

PSALM 29: WORSHIP IN A THUNDERSTORM

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INTRODUCTION:

- A. We all understand and appreciate how David says about this natural world, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims His handiwork!” (Psalm 19:1)**
1. Whether religious or not, most enjoy & appreciate this amazing world we live in and the skies above it... But Christians see something more... they see the glory of God! **(Psalm 148)**
 2. What is it in the natural realm that just shouts God’s glory to you? It is the breathtaking mountains? The powerful oceans? The innumerable stars? Is it the majestic trees of the Redwood forest? The depths of the Grand Canyon? Or even the incredible birth of a child?
 3. We think of all of those things and our minds and hearts are blown away by how great, wise, and almighty Jehovah is! But what about a terrific, powerful, and even destructive thunderstorm?
 - a. I don’t want to see anyone hurt or their property destroyed, but I love to see a powerful tornado or hurricane... Their strength, unpredictability, and beauty is astonishing!
 - b. While many people are running for safety when the tornado sirens go off, I am watching the weather to see if I can get in my car and follow it, hoping to watch it’s beauty!
 - c. Many people respond to storms in fear, running from their fury; however, when David watched an approaching thunderstorm he saw God’s glory and heard God’s voice!
- B. This is likely the context of Psalm 29 → David is writing about a powerful & destructive thunderstorm... One he probably watched passing through Israel. When David watched this storm he saw & heard God – There’s lessons to be learned from this psalm and our view of thunderstorms will change!**

I. DAVID PICTURES GOD’S GLORY IN A THUNDERSTORM:

- A. David begins this psalm like many others – With a call to worship the Lord**
1. This psalm isn’t just unique in its portrayal of a thunderstorm, but it consists entirely of praise!
 - a. While other psalms do contain praise, and even focus on praise, proportionally there are only a few psalms that are totally devoted to praise and worshipping God!
 - b. Many of the psalms mix praise with cries for help or deliverance in the midst of trouble or focus on how God’s greatness should impact the way we live our lives
 - c. There’s no cries for help or instructions for how to live here... Worship is the only concern!
 2. As David worships God throughout this psalm, he puts great emphasis on God’s name Jehovah!
 - a. In this psalm everywhere you see the term LORD, it is actually the name YHWH or Jehovah... so in only eleven verses David invokes the name Jehovah eighteen times!
 - b. Jehovah reminds us that God is “The I AM” → God is eternal, self-existent, self-sufficient, the originator & sustainer of life, redeemer & provider of man’s needs **(Josh 22:22)**
 3. David thinks about Jehovah’s majesty & calls for God’s “mighty ones” to worship Him! **(Ps 29:1-2)**
 - a. Why would David call on them to worship God? Probably when he considered the majesty and greatness of the Lord he felt his own praise wasn’t enough! God deserved more!
 - b. He says to “ascribe” three times which means to give or bring praises to God and uses the word worship one time which means to bow down, stoop, humble, do reverence
 - c. This is two-fold → Meant acknowledging & proclaiming God’s greatness & an awestricken and humble attitude... It was about HEARTFELT WORSHIP and submission to God!
 4. David was so passionate about worshipping Jehovah because He appreciated God’s MAJESTY!
 - a. Notice what David wants praised about Him → His glory, His strength, and the glory due

- His name → David wants them to praise God because this is what God deserves!
- b. Think about David's psalms – Whether during distress or success, joy or sorrow, David praised God! Regardless of what went on, he always appreciated God's greatness!
 - c. Splendor of holiness - Either how God is clothed with holiness or that those who worship should clothe themselves with holiness → I see the latter... David wanted God not only to be worshipped but for the worship & the worshippers to reflect His majesty!
5. These two verses teach us great lessons regarding our worship of the Lord!
- a. Sadly, some view worship like it's an obligation not an opportunity... It is done because it is commanded, not because they are passionate about it! Do they ever truly worship?
 - b. Worship should be the result of hearts that love & appreciate God's majesty! One reason many fail to appreciate worship & feel its power is they have lost sight of the majesty of God! We've got to go recapture those feelings of awe! (**Psalm 104:1ff - 33,34**)
 - c. Some suggest changing how we worship to make it more powerful... The power of worship is not new innovations, but our hearts & minds! It's only as strong as we make it!
 - d. Think about things that display God's greatness & majesty... See His power, His love, His wisdom, His grace, & His righteousness! This is why we worship! (**Rev 4:8-11**)

