerly,</p> <p>17:10 even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel. And I will subdue all your enemies. Moreover, I tell you that Yahweh will build a house for you.</p> <p>17:11 “When your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up one of your descendants after you (אֶת־יִרְעָךָ אַחֲרָיִךְ), who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom (וְהִכְיִנֹתִי אֶת־מַלְכוּתוֹ).</p> <p>17:12 “He shall build for Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever (עַד־עוֹלָם).</p> <p>17:13 “I will be his father and he shall be My son; and I will not take My lovingkindness (וְחַסְדִּי) away from him, as I took it from him who was before you.</p> <p>17:14 “But I will settle him in My house and in My kingdom forever (עַד־הָעוֹלָם), and his throne shall be established forever (עַד־עוֹלָם).”</p> <p>17:15 According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.</p> <p>17:16 Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh and said, “Who am I, Yahweh God, and what is my house that You have brought me this far?</p> <p>17:17 “This was a small thing in Your eyes, O God; but You have spoken of Your servant’s house for a great while to come, and have regarded me according to the standard of a man of high degree, Yahweh God.</p> <p>17:18 “What more can David still say to You concerning the honor bestowed on Your servant? For You know Your servant.</p> <p>17:19 “Yahweh, for Your servant’s sake, and according to Your own heart, You have wrought all this greatness, to make known all these great things.</p> <p>17:20 “Yahweh, there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.</p> <p>17:21 “And what one nation in the earth (בְּאַרְצוֹ) is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make You a</p>
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<p>before Your people whom You have redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, from nations and their gods?</p> <p>7:24 “For You have established (וַתִּכְוֶנֶן) for Yourself Your people Israel as Your own people forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), and You, Yahweh, have become their God.</p> <p>7:25 “Now therefore, Yahweh God, the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant and his house, confirm it forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), and do as You have spoken,</p> <p>7:26 that Your name may be magnified forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), by saying, ‘Yahweh of hosts is God over Israel’; and may the house of Your servant David be established before You.</p> <p>7:27 “For You, Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, have made a revelation to Your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house’; therefore Your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to You.</p> <p>7:28 “Now, O Lord Yahweh, You are God, and Your words are truth, and You have promised this good thing to Your servant.</p> <p>7:29 “Now therefore, may it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever (לְעוֹלָם) before You. For You, O Lord Yahweh, have spoken; and with Your blessing may the house of Your servant be blessed forever (לְעוֹלָם).”</p>	<p>name by great and terrible things, in driving out nations from before Your people, whom You redeemed out of Egypt?</p> <p>17:22 “For Your people Israel You made Your own people forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), and You, Yahweh, became their God.</p> <p>17:23 “Now, Yahweh, let the word that You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house be established forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), and do as You have spoken.</p> <p>17:24 “Let Your name be established and magnified forever (עַד-עוֹלָם), saying, ‘Yahweh of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel; and the house of David Your servant is established before You.’</p> <p>17:25 “For You, O my God, have revealed to Your servant that You will build for him a house; therefore Your servant has found courage to pray before You.</p> <p>17:26 “Now, Yahweh, You are God, and have promised (וַתְּדַבֵּר) this good thing to Your servant.</p> <p>17:27 “And now it has pleased You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever (לְעוֹלָם) before You; for You, Yahweh, have blessed, and it is blessed forever (לְעוֹלָם).”</p>
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Here in Part 2, we have moved forward in history five hundred years from Moses, the Exodus from Egypt, and the Mosaic Covenant. And we are now a thousand years after Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant. In 2 Samuel 7 and its parallel passage 1 Chronicles 17, God makes a third covenant with the king of Israel, David. Therefore, this is called the Davidic Covenant, and it establishes God’s promise of a dynasty of kings within David’s family, culminating in the final and eternal king, the Messiah, whom we know to be Jesus of Nazareth. And, as we consider these passages and additional ones in the Psalms and Prophets of the Old Testament, I suggest that Jesus’ role as Messiah and King makes sense only because they either explicitly refer to or assume God’s faithfulness to His first promise to Abraham to shape his descendants into the greatest and most powerful nation in history. God has not yet accomplished this task, but He will certainly do so at some time still future to us. This means that the complete fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant is inextricably tied to the complete fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, so that God will bring about the culmination of both covenants at the same time. Consequently, Jesus, as the final king of the Davidic Covenant, will first rule over the Jews in the present realm when God makes them the “great nation” of the Abrahamic Covenant as described in the Prophets and Revelation 20. Then, he will rule over all believers who have become immortal by the time God finishes His plans for the Jews on this earth and He destroys the present realm and creates the new earth of Revelation 21 & 22.

In this section, I will focus my explanation on 2 Samuel 7 since it and 1 Chronicles 17 mean the same thing in spite of slightly different wording. Both authors are communicating the same, inerrant ideas, and their interpretations are therefore the same. We begin with 2 Samuel 7:1-2. David is the

king of Israel around 1000 B.C., and he is living comfortably in his palace in Jerusalem. But he comments to Nathan the prophet that his home is permanent, “a house of cedar,” while the house of God, where every day the people of Israel worship the most important person in existence, the transcendent creator, is a mere portable and temporary tent. He is implying the question, “Why should I, an ordinary, mortal, created human being, be living in a relatively permanent and wonderfully built house of cedar wood, while my eternal and indestructible creator dwells here in Jerusalem in a nomad’s tent?” Thus, David is thinking about the relative value between God and himself and how to exhibit this more clearly by building God a more permanent building where the people can worship Him.

Nathan in v. 3 encourages David, “Go, do all that is in your mind, for Yahweh is with you,” But he speaks too soon. In v. 4 we are told that “the same night the word of Yahweh came to Nathan,” which then he passes on to David in vs. 5-16. In vs. 5-6 God asks David if he really is the one who should build him a more permanent temple since He has been dwelling in a tent, i.e., a tabernacle, from the time the Israelites left Egypt five hundred years earlier. In addition, God says in v. 7 that He has never asked His people to build Him “a house of cedar.” He has been content to have a portable tent be His dwelling place among His chosen people, the Jews.

God goes on in vs. 8-9 to remind David that it was He who took him from leading sheep around the countryside and made him the “ruler over My people Israel.” He has also been with him and supernaturally assisting him when he has fought Israel’s enemies, with the result that he has been victorious over all them. Plus, He now promises to make his name great, “like the names of the great men who are on the earth.” God is probably referring to the Messiah, that he will be David’s descendant, ruling as king over not only the Jews but also all the Gentile nations of the world. This will make the Messiah the ultimate “Son of David” as Matthew calls Jesus in the very first verse of his gospel when he begins his genealogy. God is also probably referring to the fact that this great descendant of David will be more than a king. He will also be a High Priest who offers himself as a propitiation for people’s sins, as we will learn from Psalm 110.

We can see that with all that God is saying in vs. 8-16, He is explicitly describing another vital element to the fulfillment of His promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-2 when he makes his descendants a “great nation.” We learned in Part 1 from the Mosaic Covenant that one important element is that God will circumcise the heart every Jew who is still living as a result of The Day of the Lord as the Prophets will speak about and as the book of Deuteronomy alluded to. Now we learn from the Davidic Covenant that the greatness of the Jewish people will include their having a king who will be the supreme ruler of the world. In other words, the “great nation” will be a “great monarchy.” And we will see that their king will rule over not only them on the land of Israel, but also the rest of the world. The remainder of this passage will now fill this out in greater detail.

In vs. 10-11, God refers to the Abrahamic Covenant in an indirect way, “**10** I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, **11** even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies.” The place which God will appoint for the Jews obviously is what was formerly the land of Canaan and that He promised to Abraham and his descendants. In 1 Samuel 13:19, an author of the Bible called it “the land of Israel” for the first time. God also assures David in vs. 10-11 that His people will “not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them as formerly.” Thus, He will give David “rest from all [his] enemies.” As we in the 21st century look back on Jewish history, we can see that God’s promise to David has not yet happened, so that God must be referring to a time still future to us and that will be the same as what Moses described in Deuteronomy 30. God will circumcise the Jews’ hearts and make them a prosperous people on their land, thus fulfilling His promise to Abraham to make his descendants the most powerful nation in human history. Now we are learning that one of David’s own family also will rule over them.

At the end of v. 11, Nathan tells David, “Yahweh also declares to you that Yahweh will make a house for you.” In other words, David will not construct a building, a “house,” for God. Instead, God

will construct a “house,” i.e., an eternal dynasty of kings, for David. Then, in vs. 12-16, God provides the salient details of David’s “house.” When David dies, God is going to raise up his son, and He will establish his kingdom just as He has established David’s kingdom (v. 12). As a result, it will be David’s son who builds a house for God, i.e., “for [His] name,” and God “will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” (v. 13). As in other cases, the word “forever” is *‘ad ‘olam*, meaning for as long as God wants, which we will see will be through the restored Kingdom of Israel when Jesus returns as the final Davidic king of the nation of Israel. Thus, both David’s kingdom and his son’s kingdom will continue to exist into the future, because they are part of the Davidic Covenant.

The name of David’s son, who will take over his kingdom, will be Solomon, of whom God says in vs. 14-15, “**14** “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, **15** but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.” The striking statement here is that God declares that Solomon is going to be His son. In other words, he will be the Son of God. From sources outside the Bible, we find out that God is borrowing a concept which is common in the Near East at this time. For example, the Egyptians and the Babylonians considered their king to be the son of their chief god. This meant that Pharaoh was the Son of Ra, the sun god. It also meant that the Egyptian people under Pharaoh’s authority viewed him as the proxy and representative of Ra, who was the legal owner of the land of Egypt. By adopting this same idea for Himself and the king of Israel, Yahweh is making Solomon, and actually David before him, His representative ruler. Consequently, whenever an Israelite walks into David’s or Solomon’s throne room, he is required to think of himself as walking into the very presence of Yahweh Himself. This also means that the king of Israel rules over God’s land and property, which ultimately is the entire universe, but will certainly be the land of Israel and also the rest of the earth when Jesus returns as the final king of the Jews.

