

Psalm 29

A Psalm of David.

Psalm 29:

A thunderstorm is viewed in this psalm, not as a phenomenon of impersonal nature, but as an act of divine intervention.

David opens the psalm by a call for praise to the LORD (verse 1-2).

He next describes the LORD's power in a storm: first over the sea (verses 3-4), then over Lebanon (verses 5-6), and finally over the wilderness (verses 7-9).

The concluding verses of the psalm appropriately express the application of God's power to His people (verses 10-11).

Verses 1-11:

This psalm has all the earmarks of the earliest Hebrew poetry (compare Exodus chapter 15; Judges chapter 5).

As to its general form, it is a hymn.

Many of its images appear in parallel literature, especially in referencing pagan gods by various "forces of nature".

However, the LORD is the unique Creator and supreme Sovereign over all these phenomena.

He alone is "the God of gods" (Dan. 11:36).

In view of these realities, 3 representative realms of the supremacy of God bring forth praise to Yahweh (Jehovah), alone.

- I. The Lord's Supremacy over Heavenly Beings (29:1-2);
- II. The Lord's Supremacy over the "forces of Nature" (29:3-9);
- III. The Lord's Supremacy over Humanity (29:10-11).

Psalm 29:1 "Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength."

"O ye mighty":

Literally "sons of God" (compare Psalm 89:6 in its context of verses 5-10; compare the plural form of "gods" in Exodus 15:11).

The reference here (in Psalm 29), is most likely to Yahweh's mighty angels.

We know that mere man cannot really give God anything except our prayers and praises.

God really does not need us, we need Him.

He loves us and wants us, but it is not necessary for His existence.

On the other hand, our entire existence depends upon God.

The mighty mentioned here are probably men who have attained world fame.

The famous of this world must give thanks and praise to God the same as everyone else.

I am what I am, because God made me what I am.

We see in this first verse, that God deserves all the glory and all the praise and He is the "All Powerful" One.

We may offer our bodies in sacrifice to Him, but it strengthens Him not at all.

The Creator has power over His creation.

Psalm 29:2 "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."

I.e. the honor which he deserves; which is to prefer him before all other gods.

And to forsake all others, and to own him as the Almighty, and the only true God.

"Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness":

The LORD only is to be worshipped, and not any creature, angel, or man.

Not only Jehovah the Father is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; but the Son of God, and the Holy Ghost also, being of the same nature, and possessed of the same perfections.

With both internal and external worship; and in true holiness, in which there is a real beauty.

Holiness is the beauty of God himself; he is glorious in it.

It is the beauty of saints, it is what makes them like unto Christ, and by which they are partakers of the divine nature.

And in the exercise of holy graces, and also in the discharge of holy duties, should they worship the LORD.

Holiness in anyone is beautiful.

We know when the High Priest was in the sanctuary, he had 2 garments to wear.

When he presented God to the people, He wore the beautiful garment which had the breastplate of jewels.

When he presented the people to God in the Most Holy Place, he wore linen with no ornaments at all.

This tells me that God offers it all to us.

We have nothing to offer Him, but ourselves washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Our righteousness is the linen garment that Jesus gave us in exchange for our sins.

This linen garment that the Christian wears is snow white, because it has been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 7:14 "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

All glory is due Him. I love the song: TO GOD BE THE GLORY.

Verses 3-9:

This is an awesome theophany, depicting dramatic movements in the powerful manifestations of the LORD God, which function to establish His supremacy as the only true God, which function to establish His supremacy as the only true God in comparison with any of the so-called gods of Israel's pagan neighbors.

Psalm 29:3 "The voice of the LORD [is] upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD [is] upon many waters."

"The voice of the LORD":

His voice is frequently associated with the thunder (compare e.g., 1 Sam. 7:10; Job 37:4-5; Psalm 18:13; 1 Isa. 30:30-31).

God speaks to His people through the elements of nature.

When the children of Israel were on their way to the Promised Land, God spoke to them.

Most of them thought that it thundered.

Moses understood the Words of God that sounded like thunder to the people.

The sea must obey the voice of God.

We know that Jesus walked upon the waters, and He also spoke to the angry sea and the waves calmed down.

Psalm 29:4 "The voice of the LORD [is] powerful; the voice of the LORD [is] full of majesty."

Or "with power"; as thunder, in the effect of it shows.

And so is the Gospel, when it comes, not in word only, but is attended with the power of God to the conversion and salvation of souls.

It is then quick and powerful (Heb. 4:12).

