

Psalm 29 • Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name!

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Psalm 29. Psalm 29 talks about the Lord and it connects His presence with a storm.

I don't know if you've ever been through a really big storm. Maybe some of you lived in the South, you've been through hurricanes or growing up as Sue and I did at the very top of Tornado Alley. We can recall a lot of summers filled with thunderstorms, and even tornadoes, and things like that. And, the lightning, the lightning.

Boy, if you've ever been in a lightning storm... I've actually... I once was so close to a lightning strike, it actually knocked me to the ground. But it's crazy how it just, middle of the pitch dark night, it just bright, everything is just lit up for a few seconds or even a fraction of a second. And then that deafening clap of thunder that follows, depending on how close you are to the lightning strike.

The torrents of rain that wash away dirt and ground and sometimes things with it. And the howling wind that bends... It's the craziest thing in the world to look out a window and see a tree in your yard that just moments ago was standing like this (arm bent vertically to show a tree standing position) and now it's like this (arm bent to horizontally to show a tree bent sideways.) I mean, the, it's curved 90 degrees and you wonder if it can take it. And often they don't. They snap or sometimes they're even brought up by the roots. It's just an amazing sort of a thing.

Here's the point. When David saw that kind of power, he saw the Lord. He saw God in the midst of those things. And I want you to notice how he does that because we're going to talk about how it applies even to our lives.

Verse 1, he says,

“Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; (and) worship the LORD in the splendor of (His) holiness."

Now listen to this,

"3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD over many waters."

I don't know if you've heard the thunder near water. It's pretty amazing; seems to amplify it.

"4 The voice of LORD is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon."

Now, David... Again this is a picture of a storm. And he's seeing things that a storm can produce. And he's seeing the hand of the Lord in the midst of it. And he understands that nature is not disconnected from the Lord God who created it.

And so he's talking about how awesome it is to hear the voice of the Lord in these various things. And so much so, that it breaks trees. Literally breaks them because of all of these things going on: the wind and, the rain, and the power of the lightning, and so forth.

And it says in verse 6,

"He makes Lebanon (to) skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox."

Not exactly sure what he means by that. But he's, who knows, perhaps the storm that moves the land or something.

He says,

"7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh."

Look at this, verse 9,

“The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth (So here's a doe that's ready to give birth, and the sound of the storm is so awesome and so immense that it scares this poor animal into giving birth. Crazy!) and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, "Glory!" (In other words, the recognition of the awesomeness of God.)

Now, I don't know, see, this is David's picture, it may not be yours. There are different things sometimes in nature that really speak to us of the awesomeness of God. I've talked to some people who've said, oh man the waves of the oceans, that's what does it for me. When I go out and see and I'm standing there and I see just the immensity of those waves and I know how powerful they are... And truly they are.

You do know that there is no other natural force on earth that is more powerful than moving water. None. Wind, lightning, fire, nothing matches the destructive power of moving water. So for some people, they look at the waves of the ocean, it's like, wow! I just, I see the immensity of God.

Sometimes it's just gazing up into the clouds. Sometimes it's the wind. The immensity of the wind. Again, a thunderstorm that lights up the sky with lightning that arcs across the entire sky from, practically from horizon to horizon. An amazing sound.

I'll tell you what does it for me. I am blown away by seeing the clouds from the upside that those opportunities that I've had to be in a jet at 40,000 feet or wherever, and looking at the clouds beneath the planet. It's amazing! And I'm thinking to myself, I'm not supposed to be here. I wasn't meant to see this. I wasn't meant to see clouds from this angle. But yet here I am! And this is pretty awesome! And I'm just amazed.

In fact, I remember one time walking... I've told you this probably before. I only have so many life stories. But I remember walking; just going out for a walk. I was by myself and the cloud formations were pretty awesome that day. Pretty big. And I was just walking along looking at the clouds as I'm walking. And I remember just all of a sudden being struck with just how big they are and how awesome they looked. And suddenly just this fleeting thought coursed through my heart, that this is nothing compared to God.

And I knew what it was at that moment to truly fear God. I mean, I was like just... It just rattled me for a second. It was just like, oh God, You're too big,

You're too awesome, You're too amazing. I can't even relate to You, sort of a thing.

So, this is what David is doing. It's almost like he's witnessed this storm going through the area and he's applying it to God. And speaking of how awesome God is, related to this storm. But what's really interesting about it is more or less his conclusion in verse 10. Look with me there in your Bible. It says,

"The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever."

What is he saying here? Okay, he's just gotten done describing in poetic language this awesome display of nature that is really quite frightening if you've ever actually been in a storm. It really can be very frightening especially when you're alone and you're like...

And a storm comes up and it's just howling and dark and so forth. And yet what David is saying here is, God's enthroned above that. You with me? Awesomeness of nature, notwithstanding, God is enthroned above.

Now, here's the point. Many times the storm that we see going on in our lives is not one that we're watching out the window. It's one that's going on inside our hearts, inside our minds, inside our bodies, in our relationships. In any number of other ways that can be very personal and very intimate in our lives.

And that's where the storm is happening. That's where the wind is raging. That's where the rain is falling in torrents. That's where the thunder is keeping you up at night and keeping you from sleep.

And about that time when we're feeling, like, very vulnerable is the time when we need to, first of all, see the Lord in the storm, just like David has in this psalm. And then recognize in our final assessment that He is enthroned above it. That His sovereign rule as Lord of all, means that He is exalted above your storm, whatever that storm may be.

And it's important for us again, I believe to say that in prayer. I think it is something that blesses the Lord when we lay out the storm that is going on in our lives. Maybe we're even talking to God about some of the wreckage that's taken place in the midst of that storm.

And then we come back and we say, but Lord, You are enthroned above the storm. And I want to learn to see Your hand. I want to see You in the storm. I

want to see You. I want to see You in the midst. I want to see Your heart. I want to see Your mercy. I want to see Your tenderness."

We have the ability to look back on David's life and see his life with 20/20 vision from the standpoint of saying, was God faithful to David? Oh yeah. Sure. We don't have that ability to look at our own lives as far as seeing them from the conclusion and to say, was God faithful in our lives? This is a book that's still being written.

However, I believe that by faith, we can speak to the end of the book and say, but Lord, You are faithful. You are faithful. You have been faithful in my life. I believe You will continue to be faithful in my life to the very last day. I believe that You are there with me in the midst of the storm. I believe that You are sovereignly in control. And I believe that You are exalted above the storm.

The Bible says that the name of Jesus is exalted above any other name that can be given or any title. So give a name to your storm. Sure. Go ahead. Name it. Give it a title. Give it a name.

And then know this, He is exalted above that name. His name is above that name. His title is above that title. Okay? And that's something you and I need to understand and truly lay hold of in the midst of our prayers, in the midst of the storm.