

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XXIX. Extolling The True Creator God Over Pagan Gods

(Psalm 29:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. Though we today do not worship pagan gods, we face contemporary idolatry in the form of the secular god of evolutionary theory where the world holds the god of evolutionary processes formed the universe.
- B. Psalm 29:1-11 in its historical and cultural setting counters pagan idolatry in a polemic we can use in our era:

II. Extolling The True Creator God Over Pagan Gods, Psalm 29:1-11.

- A. Part of verse one in this psalm comprises the introductory notes in the English Bible (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 997), so we stay with the numbering system in the English Bible for clarity for this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 29:1-11 as follows:
 - 1. "Give, ascribe (*yahab*, B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 396) to Jahweh, O sons of the mighty (angels of God, B. K. C., O. T., p. 815), ascribe (*yahab* again) to Jahweh glory and strength," Psalm 29:1.
 - 2. "Ascribe (*yahab* again, v. 1) to Jahweh the glory (due to) His Name; bow down in homage to (*shahah*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 1005; Hithpalel stem = intens. reflex.) Jahweh in the holy adornment (*hadarah*, Ibid., p. 214) of apartness, holiness (*qodesh*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 998; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 871-872)," Psalm 29:2.
 - 3. "The voice of Jahweh is over the waters, the Elohim of glory thunders; Jahweh is over great waters," Psalm 29:3.
 - 4. "The voice of Jahweh is strong, powerful (*koha*, Ibid., p. 470-471), the voice of Jahweh is majestic (*hadar*, Ibid., p. 214)," Psalm 29:4.
 - 5. "The voice of Jahweh shatters to pieces (*shabar*, Ibid., p. 990-991; Piel = intensive stem) the cedars; Jahweh shatters to pieces (*shabar* in the Piel again) the [great] cedars of Lebanon," Psalm 29:5.
 - 6. "He makes Lebanon skip about (*raqad*, Ibid., p. 955; Hiph. = caus.) like a calf and Mount Sirion in the Anti-Lebanon range [Mount Hermon, NIV] (Ibid., B. K. C., O. T., p. 816) like a young wild ox," Ps. 29:6.
 - 7. "The voice of Jahweh cleaves, hews out flames of fire [sends out forked lightning bolts] (*hasab*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 345)," Psalm 29:7.
 - 8. "The voice of Jahweh shakes the wilderness; Jahweh shakes the wilderness of Kadesh [75 miles north of Damascus, Ibid., B. K. C., O. T.]," Psalm 29:8.
 - 9. "The voice of Jahweh makes the oaks to whirl (NIV and A. R. Hurst, Old Testament Translation Problems, 1960, p. 98), and strips off the [leaves of the] forests to make them bare (*hasap*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 362), and all in His temple say, 'Glory!'," Psalm 29:9.
 - 10. "Jahweh sat (NIV ftn.) enthroned (*yashab*, Ibid., p. 442-443) over the Noahic Flood (*mabul*, Ibid., p. 550; B. D. B. claims this word is used elsewhere in the O. T. only of the Noahic Flood in Genesis); Jahweh sits enthroned as King forever," Psalm 29:10.
 - 11. "Jahweh gives strength to His people; Jahweh blesses His people with peace," Psalm 29:11.
- C. The geographical and historical backgrounds clarify the interpretation and intent of the psalmist as follows:
 - 1. The geographical descriptions reveal that David was describing a powerful thunderstorm that crossed Canaanite territory to Israel's north, moving in from the Mediterranean Sea eastward across the landscape and into the wilderness east of Mount Hermon, Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 815-816.
 - 2. Since the Canaanites worshiped the false Baal gods alleged to be gods of storms (Ibid., p. 815), David was writing a polemic against pagan idolatry, specifically Canaanite idolatry that so afflicted Israel, ascribing to Israel's true God the power of the storm that wrought havoc in the Canaanite countryside, Ibid.
 - 3. David's summation that God sat enthroned at the Noahic Flood, which event was produced by the ultimate rainfall and breaking up of subterranean waters in vast superiority to any claim by pagan Canaanites of their false Baal deities (cf. Genesis 7:10-24), counters pagan beliefs of origins and gods with Biblical truth.
 - 4. Thus, Israel's True God, the Creator and King Who sat enthroned over the Noahic Flood is able and ready to give strength to His people Israel and to bless them with peace unlike the hapless pagan Canaanite gods.

Lesson: David ascribed to God, the True Creator and King over waters, floods and storms, the glory due Him, and testified that He was far more qualified than the Canaanite false gods to give strength and peace to His people.

Application: May we NOT look to any false god, but to the God of Scripture as the Lord for all blessings.