

The Great God of the Storm

By Don Green

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Bible Text: Psalm 29

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Truth Community Church

4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road

Cincinnati, OH 45255

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

One of the wonderful things about verse-by-verse teaching is that it gives you a balanced diet of God's word. The mere process of going verse-by-verse and book-by-book through the Bible means that God brings us through a wide variety of his truth and it keeps us from giving an imbalanced focus on just one issue or just one topic and so verse-by-verse preaching and book-by-book preaching is guaranteed really to give us that which we need to have a balanced approach to spiritual life and I was mindful of that as I was preparing this message in light of the things that we've been studying from Ephesians 4 on Sunday mornings. In the past several weeks we've had some very searching messages about the way that we work out the nature of our salvation and we have been confronted in our deceptive spirits, in our angry spirits, in our lazy spirits, in our bitter feelings and bitter souls and seeing that Scripture calls us out of all of that in response to the work of Christ in our lives and you and I both have felt the weight of conviction on some of those things and you feel the weight of it.

Well, as we come to Psalm 29 tonight, we get something completely different from God's word. We get a completely different focus from the same Bible, from the same God, from the same word of God. We get a completely different focus than that introspective thing that naturally comes out of Ephesians 4 because here in Psalm 29, we get a text that is all about God. It is completely about the glory of God and responding to him and worship and rather than having a focus on our inner man in the way that we need to grow in spiritual life, we instead get our focus lifted away from ourselves and onto our God in a most majestic and poetic way. The commentator, Harry Ironside, a Bible teacher from the last century, thought that Psalm 29 was perhaps the best piece of poetry in the entire Bible and when you go through it, it's hard to disagree with that. It is not too much to say that the glory of God is the theme of Psalm 29. The word "glory" appears 4 times and it brackets the major portion of the text.

Look at it with me here, Psalm 29, verse 1. I just want to highlight the word "glory" to start with so that you see what the theme is tonight. The theme is not you and me. The theme tonight is God and I like that theme. Verse 1, "Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength." Verse 2, "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name." Verse 3, "The God of glory thunders." Verse 9, "In His temple everything says, 'Glory!'" So you see that at the beginning of the Psalms there is this heavy emphasis on the glory of God and in verse 9 there is a closing bracket that also refers us back to the glory of God where everything

is saying, "Glory, glory, glory, glory to God." So we see that the glory of God is the theme and he calls our attention to this in a very unique way, a very unique way that we'll go through here in a moment but having called attention to the glory of God in the first 9 verses, he proceeds to apply what that glory means to the people of God in verses 10 to 11.

This Psalm is much different than any of the 28 Psalms that we have studied before now because of its exclusive focus on praise. A lot of the other Psalms have praised God but mingled in with them have been petitions or struggles or things like that and that's all part of God's revelation. That's all good. We are not competing Scripture against Scripture but what makes this unique, what makes Psalm 29 unique is its exclusive focus on the glory of God.

Now, this is a Psalm that going forward you will want to pull out those of you that have young children, you will want to pull out this Psalm or if you have young grandchildren. I see some grandparents in the audience too. With young children, when there is a heavy storm going on and they are frightened by the lightning and thunder that is around, this is a Psalm to pull out and read to them when the next major storm hits our area because it's a Psalm about the God of the storm, the great God of the storm. One of the very first messages that I preached at Truth Community when we were still Truth Community Fellowship back in March 2012, on March 2, I believe it was, there was a tornado that swept through the area and there were some lives lost and some houses damaged that affected families in our church, extended families. So I came and I preached on the Providence of God and where was God on March 2. Now, and the point of the message was that where was God when the tornado hit? God was in the midst of the storm riding on the top of it. He was directing it to accomplish his purposes because God is sovereign even over the weather. God is sovereign over tornadoes and sovereign over hurricanes and monsoons and all of it because God is sovereign over everything because he's a God of glory and he rules over his creation. These things are not difficult, nor are they unclear in Scripture. I mentioned that, the March 2nd thing, I preached that message on March 11, I believe it was, Sunday, March 11 of 2012, not that any of this matters but my mind just strolls down Memory Lane sometimes and I preached that message on March 11, where was God on March 2nd and I answered the question. Well, all of that to say that if another tornado hits in our area, I'm going to come back and preach Psalm 29 because Psalm 29 addresses this in a single text in a way that I think is very wonderful.