And the word of Christ personally when here on earth, was with power (Luke 4:32).

"The voice of the LORD is full of majesty": Christ, in his state of humiliation, spake and taught as one having authority.

And now, in the ministration of his Gospel by his servants, he goes forth with glory and majesty (Psalm 45:3).

We know from the gospels, that the voice of Jesus when the soldiers came to take Him, knocked the soldiers backwards.

John 18:6 " As soon then as he had said unto them, I am [he], they went backward, and fell to the ground."

The voice of God controls the entire universe.

God tells the lightning to strike.

God controls the wind, the sea, in fact, every element in the universe.

The voice of the LORD from the burning bush affected Moses' life from then on.

We will never be able to truly know the majesty of God in reality, until we get to heaven.

Psalm 29:5 "The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon."

“The cedars ... cedars of Lebanon”:

These are the grandest of forest trees, and those of Lebanon were especially impressive.

At length, down swoops the hurricane, wind and rain and forked flashes of lightning all blended together, and violently tearing through the forest.

The tall cedars, the pride and glory of Syria and Palestine, are snapped like reeds and fall in a tangled mass.

"Now breaketh the cedars of Lebanon":

Breaks and destroys them in his fury.

Such storms, though rare in Palestine and Syria, are sometimes witnessed.

And descriptions have been given by travelers which bear this out.

At the voice of the LORD, the tornado strikes.

Great trees and old trees in the path of the storm are toppled over.

The cedar of Lebanon was thought of as a very durable tree, but to the voice of God, it was nothing at all..

Psalm 29:6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

As the thunder crashes and rolls and reverberates among the mountains, it seems as though the mountains themselves shook, and were moved from their places.

This is expressed with extreme vividness, though no doubt with truly Oriental hyperbole, in the present passage.

"Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn":

Rather, like a young wild ox.

Lebanon and Sirion, or Hermon (Deut. 3:9), are the two principal mountains of Palestine.

Hermon being visible throughout almost the whole extent of the Holy Land, and Lebanon enjoying a commanding position beyond Galilee to the north.

The storm which shook these lofty mountain-tracts would indeed be a manifestation of power (see Deut. 3:9).

We know that even the mountains will be removed by the voice of God.

Isaiah 54:10 "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee."

The authority in the voice of God makes any mountain obey, whether it is a physical mountain or a spiritual mountain.

Jesus said in Mark 11:23.

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."

Psalms 29:7 "The voice of the LORD divideth the flames of fire."

Rather, "the voice of the LORD heweth out flames of fire".

The poet describes the appearances of things, not the actual reality.

To him it seems as if the thunder, rolling along the sky, hewed out a chasm in the clouds, from which the forked lightning issued.

We know that this very thing happened when Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego were thrown into the fire.

The fire was parted, and their clothes were not even singed.

The fire had been heated seven times as hot as normal.

There was a fourth being in the fire like unto the Son of God.

We also know that lightning is a streak of fire.

God Can direct it wherever He chooses.

Psalms 29:8 "The voice of the LORD shaketh the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh."

"The wilderness of Kadesh":

Kadesh-barnea is in the southern desert country.

For its importance in the history of Israel, see note on (Num. 20:1).

The storm is made, by a magnificent hyperbole, to extend over the entire Holy Land, from the far north to the extreme south, and to embrace at once the lofty mountain-chains which are rather Syrian than Palestinian.

The hills and valleys of Palestine proper, and the arid region of the south where Judea merges into Arabia.

The world, and everything and everyone in it, was created by the spoken Word of God.

God said: Let there be, and there was.

A wilderness can be removed in an instant from one breath of God.

Earthquakes, and all sorts of turmoil of nature are controlled by Almighty God.

David speaks of Kadesh, because it is familiar to him.

There will be before the end of time, an earthquake which will be felt over the entire earth.

My own personal belief in this, is that God allows these things to happen to get people to repent.

In Revelation, we read of the plagues, and each time it would be followed by, "and they repented not".

The most devout atheist will have to admit that someone greater than himself is certainly in control of nature.

Psalm 29:9 "The voice of the LORD maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of [his] glory."

Which being timorous creatures, the bringing forth of their young, which is naturally very painful and difficult, is lessened and facilitated by thunder.

They being either so frightened with it that they don't feel their pains; or their pains, being hastened by it, become more easy. This may be applied to the Gospel, which is the means of bringing forth souls to Christ by his churches and ministers. Who may very fitly be compared to hinds for their love and loveliness, and their swiftness and readiness to do the will of Christ. And their eager desires after communion with him (Prov. 5:19).

