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The  
Songs  
29

# PSALMS - The SONGS

Twenty-nine

The God of Glory Thunders!

## READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every reference to the LORD, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every reference to the Glory of the LORD with a yellow box filled in with light purple.

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every reference to the voice of the LORD with a purple set of quotation marks.

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every reference to waters, along with all pronouns and synonyms, with a blue rounded "W".

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every reference to a place, along with all pronouns and synonyms, with orange brackets. (I.e. Lebanon, Sirion, wilderness, Kadesh, etc.)

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal line.

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every comparison with a pink equal sign.

Read through **Psalm 29** and mark every term of conclusion with a pink capital "T".

Read through **Psalm 29** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Ascribe Glory to the LORD
2. Voice of the LORD thunders
3. The LORD sits as King forever

## READ AND ANSWER

### Psalm 29:1-2

Who is addressed in **verse 1**?

Who are the sons of the mighty?



The Hebrew words for “sons of the mighty” are *benai el* and refer to celestial beings or angels.

What are the sons of the mighty told to do?

1.

2.



The Hebrew word for “ascribe” is *yahav* and is a primitive root which means to give, put, or come.

The Hebrew word for “worship” is *shachah* and is a primitive root which means to depress or bow down as in prostrating oneself in homage to royalty or God.

What are the sons of the mighty told to ascribe to the LORD?

1.

2.

3.



**There is a difference between God’s all-encompassing Glory seen in His creation and the Glory due His Name.**

**The Glory due to the LORD’s Name refers to Who He is and all that He is.**

How many times are the sons of the mighty told to ascribe Glory and strength to the LORD?

How are the sons of the mighty told to worship the LORD?



**The Hebrew word for “holy” is *qodesh* and refers to a sacred place or thing.**

**The Hebrew word for “array” is *hadarah* and means beauty, decoration, splendor, or majesty.**

**Although *hadarah* is translated “array” in the New American Standard Bible (and would lead us to think the angels were given a dress code for worship), the phrase “holy array” literally means splendor of holiness or beauty of holiness.**

**It is possible that the literal words hold a more exact meaning for our understanding. It is entirely possible that the psalmist is exhorting the heavenly beings to worship the LORD in *His* splendor of holiness.**

**In other words, rather than referring to what the angels were to wear, it could be (and probably is) speaking about *what they were to worship*—the beauty, majesty, and splendor of the LORD’s holiness.**

Is this just a general admonition to the sons of the mighty about their understanding of worship or does this exhortation refer specifically to a certain event?

If so, which event?

## Psalm 29:3-9

What is upon the waters?

What are the waters?

Where are the waters? (Hint: Before you answer, remember the point of view expressed in this Psalm. It is celestial beings who are addressed, not earthly beings. Hmm... Maybe I should give you a another hint: **Genesis 1:7** says, ***“God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.”***)



**At this point I think I want to give you something to think about...**

**Oftentimes we become familiar with a portion of Scripture  
without really understanding it.**

**Why?**

**Honestly, I believe it is because  
the church is lacking in teaching people how to study the Bible for themselves.**

**This particular Psalm is a prime example of what I am saying.**

**When I ask people what it means,  
they have no idea.**

**When I ask people what any of the three segments mean,  
they have no idea.**

**When I ask people how the first two verses  
connect with the second or third section,  
they simply have no idea.**

**The most commonplace answer is that  
Psalm 29 is generally about praising the LORD.  
That, my friends, is simply not the right answer!**

**The first two verses might sound familiar,  
but it is just as important to be familiar with, and understand,  
verses 3-9 and 10-11.**

**They are parts of a whole—each part is needed to understand the whole.**

**Psalm 29 flows together seamlessly—  
each section completely aware of its neighbor.**

**Psalm 29 will come to life right before your eyes if you will carefully observe it.  
I'm going to help you observe by pointing out various things  
and asking you pertinent questions about the text.  
But first and foremost,  
ask God to open your eyes to behold wonderful things from His Word.**

So, back to **verse 3**. What does it mean that the LORD'S voice is "upon" the waters?