David here in Psalm 29 highlights 3 realms of God's glory to call us to worship. When you walk through Psalm 29, you should be increasingly impressed with the great power and the great glory of God to such a way that you are drawn to worship him. One of the things that would really help the church in America today, the church probably throughout all of the world today, is to realize that true worship from the heart is not driven by and it is not motivated by spectacular light shows on the stage or pulsating, repetitive music that whips you up into an emotional frenzy as if you were just at a cheap rock concert, what drives true worship is a knowledge of God. True worship is a response to the truth that God has made known about himself and how he has revealed it in his word. So we read the word to get comprehension, to get understanding, to have the word

unveiled to us through the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit to expand our mind and deepen our understanding so that we would see God for who he really is and then our humbled soul in light of his greatness would respond with worship, trust and an obedient spirit.

Psalm 29 provokes that and calls us to that in 3 different areas of reality. First of all, we see in Psalm 29, we see God's glory in the heavens. God's glory in the heavens in the first 2 verses of Psalm 29. This Psalm opens with, as it were, a trumpet blast call to worship God. Look at it with me here in the first 2 verses. "Ascribe to the LORD," there is that name Yahweh again. It occurs about 18 times in this Psalm and so there is a lot of repetition of God's name in this Psalm. There is a lot of repetition throughout the Psalm. That's the pattern that David used when he wrote this Psalm in his poetic ways.

1 Ascribe to the LORD, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in holy array.

David says, "I call on you, O sons of the mighty. I call on you to worship God and to ascribe glory to his name." Now, who is he talking to when he says the "sons of the mighty." Well, most of the authorities who have commented on this passage believe that David is calling on angelic beings in heaven to fulfill their purpose and to glorify God. Sons of the mighty. The angelic beings are called sons of God in the book of Job 1 and 2. They are called the sons of God in Psalm 89:6 and 7. And so David here is addressing the angelic host in heaven saying, "You worship God. You ascribe glory and strength to him from your privileged position at the throne of God."

Three times he calls them to ascribe glory and strength. Look at it there, verse 1, "Ascribe to the LORD. Ascribe to the LORD. Ascribe to the LORD." The repetition showing emphasis and expressing urgency that this is a command not to be ignored and so, "Let me say it again. I say it again. I'll say it yet again, you ascribe glory to the Lord from your position." In other words he's saying, "You give credit to God for his greatness. Acknowledge his supremacy because it is on display." Ascribe, the verb ascribe is a word that calls on them to enlist the mind to declare God's greatness. "Worship the Lord in holy array" enlists the will, the volition, to serve this God with joy and with fear. So from the mind, we recognize and we declare the glory of God, that he is truly great and with the response of our inner man we say, "Therefore I will serve this God with joy and with fear." The name, "ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name," it's a reference to the fullness of his glorious being.

Now, here's a question for you: why would David call on the angels in heaven to render worship and glory to God? Isn't that what they are already doing? They are gathered around anyway and that's what they're appointed to do. Why call on the angels to do that? Well, here's the first aspect of a humbling realization of what this Psalm is teaching: David calls on supernatural angelic beings to worship God because he realizes in light of the glory of God that human praise is inadequate. When you and I gather together corporately, when you and I pray individually and we praise God from our hearts and we

worship him in prayer, as sincere as that may be, it is utterly inadequate for the expansive, eternal nature of his glorious being. Our human words are insufficient to rise to the occasion that the glory of God demands. So David, seeing the transcendence of God, calls on beings that transcend man to aid him, to help him express the praise and worship of which this God is worthy.

Have you ever wondered if you were a Christian? Let me give you a clue that might help you understand whether you are or not. When you contemplate God, there should be an understanding and a sense in you that where fundamentally you are overwhelmed with his greatness, you are overwhelmed by the majesty of God, you realize that there is a gulf between him and you. Not simply because of your sin, although that is certainly true enough, there is a gulf, a gap, between us and God and the reality of sin. But his very nature as Creator and us as a creature, he is an uncreated sovereign God and here we are as finite, sinful human beings with a mortal life of 70, maybe 80 years, and you just realize that this God of the Bible is someone great and someone glorious and you are overwhelmed with the majesty of who he is.

