

Psalms 89:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

Analysis

It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah. The covenant promises culminate with a third cosmic witness—the moon—and the solemn pause "Selah." **It shall be established for ever as the moon** (kə-yā-rê-aḥ yik-kôn 'ô-lām, כִּי יִכּוֹן עוֹלָם, yārēaḥ (יָרֵחַ), the moon, which like the sun is a perpetual celestial witness. The verb kûn (כּוֹן), "to be established," means to be made firm, stable, enduring. The moon waxes and wanes but never fails to appear, marking seasons and times with unfailing regularity—a perfect symbol of covenant faithfulness through changing circumstances.

And as a faithful witness in heaven uses wə-ʿêḏ baš-ša-ḥaq ne-ʿě-mān (וְעֵד בְּשַׁחַק נֶעֱמָן, נֶעֱמָן). The "witness" (ʿêḏ, עֵד) is likely the moon itself, called "faithful" (ne-ʿemān, נֶעֱמָן from ʾāman, giving us "amen")—trustworthy, reliable, steadfast. "In heaven" or "in the skies" (baššaḥaq, בְּשַׁחַק) positions this witness in the celestial realm, beyond human manipulation, visible to all. God calls upon creation itself to testify to His covenant fidelity.

Selah (סֶלָה) appears 71 times in Psalms, likely a musical or liturgical notation meaning pause, rest, or lift up. Here it invites meditation on these staggering promises: God has sworn by His holiness that David's seed and throne will endure as long as sun and moon exist, with the heavens themselves bearing faithful witness. This finds complete fulfillment in Christ, whose kingdom is established forever, witnessed by heavenly hosts (Luke 2:13-14, Revelation 5:11-14).

Historical Context

Throughout Israel's tumultuous history—monarchy, exile, foreign domination, dispersion—the moon continued its faithful witness in the heavens, testifying that God's covenant promise remained in effect despite appearances. When Jesus was born, the faithful witness in heaven announced Him: 'suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God' (Luke 2:13). At His resurrection, 'the angel of the Lord descended from heaven' (Matthew 28:2). Heaven bore faithful witness that God had kept His oath to David.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the moon serve as a 'faithful witness' to God's covenant—what does its unchanging cycle testify about God's character?
2. What is the significance of God calling upon created order (sun, moon, heaven) to witness His covenant promises?
3. How does the word 'Selah' (pause and reflect) invite us to meditate on the enormity of God's covenant faithfulness fulfilled in Christ?

Interlinear Text

כָּיָרֵחַ	יִכּוֹן	עוֹלָם	וְעַד	בְּשָׁמַיָּה	וְכַמֹּכָה
as the moon	It shall be established	for ever	witness	in heaven	and as a faithful
H3394	H3559	H5769	H5707	H7834	H539
:סֵלָה					
Selah					
H5542					

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 104:19 (Parallel theme): He appointed the moon for seasons: the sun knoweth his going down.

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