Is the LORD'S voice "physically" over the many waters, or is the LORD'S voice upon (as in control of) the many waters?



**The Hebrew word for "voice" is *qowl*  
and comes from an unused root meaning to call aloud.  
It means a voice or a sound.**

What is the LORD called?

What is identified with the LORD'S voice?



**The Hebrew word for "thunders" is *ram*  
and is a primitive root that means to tumble or be violently agitated.  
Specifically it means to crash like thunder.  
Figuratively it means to be irritated with anger.**

What exactly, then, did the LORD'S voice command the waters to do? (Hint: Stop for a moment and reason through what I am asking. And remember, ask God to open your eyes to behold wonderful things from His Word!)

What is the LORD "over"?



The Hebrew word for “many” is *rab* and means great or abundant.



Let’s take a moment and gather up the ideas we have seen thus far.

Verses 1 and 2 are speaking to heavenly beings, not humans. The angels in heaven are commanded to ascribe Glory to the LORD.

The voice of the LORD thunders a command to the waters *in the heavens*. His voice has complete authority over all the waters.

Perhaps I have stated things a bit simply, but I wanted you to see things in a condensed, concise frame.

Now, as we move on through Psalm 29, keep all that you have seen so far in mind.

Don’t let yourself fall into the trap of thinking that it is just talking about a general sense of praising God... maybe because He is so strong.

Psalm 29 is about way, way, way more than that!

I don’t want to leave this point until I make sure you see what is going on. What picture is being painted for us? What is God’s thunderous command to the waters? Water from heaven... lots of water from heaven... thunder... What is God calling forth? (Hint: It has five letters. The first letter is “S” and the last letter is “M”.)

Just in case... here is one more “bonus” hint. ***“Behold, the LORD has a strong and mighty agent; as a storm of hail, a tempest of destruction, like a storm of mighty overflowing waters, He has cast it down to the earth with His hand.”*** Isaiah 28:2  
Got it? Good...

How is the voice of the LORD described?

1.

2.

Is the psalmist talking about a general non-specific power of His voice? Or is he talking about the power the LORD has to command the many waters?

Because the powerful, majestic voice of the LORD is heard as the great tumultuous thunder of the storm, we must bounce back and forth between the scene of God in heaven commanding this violent disturbance and the atmospheric disruption itself. What is the voice of the LORD literally causing on the earth?

Increasing the intensity of the picture, how does the psalmist describe the breaking of the cedars?

Which cedars are being broken?

How completely are the cedars of Lebanon being broken?



Point of Depth

**The Hebrew word for “break in pieces” is *shabar* and means to burst.**

Where is Lebanon in relation to Israel? Is it North or South? Look it up on a map if you don't know for sure.

How is the voice of the LORD breaking the cedars of Lebanon? (Since there is thunder, and the cedars are being broken into pieces, what must be happening?)

This is more than a violent storm, causing havoc on the earth. This is the Glory of the LORD sending judgment. What metaphor is used to describe what is happening in Lebanon?

Where is Sirion? (Look it up on a Bible map if you don't know.)



**Sirion is the Sidonian name for Mount Hermon.**

**Deuteronomy 3:8-9**

***Thus we took the land at that time  
from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan,  
from the valley of Arnon to Mount Hermon  
(Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir)...***

Where is Sirion in relation to Lebanon?

Where is Sirion, or Mount Hermon in the land of Israel?



**Lebanon is to the far north of Israel.  
Sirion is at the southern end of the Anti-Lebanon range of mountains.**

What metaphor is used to describe what is happening in Sirion?



**The Hebrew word for “skip” is *raqad*  
and means to dance or stamp.  
It has the idea of springing about, either wildly or for joy.**

**Psalm 114:4 evokes the image of an earthquake.  
*The mountains skipped like rams,  
The hills, like lambs.***

**Whether the metaphor of a skipping calf or skipping ox  
is showing the forests being splintered and blown to smithereens,  
or whether it is, more likely, introducing an earthquake at this point,  
what we know for certain is that the magnitude of this thunderstorm is colossal—**

**or as some people might say, it was (or will be) “of biblical proportions”.**

What does the voice of the LORD do next?