When Isaiah saw the glory of God, what did he say in Isaiah 6? "Woe is me. I'm undone." It was too much for him. He said, "I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips. Who am I to see the glory of God? It transcends me." When Peter obeyed the command of the Lord, the Lord said, "Let down your net," after Peter had been fishing all night and they had caught nothing and then the Lord says, "Let your net down one more time," and he says, "Lord, Lord, we've been at this all night and we are professional fisherman here. We know what we're doing but since you commanded it, I'll do it." His nets were so full that they were nearly breaking. The glory of God had been put on display through the person of our Lord Jesus Christ and he had exercised his sovereign power over nature in an undisputable display of power before Peter. What did Peter say? He said, "Lord, depart from me. I'm a sinful man. I'm not worthy to be in the presence of such majestic glory. It transcends me."

So Scripture calls us, here's the point, beloved, Scripture calls us to a high view of God that goes beyond simply thinking of him as our friend or our buddy or as if God's primary reason for existence was to help us shave off the sharp edges of a difficult life. We're not supposed to think about God in such limited earthbound terms that define his relevance by how it impacts me or you. Not that you would define it by how it impacts Don Green. That's why I'm chuckling to myself. That's what you say to yourself, "I don't define it in reference to myself." No, you see, the whole point is this: God is transcendent. He is beyond us. He is greater than we can imagine and his word reveals the glory of his infinite attributes of omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. His great sovereignty overall. The boundless nature of his mercy and grace. His love for sinners. And we just get swept away in an ocean of magnitude that is beyond anything that our human minds can comprehend.

When we think along those terms and when we think God's thoughts after him and we see how he has revealed himself and we enter into that and we receive it and humble ourselves before it, we realize his vastness calls for a response of praise which we are

incapable of giving to him in all of the worth that it deserves. David felt that here and so he calls upon the angels, "Help me out here. Help me out and give this glory to God that goes beyond what my human tongue can render." To glimpse the glory of God is to be overwhelmed and sense your inadequacy. I asked the question: do you ever wonder if you're a Christian? Well, a starting point is seeing the greatness of God and fearing him and worshiping him in response.

God has made his glory known in the heavens. The angels see it and they glorify him and as a result worship the Lord in holy array kind of picturing the priestly vestments of the Old Testament. Kind of a picture that the angels would respond with an appropriate worship fitting for God just as a priest had to put on the fitting, God appointed garments in order to enter into worship there. Worship him in a fitting manner, in other words, is the call.

Now, we've said that God is transcendent. That provokes in us a sense of inadequacy and that sense of inadequacy is heightened as you go through Psalm 29 when you understand what David is talking about in what follows. Psalm 29:3 through 9 is a revelation of God's glory in the storm, we could say. We've seen God's glory in the heavens, now we're going to see God's glory in the storm, verses 3 through 9. And what follows here is a description of a great massive thunderstorm that David must have witnessed from his royal palace and he uses this word, "the voice of the LORD," 7 times. He uses it to express the majesty of the thunder in the heavens as this storm blows through. Look at verses 3 and 4 with me. He says,

3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; The God of glory
thunders,[there is our interpretive clue] The LORD is over many waters. 4
The voice of the LORD is powerful, The voice of the LORD is majestic.

There is a repetition here that especially in the original language, the sound of the Hebrew word kol gives a sense of repetitive boom! Boom! Boom! Thunder, thunder, thunder, in a magnificent storm that is taking place and what David is describing here is a storm. If you picture the oblong nature of the Mediterranean Sea, on the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea is the land of Israel there and down a little bit Southeast of that. If you have that little general picture in your mind, you can get a picture of what's happening here. David is describing a storm that gathered strength over the Mediterranean Sea which was the greatest body of water known at that time to the people of that area. The Mediterranean Sea was the greatest sea known. It was a sea of many waters because it was a great body of water to them, it still is, of course. But what he's describing here is a storm that is gathering strength over the waters and the voice of the Lord is speaking in the thunders, poetically expressing it, that as that storm grows, there is this distant rumble of thunder as the storm starts to build strength.

Now, most of you, many of you are probably like me, you love a good thunderstorm. You love seeing the clouds build up and seeing the streaking lightning and the booms of the thunder coming as they approach and get closer and closer. Well, this is the same thing. David is poetically equating the voice of the Lord with the thunder that the storm brings.

