

**Tuesday, August 22, 2023 • Read Psalm 99**

*Questions from the Scripture text: With what declaration does the Psalm begin (v1a)? Who, then, should do what (v1b)? Where, specifically, does He do this (v1c)? What, then, responds in what way (v1d)? Among whom is YHWH great (v2a)? What relation does He have to whom else (v2b)? What must these do to what (v3a)? With what declaration does section of the Psalm conclude (v3b)? What does v4 now call YHWH (v4a)? What attribute does it praise? How does this attribute relate to what other attribute? What has He established (v4b)? What has He executed (v4c)? Among whom? What is Jacob to do to Him (v5a)? Owning Him to be Whom/what to them? What are they to do and where (v5b)? With what declaration does this section of the Psalm conclude (v5c)? Who were among which office (v6a)? And who was among which (v6b)? What did these all do (v6c)? And what did YHWH do? How did He answer Moses and Aaron, specifically (v7a)? And by this sustaining Word, what did they keep (v7b)? Again (v6c), what did YHWH do (v8a)? Showing that He bears what relation to His people? In order to be "our" God, what else did He have to be (v8b)? Even though He forgave the guilt of their sin, what did YHWH do (v8c)? What ought we to do in response (v9a)? By doing what, specifically (v9b)? Where? How does v9c conclude this section like v3b and v5c, but emphasizing the covenantal relation throughout the Psalm?*

**How has the holy LORD ordained to obtain praise?** Psalm 99 looks forward to the opening portion of morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these nine verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the holy LORD has ordained to obtain praise by dwelling among His people, ruling His people, and hearing His people's prayers in mercy.**

The main point of the Psalm isn't difficult to find: He is holy (v3b) ... He is holy (v5c) ... YHWH our God is holy (v9c). He is the thrice holy God—an obvious embellishment upon the terser version of that glorious announcement in Isa 6:3 and Rev 4:8. The main command is tied directly to it: let them praise (v3a) ... Exalt (v5a) and worship (v5b) ... Exalt (v9a) and worship (v9b)! The amazing thing through the Psalm is how this holy God has presented Himself for praise: by drawing near to His people on earth. Even as Isaiah continued to hear, "The whole earth is full of His glory."

**Dwelling among His people.** YHWH sits enthroned, where He dwells upon the cherubim (v1). This is not unexpected. Even the earth quaking at Him is not a surprise (v1d). The surprise comes in v2a where the location of YHWH's greatness is identified as Zion, David's hill in Jerusalem. *Those* are the cherubim described in v1—the ones upon the ark?! Indeed, His dwelling among His people elevates them far more than geologic altitude ever could. For He is "high above all the peoples." He turns Zion into the high mountain that fills the earth, and all the peoples "praise Your great and awesome Name" (v3a) when they see Who He is in Zion. The Holy One dwelling among His people. This has come to be all the more true in the Word Who became flesh and tabernacled among us. Jesus truly is "Immanuel," God-with-us.

**Ruling His people.** When we learn that the Christ is the God-man, any question of to whom "King" refers is answered. It's Jesus. In v4a (and again in v8a–b) YHWH exalts His simplicity: the fact that He is all of His attributes in perfect infinitude, and none of them ever contradict. His strength, love, and justice are all one in the fact that "the King's strength loves the judgment." The phrase is difficult to translate from the Hebrew into English because of the way the words are put together, but the message is clear: His power, love, and justice are all of a single, whole, perfect piece.

Every time He deals uprightly with His people (v4b–c), which is *all the time*, He is displaying this glorious reality about Himself: His power loves justice. Indeed, the King in Zion is not so much in the palace as in the holy of holies. That is where His throne is, which means that His people could gather all the way to the footstool of the King to worship (v5b)!

**Hearing His people.** The repeated "He answered them" of v6c and "You answered them" of v8a gives the sub-theme of the unit in vv6–9. How amazing that earth-shaking, reigning Creator-God listens to the voices of men! Moses, Aaron, and Samuel are heroic figures, but what they brought to the table was neediness. They called upon YHWH, and He answered them. It is by His answering (v6c) and speaking (v7a) that all testimony-keeping and ordinance-keeping came.