What are flames of fire?

What is happening now in this storm? What do earthquakes often cause?

Just to be clear—what, or Who, is causing the flames of fire?

This enormous thunderstorm started at the Northern boundary of Israel, but it moves southward. Where is it in **verse 8**?

What wilderness is it referring to?

Where is Kadesh? (Look it up on a map if you need to.)

What does this magnificent storm do to the wilderness?

What does this magnificent storm do to the wilderness of Kadesh?



**The Hebrew word for “shakes” is *chiyl* and means to twist or whirl in a circular or spiral manner.**

**This storm is now causing a tempest, or whirlwind, in the wilderness as it reaches the southern border of Israel. Amazing!**

**And don't forget, all the while the storm is traveling through Israel, the sons of the mighty are ascribing to the LORD the Glory due to His Name for what He is doing!**

What does the voice of the LORD do next?



The first line of verse 9 can seem a little out of place (of course, it is not).

Why would the psalmist be talking about deer being so frightened by the storm  
that they give birth prematurely?

The psalmist has thus far been crescendoing chorus by chorus  
the power of the LORD as he describes this terrible tempest—  
but the plight of the hind (deer) seems to drop the intensity rather than further it.

There is a possible explanation.  
In order to translate the word for “hind” (or deer) from the original Hebrew,  
the translators needed to add vowels.

Anything added by translators is not inspired—  
the vowels were added by men in order to help the reader.

If different vowels were added, the word would be “oaks”.

The word for “calve” is *chiyl*  
the same word used for “shakes” in the previous verse.  
*Chiyl* means to twist or whirl in a circular or spiral manner,  
but it can also mean to writhe in pain or fear.

This same word is used in Job 39:1  
when the LORD asks Job if He has ever observed the calving of the deer.

If the word really should be “hind”,  
then *chiyl* makes sense with its meaning of writhing in pain or fear.  
But if the word should actually be “oaks”,  
*chiyl* still makes sense with its means of whirling in a circular or spiral manner,  
plus it would flow with the context more seamlessly.  
It would continue the thoughts from the previous verses  
and would be the prequel to the rest of the verse.

Whichever it is, the psalmist’s point is still the same—  
the God of Glory thunders!  
He is strong and powerful and majestic!  
We are to worship Him in His splendor of holiness!

What else does the voice of the LORD do?

What happens to the forests?



**The Hebrew word for “strips” is *chasaf* and means to strip off. It has the idea of taking the covering off of what has been covered.**

**The individual trees are stripped of their tops and their leaves so that their trunks are clearly seen.**

**What the trees of the forest had covered is now laid bare, as well. Once the individual trees have been stripped, the forest floor itself is laid bare—to put it simply—the forest is no more.**

The last line of **verse 9** uses the **Psalm’s** key word one last time. What is it?

What says, “Glory”?

Which temple is this referring to? (During the time of David, there was no temple, only the tabernacle.)

Could this be the temple in heaven, where the sons of the mighty are already ascribing Glory to the LORD?

### **Psalm 29:10-11**

When did the LORD sit as King?

Is the flood present, future, or past tense?

What flood is being referred to?



**The Hebrew word for “flood” is *mabbul***

and means a deluge or flood.

**The only time the Bible uses the word *mabbul* for flood is in Genesis 6-11 when referring to the flood of Noah.**

Has the LORD continued to sit as King since the flood?

Will the LORD continue to sit as King?

How long will the LORD sit as King?

Over what is the LORD King?

Think for a moment. Why did the LORD flood the earth? (Hint: The word begins with a "J".)



**Did you know that the book of Revelation has a pattern in which songs and praise happen in heaven right before the judgments of God?**

**What do you see in Psalm 29?  
What precedes the judgment of God pictured in verses 3-9?**

**Interesting, isn't it?**

Why does the psalmist bring up Noah's flood?