What he's saying is this, we're in Psalm 29, what he's saying is this: that this storm, this booming thunderstorm is a display of the power of God and so in the first 2 verses he has called the angels to worship God in a manner that is fitting and he is doing so, we now see, after he has reflected on a storm, a massive storm that has passed through, and you see the storm as you go on through verses 3 through 9. Thunder is, as it were, the powerful voice of God speaking. David says, "God is sovereign over this storm. God is displaying himself in the power of the storm and the shaking, reverberating, resounding power of the thunder is giving an indication of how great the invisible power of God is."

How great is it? Verse 4, "The voice of the LORD is powerful, The voice of the LORD is majestic." You know what it's like to see in the midst of a storm you see a flash of lightning that is immediate because you're right there. It is immediately struck with the boom of the thunder and it's almost like the windows shake in result of it. In response to that lightning and boom! Boom! Boom! Well, that's what David is describing here and he's saying, "This is like the voice of God speaking." And you know something by experience, you know something of the fact that that great lightning and the great booms of thunder have a way even as you're enjoying it maybe watching it from your deck or whatever, realizing that that thunder makes you feel small. When you see the great black thunder clouds forming, you realize that there is a power at work that is beyond your ability to control and you are suddenly subject to forces that are outside your control when you're thinking about it properly. You realize this is just magnificent power that is greater than any human can contain. Well, David had just lived through one of those storms and the power of it prompted him to think about the power of God because he knew that God was over the storm.

Now, verse 5, as the Psalm progresses, it pictures the storm moving from north to south over the land of Israel. It starts to the north in Lebanon. Look at verse 5 with me. So the storm has swept in off the sea and now it is descending upon the land and there is an effect of this thunderstorm. Verse 5,

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; Yes, the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

What is he see describing here? Well, the cedars of Lebanon were renowned for their great size and their great majesty. I actually was in Lebanon a few years ago and my guest, my host I should say, took me into some of the remaining forests where these cedars are and they are magnificent trees. When you think of cedars maybe around here or you think about trees in the Midwest, there is no comparison. These cedars were evergreen trees that grew to a height of over 100 feet. 10 stories high or more, in other words. They reach a diameter, a width of 40 feet. They are massive. They are massive trees. If you've ever been to California and seen the redwoods or seen sequoias, there is maybe a little bit of comparison there to the dwarfing size of these trees. They are just a symbol of longevity. A symbol of strength and majesty and might and permanence, these trees. And you can read about Solomon used cedars from Lebanon to help build the temple. These trees were renowned for their value and their strength and their size. They were majestic and they symbolized power in their very existence.

Now, why does that matter here? What's the point of this text. Well, look at verse 5 in the light of what I've just described to you. "The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; Yes, the LORD breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon." The idea is that even the cedars of Lebanon were subject to the power of this storm. Those trees, here's the point, those trees were snapped into pieces by the power of God displayed in this storm. So the greatest, strongest tree that they knew at the time and these things lived for hundreds of years; they grow over long periods of time. When the power of God is unfurled, they snap like toothpicks. That's what David is saying here. He is illustrating the power of this storm by showing what its consequences were and the greater point is that that storm was a display of the power of God who ruled over the storm. So for those of you that have lived through violent weather and you've lived through the violence of the storm, you can relate to this. You know what the power of nature can do and things that seem so stable and secure are just snapped into pieces when the storm hits.

In verse 6, he's describing poetically the effects of the storm. He says,

6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox.

These are references to 2 mountains in the region. Mount Lebanon was in the north. Sirion is another name, a Phoenician name for Mount Hermon, which also lies to the north of the land of Israel. And what he's saying here is even these majestic mountains, the greatest mountains that they knew, the greatest trees that they knew shattered. The greatest, most permanent mountains, the symbols of strength, quaked in the light of this storm that was going through. The booming thunder made the ground shake. The winds blew in waves that made it seem like the earth was skipping, so great was the display of the power.

Yet there was more to the storm. Verse 7,

7 The voice of the LORD hews out flames of fire.

Describing the intense lightning that accompanied this storm and so David is describing the booming thunder, the continual flashing of lightning, the strong winds that destroyed nature and shook the very foundations of the earth which reminds me of the earthquake that we lived through in 1994, the great Northridge earthquake in January of 1994 and the ground shaking and the windows busting out of our house and you couldn't even walk down the hallway because the ground was shaking so much it was banging us back and forth across the walls. You remember those. Were you there in Northridge? You guys know, Bonnie and Charley know. You were there. That was some earthquake, wasn't it?