But because Solomon will be a sinner, God tells David that He will deal with him when he sins by using other men as His instruments of discipline. However, no matter how much Solomon sins, God will never remove from him His *hesed*, His constant and loyal commitment to him, just as we have learned that God will never remove it from the nation of Israel. Therefore, by extrapolation, God will always be with both His chosen people, the Jews, and their kings, even if He brings the curses of the Mosaic Covenant on them and expels them from the land and scatters them to the far reaches of the earth, just as He said in Deuteronomy 30:3-4. Nevertheless, God had removed his *hesed* from Saul who was king before David, but we can assume that this was because He never planned to make Saul’s descendants a dynasty of kings. We see that there is the possibility of short-term divine *hesed*. But when God chooses, He extends His *hesed* for as long as He wants, i.e., *‘ad ‘olam*. God’s long-term *hesed* pertains to the Abrahamic promise as restated in the Mosaic Covenant and here in 2 Samuel 7 to the Davidic Covenant’s promise, which will be until the end of the present realm and after He has fulfilled both these promises.

God finishes His comments to David in v. 17 by telling him that his “house” and “kingdom” will endure before Him “forever,” i.e., *‘ad ‘olam*, and his throne will also be established *‘ad ‘olam*. By making these statements, God is confirming the absolute longevity of the Davidic Covenant and David’s dynasty and kingdom until He completes His plans to make the descendants of Abraham a “great nation” according to His promise in Genesis 12:1-2.

The rest of this passage in vs. 18-29 is David’s humble response to God for such an honorable commitment He is making to him through this covenant. First, in v. 18, he wonders before God why He is doing something so magnificent for him and his descendants that they would be perpetual rulers over Israel. Thus, he is demonstrating significant humility before God. Then, in v. 19, David acknowledges that God’s promise is a very small thing for Him to fulfill—probably referring to God as the transcendent creator of all reality. Whether it is bringing into existence the entire universe and its history or creating a gnat, nothing is difficult for God. All He has to do is think something into

existence and it appears. Therefore, making David's descendants a dynasty of kings for the nation of Israel is a snap for Him.

But what an honor for David, and, even though he has not yet committed adultery with Bathsheba and murdered her husband Uriah, one of his best friends, he knows that he is a sinner who deserves God's condemnation and not a dynasty of eternal kings! Thus he goes on in v. 19 to say to God that this "is the custom of man." The parallel verse of 1 Chronicles 17:17 is easier to interpret, that God has "regarded [David] according to the standard of a man of high degree," meaning that God considers him to be a great man. And even if David cannot earn any blessing from Him, it will be only if God acts in the way which He promises that it will happen. This is because human beings cannot guarantee something will happen merely by their own puny efforts. David is saying in effect, "Yahweh, there is no way that I deserve such acclaim in this role that you are giving me and my descendants, and You are the sovereign author of the story which You are telling." God is both a God of power and grace, and He has the final say as to what effects occur as a result of human beings' efforts. He grants things to sinners that they do not deserve—such as forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus the Messiah (and an eternal dynasty to David)! And He brings them about when He wants as only He can do.

In the midst of such wondering, David asks the rhetorical question in v. 20, "And again what more can David say to You?" The answer of course is, "Nothing." And this question is in the light of what David knows about God, which is, "For you know your servant." No sinful human being deserves what God is promising to do with and for David, and David is acutely aware of this fact. He continues in the same vein in v. 21, "For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness to let your servant know." This is such an important principle of life for each of us Christians to grasp—that whatever God does for us, it is "for our sakes" as individuals, rendering anyone else's acknowledgement or approval completely unnecessary. If the entire rest of the world abandons us and rejects us (as what pretty much happened to Jesus), so what? The apostle Paul states it this way in Romans 8:31, "If God is for us, what does it matter that anyone else is against us?" Additionally, God's gracious actions towards us are "according to [His] own heart." They originate with Him and His sovereign kindness and love towards us. Therefore, they are truly heartfelt by God, and we can know that He is always acting in the most intimate and tender way towards us.

David continues in v. 22, "For this reason You are great, O Lord Yahweh; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all we have heard with our ears." I think that the "we" here refers to the Jews throughout their history, starting with their patriarch Abraham. God has spoken to no other ethnic group, and He has declared all sorts of great things about Himself. The result is that David and his fellow Jews know that there is no other God besides Yahweh. He alone is the eternal and invisible author of all reality. David confirms this in vs. 23-24. First, he says in v. 23, "[W]hat one nation in the earth is like Your people Israel, whom God went to redeem for Himself as a people, to make a name for Himself, to do a great thing for You and awesome things for Your land, before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, from nations and their gods?" The events associated with the God's rescuing the Jews from slavery and oppression in Egypt and leading them into Canaan to take over that land around 1500 B.C. remain for David and his contemporaries the benchmark of God's greatness and loyalty five hundred years later. God has not performed and never does perform such a remarkable display of His power for any other nation or ethnic group.

And the reason why this is the case is, "For You have established for Yourself Your people Israel as Your own people forever, and You, Yahweh, have become their God" (v. 24). God has singled out the Jewish people to make and call them His people "forever," *'ad 'olam*, for as long as it suits His purposes in the present realm, which will be through Jesus' return, the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel, and the ensuing millennial kingdom of Revelation 20. Other ethnic groups have come and gone, but the Jews persist and persist and persist—because God will fulfill His promise to Abraham to make them the most powerful, prosperous, and honored nation in history. And no one is going to

stop Him, as first demonstrated by His rescuing the Israelites from Egypt and destroying Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea.

The rest of David's prayer in vs. 25-29 is his simply saying, "God, let it happen, what You have promised to me, your humble servant." God is going to establish a dynasty of kings through him, until the last king arrives, whom we know is Jesus of Nazareth. This will be David's "house" in lieu of his building a more permanent dwelling for God in Jerusalem. And since Yahweh is God, His promise is certain. And all that God will do for David and his descendants will be such an incredible blessing that David says so three times!

Psalm 2

- 2:1 Why are the nations in an uproar
And the peoples devising a vain thing?
- 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand
And the rulers take counsel together
Against Yahweh and against His Messiah, saying,
- 2:3 "Let us tear their fetters apart
And cast away their cords from us!"
- 2:4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,
Yahweh scoffs at them.
- 2:5 Then He will speak to them in His anger
And terrify them in His fury, saying,
- 2:6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King
Upon Zion, My holy mountain."
- 2:7 "I will surely tell of the decree of Yahweh:
He said to Me, 'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
- 2:8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance (וְיִתְּנָה לְךָ יְהוָה גּוֹיִם נַחֲלָתְךָ),
And the very ends of the earth as Your possession (וְאֵת קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ אֶפְסָרְךָ אֶפְסָרְךָ).
- 2:9 'You shall break/rule them with a rod of iron,
You shall shatter them like earthenware.'"
- 2:10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;
Take warning, O judges of the earth.
- 2:11 Worship Yahweh with reverence
And rejoice with trembling.
- 2:12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way,
For His wrath may soon be kindled.
How blessed (אַשְׁרֵי) are all who take refuge in Him!

The next six passages, which will comprise the rest of Part 2 of this series, are all from the Psalms—Psalm 2, Psalm 8, Psalm 45, Psalm 72, Psalm 89, and Psalm 110. Each one refers to the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7, and I suggest that each one also assumes that God will fulfill His first promise to Abraham to shape his descendants, the Jews, into the most powerful nation in history. Otherwise, how can David's descendant, the king of Israel, be the king of Israel?

In Acts 4:25, the apostles attribute Psalm 2 to David. Its content indicates that a king of Israel is being coronated, making this king most likely the one who follows David himself, his son Solomon. In vs. 1-3, David asks why the Gentile nations and their rulers are creating such an uproar and are conspiring "against Yahweh and against His Messiah." The word "Messiah" is the Hebrew *Mashiach*, meaning Anointed One, and it gets translated in the New Testament into the Greek word *Christos* and then into our English word Christ. It refers to someone who literally has olive oil poured over his head to distinguish his role in Israel as special and unique. The first Messiah (Anointed One/Christ) in Jewish history was Aaron in Exodus 29 when his brother Moses consecrated him as high priest. The second Messiah (Anointed One/Christ) was Saul, the first king of Israel, in 1 Samuel 9. The third

Messiah was David when Samuel anointed him as king in 1 Samuel 16. Therefore, at his own coronation ceremony, Solomon becomes the king of Israel, and he is now the new Messiah and Christ. In vs. 1-3, David his father is wondering why the Gentile nations are so hostile towards Solomon and the God of Israel.

David's question may not refer to a specific historical situation in their day. He understands the full extent of the Davidic Covenant is probably anticipating how the majority of Gentiles and their rulers will respond as God is in the process of fulfilling His promise to the Jews to make them the greatest nation in the world. Until this occurs, Deuteronomy 28, for example, makes it clear that the people of the rest of the world exercise hegemony over Israel and mistreat the Jews. But when God turns the tables on them and begins to make the Jews the greatest nation during The Day of Yahweh as spoken by the Prophets, it will obviously make the proud and arrogant Gentiles angry, and they will attempt to destroy Israel and their king, who will be the returning Jesus.

In vs. 2-4, God responds to this future situation of rebellion by the Gentiles and their rulers with His own anger and even laughs at these presumptuous sinful human beings who think that they can avoid the rule and authority of His Messiah. This implies, of course, that eventually the Messiah will rule over the entire world, which will include the nation of Israel. And vs. 5-6 explain that God will express His anger towards the rebellious Gentiles and terrify them as He acts to suppress their opposition and even destroy some of them as the Prophets will describe. God also says in v. 6, "But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain." If God installs someone or something somewhere, we know that it is a permanent installation. And even though Solomon will die and his son Rehoboam will take over the throne, we learn from the rest of the Bible that Jesus will begin his reign of Israel and the rest of the world when he returns, and he will never give up his throne and authority throughout the entire millennial kingdom of Revelation 20.

