

## Psalm 89:39-53 (38-52)

"But" - The final section begins a protest against the appearance of God's abandonment of Israel in the exile because of their sin. It can also apply to Christ on the cross, laden with our sins, when God hid his face from him (Matthew 27:46).

This part of the psalm expresses human puzzlement at the apparent defeat of the cross.

**Psalm 89:38** - "But thou hast cast off and abhorred, thou hast been wroth with thine anointed."

Rashi - "thine anointed" - You abandoned them and You rejected them in the days of Zedekiah.

But if Zedekiah was the "anointed" (as king), then he stood as a type of Christ, the Messiah, who was the object of God's wrath because of bearing the sins of humanity.

"abhorred" = *ga`al* - abhor, reject with loathing, cast away. The word can also refer to an abortive birth (**Job 21:10**).

In **Leviticus 26:11**, God said "And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you." But if Israel broke the covenant, "my soul shall abhor you." (**Leviticus 26:30**)

The same word is used by Jeremiah:

- **Jeremiah 14:19** - "Hast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed (*ga`al*) Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us?"

Paul sees himself in this same light - as cast away as a premature stillborn fetus:

- **1 Corinthians 15:8-9** - "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time (*ektroma*). For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

*ektroma* = The literal definition of the word is "an abortion, abortive birth" or perhaps even "born as a leper" - the living dead. The LXX uses *ektroma* to describe Miriam after she was struck with leprosy (**Numbers 12:12**)

Paul saw himself as rightfully to be rejected as unworthy and loathesome, but even so, Christ by grace revealed himself to him.

**Psalm 89:39** - "Thou hast made void the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground."

## Everlasting Covenant

Referring to the covenant with David - see **Psalm 89:3**. This covenant seemed to be voided after the cross as Christ lay in the tomb, before it was confirmed at the resurrection:

- **Hebrews 13:20-21** - "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

"cast to the ground" - The crucifixion seemed inconsistent with the promise, in **Psalm 89:27**, that he should be made higher than the kings of the earth.

**Psalm 89:40** - "Thou hast broken down all his hedges; thou hast brought his strong holds to ruin."

Rashi - The Temple Mount and the stronghold of Zion.

Spiritually, this refers to Christ's own body, which was "brought to ruin" on the cross:

- **John 2:19-21** - "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body."

**Psalm 89:41** - "All that pass by the way spoil him: he is a reproach to his neighbors."

Targum - "all that pass by the way tread upon him"

Christ was stripped of his clothes by the Roman soldiers, who also parted his garments, casting lots on his vesture; those who passed by his cross as he hung upon it, reviled him.

"reproach" = *cherpâh* - disgrace, dishonor, shame, also the exposed naked genitals.

- **Psalm 22:6** (a Messianic psalm) - "But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach (*cherpâh*) of men, and despised of the people."

- **Job 16:10** - "They have gaped upon me with their mouth; they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully (*cherpâh*); they have gathered themselves together against me."

- **Psalm 69:9** - "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches (*cherpâh*) of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

**Psalm 89:42-45** - "Thou hast set up the right hand of his adversaries; thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast also turned the edge of his sword, and hast not

made him to stand in the battle. Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. The days of his youth hast thou shortened: thou hast covered him with shame. Selah."

Jesus was crucified at age 33. There was no greater shame than the cross. It appears as though God has failed.

But Satan, though he bruised Christ's heel, yet Christ bruised his head at the cross (Genesis 3:15), and at the resurrection destroyed his works and spoiled his principalities and powers; and death could not hold him long, nor has it now any dominion over him, and death is abolished by him; and in the end antichrist will be destroyed.

- *Gill's Exposition*

- **Hebrews 2:8-9** - "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

- **1 Corinthians 15:24,25** - "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power..."

**Psalm 89:46** - "How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?"

Jewish mysticism says that God hides himself (and the spiritual world of the heavenlies, the angels, etc.) so He won't annihilate the identity of his creation. Only occasionally does He reveal parts of it for His own purposes, and He fully revealed what can be known of Him in Christ. (See **2 Kings 6:8-23** - Elisha reveals God's hosts and chariots of fire)

This is like Jesus' cry on the cross from **Psalm 22:1** and **Matthew 27:46** - "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Jesus had known the Father all his life, but now God was hidden even from Him because of the abhorrence of the sin He carried.

- **Psalm 13:1-2** - "How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?"

- See Also - **Psalm 42:9, Habakkuk 1:2.**

### What is the Meaning of our Lives?

Psalm 89:47 - "Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?"

It's possible that the letters of the word *cheled* have been accidentally transposed and that we should read *chadel*, Or "remember how frail I am..."

Rashi - For nothing and for vanity have You created all the sons of man?

Or "for what vanity hast thou made all the sons of men? Is it all just futile?"

The Preacher of Ecclesiastes would say yes, if observed "under the sun": All is vanity and futility.

Similar to Jeremiah's piercing question to God:

- **Jeremiah 20:18** - "Why did I come out of the womb to see only trouble and sorrow, and to end my days in shame?"

- **Job 5:7** - "Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward."

- **Job 14:1** - "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. Like a flower, he comes forth, then withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure..."

The fact that Jesus asks the same question of God on the cross for all of us shows that the question is valid and common to all fallen humanity, and is answered in the Resurrection.

- **Psalm 103:12-17** - "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children..."

- **1 Corinthians 15:14** - "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

**Psalm 89:48** - "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah."

Enoch and Elijah are the two exceptions, taken by God.

The word for man is *gēbēr*, 'strong man' - i.e. even the mightiest hero will die. If there is no resurrection, then no one is strong enough to defeat death.

Targum - "what man is he that shall live, and shall not see the angel of death (**Hebrews 2:14**)? Shall he deliver his soul from his hand, that he should not go down to the house of his grave?"

Only One died and rose again, defeating death:

- **1 Corinthians 15:55-57** - "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

**Psalm 89:49** - "Lord, where are thy former lovingkindnesses, which thou swarest unto David in thy truth?"

This could be an expression of despair similar to the disciples after the crucifixion:

- **Luke 24:21** - "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done."

**Psalm 89:50-51** - "Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people; Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine anointed."

"all the mighty people" = the totality of the multitude of peoples. Humanity can't conceive of this hope for Messiah, and so they ridicule and mock those who believe.

Rabbinical writers connect the verse with the delay of the Messiah, the "Anointed," since it brings reproach on those who wait for him in vain.

Rashi interprets "footsteps" as "ends" - the ends of the King Messiah. At the ends of the Messiah, audacity will increase; i.e., at the end of the exile, prior to the advent of the Messiah.

(Jews of Jesus' day felt the exile continued because Messiah had not yet come).

Targum - "For thine enemies reproach, O Lord, they reproach the slowness of the footsteps of Thine Anointed."

His footsteps (His arrival) would bring in God's Kingdom:

- **Isaiah 52:7** - "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

Some have interpreted "footsteps" as referring to His heel, which would crush the head of the serpent:

- **Genesis 3:15** - "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

- **Romans 16:20** - "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

**Psalm 89:52** - "Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen."

This verse is not part of **Psalm 89** but a doxology that marks the close of Book 3 of the

Psalms.

The Hebrew word "amen" is related to the word "*amanah*," meaning truthfulness, credence or belief. Amen is also an acronym for the Hebrew words (*El Melech Ne'eman*), meaning "God, the trustworthy King."