There is something incredibly humbling about the power of an earthquake, the power of a hurricane and you realize this is just so much bigger than anything I've ever known. You take for granted that the ground is always going to be stable under your feet until you live through an earthquake that you can't even walk on and you can't even walk and there is something terrifying about that. Well, David is describing these natural phenomenon and

saying, "Realize that the power of God and the glory of God is being displayed through this." These natural phenomenon are just the outer fringes of his power. It's not difficult for God to make this happen.

He goes on in verse 8 and says,

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

This is describing the area in southern Israel, the wilderness perhaps where Moses led the children of Israel out of. As you follow the geographical references, the storm blows in off the Mediterranean Sea and then descends from north to south, going across the entire land. So there is this movement that's taking place in the Psalm. The repetition giving you a sense of the boom! Boom! Boom! of thunder and the geographic references giving you a sense of the storm sweeping through and leaving its destruction in its wake. It's a spectacular storm. An intense storm that covered the nations and it even affected animals and left devastation in its wake.

Look at verse 9,

9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer to calve

It so frightened the animals that they entered into premature labor. In a different way than you've seen, you know, when your dogs run under the desk, hide from the booming thunder. Well, in a similar way, the animal kingdom responded to this with their own reactions of physical inability to accept it. Devastation in its wake.

And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, "Glory!"

David feels small in light of the greatness of God. What he had seen shouted, "Glory!" Whether here he means the temple of God's presence in heaven or his presence manifested in the place of worship on earth, all of these 9 verses have pointed to the majestic powerful glory of God and David declares that. And our duty, our response as we read this Psalm is simply to let that sink in and let the glory of God sink into our souls and to acknowledge and recognize it and respond to it with a humble submissive spirit that says, "Lord, I give you worship in response." As David says, "Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength." When you see it displayed in nature, you find yourself responding in the only way that you can. "This is glory. This is greatness. On display. This is a magnitude beyond which my mind cannot reach." And the human response to that is one of humility, bowing down. The visible power of the storm only illustrating the greater invisible power of the God who rules it.

There is something refreshing, isn't there, about just kind of forgetting everything around us and inside us and in our life and just focusing on the glory of God for the sake of focusing on the glory of God? That's what David is doing here, unveiling, illustrating the glory of God simply because God is worthy of that. Beloved, we don't worship God just

so that we can get something out of it. We don't come to him and pray simply because we're grinding out needs before him and hoping for his helping hand. Not just that anyway. You see, what's going to distinguish you in your spiritual life from perhaps past mediocrity that you've known is when your heart is so captivated by the glory of God that it's good just to think on that and reflect on that without any consideration of how it might affect you or assist you in your life. You just worship God simply because God is worthy of worship.

Now, with the storm having blown through as happens in our storms here in our region, the storm blows through and so often it leaves calm in its wake. The elements have been stirred up and then they settle back down and there is almost a greater sense of calm in the aftermath of the storm because of the great contrast to what had just passed through. Well, here David shows the calm that is left by reflection on the glory of God. He has shown us the glory of God in the heavens, the glory of God in the storm and now he's going to show us God's glory among his people. This conclusion of this Psalm is just wonderful. The storm has passed, God was on his throne in the storm and he is on his throne after the storm and he was on the throne before the storm.

Verse 10, notice the past tense,

10 The LORD sat as King at the flood;

That word "flood" there, this is the only time that it's used outside of Genesis 6 to 11 to refer to the Noachic flood. This is a specific reference to the flood of Noah and what David is saying here is that, "I've just described this magnificent storm and shown how God was over it. Well, you know historically there was an even greater storm than the one that I have just described that was devastating in its impact. That was unlike anything that any man could produce. It was a phenomenon that just passed through here and let me tell you that while the voice of the Lord was thundering in the midst of that, God was making himself known as he displayed himself in the natural phenomenon, well, let me tell you that God made himself known. God was sovereign over another climatological event in the days of Noah and the Lord sat as King over that flood. As the rains burst down and as the entire world was flooded and destroyed in judgment in that day, God was calmly sitting as King over it all. He ruled over the flood." So David here having expressed the glory of God in this storm, expands the reference even further and says God's sovereignty is so complete that more than this one regional event that took place, God's glory was displayed when he ruled over a worldwide flood and he sat as King. He ruled over that event as well. That flood was even more intense.