Next, in v. 7 David puts words in Solomon's mouth, probably because these are words that he himself could speak as the first Son of God and Davidic king in Israel, "I will surely tell of the decree of Yahweh: He said to Me, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.'" In line with God's statement to David in 2 Samuel 7:14, as the crown is being placed on Solomon's head (and as David was anointed king in 1 Samuel 16), it as though he can say, "I am now becoming the Son of God, because Yahweh said to my father David, 'I will be a father to him [David's son who succeeds him as king], and he will be a son to Me.'" Solomon also uses the metaphor of giving birth. It is today as he becomes the king of Israel that God births him as His Son as a woman bears her child at the end of her pregnancy. And this metaphor works for Solomon because to be the king of Israel, whether it is David or Solomon or Jesus, is to be the Son of God—the one who are the moment God acknowledges his role, he becomes God's substitute on earth. Therefore, this phrase becomes a technical term for the human being, even sinful human being, who serves as God's proxy on earth, ruling over the nation of Israel—and ultimately over the entire world as Jesus will.

This is why David goes on in the psalm to have God address Solomon with the words, "8 Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. 9 You shall break/rule them with a rod of iron, you shall shatter them like earthenware" (vs. 8-9). Every king of Israel, starting with David and continuing through Zedekiah, the last king before the Babylonian exile, had the right to ask God that he rule and exercise authority over the entire earth, because it belongs to God and the Son of God is His proxy over all that belongs to Him and that He rules. However, it will be only Jesus when he returns who eventually does actually ask this of God and who receives it. He will be granted "the nations as [his] inheritance, the very ends of the earth as [his] possession." And he will "break" and "rule" any of them who rebel against him "with a rod of iron," shattering their power and even putting an end to their proud and arrogant lives if they fight against him and try to prevent him from exercising authority over them (cf. Revelation 19).

David then finishes the psalm in vs. 10-12 with a warning to the Gentiles to wise up and get a grip on reality. Their opposition to God and His Son, the king of Israel, will fail miserably and only incur God's wrath and destruction, even eternally we can assume. Therefore, they should "worship

Yahweh with reverence and rejoice [in His mercy and salvation] with trembling” (v. 11). They should also bow down before “the Son,” any king of Israel and especially the final one, Jesus. God’s blessing of both the great nation of Israel and eternal life come to those who “take refuge in Him,” meaning ultimately in God, but also in the final Son, Jesus, who the rest of the Bible demonstrates as not only king but also Savior and champion of sinners to rescue them from God’s anger and condemnation. David will reveal that he understands this about the final Davidic king when we get to Psalm 110.

Psalm 8

- 8:1 O Yahweh, our Lord,
How majestic is Your name in all the earth,
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!
- 8:2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength
Because of Your adversaries,
To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.
- 8:3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;
- 8:4 What is man that You take thought of him,
And the son of man that You care for him?
- 8:5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God,
And You crown him with glory and majesty!
- 8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
- 8:7 All sheep and oxen,
And also the beasts of the field,
- 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea,
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.
- 8:9 O Yahweh, our Lord,
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

This, too, is a psalm of David. And we are considering it because most students of the Bible interpret it as referring to God’s mandate that all mankind rule over the earth with great care and wisdom. However, the ideas and tone that David is expressing here are so similar to his prayer in response to God’s making the Davidic Covenant with him in 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17 that it makes more sense to understand him to be speaking of one individual only—his descendant, even Solomon to begin with, the king of Israel, who is God’s proxy and human substitute on earth. In v. 1, David points out that God has displayed His splendor to the highest height of the heavens so that no one in His role and with His actions in the created reality is as majestic as Yahweh. Indeed, from the lowliest people on the earth, babies, some of whom will succeed David as his descendants and become kings of Israel, God establishes their power and authority to conquer His enemies who otherwise would harm and even destroy the nation of Israel, the Jews.

Then David goes on in vs. 3-8 to wonder out loud how the one who has made the entire universe would consider taking a mere human being and granting him the unequalled responsibility of ruling over all the earth and all that it contains. The phrase “son of man” here is in parallel with the word “man” in the previous line and becomes the favorite title of Jesus when he speaks about himself. Both David and he mean by it the Son of God, i.e., David’s descendant within the Davidic Covenant, who is a real man, a real flesh and blood human being and to whom God gives the responsibility of being not only the king of the Jews, but also the one who exercises authority over the entire rest of the earth, including the Gentile nations! This is to say that the Son of God is the “Son” who comes from the human race (“of Man”) and yet who is God’s substitute on the earth with the right to exercise His authority over the entirety of the world.

This is the man whom God has “made a little lower than God” by virtue of his having almost the same amount or level of authority and jurisdiction as the transcendent creator. He is the unique proxy

of God among all mankind, the king of Israel, but he is merely a man—such as were David, Solomon, Rehoboam, and the others of his descendants. And such is Jesus, although the apostle Paul calls him the very icon and image of God within the creation which these other men were not (cf. 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 2:15). In other words, he is God in the creation, while also being a real human being. These other Davidic kings were only human beings. Thus, Jesus is the Son of God who is also the Son of Man because he is both God and man in a manner which no other Davidic king was.

This psalm, therefore, is first about David, the author, then about Solomon his son, and then ultimately about someone whom we will see in Psalm 110 he labels “my Lord,” the final king of Israel. And he ends the psalm with a doxology like v. 1, “O Yahweh our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth.” And I suggest that none of this makes good sense regarding the king of the Davidic Covenant who is also the king of Israel unless God eventually fulfills His first promise of the Abrahamic Covenant to make his descendants the most powerful nation in the world. The Jewish king is first and foremost the king of the Jews, who will rule over them and the entire earth and its Gentile nations. In this way, Jesus when he returns will be the ultimate fulfillment of what David is describing in Psalm 8.

Psalm 45:1-7

- 45:1 My heart overflows with a good theme;
I address my verses to the King;
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.
- 45:2 You are fairer than the sons of men;
Grace is poured upon Your lips;
Therefore God has blessed You forever (בְּרַכְּךָ אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם).
- 45:3 Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One,
In Your splendor and Your majesty!
- 45:4 And in Your majesty ride on victoriously,
For the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness;
Let Your right hand teach You awesome things.
- 45:5 Your arrows are sharp;
The peoples fall under You;
Your arrows are in the heart of the King's enemies.
- 45:6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever (עוֹלָם וָעֶד) (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος);
A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom.
- 45:7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
Therefore God, Your God has anointed You
With the oil of joy above Your fellows.
- 45:8 All Your garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia;
Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made You glad.
- 45:9 Kings' daughters are among Your noble ladies;
At Your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.

The third psalm in our series is Psalm 45. It was written on the occasion of the wedding ceremony of the king of Israel and extols both him in vs. 2-9 and his bride in vs. 10-15. We will look at only the portion that pertains to the king and how it adds to our understanding of the Davidic Covenant and God's role for the human being who rules over His people Israel. In v. 1, the psalmist declares that his “heart overflows with a good theme” as he addresses his words mainly to the king of Israel and knows that he has great things to say about him.

In v. 2, he begins his description of the king, “You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever [*le 'olam*, a variation of *'ad 'olam*].” The king of Israel is the best of men on the earth. And of course he should be because he is God's proxy and direct representative. He should always have the message of God's gracious willingness to forgive sinners on his lips. And since he also should be a man of genuine belief in God, God will

bless him with not only living out his role as king of Israel as best as possible, but also with eternal life. Ultimately, of course, it will be Jesus who fills out these words of the psalmist to their greatest extent, even while not being one who needs God's forgiveness and mercy, because he is the morally perfect icon of God.

Then, the psalmist in v. 3 exhorts the king to arm himself for battle, because it is assumed that he will have enemies on the basis of mankind's innate hostility towards God, "Gird your sword on your thigh, O Mighty One, in your splendor and your majesty!" And the king's enemies will be the enemies of not only God, but also of Israel and their king, an antisemitic theme which will play itself out during the rest of the Jews' history right up to the end when the Beast of Revelation will attempt to destroy them completely. However, the final king, Jesus, will intervene and destroy this "Man of Lawlessness" and his army who have invaded the land of Israel (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:3).

Thus, the psalmist goes on in vs. 4-5 to describe the king's success in his battles, "4 And in your majesty ride on victoriously, for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; let your right hand teach You awesome things. 5 Your arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under you; your arrows are in the heart of the King's enemies." When the king's heart is right before God and he is being authentically obedient to God, no one is more powerful and can defeat him. After all, according to the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7, he is the Son of God, the human representative of God's power and authority on earth. Defeating him would be like defeating the transcendent creator of all reality and the sovereign author of the story of cosmic history. Impossible!! Therefore, of course the king's arrows sink deep into the hearts of his enemies and destroy them. And another reason why this is the case is because the king of Israel, whose own heart is oriented towards God, always acts "for the cause of truth and righteousness," God's truth and righteousness. This means also that his "right hand," his mind and heart that guide him and control his actions existentially, "teach [him] awesome things" about God and His eternal plans and purposes, especially those for His chosen people Israel. The king has been a student of all the truth which God has shared with the Jews, whose responsibility according to Exodus 19 and Deuteronomy 4 is to share it with the rest of the world.

We will not look at vs. 8-9 but finish our analysis with vs. 6-7, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God has anointed you with the oil of joy above your fellows." It would be easy to think that the psalmist addresses himself in v. 6 to Yahweh, the transcendent creator, whose "throne...is forever and ever." But it makes more sense in this context that he is speaking to the very human king of Israel and calling him "God." Thus, the psalmist recognizes according to 2 Samuel 7 that the king is the Son of God and therefore His proxy on earth, so that walking into his throne room and presence is basically the same as walking into the presence of God Himself. Consequently, he calls the king "God" and declares that his kingdom is "forever and ever, i.e., *'olam va 'ed*, another variation of *'ad 'olam*. ("into the age of the age" as the Greek Septuagint from around 270 B.C. translates it). The kingdom of Israel will persist for as long as God, the transcendent author of reality, desires it to do so. And we find out from the rest of the Bible that this will be through the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20 after Jesus returns. Therefore, the psalmist must be assuming God's constant faithfulness towards the Jews and His promise to Abraham, that He will form them into the strongest nation in history. Eventually, the king of the Davidic Covenant will intersect with the "great nation" of the Abrahamic Covenant with all the Jews living on the land of Israel as authentic believers and exercising hegemony over all the Gentile nations with their king, Jesus.