Not only does He answer the prayers of creatures; He answers the prayers of *sinners*! The disciplining care and providence of the Lord to His people are expressions of love. There is no tension within God! Every time He has answered His people then, or answers you now dear Christian, He is presenting Himself to us as "God-Who-Forgives."

Indeed, He declares this in that refrain throughout the Psalm: "YHWH our God." This wonderful phrase appears four times in the Psalm, but three of them are in the final two verses, as the praise of the Psalm crescendos in wonder. YHWH has joined Himself to us as our own covenant God! He is infinitely worthy of praise in Himself, but here is how He has most provoked us to exalt Him and worship Him: He has given us to know the Holy, Holy, Holy God as "YHWH our God"!

How has YHWH come to dwell with you? What does He show about Himself as He rules you? Who gets to call on His Name now like Moses did? What is He showing when He lets you call Him your own covenant God?

*Sample prayer: Lord, indeed You reign over all. But, You display that reign especially in the assembly of Your people. You have come into our midst in Christ, and now by Your Spirit. And You gather us up into the midst of glory by our union with Christ. How righteously You rule us! How forgivingly You hear and answer our prayers! So, grant unto us the help of Your Spirit, so that we may praise Your great and awesome Name, and worship at Your footstool, and call upon Your Name, and exalt and worship You at Your holy will. Receive us there, through Christ, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP99A "Let the Nations Tremble" or TPH99A "The Lord God Reigns on High"**

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Psalm 99. These are God's words. Y'all play rains. Let the people's tremble. He dwells between the cherubine. But the earth be moved. Yahai is great in Zion. Is high above all the people's. Let them praise your great and awesome name. He is. Holy. The king's strength also loves justice.

You have established equity. You have executed, justice righteousness. In Jacob. Exalt y'all, hey, our god and worship at his footstool. He is. Holy. Moses and Aaron were among his priests. Samuel was among those who call upon his name, they called upon yahweh and he answered them. He spoke to them and the cloudy pillar.

They kept us testimonies and the ordinance, he gave them. You answered them. You all play our god. You were to then god who forgives? Though, you took vengeance on their deeds? Exalt, you always our god? And worship. That is holy, hell. For your way, our god. Is holy? So far the reading of god's inspired and inherent word.

You can hear as you read through it, the three sections of the psalm, each of them having the conclusion. That the lord is holy. The first section. Let them praise. You're great. And awesome name. He is holy. Second section exalt, yahweh, our god, and worship at his footstool. He is, holy third section.

Exalt. Yahweh our god, and worship at his holy hill for yahweh. Our god is holy And so, even in the three conclusions, you see this Progression in which That is especially god's binding himself to his covenant people. As their own god, especially god's gathering them to himself. Not merely at the footstool of his throne, but in

his presence, among his people, That he shows his holiness.

He has, of course. Holy from all eternity. He is god. And so, the One of the great aspects of his divine character, it says, commitment to himself the perfection Of his glory. And then he gives us. To recognize him. As the only true and living god. And when he makes us holy he does do things he first.

He sets us apart to himself from the world. And so, there is that. Derivative holy that we get by our connection within. But then there's also holiness of conduct in which we begin to treat god as god treats himself. And that's where purity. Uh, purity of obedience to the first table of the law, loving the lord.

Our god, with all our hearts, all by an strength, and then the proper application of that in the world, in which we live. Devoted obedience to the second table of the law of your neighborhoods. Yourself our neighbors being the ones who have made in God's image. And so, there's both that holiness of standing in which god sets us apart to himself.

And then there's that holiness of conduct. Uh, which the lord produces but it all comes from him. Because he is. Holy now, in each of these sections, one aspect of his interaction with his people that is primary in the first. It's his dwelling. Among his people. When it says he dwells between the cherubim, let the earth be moved.

It's talking about his making his presence known to his people. By means of the, tabernacle by means of the holy of holies by means of the ark. By means of the mercy seat. By means of the cherubim who Our pictured. On top of the emergency seat one piece with Uh, the mercy seat.