"And discovereth the forests":

The word used here means "to strip off, to uncover;" and, as used here.

It means to strip off the leaves of the forest and to make the trees bare.

Referring to an effect which is often produced by a violent storm.

"And in his temple doth every one speak of his glory":

Either in heaven, where angels and glorified saints are continually employed in speaking of his glorious name, nature, and works.

Or in the temple, or tabernacle at Jerusalem, where the Levites stood to praise the LORD morning and evening.

And where the tribes went up to worship, and to give thanks unto the LORD (1 Chron. 23:30).

Or the church of God, which is the temple of the living God, whither saints resort, and where they dwell, and speak of the glory of God.

Of his divine perfections, and of his works of creation and providence.

And of the glory of the person of Christ, and salvation by him.

And of the glorious work of grace begun in their souls by the blessed Spirit.

For hither such as have heard the voice of Christ, and have felt the power of it.

It seems that animals have great terror at time of terrible storms, and sometimes they have their offspring early from terror.

Around the throne in heaven, we see much praise to God.

Let us take a look and see what goes on in the real temple in heaven.

Revelation 4:8-11 "And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]; and [they were] full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." "And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever," "The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying," "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Here on this earth, Christians are the temple of God. Is your temple filled continually with praise to God?

Psalm 29:10 "The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the LORD sitteth King for ever."

Other than its reference to the worldwide cataclysm in the days of Noah in (Gen. chapters 6-11), this is the only other time the word translated "Flood" is used in Scripture.

"The flood":

Refers to the universal flood of (Genesis chapters 6-8, especially Genesis 7:17).

The LORD stopped the flood in Noah's time, and He will stop the flood of problems in our lives even today.

The people who disregarded God in Noah's time, learned a very hard lesson.

The LORD He is God.

He is God of the past, God of the now, and God of the future.

His reign is forever.

He is the great I AM.

He is the eternal One.

He is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Jesus will reign on this earth for 1000 years and then for all of eternity in heaven.

Psalm 29:11 "The LORD will give strength unto his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace."

His special people, his covenant people, whom he has chosen for himself.

These are encompassed with infirmities, and are weak in themselves; but there is strength for them in Christ.

The LORD promises it unto them, and bestows it on them, and which is a pure gift of his grace unto them.

This may more especially regard that strength, power, and dominion, which will be given to the people of the most High in the latter day.

Since it follows, upon the account of the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

"The LORD will bless his people with peace":

Will give them the "rest which remaineth to the people of God" (Heb. 3:9).

The perfect peace which "passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

Christians will reign with Jesus as His subordinates.

He is King of kings and LORD of lords.

Jesus is the King of Peace.

For those who ride out the storms of life steadfast in their faith, will live in peace with Jesus.

I want to bring one Scripture to our attention about all these voices of God we have studied in this lesson.

Revelation 4:5 "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

This Scripture alone allows us to know where these mighty voices come from.

Psalm 29 Questions

1. What are the only things, really, that man can give to God?
2. In verse 1, the mention of the mighty is possibly speaking of whom?
3. Why am I what I am?
4. The Creator has power over His _____.
5. Describe the 2 different garments that the High Priest wore.
6. How is the only way that we are acceptable to God?
7. What color is the linen garment Jesus gave the Christians to wear?
8. God speaks to His people sometimes through the elements of _____.
9. The children of Israel thought it thundered when they heard the voice of God, who understood what He was saying?
10. What were 2 incidents that showed that Jesus had authority over the sea?
11. What changed the life of Moses at the burning bush?
12. When will we fully recognize the majesty of God?
13. What tree was thought to be very durable?
14. What does Isaiah 54:10 tell us about the effect of God's voice on the mountains?
15. What statement did Jesus make to believers about the mountain?
16. Who were the three men in the fire that God saved?

17. Who was the fourth in the fire?
18. Earthquakes, and all turmoil of nature are in whose control?
19. Why does God allow earthquakes and other natural disasters?
20. What is one thing that even an atheist must admit?
21. Where is the temple of God, that the other temples are patterned from?
22. What were the 4 beasts around the throne crying?
23. What were the 24 elders doing?
24. Why was the earth, and all things in it, created?
25. On this earth, what is the temple of God?
26. When is God, God?
27. Name a few names that show the eternity of God.
28. Who will live in peace with Jesus?
29. What can we learn about these voices from Revelation 4:5?