In the last part of v. 6, the psalmist says that "a scepter of uprightness is the scepter of [the king's] kingdom." A scepter is a decorated staff that rulers carry to symbolize their sovereign authority over the land and the people whom they rule. Every Davidic king should rule with "uprightness," the Hebrew word that literally means "straightness." In this case we are talking about moral straightness in line also with biblical and divine justice. But, again, the rest of Old Testament history reveals that most kings of Israel were anything but moral and good. This is why it is so encouraging to be waiting

for Jesus' return. He will rule perfectly!! And those who have believed in God and him will enjoy the best government (over the entire world!!) that has ever existed. More details to follow.

In v. 7, the psalmist says how the king has "loved righteousness and hated wickedness." And as a result, "Therefore God, your God has anointed you with the oil of joy above your fellows." Again he calls the king "God," because he is His human substitute and rules with His authority. This is the most explicit addition in Psalm 45 to 2 Samuel 7, which I actually mentioned in my explanation of it. The people of the Ancient Near East considered their kings to be the very embodiment of their chief god, and the Jews are to think likewise of the ruling descendant of David. As far as they are concerned he is "God," not the invisible and eternal God, but the human embodiment of God within the creation—whether we are talking about David, Solomon, or Jesus. It is just that Jesus is a bit different—conceived miraculously in Mary's woman by God Himself, morally perfect, the character in God's story who is God Himself, and yet as flesh and blood human as any of the rest of us.

The psalmist goes on to tell the king who is currently ruling Israel and is getting married that his God, the transcendent creator, has anointed him. In other words, He has metaphorically poured oil over his head, making him the Anointed One, i.e., the Messiah and Christ. The king is the one whom God has set apart for the very special role of ruling over His chosen people, the Jews, and eventually according to Psalm 2 over the whole world. And this should bring nothing but joy to the heart and mind of the king, which will certainly be the case with Jesus when he returns. Indeed, the joy for all of us who will welcome him will be beyond anything we have ever experienced and can imagine. However, interestingly enough, it will still not be as great as the king's joy, i.e., Jesus' joy, which will be "above [all his] fellows."

Psalm 72

- 72:1 Give the king Your judgments, O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's son.
- 72:2 May he judge (יָדִין) Your people with righteousness
And Your afflicted with justice.
- 72:3 Let the mountains bring peace (שָׁלוֹם) to the people,
And the hills, in righteousness.
- 72:4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people,
Save the children of the needy
And crush the oppressor.
- 72:5 Let them fear You while the sun endures,
And as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
- 72:6 May he come down like rain upon the mown grass,
Like showers that water the earth.
- 72:7 In his days may the righteous flourish,
And abundance of peace (שָׁלוֹם) till the moon is no more.
- 72:8 May he also rule from sea to sea
And from the River to the ends of the earth.
- 72:9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him,
And his enemies lick the dust.
- 72:10 Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents;
The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.
- 72:11 And let all kings bow down before him,
All nations (כָּל-גּוֹיִם) serve him.
- 72:12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help,
The afflicted also, and him who has no helper.
- 72:13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy,
And the lives of the needy he will save.
- 72:14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence,
And their blood will be precious in his sight;

- 72:15 So may he live, and may the gold of Sheba be given to him;
 And let them pray for him continually;
 Let them bless him all day long.
- 72:16 May there be abundance of grain in the earth (בְּאֶרֶץ) [on the land?] on top of the mountains;
 Its fruit will wave like the cedars of Lebanon;
 And may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth.
- 72:17 May his name endure forever (לְעוֹלָם);
 May his name increase as long as the sun shines;
 And let men bless themselves by him;
 Let all nations call him blessed (כָּל-גּוֹיִם יִשְׁתַּבְּחוּהוּ).
- 72:18 Blessed be Yahweh God, the God of Israel,
 Who alone works wonders.
- 72:19 And blessed be His glorious name forever;
 And may the whole earth be filled with His glory.
 Amen, and Amen.

The Septuagint indicates that this fourth psalm is either for Solomon or by him. In either case, it is a prayer for God to grant the king of Israel to rule righteously, to rescue the needy in Israel from their oppressors, and to extend the king's dominion over the entire earth—which David could have written on behalf of his son, who succeeded him, or which Solomon himself wrote for his own benefit, because he recognized the enormous responsibility God was given him to govern His people, the Jews, as well as the rest of the world when the final Messiah arrive. Therefore, the author of this psalm wrote during the early days of Israel's monarchy around 1000 B.C., but his words, like those of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, always had the potential to find their complete fulfillment at any time in Jewish history. Nevertheless, they will be fulfilled in their entirety only when Jesus returns as the final, eternal, morally perfect, and divine Davidic king.

In vs. 1-2, the psalmist asks of God that He grant to the king all that he needs intellectually and spiritually to “judge [rule] Your people with righteousness and Your afflicted with justice.” Notice that “Your people” are in parallel with “Your afflicted.” The prayer is for the king to rule the Jews in a manner that is commensurate with God's own moral character and commandments in the Mosaic Covenant. Therefore, the “afflicted” are those Jews who are being mistreated either by their fellow Jews or by their Gentile enemies (or by both). As a result, they are the same as the “needy” of v. 4 who are under the thumb of the “oppressor,” their arrogant and evil fellow Jews or their Gentile enemies (or both).

In v. 3, the author requests of God that He, through “the mountains,” the natural defenses of the land of Israel as metaphorical of the Jewish human army, bring “peace,” i.e., shalom and a wholesomeness of life that is never disturbed by external or internal threats of harm and suffering, “to the people” of Israel. And may “the hills,” like “the mountains,” do so also “in righteousness,” which is to say with the people all acting in righteousness—with authentic, inward faith and obedience. Similarly, the prayer in v. 4 is for the king to bring justice to the defenseless and weak within the Jewish culture, who have not been able to acquire justice for their mistreatment by those stronger than they are, whether within their land or initiated outside it. Obviously, the ideas here match those of Deuteronomy 28, which predict the time when the Jews will never again suffer at the hands of the Gentiles. This means that they also assume God's perpetual faithfulness to His promise in the Abrahamic Covenant to render the Jewish people the mightiest in the world. Thus, we see, at least implied, the *Jewish* interconnection between all three covenants, the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Davidic. To break any one of these connections by suggesting that God has transferred one (or more) of the covenants to the New Testament Church of mostly Gentiles is to violate all three covenants. This does not make sense to do so.

The psalmist goes on in v. 5, “Let them fear You while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.” The question here is whether “You” refers to God or to the king? More likely, it refers to God, the transcendent creator, but because the king is His proxy and substitute on

earth according to the Davidic Covenant, it really does not matter. But I think that since this psalm is mainly a prayer, the speaker of these words is addressing God and requesting on behalf of “them,” the “afflicted” and “needy” Jews, that God will be their God so that they revere Him and trust Him for their salvation from those who oppress and mistreat them. And he is asking that the “afflicted” people do so for as long as this age exists, which means until God creates the new and eternal earth of Revelation 21.

In vs. 6-14 we see an appeal to God that the king rule so that all experience his righteousness and the goodness of life that results from it. In v. 6, the psalmist prays, “May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.” This is interesting wording, “May he come down...” Come down from where? For on high, from heaven, i.e., from God. Even though it is tempting to interpret the psalmist as referring to Jesus the Messiah who will return “from heaven” to establish his own Kingdom of Israel, I think that it is more reasonable to hear him talking about the king’s origin as God and His eternal plans and purposes to set up the messianic kingdom. Therefore, the psalmist is asking God to make the Messiah come from Him so that the inevitable effect is prosperity, abundance of food, and life for the Jews that is better than the best life they could ever possibly imagine—“like rain upon mown grass [so that it is constantly green and grows prolifically], like showers that water the earth [and make it produce abundant (and indeed more than abundant) food]. This is nothing less than another description of the “great nation” which God has promised in Genesis 12:2 to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob. This is the psalmist’s prayer to God.

In v. 7, he requests that “the righteous flourish” in the days of the king, which of course they will when God makes the nation of Israel great and only those Jews of genuine faith will be living on the land of Israel. Jews who lack authentic belief will no longer exist for the duration of the messianic kingdom, and they will inhabit the land in great prosperity. Plus, there will be “abundance of peace,” that is, *shalom*, which will mean a political, social, psychological, emotional, and physical environment that is nothing less than pure enjoyment and safety. The Jews will be free from any outside or inside threats. And this will be “until the moon is no more,” which is to say, until God is finished with the present realm and creates a new one with an eternal earth as described in Revelation 21.

The prayer goes on to request, “May he also rule from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth” (v. 8). The “River” may be the Nile of Egypt or the Euphrates of Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). The point is that the king will exercise worldwide hegemony, which will happen only when Jesus returns, restores the Kingdom of Israel, and together with the Jews extends his authority over the entire earth. To do so has been the right of all Davidic kings since each is the Son of God and His proxy on the earth. However, it will be Jesus who will rule over all God’s property in the world, which is not only the land of Israel, but also all the earth and its Gentiles people.

Then, in vs. 9-11 the psalmist requests that all mankind bow down before the Israel’s king and revere and respect him, “**9** Let the nomads of the desert bow before him, and his enemies lick the dust. **10** Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. **11** And let all kings bow down before him, all nations serve him.” While this should have been the case for any of the kings as a descendant of David, because each and every one of them was a Son of God according to the Davidic Covenant, regardless of the amount of sin in their lives, the respect and worship of the king by all the people of the world will happen only for Jesus when he returns. “Tarshish” and “the islands” refer to the people who inhabit the coastlands and islands around the Mediterranean Sea. Sheba is probably the southwest corner of the Arabian peninsula. Seba likewise is either southern Arabia or Ethiopia. These four places represent the Gentile nations which surround Israel, and they, like the Jews, will worship Israel’s king. Even though they may not have changed hearts and genuine faith, they will acknowledge that he must at least be obeyed outwardly or there will be grave consequences, because he will rule them “with a rod of iron” (cf. Psalm 2:9). In other words, Jesus will not tolerate any immoral behavior or outward disobedience towards God. He will identify and punish appropriately all immorality.

