

it, as well as the element of continuing benevolence. We have ordinarily translated it "loving-kindness," but in this context, "mercy" seems especially appropriate.

The third problem is the relation of the phrase to what precedes. The King James Version inserts the word "even" in italics to show that the phrase is in apposition with what precedes. Some modern translations insert the words "according to," thus reducing the relation to David to a mere analogy. If it were not for the next verse, this would seem to be a reasonable interpretation, since God's mercy to David is an excellent example of the mercy He extends to all who put their trust in the merits of His Son.

The sure mercies given to David were visible at point after point in his life. He was not a man who had any righteousness of his own for which he could claim God's favor. He forgot God and fell into grievous sin, but he always came back, confessing his sin and seeking God's mercy. David is an outstanding example of the fact that salvation is by faith, apart from any works of the Law. He could well have said, "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling." David wrote Psalm 51, expressing the anguish of the one who has sinned against God and knows that he deserves eternal punishment for his sin. Yet God gave David the great joy that belongs to those who have repented of their sin and received God's unstinting mercy with a full heart. The relation of God to those who receive the Gospel invitation of verses 1-3 is similar to His mercies to David, but this is not the primary thought of the verse. The phrase "the sure mercies of David" is in apposition with the words "an everlasting covenant."

Proof that this is what the phrase means here is provided by the next verse, which otherwise would seem to represent a complete change of thought. David is not merely a prototype of the life of the one who recognizes that all that he has been struggling for is that which is not bread and which does not satisfy. He is actually an instrument in establishing God's marvelous covenant. It is the faithful promises to David that are here in view. David was a great witness to God's mercy and