

Psalms 89:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him.

Analysis

My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. God's commitment intensifies with promises of eternal duration. **My mercy** (ḥasdî, חֲסֵדִי) again emphasizes hesed (חֶסֶד)—that covenant loyalty, steadfast love, and faithful kindness that is God's very nature. **Will I keep for him** ('e-šě-mār-lô, אֶשְׁמַר־לוֹ) uses šāmar (שָׁמַר), meaning to guard, watch over, preserve carefully—the same verb describing God keeping/guarding His covenant (Deuteronomy 7:9) and Israel keeping God's commandments.

For evermore (lə-'ô-lām, לְעוֹלָם) means perpetually, forever, to the most distant time—underscoring the eternal nature of this covenant. **My covenant shall stand fast with him** employs ûb-rî-tî ne-'ē-me-net-lô (וּבְרִיתִי נֶאֱמָנָת־לוֹ). The verb 'āman (אָמַן, from which we get "amen") in Niphal form means to be confirmed, established, sure, faithful. The "covenant" (bərît, בְּרִית) is God's solemn, binding agreement—here specifically the Davidic covenant of 2 Samuel 7.

This double promise (hesed kept forever, covenant standing firm) assures that God's commitment to David's line cannot fail despite human unfaithfulness. When the exile came and Jerusalem fell, this promise seemed broken—but God's covenant proved "more steadfast" (2 Samuel 7:16). Fulfilled in Christ, whose resurrection proves God's faithfulness (Acts 13:34, quoting Isaiah 55:3: "I will give you the sure mercies of David"), this covenant stands eternally secure.

Historical Context

God's hesed (covenant loyalty) sustained David through Saul's persecution, Absalom's rebellion, and his own grievous sins. The covenant stood firm through Solomon's apostasy, the kingdom's division, the Assyrian crisis, and even the Babylonian exile. Though the monarchy ended in 586 BCE, God preserved the Davidic line (Jehoiachin released from prison, 2 Kings 25:27-30; Zerubbabel leading the return, Ezra 3). The genealogies of Matthew 1 and Luke 3 trace Jesus back to David, demonstrating that God kept His hesed forever and His covenant stood fast.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to 'keep' His hesed for David 'for evermore' assure believers of the eternal security of salvation in Christ?
2. What does it mean that God's covenant 'shall stand fast'—how is the reliability of God's covenant the foundation of Christian hope?
3. How did Jesus's resurrection demonstrate that God had kept 'the sure mercies of David' (Acts 13:34) despite centuries of apparent covenant failure?

Interlinear Text

לְ עוֹלָם	לִּי	לִּי	חַסְדִּי	וּ בְרִיתִי
for him for evermore	will I keep	will I keep	My mercy	and my covenant
H5769	H8104	H8104	H2617	H1285
נֶאֱמָר נֶת	לִּי			
shall stand fast				
H539	H0			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 55:3 (Covenant): Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

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