In vs. 12-14, the author provides a good reason for the king's deserving everyone's reverence and respect, "12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help, the afflicted also, and him who has no helper. 13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy, and the lives of the needy he will save. 14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence, and their blood will be precious in his sight." The king deserves everyone's respect because he is the champion of the weak, the oppressed, and the needy Jews. They have suffered at the hands of those who have used their political, financial, social, and cultural strength to mistreat them, but now the king of Israel will set them free to live a life of *shalom* and joy and fulfillment in the messianic kingdom.

As a result of the king's beneficent actions towards his people, the Jews, the psalmist requests of God in v. 15 that he, too, live a life of prosperity and abundance with "the gold of Sheba." And the poor and weak who have been rescued from their oppression by the king will "pray for him continually" and "bless him all day long." The psalmist also asks for prosperity for the entire nation of Israel in v. 16, "May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains; its fruit will wave like the cedars of Lebanon; and may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth." Probably "earth" (*'eret*) refers to the land of Israel and not the whole earth, even though the worldwide rule of the Messiah will result in prosperity for even the Gentiles. But the psalmist's main concern is for the "needy" and the "afflicted," i.e., the Jews who have suffered under the thumb of their own people and of the Gentiles for even thousands of years. And he longs for the day when God fulfills His promise to Abraham and lifts them above all the Gentiles and grants them authority over the other nations of the world.

He continues in v. 17, "May his name endure forever; may his name increase as long as the sun shines; and let men bless themselves by him; let all nations call him blessed." The psalmist's desire is for the king of Israel to acquire the greatest of reputations, and to do so "forever." The word is *le 'olam*, which we have seen before as a variation of *'ad 'olam*, meaning for as long as God desires in the present realm. And this will be during the millennial kingdom of Revelation 20 when Jesus' name will be great because he will restore the Davidic throne and rule with the Jews over the whole world. During this same time, everyone in the world can find blessing in their own lives as they submit to Jesus' righteous rule so that "all the nations call him blessed." There will never have been a good government like that of the Messiah, and as a result he will provide for the first time in human history a worldwide society and culture that is characterized by truth and justice. Again, this will be a key characteristic of the fulfillment of the promise of the "great nation" to Abraham and his descendants. It will be a great monarchy that extends throughout the entire world.

The author ends this psalm in vs. 18-19 with a doxology and praise for God, "18 Blessed be Yahweh God, the God of Israel, who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; and may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen." He has prayed to God regarding the king of Israel, and he knows that God's promises in the Abrahamic Covenant will eventually combine with His promises in the Davidic Covenant, so that the king will rule with righteousness and justice over both the Jews and the Gentiles. No one during the Messiah's reign will suffer at the hands of their enemies or be oppressed by the powerful, wealthy, and arrogant. Instead, the whole atmosphere of the local culture of the Jews on the land of Israel and the extended culture of the Gentiles in all their countries will be one of *shalom*—peace, safety, security, and friendship, because the king, the Messiah, will "rule [the whole earth] with a rod of iron" (cf. Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:26,27; 12:5; 19:15).

A vital concept to recognize is that it is the transcendent creator who brings all this about, "who alone works wonders." All human history, including the successful exploits of the king of Israel, which will culminate in Jesus' return and restoring the Kingdom of Israel, is the story which God is telling. Therefore, the psalmist encourages everyone, including himself, to bless God, Yahweh, the God of Israel. And may "His glorious name" be extolled by all peoples "forever" (*le 'olam*), i.e., during the entire time of the messianic kingdom. In other words, the psalmist is thinking of the first promise of God to Abraham of a "great nation." In addition, the psalmist would have the entire earth and world "be filled with His glory," as it will when Jesus returns and sets up his kingdom as the final

Davidic king of Israel. Thus, like other passages in the Old Testament, we see that this psalm assumes the Abrahamic Covenant even if it does not explicitly refer to it.

Psalm 89

- 89:1 I will sing of the lovingkindness of Yahweh forever;
To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth.
- 89:2 For I have said, "Lovingkindness will be built up forever;
In the heavens You will establish (תִּכְנֶן) Your faithfulness."
- 89:3 "I have made (כָּרַתִּי) a covenant with My chosen;
I have sworn (נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי) to David My servant,
- 89:4 I will establish your seed forever (עַד־עוֹלָם אֶכְיִן זַרְעֶךָ)
And build up your throne to all generations (לְדוֹר־וָדוֹר)."
- 89:5 The heavens will praise Your wonders, Yahweh;
Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones.
- 89:6 For who in the skies is comparable to Yahweh?
Who among the sons of the mighty is like Yahweh,
- 89:7 A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones,
And awesome above all those who are around Him?
- 89:8 Yahweh, God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty Yah?
Your faithfulness also surrounds You.
- 89:9 You rule the swelling of the sea;
When its waves rise, You still them.
- 89:10 You Yourself crushed Rahab like one who is slain;
You scattered Your enemies with Your mighty arm.
- 89:11 The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours;
The world and all it contains, You have founded them.
- 89:12 The north and the south, You have created them;
Tabor and Hermon shout for joy at Your name.
- 89:13 You have a strong arm;
Your hand is mighty, Your right hand is exalted.
- 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne;
Lovingkindness and truth go before You.
- 89:15 How blessed (אַשְׁרֵי) are the people who know the joyful sound!
Yahweh, they walk in the light of Your countenance.
- 89:16 In Your name they rejoice all the day,
And by Your righteousness they are exalted.
- 89:17 For You are the glory of their strength,
And by Your favor our horn is exalted.
- 89:18 For our shield belongs to Yahweh,
And our king to the Holy One of Israel.
- 89:19 Once You spoke in vision to Your godly ones,
And said, "I have given help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
- 89:20 "I have found David My servant;
With My holy oil I have anointed him,
- 89:21 With whom My hand will be established (תִּכְוֶן);
My arm also will strengthen him.
- 89:22 "The enemy will not deceive him,
Nor the son of wickedness afflict him.
- 89:23 "But I shall crush his adversaries before him,
And strike those who hate him.
- 89:24 "My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him,
And in My name his horn will be exalted.
- 89:25 "I shall also set his hand on the sea

- And his right hand on the rivers.
- 89:26 “He will cry to Me, ‘You are my Father,
My God, and the rock of my salvation.’
- 89:27 “I also shall make him My firstborn,
The highest of the kings of the earth.
- 89:28 “My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever (לְעוֹלָם אֲשַׁמְרֵהוּ—[אֲשַׁמְרֵהוּ]—לְךָ חַסְדִּי),
And My covenant shall be confirmed to him.
- 89:29 “So I will establish his descendants forever (וְשִׁמְתִי לְעֶד זְרַעוֹ)
And his throne as the days of heaven.
- 89:30 “If (אִם) his sons forsake My law
And do not walk in My judgments,
- 89:31 If (אִם) they violate My statutes
And do not keep (לֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ) My commandments,
- 89:32 Then I will punish their transgression with the rod
And their iniquity with stripes.
- 89:33 “But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him,
Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness.
- 89:34 “My covenant I will not violate,
Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips.
- 89:35 “Once I have sworn (נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי) by My holiness;
I will not lie to David.
- 89:36 “His descendants shall endure forever (זְרַעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה)
And his throne as the sun before Me.
- 89:37 “It shall be established forever (יָבֹן עוֹלָם) like the moon,
And the witness in the sky is faithful.”
- 89:38 But You have cast off and rejected,
You have been full of wrath against Your anointed.
- 89:39 You have spurned the covenant of Your servant;
You have profaned his crown in the dust.
- 89:40 You have broken down all his walls;
You have brought his strongholds to ruin.
- 89:41 All who pass along the way plunder him;
He has become a reproach to his neighbors.
- 89:42 You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries;
You have made all his enemies rejoice.
- 89:43 You also turn back the edge of his sword
And have not made him stand in battle.
- 89:44 You have made his splendor to cease
And cast his throne to the ground.
- 89:45 You have shortened the days of his youth;
You have covered him with shame.
- 89:46 How long, Yahweh?
Will You hide Yourself forever (לְנֶצְחַהּ)?
Will Your wrath burn like fire?
- 89:47 Remember what my span of life is;
For what vanity You have created all the sons of men!
- 89:48 What man can live and not see death?
Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol?
- 89:49 Where are Your former lovingkindnesses, O Lord,
Which You swore (נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ) to David in Your faithfulness?
- 89:50 Remember, O Lord, the reproach of Your servants;
How I bear in my bosom the reproach of all the many peoples,
- 89:51 With which Your enemies have reproached, Yahweh,
With which they have reproached the footsteps of Your anointed.

89:52 Blessed be Yahweh forever (בְּרַחֲמֵי יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם!)
Amen and Amen.

This fifth psalm is about David and God's covenant with him in the midst of adverse circumstances in Israel. Indeed, the situation sounds rather bleak, and I have to wonder if it was written when the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and taken the Jews into exile, which would have occurred between 605 and 586 B.C. The psalm has four parts –

- 1) Praise to Yahweh for His constant faithfulness and the Davidic Covenant in vs. 1-18
- 2) Restatement of the Davidic Covenant in vs. 19-37
- 3) Concern for the king's situation and appeal to God to remember His covenant in vs. 38-51
- 4) Final praise to Yahweh in v. 52

The Hebrew text informs us that the psalmist is Ethan the Ezrahite (Israelite in the Greek Septuagint). He begins in v. 1, "I will sing of the lovingkindness of Yahweh forever; to all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth." On what basis can Ethan be so confident of God's *hesed* and *'emunah* (constant loyal love and steadfastness respectively) towards the Jews and the Davidic king? It has to be both the Abrahamic Covenant, i.e., God's promising, guaranteeing, and swearing an oath that His chosen people of Israel will become the most powerful nation in history, and the Davidic Covenant, i.e., God's promising and swearing an oath that a descendant of David will rule over them and the entire world. Therefore, here is another psalm which assumes the first promise of the Abrahamic Covenant even though it does not refer explicitly to it. Ethan is saying that, as long as he has breath in his mouth, he will extol God's ongoing commitment to His people, the Jews. He will also remain certain that the fulfillment of this promise is coming.

