

## Psalm 29

**Introduction** – Many Psalms focus on a particular characteristic or attribute of God. Psalm 23 is wonderfully comforting as we consider the care and protection of our Good Shepherd. Psalm 29, when one really considers all that is being poetically brought forth, should scare us to death (as in Ex 20:18-21) – like an approaching, immense, uncontrollable storm. *“The verses march to the tune of thunderbolts. God is everywhere conspicuous, and all the earth is hushed by the majesty of his presence. The word of God in the law and gospel is here also depicted in its majesty of power”* – Spurgeon.

**Quick Outline** – The psalm simply divides into three sections. The first is a charge to give glory to Yahweh (1-2). The second describes the movement of an approaching and then overpowering storm, which is the voice of Yahweh (3-10). After the storm, Yahweh rides over the floods and gives strength and peace to His people as an aftermath of the storm (10-11).

**Give Glory Times Three** (vv1-2) – Like the seraphim in heaven, the Psalm-singer thrice calls us to give glory to the LORD.

Specifically *“you mighty ones”* are to give glory and strength which is *“due to His name.”* The mighty ones (and those who think themselves mighty in opposition to God) specifically are tempted to not render glory to God but rather on themselves.

**The Voice of the Lord Times Seven** (vv3-9) – In this main section, we hear the voice of the Lord in a storm approaching us from over the waters (which is described as *full of majesty*), passing over forests (splitting the tallest cedars) and mountains (skipping to the strobe-light of the lightning) and then down into the deserts, terrifying the wildlife and shaking the wilderness. This thunderous voice is heard seven times, seven being the number of fullness and perfection. These seven thunders represent the summation of the mysteries heard by the apostle John (Rev 10:1-4). Notice also, the mountain we are on is actually the temple (v9) where we gather to say “glory; look and listen to our powerful God.”

**The Twofold Results Riding the Storm** (vv10-11) – After the storm there is a torrential flash flood, and the Lord rides upon that flood, reigning as King forever. He gives strength to His people and blesses them with peace – like the peace and solace following a great storm.

**Is it God or Mother Nature?** – Commenting on this Psalm, John Calvin said, *“Philosophers think not that they have reasoned skillfully enough about inferior causes unless they separate God very far from His works. It is a diabolical science, however, which fixes our contemplations on the works of nature and turns them away from God.”* And we have grown ever more diabolical in the way we handle our explanations of the weather. But why are there low pressure and high pressure systems? Why do mountains blow and hurricanes batter the Gulf Coast? Why do twisters touch down in the Midwest and tsunamis devastate islands and coastlands afar? Where is God? Mother Nature (Or Natural Law) is simply shorthand, often idolatrous and blasphemous, for “what God usually does.” A miracle is what He occasionally does. But in both situations, Christ is holding all things together (Col 1:17) and ordains everything that comes to pass (Isaiah 46:10).

**Fear God in the Storm** – God is in the storm and is to be feared, and the only place to hide from Him is in the cleft of a rock, and we find that Rock is God Himself as well. Dwelling in the temple of the Lord, we hear His fearful voice and tremble and yet we find our hiding place with Him. And this is important, because God is in the storm.

**The Messy Work of Giving God Glory** – There is a fearful, terrifying worship we are to render God in His displays of glory and majesty and this does not sit well with our modern sensibilities. Having granted that gravity is one of the ways that God holds all things together, and having granted that God ordains the earthquake, we then have to answer the difficult question when the buildings in Haiti crumble on top of children. We are to worship God in the *“beauty of holiness”* (v2) and then we are given the picture of a terrible storm where we hear His voice. He is riding on those flash floods. Why was that man born blind (John 9)? Job’s friends ask what he has done to deserve his punishment (Job – all of it).

**Wild Holiness** – Holiness is not boring, and so if you think holiness is prim and proper and just so, go watch the storm – and all He does in it. The answer is not worldliness either, for that is simply rebellion, like holding up your hand to stop the storm. And so, the next time you drive by a horrible traffic accident, say to yourself “God did that.” Where have you suffered? What have you suffered? What has the storms of God brought into your tidy life and faith? Walk into an ER and look around – God ordained all of that and He is holy. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12). See the power and majesty of the storm and worship God acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb 12:28).

**Give Glory, Give Glory, Give Glory** – God is not out of control, but He is far, far out of your control. Give glory to Him, running to Him in the storm to find the only strength and peace that comes. “The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, and the LORD sits as King forever.” In judgment, where will you find your ark? Faith in the LORD of the storm. Fear God because God is love and perfect love casts out fear. Run to the One who causes you to shake with fear and you will find all fear gone.

We must understand that this is the God we worship. This is the thundering power of His Word (far greater than the sound of thunder). When the Voice of God is thundered, cedars shatter, and men are humbled and bow the knee. This is the power of the law and gospel. And in that Voice, we find strength and peace.