What did God do? He calmly sat on his throne as he carried out his judgment in the days of Noah. Judging an entire wicked world of rebellion against him. Saving 8 people for the sake of his name in the process. Distinguishing the sheep from the goats. Pouring out judgment in the form of a universal calamity. And he was in perfect control of it all. The rebellion of men against him did not compromise his sovereignty at all. He rules. He rules. He rules. He says, David says, look there at the end of verse 10,

Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.

God has always been sovereign. Before Genesis 1, he was sovereign. In the Genesis flood, he was sovereign. In the storm 3,000 years ago, he was sovereign. He was sovereign at the cross. He is sovereign today. He'll always be sovereign. He sits as King forever. So David expands beyond these historical events to the future and looks deep into the future and says, "It's always going to be this way. God's power will never be challenged successfully. God will never be defeated. God will never encounter a situation that he hasn't ordained and doesn't have complete mastery over." What does his sovereignty mean? It means that he is always able to do exactly what he wants. If he can rule a storm that is beyond our human power, then he can rule anything else as well.

Now, let's pause for a moment. Scripture says that it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. When you think through what we've been considering here this evening, you can see why that would be the case. His great power is unsearchable and can you imagine the tragedy, the unspeakable horror of falling into the hands of this great majestic God when he is angry with you over your sin and rebellion against him? There is no hope once that is unleashed. Just as you can't go out on your front porch and stop a thunderstorm that is rolling in, when God determines to judge people in their sin, they will not be able to defend themselves. They will not be able to stop it. They will not be able to stay his hand of judgment against them. That's why it's terrifying. Once it starts it can't be stopped and you realize that you will be dealing with a power that is far greater than anything you've encountered.

His great power is unsearchable. Well, beloved, God forbid that he should exercise that power in wrath against you in sin. Shouldn't you fear him and be reconciled to him through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? And does this not give you a sense of the great power of our Lord Jesus? Think about it with me: God's great power will one day be expressed in great wrath against those who rebel against him and yet what has our Lord Jesus done? He has intervened on our behalf and by the power of his blood, by the power of his righteousness, by the power of his interceding mediation on our behalf, he has stayed, as it were, the powerful hand of the wrath of God upon us. Jesus Christ is so great in his power that he alone can stop the unfolding of the wrath of God against you in your sin. So great is his power that we can take refuge in him and know that his righteousness and his shed blood satisfy the demands of a holy God. Were it not for that intervention by him on your behalf, all of this fury would have come down on you but in Christ you are safe in the storm. There is a refuge. There is a shelter in Christ. And if you don't know Christ here today, those of you watching on the live stream, maybe you don't know Christ, come to Christ and be rescued before the wrath of God is unveiled on you. There is a Savior in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, when the fury of the howling winds and thunder gave way to the calm of the storm's aftermath, peace seemed to abound. It's no different in Psalm 29. Psalm 29 ends on a very reassuring note and every word of Scripture is proof of the inspiration of Scripture but this verse is such a magnificent display of the genius of God in making his word known to us. Look at verse 10 with me again and we'll lead into it. We're seeing the

glory of God among his people. He showed that glory in preserving his people through the flood in the ark. "The LORD sat as King at the flood; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever." Now look at verse 11,

11 The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace.

What's he saying here? Incredible. Magnificent. This goes beyond the glory of God displayed in the power of the storm and takes us into yet another realm of reason to give him glory. What David is saying here is this: the Lord, Yahweh, the covenant keeping, promise keeping God, he's mighty in the storm but that's not his point now, what he's saying here is this God who displayed the arm of his omnipotence in the storm, watch this, exercises that same power, that same illimitable might, he exercises that power for the benefit to bless his people. God exercises the power that he displays in the storm in order to keep and protect and to guide his people. In other words, his power, when we are reconciled to God through Christ, in other words, his power is no longer a threat. It is our surest refuge. It is that which keeps us just as God protected Noah and his family with salvation as he unleashed the flood of judgment in the waters. Just as God displays his power in the work of nature and has used it as an instrument of judgment in the past, God in his grace, in his mercy, in his faithfulness, he uses that same unmatched, unlimited power in order to protect us who belong to him. In other words, this Psalm is an expression of the security of the people of God in the power of God.