How does Noah's flood compare to the deluge in **Psalm 29**?

Why did, or will, the LORD bring the storm in **Psalm 29**?

Will there be a flood in the future that will destroy the earth?

Although God will not destroy the earth with a flood, what has He promised will happen in the last days?

What will the LORD give to His people?

Who are the people referred to in **Psalm 29**?

Why will they need strength?

When will they need strength?



***So I will kindle a fire on the wall of Rabbah  
And it will consume her citadels  
Amid war cries on the day of battle,  
And a storm on the day of tempest.  
Amos 1:14***

***The LORD is slow to anger and great in power,  
And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.  
In whirlwind and storm is His way,  
And clouds are the dust beneath His feet.  
Nahum 1:3***

What will the LORD bless His people with?

When will the LORD bless His people with peace?

## **READ AND REASON**

Most churchgoers can (from memory) sing a song or two which quote the first one and one-half verses of **Psalm 29**.

There are many songs out there that come from **Psalm 29**,  
or at least they are supposed to be from **Psalm 29**.  
I looked up quite a few of them online  
and found that not a single one used anything from the rest of the **Psalm**.

Doesn't it make you wonder why no one uses the rest of **Psalm 29**?

Some of the songs were actually entitled **Psalm 29**  
but seemed to take the bulk of their words from other parts of the Bible.

I also looked at the lyrics to songs which were supposed to be **Psalm 29**  
but were actually closer to **Psalm 96** or **1 Chronicles 16**.  
But even those left out the reason for ascribing Glory to the LORD  
for the point stated in either **Psalm 29**, **Psalm 96**, or **1 Chronicles 16**—His judgement.

Why?

Because of the subject matter—  
In each of these Scriptures the reason for ascribing Glory to the LORD was...  
are you ready?  
The reason was His judgment...

The power He displayed in each of these passages  
was for the purpose of judging His creation—  
and He was to be praised for doing so.

Judgment, it seems,  
is a politically incorrect topic for the church to sing about these days...

I hope that you will study **Psalm 29** in its entirety.  
I hope that you will listen to all that God is saying in it.  
I hope that you will see that God is to be praised for Who He is...  
and for all that He is...

The very Gospel that we so dearly love  
cannot be understood apart from the need for salvation...  
from His judgment...

Otherwise, there would have been no need for Jesus to die in our place...  
Indeed, having been saved from His wrath,  
we can't help but praise Him for His judgment...

***Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,  
Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.  
Ascribe to the LORD the glory of His name;  
Bring an offering and come into His courts.***

**Worship the LORD in holy attire;  
Tremble before Him, all the earth.  
Say among the nations,  
“The LORD reigns; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He  
will judge the peoples with equity.”  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
Let the sea roar, and all it contains;  
Let the field exult, and all that is in it.  
Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy before the LORD,  
For He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth.  
He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His faithfulness.  
Psalms 96:7-13**

**Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.  
Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;  
Bring an offering, and come before Him;  
Worship the LORD in holy array.  
Tremble before Him, all the earth;  
Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved.  
Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;  
And let them say among the nations,  
“The LORD reigns.”  
Let the sea roar, and all it contains;  
Let the field exult, and all that is in it.  
Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before the LORD;  
For He is coming to judge the earth.  
O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;  
For His lovingkindness is everlasting.  
Then say, “Save us, O God of our salvation,  
And gather us and deliver us from the nations,  
To give thanks to Your holy name, And glory in Your praise.”  
Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,  
From everlasting even to everlasting.  
Then all the people said, “Amen,” and praised the LORD.  
1 Chronicles 16:28-36**

## ~ Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.  
Ask God to help you.**

**Verses 1-2**

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**Verses 3-9**

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**Verses 10-11**

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## ~ Purpose of Psalm 29

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 29.  
The purpose simply states “why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

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## ~ Theme of Psalm 29

**Try giving Psalm 29 a title by identifying its theme.  
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**

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