

## Psalm 29

# "Praising Yahweh's Sovereign Power in a Storm!"

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A Psalm of David

### A1 DAVID'S CALL TO ANGELS TO PRAISE YAHWEH'S GLORY DISPLAYED BY A STORM 29:1-2<sup>1</sup>

B1 (Angels) {1} Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of the mighty,<sup>2</sup>

C1 Ascribe to the LORD **glory** and strength.

C2 {2} Ascribe to the LORD the **glory** due to His name;

B2 (Angels) Worship the LORD in holy array.

### A2 DAVID'S PRAISE OF YAHWEH'S GLORY IN HIS CALLING FORTH THE STORM 29:3-9

#### B1 Yahweh's Utterance of a Storm Originating in the Mediterranean to the West 29:3-4

C1 Producing Thunderous Rain and Tempestuous Seas and Coastal Rivers 29:3

D1 {3} The **voice**<sup>3</sup> of the LORD is upon the waters;

D2 The God of **glory** thunders,

D3 The LORD is over many waters.

C2 Evidencing His Power and Majesty 29:4

D1 {4} The **voice** of the LORD is powerful,

D2 The **voice** of the LORD is majestic.

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<sup>1</sup> 29:1-2: Note that the first four lines form a chiasm: A B B A.

<sup>2</sup> 29:1 - sons of the mighty: Probably angels (presumably up in heaven, witnessing a storm upon earth) (Allen P. Ross, "Psalms," *The Bible Knowledge Commentary (TBKC)*).

<sup>3</sup> 20:3 - voice: Seven times in six verses (20:3-9) David refers to Yahweh's voice. Thus the use of "Calling Forth" and "Utterance" in the headings.

**B2 Yahweh's Utterance of The Storm in the Forested Mountains of Lebanon to the North 29:5-7**

C1 Breaking the Cedars

D1 {5} The **voice** of the LORD breaks the cedars;<sup>4</sup>

D2 Yes, the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

C2 Shaking the Earth<sup>5</sup> in the Mountains 29:6

D1 {6} He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,

D2 And Sirion<sup>6</sup> like a young wild ox.

C3 Spewing Out Bolts of Lighting, Starting Fires in the Forest: {7} The **voice** of the LORD hews out flames of fire.

**B3 The Storm's Utterance from Yahweh in the Wilderness of Syria to the North and East 29:8-9**

C1 Shaking the Earth in the Wilderness 29:8

D1 {8} The **voice** of the LORD shakes the wilderness;

D2 The LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 29:5 - breaks the cedars: Apparently the storm was accompanied by high winds.

<sup>5</sup> 29:6 - shaking the earth: Apparently David portrays here an earthquake (so also Ross, *TBKC*). A phenomenal storm, indeed! Keil and Delitzsch prefer to perceive the violent thunder as shaking the ground.

<sup>6</sup> 29:6 - Sirion: "Sirion [is] the name given to Mt. Hermon by the Sidonians, and [is] probably used to indicate the entire Anti-Lebanon range." Other names for Mt. Hermon are Senir (Amorite) and Siyon, probably a form of the Phoenician name, Sirion (PC Bible Atlas for Windows by Quickverse). In this instance, Sirion probably means Mt. Hermon (JTB).

<sup>7</sup> 29:8 - wilderness (*midbar*, 4057) of Kadesh: NIV almost universally translates *midbar* desert, while NAS almost universally translates it wilderness. Regardless, it seems to be a largely uninhabited and desolate area 75 miles north (and perhaps east) of Damascus (Allen P. Ross, *TBKC*). The fact that 29:9 speaks of deer and forests suggests that wilderness, not desert, is the preferred translation here. (Certainly Ps. 63:1, for example, warrants the translation, desert.)

Kadesh: Ross, without support, states this is Kadesh 75 miles north of Damascus on the Orontes (Asi) River. In favor of a northern site for Kadesh is that (1) it fits in better with the forests and deer mentioned in 29:9; and (2) storms (at least in the midwest US) general track west to east or southwest to northeast. I have no data on storms in Lebanon/Israel. Against this view: (1) How would David know what the weather was doing 75 miles north of Damascus? (2) Keil and Delitzsch assert, without mentioning the Syrian Kadesh, that Kadesh Barnea is in view. In favor of this view is the fact that certainly Kadesh Barnea would be the expected Israeli town that David would mention. The difficulty with this southern site for Kadesh is two-fold: (1) Assuming David is tracking the progress of the storm, why would he mention Kadesh in 29:8 and then mention deer and forests in 29:9. Kadesh Barnea is, indeed, in the Negev, a desert area. (2) Most storm systems track west to east, and do not suddenly head south.

- C2 Causing the Deer to Calve Prematurely: {9} The **voice** of the LORD makes the deer to calve<sup>8</sup>
- C3 Stripping the Forests of Limbs and Leaves: And strips the forests bare;
- C4 Stimulating Awed Praise in Heaven: And in His temple<sup>9</sup> everything says, "**Glory!**"

### **A3 DAVID'S APPLICATIONS FROM YAHWEH'S POWER IN THE STORM 29:10-11**

#### **B1 Yahweh is Sovereign as Demonstrated by the Ensuing Flood 29:10**

- C1 His Sovereignty as King of the Flood: {10} The LORD sat *as King* at the flood;<sup>10</sup>
- C2 His Eternal Sovereignty as King over All: Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.

#### **B2 Yahweh Will Strengthen and Bless the People of Israel 29:11<sup>11</sup>**

- C1 The Strength from Yahweh: {11} The LORD will give strength to His people;
- C2 The Peace from Yahweh: The LORD will bless His people with peace.

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<sup>8</sup> 29:9 - deer to calve: NIV translates "twists the oaks", but the word '*ayalah* (355) is elsewhere translated deer (or hinds), not oaks, so why not here? (See also Allen P. Ross, *TBKC*.)

<sup>9</sup> 29:9 - temple: *heykal* (1964) is a large public building, and probably signifies God's temple in heaven, in which the angels cried, "Glory!" in response to the storm on earth. The sanctuary in which David worshiped consisted of a tent at this point, not a building.

<sup>10</sup> 29:10 - flood: In my judgment, David had three floods in mind: (1) He was evidently in Lebanon, or at least near Mount Hermon in the northern extremity of Israel, and actually witnessed the tremendous storm that occasioned this psalm. Either he witnessed the storm causing extensive flooding of the Litani River that flowed southwest through the Lebanon (or Beqaa) Valley separating the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges, turning westward into the Mediterranean; or else he witnessed its flooding of the upper regions of the Jordan River descending from the slopes of Mount Hermon. (2) This flood he witnessed reminded him of the flooding of the Jordan River near Jericho in Israel that provided the occasion for God in His sovereignty to dam up the river, miraculously enabling the Israelites to cross over dry-shod and conquer Canaan. (3) That in turn reminded David of God's display of sovereignty in the world-wide deluge in the days of Noah. Nothing could more potently display God's Sovereignty than THAT FLOOD!

<sup>11</sup> 29:10-11 - Application: All of us experience storms in life. Storms should lead us to praise God for His awesome power but also to trust Him for His Sovereignty. God's Sovereignty is dangerous for the wicked, but for those who trust in Him, God's Sovereignty means He will give us strength and bless us with peace.

An expository outline of this psalm might include (1) The Call to Praise God's Sovereignty in a Storm (29:1-2). (2) The Act of Praising God's Sovereignty in a Storm (29:3-9). (3) The Comfort Derived from God's Sovereignty in a Storm (29:10-11).

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 29

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November, 2009

Published Online by [WordExplain.com](http://WordExplain.com)

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