Then, we notice that the phrase "to all generations" is in parallel with the "I" of the first line, who is Ethan. Consequently, he is saying that all Jews, regardless of when they live at a time future to him, should all extol God's "faithfulness" (*'emunah*). They just have to wait and endure whatever circumstances God takes them through. In addition, the psalmist's confidence started a while back when, in his life, he first said had the opportunity to say and now continues to say, "Lovingkindness will be built up forever; in the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness." Ethan knows that it is theologically impossible for God to change His mind when He has promised something, even *if* He places a condition on sinful human beings, and even *if* they fail in keeping the condition, because ultimately the Jews will keep the condition which God has placed on them and He will fulfill His promise to shape them internally and externally into the most powerful nation in history. In other words, the Jews' keeping God's condition is entirely dependent on Him and not on them. According to the Bible, this is just how the cosmos works, and no one can alter this reality.

The psalmist then speaks for God in vs. 3-4, "3 I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, 4 I will establish your seed forever and build up your throne to all generations." Here we definitely have an explicit reference to the Davidic Covenant. Just as God swore an oath in Genesis 22 to Abraham to make his descendants a great nation, He says through Ethan that He has sworn an oath to David to keep the line of his descendants going into perpetuity (*'ad 'olam*), so that they will be kings of Israel for as long as God has planned. It turns out that, in the Bible, God never explicitly swears an oath to David. Therefore, Ethan simply assumes that if God promises something, He might as well guarantee it (as He did for Abraham in Genesis 15) and swears to it (as He did for Abraham in Genesis 22). And we now know from the rest of the Bible that God keeps both His promise and His oath to David because Jesus of Nazareth is their completion. Even though there was a long interruption of around 580 years between King Zedekiah in 586 B.C. and Jesus' first appearance, as well as a longer gap between Jesus' first and second appearances, God has kept and continues to keep His promise to David. The result will be that the perpetuity of Davidic kings will end with the return of Jesus, who will rule over the restored and invincible Kingdom of Israel at the end of the present realm.

In vs. 5-8, Ethan personifies the creation, and he declares that it will “praise” the wonders of God when God’s “holy ones” are assembled. Is he referring to human beings who are inwardly set apart by God in their hearts or to morally perfect angels who inhabit a different realm? It is hard to say. But he also asks either what forces above the earth in the clouds or what human beings who are the progeny the most powerful men of the earth can even be compared to the transcendent creator? And the obvious answer is, Nothing and No one. Indeed, whoever thinks he can defy God and defeat Him so that his plans and purposes will supersede God’s is as self-deluded as anyone can be. In other words, he is insane and completely out of his mind. So again, Ethan asks, “Yahweh, God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty Yah?” The name “Yah” is short for Yahweh. No one is like God, because anything and anyone else that exists has been created by Him and is therefore completely subordinate to His rule, authority, and sovereignty. Thus, it is appropriate for the psalmist to finish these verses with another statement regarding the fact that “God’s faithfulness,” His *'emunah*, is all around Him. This is part of His character which cannot be removed or disappear and comprises mainly His perpetual faithfulness to the Jewish people and to their king.

Ethan goes on in vs. 9-12 to list several of God’s accomplishments, things that no one else has or can do. God “rules the waves of the sea.” Each and every peak and trough of the ocean’s waves exists exactly as God wants it to at every moment of time. And when the swelling of the sea becomes great and He wants to reduce it, He simply reverses its rising and falling and calms it. Every molecule of water is constantly at His beck and call and follows His orders exactly. In this context, “Rahab” is in parallel with God’s enemies whom He scattered, possibly a reference to either the Egyptians who failed to recapture the escaping Israelites and drowned in the Red Sea or the Canaanites whom the Israelites conquered when God through Joshua led them into the land. In either case, any “Rabab,” i.e., force within the creation which seems powerful and possibly capable of thwarting God’s purposes, is nothing in comparison to Him. He can crush it and/or scatter it to the four winds whenever He wishes. And this is because the entire creation, “the heavens” and “the earth” both belong to God because He has “founded,” i.e., made, them. This includes “the north” and “the south” which are the far reaches of either just the earth or the entire cosmos. Indeed, Mt. Tabor in the southwest part of the land of Israel and Mt. Hermon located to the north of Israel’s most northern tribe of Dan praise God as their creator—if we imagine their speaking and shouting their approbation and applause of the author of even their story.

Verses 13 and 14 speak of God’s sovereign power over the creation and that He always acts according His basic moral character, this is to say, according His righteousness and justice which are “the foundation of [His] throne” and according to His “lovingkindness and truth” which “go before” Him. Thus, God is pure power, goodness, morality, justice, constant commitment, and truth in all His dealings with the entire creation and especially with His chosen people, Israel. In addition, He has a “strong arm,” a hand that is “mighty,” and a “right hand” that is “exalted.” These three anthropomorphic parts of God also refer to His power and absolute control over everything that He has made and continues to cause to exist—including human beings and their choices. Nothing and no one is even the least bit independent of God. The structure of the created reality is a story, and God as the author has been and is telling it exactly as His desires.

Ethan continues in vs. 15-17 with the benefits of those who know and understand God to be who He is. “How blessed are the people who know the joyful sound! Yahweh, they walk in the light of Your countenance” (v. 15). The last verse where the psalmist mentioned any sound was v. 12, where Mt. Tabor and Mt. Hermon “shout for joy at Your name.” He is implying that, if the people of Israel listen carefully enough, they can hear the creation rejoicing in God together. Even the mountains of the land of Israel and beyond express their constant joy and happiness in have being made Yahweh. Thus, these same people, who, it is assumed, are as delighted to be the creations of God as the mountains, the seas, and everything else He has made, hear the singing of the creation and join it in praising their God. In addition, they live their lives with God’s looking straight at them with His face turned towards them, giving them the light of His truth, which they need in order to know how to

lives their lives well and to please Him. But God never turns His “countenance” away from Israel. He always remains committed and loyal to them according to His *hesed* and *'emunah*.

The effect of all this for the Jews is, “In Your name they rejoice all the day, and by Your righteousness they are exalted” (v 16). The people of Israel rejoice all day long in being God’s people and in His commitment to them. And because God is morally perfect and will fulfill His promise to make them powerful and dominant in the world, His people will be seen as the most honored people in all history. Then, Ethan states a further reason in vs. 17-18 why this is true for them, “17 For You are the glory of their strength, and by Your favor our horn is exalted. 18 For our shield belongs to Yahweh, and our king to the Holy One of Israel.” This seems to speak of the Jews at the time of their greatest strength, which we have seen will be when God fulfills His promise to Abraham and they become the “great nation” of Genesis 12:2. Indeed, God will be “the glory of their strength,” i.e., the magnificent reason why they are so strong so as to rule the rest of the world and the Gentiles. And it will be by His “favor [their] horn is exalted.” Again, their power and authority to dominate and rule those who have oppressed them in the past will come from God. And this is because God uses their king, who belongs to Him, to protect them. The king is their shield, so that no one can destroy them completely and, when they become the most powerful nation on earth, no one will be able to harm them. Therefore, this description of the Jews, God’s chosen ethnic group, must be based upon the Abrahamic Covenant, which awaits its fulfillment when Jesus returns and shields them from the Beast of Revelation and his army (cf. Revelation 19,20).

Moving on to vs. 19-37, the psalmist provides a restatement of the Davidic Covenant of 2 Samuel 7. In vs. 19 and 20, he reminds God that at a particular time in the past, He spoke to David in a vision through the prophet Nathan so that He can say now, “19 ...I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people. 20 I have found David My servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him, 21 with whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him.” David is “mighty,” because God has “chosen” him “from the people” of Israel in order to exalt him by making him king. Thus, God “with [His] holy oil” has “anointed him.” In other words, David was the Messiah, the Christ of his day. And it is through his rule and actions on behalf of and in obedience to God that His “hand will be established,” meaning that God’s plans and purposes will find their fulfillment in David. I think that these are God’s plans to make Israel a great nation with a king, who is God’s substitute, ruling over them. Plus, this will happen because God’s arm, i.e., His own transcendent and mighty power, “will strengthen” David, and by extrapolation his descendants who also will be king. Of course, this applies especially to the final and permanent king, Jesus, who will govern the final form of the Kingdom of Israel when he returns.

And because God is so committed to making David strong and successful in his exercising authority over the nation of Israel, and because He has promised him such greatness, “22 “The enemy will not deceive him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. 23 But I shall crush his adversaries before him, and strike those who hate him” (vs. 22-23). Basically, no one will be able to oppose David and defeat him in battle. This was not the case for all his descendants who were kings of the Jews, especially the last sinful one, Zedekiah, when Babylon destroyed Jerusalem and the temple around 600 B.C. But it will definitely be true of the last (and morally perfect) one, Jesus of Nazareth, when he returns, destroys Israel’s enemies (the Beast of Revelation and his armies), and restores the Kingdom of Israel for “a thousand years,” symbolic of a long time in Revelation 20.

And the survival of David and Jesus will depend upon God’s longstanding and perpetual commitment to them as Ethan writes in v. 24, “My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him, and in My name his horn will be exalted.” God’s *'emunah* and *hesed* will always be there for David’s descendants, especially for Jesus who will fulfill the Davidic Covenant. And while it was possible for David and any other king of the Jews, it will especially be true for the final king, Jesus, that “I shall also set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers,” as God says in v. 25. In other words, there was always the potential for David and his successor kings to rule over the earth as God does in His sovereignty. However, it will fall to the final king to perform this task with all the authority and power that God vests in Jesus as the final Son of God.

The psalmist then comments in v. 26 on what God proclaimed in 2 Samuel 7:14 regarding Solomon and that is true of David (and all his kingly descendants), “He will cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.’” For David, Solomon, and the other *sinful* kings, God is truly their salvation from His wrath and condemnation, if they so choose to believe in Him. He is also their “rock,” their underlying source of stability, security, and safety. But in a sense, God as the transcendent creator is also the “salvation” of the *morally perfect* Jesus. He rescued him from death when He raised him from the grave three days after his crucifixion. And He certainly is also Jesus’ “rock” by providing him with all the necessary power and security, first, to fulfill his role in suffering death at his initial appearance, and, second, to fulfill his role when he returns to live forever, as the king of the restored Kingdom of Israel of Revelation 20 and then as king of those who will live on the new earth as described in Revelation 21-22.

