

Psalms 89:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

Analysis

This verse describes God's throne: "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Hebrew tzedeq u-mishpat m-khon kis-ekha chesed v-emet y-qad-mu paneycha). The "habitation" (foundation) of God's rule is "justice and judgment"—His governance is absolutely righteous. Yet "mercy and truth" (covenant love and faithfulness) "go before His face" like heralds announcing a king. God's justice doesn't exclude mercy; His righteousness doesn't negate grace. Both are essential to His character and rule. This verse parallels 85:10 in harmonizing seemingly contradictory attributes.

Historical Context

This verse celebrates the Davidic covenant, grounding the king's rule in God's character. Human kingship was meant to image divine kingship—ruling with justice and mercy. Israel's kings failed this standard, but Christ fulfills it perfectly, ruling righteously while extending grace. Revelation 4-5 depicts heaven's throne similarly: holy justice and sacrificial mercy united.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's throne being founded on justice prevent sentimentality that ignores sin's seriousness?
2. How does mercy and truth "going before" God's face demonstrate that grace isn't afterthought but essential to His nature?
3. In what ways does Christ's reign perfectly combine justice and mercy, and how should this shape Christian leadership?

Interlinear Text

צְדִיקָה	וּמִשְׁפָּט	מִכּוֹן	כִּסֵּאךָ	חַסְדְּךָ	וְאֱמֻנָה
Justice	and judgment	are the habitation	of thy throne	mercy	and truth
H6664	H4941	H4349	H3678	H2617	H571
וְיָצֵא	פָּנֶיךָ				
shall go	before thy face				
H6923	H6440				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 97:2 (Righteousness): Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.

Proverbs 16:12 (Righteousness): It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.

Psalms 85:13 (Righteousness): Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps.

Psalms 99:4 (Righteousness): The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

Psalms 145:17 (Righteousness): The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Deuteronomy 32:4 (Righteousness): He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Revelation 15:3 (Righteousness): And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.

Psalms 89:2 (Grace): For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

John 1:17 (Grace): For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

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