

International Bible Lessons Commentary
Psalms 89:29-37

International Bible Lessons
Sunday, March 9, 2014

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The **International Bible Lesson** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, March 9, 2014**, is from **Psalms 89:29-37**. Please Note: Some churches will only study **Psalms 89:35-37**. This commentary is the first part of a three part Bible Lesson that includes Isaiah 9:6-7 and Matthew 1:17-25. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary* below. **Study Hints for Thinking Further**, a study guide for teachers, discusses the questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion; these hints are available on the **International Bible Lessons Commentary** website. The weekly *International Bible Lesson* is posted each Saturday before the lesson is scheduled to be taught.

International Bible Lesson Commentary

Psalms 89:29-37

(Psalms 89:29) “I will establish his line forever, and his throne as long as the heavens endure.

These verses in Psalms 89 emphasize some of the promises God made about the Messiah, and about and to King David through the prophet Nathan, as recorded in 2 Samuel 7 and elsewhere in the Bible. The Psalm ends with the writer disturbed because God is fulfilling His promise of discipline for disobedience in 2 Samuel 7:14, and he wonders how long God's punishment will last before the Messiah comes. The answer comes in the first few chapters of the New Testament regarding the birth of Jesus. Now we know that the Messiah has come; God the Father has established the Messiah's line forever; His throne is at the right hand of God in heaven; God has fulfilled the promise of this verse.

(Psalms 89:30) If his children forsake my law and do not walk according to my ordinances,

God did send the Messiah in the line of David as He promised, and Jesus now reigns from heaven visible to the heavenly host and invisible to us except as we see the direct results of His reign on earth. The word "If" in these verses indicates the fact that God's children and the kings in the line of David had the ability to choose, and wrong sinful choices (not walking according to or practicing God's law) would lead to consequences. God has given the promise of corrective discipline to all of His children.

(Psalms 89:31) if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments,

God summed up the moral law in the one word “love;” love for God and neighbor fulfills the moral law of God. The Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses provide a ten point summary or give examples of what people should and should not do in order to love and obey God. God’s ordinances and statutes further define and apply the Ten Commandments in very particular ways to help God’s people live together and to tell them what to do if someone disobeys God or hurts a neighbor. God also gave the kings and priests of Israel statutes to follow so they would not abuse their power, evade their responsibilities, or cease to trust in the true God. The Hebrew Scriptures reveal how God’s leaders and people often broke God’s commandments and the consequences to them and their kingdom when God brought corrective discipline upon them.

(Psalms 89:32) then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with scourges;

When the writer of this Psalm wrote, God had removed the king in the line of David from his throne. It appeared that God might have removed the throne of King David forever (though the Psalmist trusted in God and His promises). It would be many years before Jesus would be born. The Jews would suffer exile in Babylon, have their temple destroyed, and live under oppressive Roman rule before Jesus would be born in the line of David. God punished His disobedient people for their transgressions as the Psalmist described. The historical consequences of God’s

just discipline could last for several generations; still, individual believers would continue to trust in God. After Jesus was arrested and tried, He suffered the punishment our sins deserved as Roman guards struck His crown of thorns with a rod and He was scourged before they crucified Him.

(Psalms 89:33) but I will not remove from him my steadfast love, or be false to my faithfulness.

God promised to punish His unrepentant children for their sins, but He would not remove His steadfast love from His children when He punished them. Because God loves His children, He always disciplines them for their own good. God designs His discipline as a faithful response to unrepentant sinners which will lead some to repent and receive God's forgiveness. As Jesus died on the cross for sinners, He knew that His Father would not remove His steadfast love from Him or be false to His faithfulness.

(Psalms 89:34) I will not violate my covenant, or alter the word that went forth from my lips.

God promised to love and discipline His people, and the Psalmist believed God's promise: when God makes a promise or a covenant, God will do what He says and He will not change one word of what He has said. God did what He said when He sent Jesus, who fulfilled the law of God and established a new covenant in His blood, a new covenant designed to bless all people in fulfillment of all God's promises.

(Psalms 89:35) Once and for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David.

God's character and the expression of His nature in acts and words reveal His moral perfection, holiness, and steadfast love. God's steadfast love expresses itself in consistent holy actions. God is morally perfect; therefore, God does not lie to anyone. God's love and holiness motivate God to always do what is best for all, and sometimes doing what is best includes just punishment (even as Jesus died on the cross as the ultimate expression of God's love for His children, so they could enjoy eternal life).

(Psalms 89:36) His line shall continue forever, and his throne endure before me like the sun.

God's promise to David included the continuance of his kingly line, and the Bible traces David's kingly line to Jesus the Messiah; so, we have another example of how God keeps all of His promises. Because of their sins, David's kingly line lacked authority and power over Israel for many generations; however, Jesus displayed the power of God through David's line when He worked miracles upon the earth, even raising the dead and conquering death when He rose from the dead. Jesus' throne endures before His heavenly Father is the shining sun.

(Psalms 89:37) It shall be established forever like the moon, an enduring witness in the skies."

God made a lasting promise to King David and his descendants, but that did not mean God would allow David and his descendants to escape just punishment when they sinned: God did not show them favoritism. They would lose the power of the throne, but Jesus the Messiah took up the power of the throne once again and He reigns from heaven, far above all earthly powers and authorities. He reigns today in the hearts of the spiritually discerning, and they know He reigns from on high. Today, the Christian church exists as an enduring witness to the truth and power of Jesus' reign.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

Since this is the first of a three part lesson series, only 1 of the 5 Study Questions will be asked below.

1. How has God proven that He did not lie to King David?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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