As a result, God can say first of David in vs. 27-29, “27 ‘I also shall make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. 28 My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall be confirmed to him. 29 So I will establish his descendants forever and his throne as the days of heaven.’” Certainly, David was the greatest of the kings of his day, because he was the Son of God and Messiah of his day as designated by God. This made him (and by extrapolation any Davidic king after him) God’s “firstborn,” the one who inherited God’s property of not only the land of Israel, but also the whole earth—if God had extended his rule this far. And, just as God promised His lovingkindness and *hesed* to Abraham for as long as the Jews exist as a separate ethnic group during the present realm (cf. Numbers 14:18ff.; Deuteronomy 7:9-10,12; Deuteronomy 30), He promises His *hesed* to David so that his descendants will be the kings of Israel, established and set in concrete “forever” (*le ‘olam*) and “as the days of heaven.” Jesus will live out these statements by God to their fullest when he returns and his kingdom exists until God destroys the present realm and creates an eternal one (cf. Revelation 21).

The next three verses apply to David’s *sinful* descendants, not to his morally perfect descendant Jesus, “30 If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, 31 If they violate My statutes and do not keep My commandments, 32 then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes.” The “if” of v. 30 and v. 31 is conditional, but because Solomon through Zedekiah will naturally be sinners, we know that they are going to fulfill this condition. They will to some degree “forsake” God’s law and “not walk” in His judgments. They will “violate” His statutes and “not keep [guard in their hearts and minds] His commandments.” And the history of these ruling descendants in 1 & 2 Kings demonstrates that God followed through on His warning, that these men and their followers in the southern Kingdom of Judah (as opposed to the northern Kingdom of Israel, which is a whole another story of disobedience towards God on the part of the Jews) suffered under God’s discipline.

But these warnings to the future kings from David’s line are mainly a set up in this psalm for God to state in vs. 33-37 how faithful and committed to him He will remain in spite of how his descendants act, “33 But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, nor deal falsely in My faithfulness. 34 My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. 35 Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. 36 His descendants shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before Me. 37 It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.” Regardless of how disobedient the future kings of Israel become, regardless of how much they “violate” their implied agreement in the Davidic Covenant to rule righteously (according to the Mosaic Covenant), and regardless of how often He has to discipline and punish them, God will NEVER “violate” His covenant with David and abandon his descendants so completely that He brings the covenant to an end. If He did, this would be to “break off [His] lovingkindness (*hesed*) from David, “deal falsely in [His] faithfulness (*‘emunah*),” and “lie to David.” Instead, his “descendants shall endure forever (*le ‘olam*) and his throne as the sun.” In addition, David’s kingdom “shall be established forever (*‘olam*) like the moon.” In other words, as long as this earth and the accompanying cosmos made up of the sun, moon, and stars exist, the Kingdom of David will exist.

There might be a slight interruption in one of his descendants sitting on his throne, as there was between Zedekiah around 600 B.C. and now, but the presence of this earth and the heavenly bodies reveals that we are simply waiting for that moment when God will bring the kingdom back into existence—when Jesus returns. If someone can make this universe cease to exist, then he can make God abandon His promise to David so that there will never be another king of Israel and Kingdom of Israel. But God is the only one who can do this, and He is saying that He will NEVER do this.

Nevertheless, based upon just this section of Psalm 89, is it not plausible that a descendant of David will always exist as a king (such as Jesus), but the Jews will not exist as a nation over whom he rules? In other word, is it possible that King Jesus will always exist, but the Kingdom of the Jews has ceased to be something God will bring about, because Jesus rules over only the Church and not the Jews? However, God will use in the Prophets, which we will look at in the next parts of this exploration of the Bible, the same language as Psalm 89 to refer the people of Israel and His promise to make them as a specific ethnic group the most powerful nation in human history. This is to say that the king of Israel must rule over the people of Israel, the Jews, and the Jews need a Jewish king from the line of David in order to be the “great nation” of Genesis 12:2. This means also that God’s *hesed* (constant commitment to David, and ultimately to Jesus as his final, kingly descendant) goes hand in glove with His *hesed* to Abraham and his physical descendants through Isaac and Jacob, i.e., the twelve tribes of Israel. If God ever abandons the Jews, then He will also be abandoning Jesus. And vice versa. If God ever abandons the Jesus, then He will be abandoning the Jews. Therefore, it is theologically and biblically impossible for God to reject the Jews (even though they rejected Jesus at his first appearance) and transfer the promise He made to them to the Gentiles and Jews within the Church of Christian history, just as it is theologically and biblically impossible for Him to reject Jesus and transfer the role of the final Jewish king to some other human being!

This is vital to keep in mind as we look at vs. 38-51. Ethan the Ezrahite, the author of this psalm, now laments the fact that God has treated the Jewish king and his subjects, the Israelites, so badly. He says in vs. 38-45,

- 38 But You have cast off and rejected,
You have been full of wrath against Your anointed.
- 39 You have spurned the covenant of Your servant;
You have profaned his crown in the dust.
- 40 You have broken down all his walls;
You have brought his strongholds to ruin.
- 41 All who pass along the way plunder him;
He has become a reproach to his neighbors.
- 42 You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries;
You have made all his enemies rejoice.
- 43 You also turn back the edge of his sword
And have not made him stand in battle.
- 44 You have made his splendor to cease
And cast his throne to the ground.
- 45 You have shortened the days of his youth;
You have covered him with shame.

Ethan is describing a time of obvious great destruction in Israel. God has been “full of wrath against [His] anointed,” His Messiah and Christ. And it would seem that He has “spurned the covenant” of David, His “servant,” even to the point that his “crown” is lying in the dust. This is to say that the Davidic kingdom is no more. The walls of a city, probably Jerusalem, have been “broken down” and the enemies of the Jews “plunder” the king and his former wealth. No longer do the king’s enemies revere and respect him (as we recall Psalm 2 exhorts them to do). Now they are laughing at him instead of God’s laughing at them. But all this is ultimately the responsibility of God. He has “exalted” the power and strength of the king’s “adversaries” so that “all his enemies rejoice” over his

downfall. The weapons of the king, and by extrapolation of the Jews, are useless. Instead of victory, they are suffering defeat because they cannot “stand in battle.” The glory and “splendor” of God’s appointed ruler over His people is nowhere to be found. And he has either died or been made to age so rapidly during this debacle that he now looks like an old man.

I suggest that this may very well be referring to the Babylonian destruction of the southern Kingdom of Judah, Jerusalem, and the temple which stood so proudly in its midst as a symbol of God’s commitment to and presence among the nation of Israel, the Jews. If so, then Zedekiah as the final Davidic king until Jesus appears is being carried off to Babylon, “covered with shame.” Ethan continues in vs. 46 with an appeal to God, “How long, Yahweh? Will You hide Yourself forever? Will Your wrath burn like fire?” It certainly would seem that God has abandoned both the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenants. But what Ethan’s question, “How long, Yahweh?” I think it is rhetorical. In the previous section of the psalm, he recorded God’s own words to the effect that His *hesed* will survive any level and duration of disobedience on the part of the Jews. And this still must be true. Therefore, he really is wondering how long God’s “wrath” against the sinful kings of David and the rebellious Jewish people will “burn like fire” *until God restores the kingdom and maintains His hesed with a new king?* The answer is, Until Jesus appears, dies, is resurrected, ascends from the earth, and returns to fulfill God’s promise to make Abraham’s descendants a “great nation.”

Thus Ethan urges God in v. 47, “Remember what my span of life is; for what vanity You have created all the sons of men!” Ethan would prefer to see a complete reversal of fortunes for God’s people immediately! However, he is cognizant that all human beings are at the sovereign mercy of God and His eternal plans and purposes—so much so that sometimes life seems like “vanity,” which is to say that it is empty and futile. For how can we stop God from bringing either joy or sorrow into our existence? It is He who orchestrates the story of human history which He is telling exactly as He has planned. The psalmist goes on in this vein in v. 48, “What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol?” Ethan is definitely sensing his mortality and powerlessness to stave off or prevent death. Look at how much effort we human beings put into our health and healthcare. In our contemporary world, who knows exactly how many billions (trillions?) of dollars we spend in order to keep ourselves fit and alive. Certainly, there is nothing morally wrong with pursuing good health. But how much is the world’s effort to fight diseases, stay in shape, and maintain perfect health based upon an abject rejection of God? And Ethan asks, “What man can live and not see death?” Who of us mortal, aging, weak human beings has the power death to prevent death from knocking at our door and eventually completely overwhelming us? In other words, who of us is God? Plus, there is another implied question within Ethan’s text, “Who within the creation is in control of God that he can change His plans for exactly when each one of us dies?” Can Satan? Can another angel or demonic being? Can the leader of the most powerful country in the world? Can the lowliest person in the world? No! God’s plans are irrevocable and unchangeable, and each of us will breath his last exactly when God has determined from eternity past when He composed the entire story of creation before He even brought the universe into existence. This is what Ethan is realizing and embracing as *bona fide* theological and biblical truth. He and his existence are nothing in terms of their substance in comparison to the transcendent and eternal God.

He continues his appeals to God in vs. 49-51, “49 Where are Your former lovingkindnesses, O Lord, which You swore to David in Your faithfulness? 50 Remember, O Lord, the reproach of Your servants; how I bear in my bosom the reproach of all the many peoples, 51 with which Your enemies have reproached, Yahweh, with which they have reproached the footsteps of Your anointed.” Here we find out that probably since v. 38 the psalmist has been speaking on behalf of the Davidic king. At least in vs. 49-51, this is all that the king should be thinking and realizing. He asks that God remember His lovingkindnesses (plural of *hesed*!) and faithfulness (*’emunah*) to David. He wants Him to look at how “the many peoples,” i.e., the Jews who have been relatively numerous but now are greatly reduced in number because of having fallen in battle against their enemies, are in a state of “reproach.” Their enemies are mocking them as the people of the great God, Yahweh, as if Yahweh

does not exist. And this includes the disrespect for even God's "anointed," the Messiah and Christ who as the recent king has been dethroned, failed in battle, and lost his kingdom.