If you are reconciled to this God through faith in Christ, you can know for certain that he will use that power to bless you, to give you peace, to bring you security and confidence. This is what Jesus was referring to in John 10:28 when he said, "No one can snatch my people out of my hand." What he's saying is, "I have saved them. They belong to me. And I have the power to keep them." Beloved, the Lord who saved you is the same God who rules over the storm and the power that storm displays gives you an indication, gives you a measure, gives you a hint, gives you an illustration of the unconquerable strength that keeps you in Christ.

Why are we confident in Christ? Why are we confident as we look to an uncertain future? Why are we at peace and unflinching when it seems that our society and culture is getting ever more vocal, open and hostile toward people like us? Do you know why we blow that away like a feather? It's because the power of God keeps us and will keep us forever. He sits as King forever and we belong to him and he is a God of covenant faithfulness and therefore it has to come out well for us in the end. Don't be afraid. And perhaps you're a man, perhaps you're a woman of weak faltering faith. That's okay. God is strong enough to keep you. Your security is not grounded in the strength of your faith. It's grounded in the strength of the faithfulness of God and that faithfulness and strength cannot fail. It will not fail because he sits as King forever.

The power that blows the storm keeps and blesses those who trust him. Isn't that wonderful? The storm has blown through. The power of God has been on display and what's left behind in our souls? Not destruction but peace. Do you believe that? You

should. You must, actually, because it's revealed in God's word. So here comes the question then, the question then at this point is: will you put your life, your priorities, all that you hold dear into the hands of this omnipotent God and trust him with the outcome? Will you trust him enough to enter into that peace that he promises to those who know him?

Look at verse 11 with me again. This isn't a speculation. This isn't a wish. This is a statement of fact. "The LORD will give strength to His people." Are you afraid of dying? The Lord will give you strength in your dying day, in your dying moment, to rise to the occasion and to face that with strength and valor and courage and God will be with you in your hour, in your moment of distress to keep you even then. Is it your financial strain? Is it an uncertain future? Is it family that seems to be spinning off the rails and you don't know what's going to happen? Maybe it's your own fascination and weakness in the face of temptation. God's strength is what matters and so the question is: will you put your life and priorities into his hands with all of those things and trust him with the outcome? Will you do that? You see, there comes a time where you have to settle these things in your mind and not leave them open to further negotiation or struggle and you just say, "No, no, I'm going to take, so to speak, I'm going to take all of my eggs and I'm going to put them in this one basket, the one basket of the faithfulness and the power of God to keep me and to care for all of that which matters to me." The God of the storm deserves your trust. The God of the storm deserves your worship. Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength and then rest in him.

Let's pray.

Father, human words are indeed inadequate to declare your greatness and your omnipotence. Our eyes haven't seen the fullness of your glory on display. Scripture says that no man can see you and live and so we realize that we see only the outer fringes of the garments of your greatness. But in your word, Father, we see what is true and we see enough to evoke our trust. Father, tonight we put our trust in you. All that weighs on us, all that we care about, Father: our loved ones who don't know Christ, our uncertain future in our finances, our physical health, in relationships, for some even the uncertainty of the lack of clarity of knowing where they stand with you, am I my saved, am I not saved. Father, we gather up all of those things and place them before you, the great God of the storm, and we ask you in accordance with your word to give strength to your people because you have said that you would therefore, Father, we ask. Not because we deserve it but because we see the promise laid out in your word. Father, give us this strength of which you speak. Father, bless us, your people, with this peace of which you speak. And as you do, Father, and as we trust you to do just exactly that, we commit ourselves to join with the angels in heaven in ascribing to you the glory of your name and ascribing to you glory and strength.

Lord, your power is majestic. It is powerful and we believe you. We believe in Christ. We rest in him. We thank you that he has interceded for us and secured our blessing and our salvation with his atoning death on the cross. Yes Lord, we give you glory and yes, Lord, in this hour of quiet, in this moment of silence, we trust you completely and without

reservation. We respond to your sovereign majesty in worship, trust and love and we do this in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.