And so the the lord has chosen a particular place to make himself known. He says, yahui is great in Zion, he has high above all the peoples. Because it is the greatness of the lord. Not the elevation above sea level, that the determines the altitude of zion. Zion as far as elevation above sea level.

Is not a very high mountain. In fact, it's a little more than a hill. Although People who live in flat america, might call it a mountain. But it is. By yahweh's being great, in Zion by the lord's, choosing this is the place. As he puts it in the scripture to put his name, Or to make himself know.

That elevates. That truly elevates saying above all the people. So that's the first Place and way in which God.

That's the first place and way in which god displays his holiness. We pray hallowed to be thy name. We're praying lord, do the stuff that you're telling us about and psalm 99. The first way, is that he dwells among these people, the second way is he rules? His people.

The lord is referred to in verse 4 as the king. He is strong and he is righteous and he deals fairly. And he executes his judgments. Rewarding the good and punishing, the wicked, which of course, all kings. And rulers are supposed to do Romans 13, but god actually does perfectly.

Psalm 99. Verse 4. So this is another way that he demonstrates his holiness. By being the perfectly strong and righteous king. Perfectly just king. And so he displays this holiness and his dwelling among his people, he displays his onliness and ruling his people. And he also displays his holiness in hearing.

And speaking to this people, Here is something much higher. Then merely having just civil government. Having pure and true worship. He is the hearer of his people. He has granted to them to be able to draw near. So, moses and Aaron counted among his priests. Samuelas, those who call upon his name, they call upon his name and he answered them.

Verse 6. And then again, verse 8, you answered them, he hears us. Not only does he hear us? He draws us near and he speaks to us. He spoke to them in the cloudy pillar. They kept his testimonies the ordinance. He gave them. And so, god has you in his great holiness.

Not just made his name to dwell among us. People not just ruled his people, but he has brought them near. Very helpful for us to see. That's significance. Of the priesthood. Have been come through the early part of Leviticus together, just recently and God's merciful providence to us. That.

He is the god who forgives and he shows that forgiveness by making the way. That he brings us near so that we can call upon his name. He hears us. And he answers. And then, Uh, making drawing us near and also speaking to us giving us his testaments Giving us his His ordinances.

Yes, he is. Holy and righteous. He disciplines us for sin. He never Um, He does everything we need for us and indeed he punishes sin on the lord jesus christ. And we'll punish it forever in hell for those who are not in the lord, jesus christ. But also, he responds rightly to all our sins.

He doesn't just pretend that they don't exist for us. He that treats us according to mercy, to cleanse us, not just forgive us from all our sin, but to Cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And one of the ways we have evidence of that is if he had not done that, there is no way.

We could come near to god and speak and have in hear us and answer us. And he would not be coming near to us. Giving his Uh, giving his fatherly instruction giving us his words. So, here's the god, who shows his holiness in his dwelling, among his people. This place is holiness in his ruling, his people and he displays his holiness.

By hearing us. This is one of the great reasons that prayer. Such an act of worship. Whenever you come to god to pray. Grant the lord granted to you. That you would realize. That he is hearing you. And that this is part of how he displays his holiness. So that your heart would honor him as you pray.

Just by the fact, That it is to him. That you are praying and that you trust. That he hears you. Because he has forgiven you In the lord, jesus christ. Man, let's pray. Father, we praise you. Who our holy in yourself? We thank you. For the ways in which you, indeed hallow, your own name.

We pray that you'd make us to know your presence. With us and to us and the Lord jesus christ. Your presence to us by your spirit, who ministers. Christ and our union with him to us here. And your union uniting us to christ so that we are seated with him.

In heaven, we praise you. Oh lord. We ask that you administer, not only your nearness, but you're perfect rule and kingship of us. And especially lord that you would help us. As we speak, lift our hearts to you to know that you hear us. And that you display yourself as god, who forgives.

But a very active hearing us. Help us to receive your words, the words of scripture. As you're breathing them out to us. So that we would know your great nearness and see. How you have made us a holy people. Because we belong to you, the holy god. Grant these things, then we ask For the rest of our day today.

And the rest of our lives indeed forever. Jesus name.