

Psalm 89: “When God Says No”

Read Psalm 89

Contextually this psalm was written during the Jewish exile. The temple has been destroyed, the Davidic King has been cast down, and what remains of Israel is a scattered people. The psalmist responds to God’s promise to fulfill the Davidic Covenant by pointing out all the ways this seems to not be happening. This invites a particular response from us as part of the Christian life is navigation the tension in between the promise of Christ’s return, and the present moment in which things in the world seem to suggest otherwise.

1. What sort of places might we feel a tension between what we read in scripture, and what we see in our lives?
2. As you read through the psalm, were there any verses or phrases that really stuck out to you?
3. Do you have a moment in your life where you prayed earnestly and continually for something? What happened? If God answered it, how did you respond? If it remained to be unfulfilled, how did you respond? This might be a good opportunity to share a vulnerable moment with the group.
4. Vs. 15-19 give a layout of the sort of people that are among God’s chosen. What does it look like to delight in the Name of the Lord, or to rejoice in God? How do seasons of sorrow and grief shape these responses?
5. When we look at the scene of Jesus at Gethsemane, what does it call to mind for us? What do we think of the drowsing disciples, who couldn’t stay awake with Christ in prayer?