Therefore, it is encouraging that Ethan ends this psalm in v. 52 as he began it, with a doxology, "52 Blessed be Yahweh forever! Amen and Amen." He knows that eventually God will bring back the Davidic Kingdom and preserve the Jewish people so that the kingdom will coincide with His fulfilling His promise to Abraham to make them a "great nation." Thus, it is entirely appropriate for him to say, "Blessed be Yahweh forever (*le 'olam*)." It would make no sense for him to say this if God does not remain faithful to both Abraham and David exactly as He has stated in the covenants which He made with them respectively. God never changes the object of His covenants either from the Jews (according to the first Abrahamic promise) to any other group, or from David to a human being who cannot trace his lineage back to him. In other words, the Jews and Jesus will comprise the most powerful nation in history when he returns, as the Abrahamic Covenant (in Genesis-Deuteronomy) and the Davidic Covenant (in 2 Samuel 7-Psalms) attest, and as we will see the Old Testament Prophets provide clear evidence.

Psalm 110

110:1 Yahweh says to my Lord:

"Sit at My right hand

Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

110:2 Yahweh will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying,

"Rule (רָדָה) in the midst of Your enemies."

110:3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power;

In holy array, from the womb of the dawn,

Your youth are to You as the dew.

110:4 Yahweh has sworn (נִשְׁבַּעַת) and will not change His mind,

"You are a priest forever

According to the order of Melchizedek."

110:5 Yahweh is at Your right hand;

He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

110:6 He will judge (יִדְּן) among the nations,

He will fill them with corpses,

He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.

110:7 He will drink from the brook by the wayside;

Therefore He will lift up His head.

The sixth and final psalm we will examine was written by David, who is obviously writing about someone else. In v. 1, he says, "Yahweh says to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" David calls this person, "my Lord," meaning that he is above David. But who can be above him, the king of Israel? Certainly not any one of his own subjects, not even a priest from the tribe of Levi who serves in the tabernacle of God and offers sacrifices to Him. The only possibility is another king who is greater than David, the progenitor of all Israel's kings. But what descendant of David will be greater than David? Not Solomon, his son. Neither Rehoboam, his grandson. No, it must be the unique and final king of all his descendants who become kings of Israel. It has to be Jesus of Nazareth, who will restore the Kingdom of Israel when he returns and rules over this "great nation" of Jews with all resurrected believers in history, including David. In other words, David realizes that God is not going to fulfill His promise to make the Jews the most powerful people in the world during his own lifetime, but, instead, it will involve his future descendant who will rule over them. But we will see in a moment that Jesus' being greater than David comes not just from his being the permanent king of the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. It will also involve his being David's High Priest who obtains God's forgiveness and mercy for him (and for all other sinful believers!).

Also in v. 1, David indicates that Yahweh speaks to his Lord Jesus and says, “Sit at My right hand until [or while] I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” This means that Jesus will gain victory over his (and the Jews’) enemies when he returns so that, in Ancient Near Eastern fashion, they will become a footstool for him, symbolizing their complete submission to him either by being conquered by him and still living, or through being killed by him. David spoke of the same thing in Psalm 2:9, “You [the king of Israel] shall break [or rule] them [your enemies] with a rod of iron; you shall shatter them like earthenware.” No one will escape either destruction by the final king of Israel or complete submission to his universal rule.

David continues with a similar thought in v. 2, “Yahweh will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies.’” God will make sure that the power and extent of David’s Lord’s government will be so strong, beginning in the very heart of the land of Israel, the city of Jerusalem, and including the four corners of the earth, that all his enemies who are still alive will subordinate themselves to him—even if they chaff at the thought and do so grudgingly. This probably means that most of the Gentiles in the world will remain the Jews’ and his enemies, but they will be unable to mount any kind of opposition to Jesus (until the very end of the millennial kingdom as described in Revelation 20:7-10). Therefore, some of the Gentiles in foreign nations will become believers in Jesus during his reign on earth. But it will be no surprise that most of them remain unbelievers while Jesus requires them to submit to him politically, socially, and culturally.

And what about the Jews? David says of them in v. 3, “Your people will volunteer freely in the day of your power; in holy array, from the womb of the dawn, your youth are to you as the dew.” The Jews will be like young people, enthusiastic to follow their powerful and victorious leader, and spread out over the land of Israel like dew in the morning. And they will “volunteer freely” to do whatever their king commands them, because Deuteronomy 30 tells us that God will circumcise their hearts so that they become people of genuine faith and obedience to God.

David, in v. 4, next adds another role for his “Lord” that has not yet been mentioned in the Bible with respect to the king of Israel, but clearly be a major part of his greatness. He says, “Yahweh has sworn and will not change His mind, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’” We can assume that, as David surveys the historical and theological landscape, it has occurred to him that:

- 1) The Abrahamic Covenant combined with the Davidic Covenant will result in the Jewish “great nation” being a monarchy in its political structure.
- 2) The Mosaic Covenant with its animal sacrifices are inadequate to obtain God’s forgiveness both for the Jews of the “great nation” whenever this occurs and for Jews and Gentiles who eventually will gain eternal life. This is in line with what David says in Psalm 51:16-17, “**16** For You [God] do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.” It is the combination of a changed heart and something other than what the Mosaic Covenant requires that results in God’s complete and eternal forgiveness.
- 3) The only “thing” available to provide for God’s eternal mercy for Jews and Gentiles is one of his descendants who will be both King and High Priest—and who will offer *his* life as the appropriate sacrifice, so that he qualifies to appeal to God for forgiveness for sinners.

These three realizations by David then allow him to make a *literary* connection between Melchizedek and his future “Lord” (cf. Genesis 14:18-20). Melchizedek, whose name means “King of Righteousness,” was both King and High Priest of the city of Salem (*Shalom* and probably corresponds to Jerusalem) in Abraham’s day. But his story in the three verses of Genesis 14 says nothing about his origin or his death. Therefore, from a *literary* perspective, it is as though his kingship and priesthood could go on forever if another person comes along who is like him, a King of Righteousness and a High Priest who will intercede for sinners before God and obtain eternal forgiveness for them. David makes this connection between in Psalm 110:4 between the original

Melchizedek and his “Lord.” The author of Hebrews puts it this way in Hebrews 7:3, “[Melchizedek] was...without father, without mother, without genealogy and having neither beginning of days nor end of life. And, because he was likened to the Son of God [in Psalm 110:4], he remains a priest into perpetuity (εἰς τὸ διηνεκές)” [my translation]. Thus, inspired by God and therefore inerrantly, David “likens Jesus to Melchizedek” and declares in Psalm 110:4 that God has sworn an oath (as we have seen God do to Abraham and to David) that eventually one of his descendants not only is going to rule over him for eternity as his “Lord” and King, but also is going to intercede for him before God in order to obtain His forgiveness.

As a result, David is able to say to say that his “Lord” is also a “priest forever (*le ‘olam*) according to the order of Melchizedek.” He means that the only eternally effective priest for the Jews and for the Gentiles is not from the tribe of Levi and operating under the umbrella of the Mosaic Covenant. Instead, he is from the tribe of Judah and obviously performs his clerical and religious duties outside the Mosaic Covenant. The author of Hebrews says it this way, “7:12 When the priesthood is changed, there is, of necessity, a change of Covenant, 7:13 because the one concerning whom these things were being said has participated in a different tribe, from which no one has paid attention to the altar. 7:14 And this all becomes obvious because our Lord has arisen out of Judah, in regard to which tribe Moses said nothing about priests” (cf. Hebrews 7:12-14). When we get to the New Testament, we will look more closely at how the author of Hebrews uses Psalm 110 as his main argument that Jesus is both an eternal King and High Priest as a very real and ordinary human being—except for the fact of course that he is morally perfect and the icon of God within the creation.

David continues in v. 5 describing God’s relationship with his Lord and High Priest, “Yahweh is at Your right hand. He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.” After Yahweh has requested in v. 1 that David’s “Lord” sit as His right hand, David now tells him that Yahweh will be at his right hand, meaning that He will give him the strength and power to conquer his enemies. This is because it will be God Himself who “will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.” David is probably referring to that point in history when the king of Israel will destroy or subdue all the Jews’ and his enemies, which the rest of the Bible indicates as the time of the return of Jesus, the final Messiah. Another way to say this, according to David, is v. 6, “He will judge among the nations, he will fill them with corpses, he will shatter the chief men over a broad country.” It makes more sense to translate the word “judge” with “rule.” Thus, David’s “Lord” and the King of Israel will rule the Gentiles, kill anyone who persists in outwardly opposing him, and put the arrogant leaders of the Gentiles in their proper place so that he will be the only “chief man” in the world. All other political, business, social, and institutional leaders will have to submit to him and his authority.

The psalm ends in v. 7, “He will drink from the brook by the wayside; therefore He will lift up his head.” It is a little difficult to sort out each use of “He/he” in this verse. But I interpret it as saying that the king will have plenty of “water” [energy, sustenance, strength] to sustain himself in his battles against his enemies and in his rule over the world during his kingdom. And this will be because God will always “life up his head” and preserve his strength, so that he never lacks anything to carry out his responsibility as King (and High Priest). Or it could be that the King will lift up his own head as he constantly acquires adequate power and sustenance to fight against and subdue his enemies. Nevertheless, the source of his strength is still the same. It is ultimately God, Yahweh, the transcendent creator.

Like the other five psalms we have looked at, this one also assumes the Abrahamic Covenant and that God, by His *hesed*, will remain committed to making the Jews the most powerful nation in history with their King, the final descendant of David, whom we know to be Jesus of Nazareth, as champion, savior, leader, and ruler over not only them but also the rest of the world. This inextricably and permanently connects the entirety of the Abrahamic Covenant to all of the Mosaic Covenant to the whole of the Davidic Covenant.