B. But it quickly turns very different – He pictures God's Voice In A Thunderstorm!

1. David captures the majesty of God by picturing a very powerful & destructive thunderstorm:
 - a. Can you hear the silence before the storm? Can you feel the moisture in the air? Listen to the wind chimes as they sing their distinctive melody. It's still sunny, but as you listen to the music, glance into the horizon, and sense the change in the air, you know a storm is coming! Then, "BOOM!" With one thunderous clap it is upon you!
 - b. Spurgeon: "Just as the eighth psalm is to be read by moonlight, when the stars are bright, as the nineteenth psalm needs the rays of the rising sun to bring out its beauty, so this can be best rehearsed beneath the black wing of the tempest, by the glare of the lightning, or amid that dubious dusk which heralds the war of elements. The verses march to the tune of thunderbolts. God is everywhere conspicuous, and all the earth is hushed by the majesty of His presence."
2. As he describes this thunderstorm, it seems this is a real storm he has watched:
 - a. **Psalm 29:3-4** → He's likely watching a storm brewing over the Mediterranean Sea. He can see clouds billowing, waves picking up, & hears the thunder rumbling over the water
 - b. **Psalm 29:5-7** → The storm then moves across the northern border of Israel into Lebanon where there are great cedar trees & breaks them apart. Sirion is another name for Mt Hermon, one of the biggest mountains, & even it can't stand against the thunders
 - c. **Psalm 29:8-9** → The storm moves down south, through the country, and exists through the wilderness of Kadesh – But you could look behind & see its path of destruction!
 - d. When most people witness a storm of this magnitude they are afraid, blame God, or ask why... Here we find people gathering in the temple worshipping due to God's glory!
3. What David sees in this powerful storm is the thunderous voice of the Lord!
 - a. As we consider the comparison of God's voice to a violent thunderstorm, we may think it implies God is angry. That's not the point, nothing in this psalm speaks of wrath!
 - b. Using thunder to speak of God's presence & voice is common (**Exodus 19:16; Job 40:9-10**)
 - c. What is it about thunder and lightning that is like the voice of God? It is powerful, majestic, it gets your attention, and it moves men and nature – What better picture?
4. We need to make sure we develop and maintain the same kind of worshipful attitude for the voice of God as David shows in this psalm! (**Hebrews 12:18-25**)

C. In the wake of a such a great storm David observes security and peace!

1. This storm gave David a greater appreciation for the fact that God is in control (**Psalm 29:10**)
 - a. Sometimes when the storms of life hit hard, people will question, “Does God even exist? If He does, is He in control? If He is in control, does He not care enough to intervene?”
 - b. Here a terrible storm has come and passed leaving devastation in its wake... Yet God remains, unchained, and still in control! He’s still sitting on His throne ruling!
 - c. God is enthroned over THE flood – This makes sense considering such a great storm usually has floods with it. But this is a special word for flood, only used in Genesis 6-11 in reference to the great flood of Noah’s day... A great demonstration of God’s control, strength & judgment. Then God gave a rainbow of promise, still holding true today!
 - d. Not only is God in control, but notice the emphasis... He is in control forever! We don’t know who our next president will be and we are very uneasy! Jehovah, the GREAT I AM, will always be King! That ought to give us the confidence to face our storms!
2. After experiencing this storm, David considered how God gives strength to His people (**Psa 29:11**)
 - a. The same God whose thunderous voice could rip apart the cedars of Lebanon and shake the mountains gives us of His strength to face our battles and struggles in life!
 - b. The same lesson Israel learned is for us today – If God is for us, who can be against us! We can know that since He gave us His Son, He’ll give us what we need! (**Rom 8:31-32**)
 - c. It’s a wonderful blessing for us to know that regardless of what storm we may face in life, both physical and spiritual, God gives us the strength to match it! (**1 Pet 1:5-6; 5:10**)
3. Finally, David remembered how God would always bless His people with peace (**Psalm 29:11**)
 - a. During a storm we are very anxious... When and where might a tornado hit? Then, just as quickly as a storm approaches it leaves... you step outside and it’s totally peaceful!
 - b. The storm reminds us of God’s great strength and majesty! It’s that same power that assures us of peace... Wait upon the Lord & He will give you peace! (**Isaiah 40:25-31**)
 - c. But as we learn from a storm we have a great lesson to learn... Sometimes the peace God has in store for us comes after a storm has passed... Don’t forget God is in control!

CONCLUSION: XXXX