

Fact Sheet for **“Your God Is Too Small”**  
**Psalm 29**

Pastor Bob Singer  
01/05/2019

*Your God Is Too Small* is the title of the book written by J.B. Phillips that was first published in 1955. As Christians our view of God can be too small. We can be thrown for a loop by financial setbacks, medical diagnoses, political elections, family problems, broken down cars, and leaky roofs. We worry and fret, and forget that we serve a big God who has promised to see us through even the most difficult of circumstances. For those who are not Christians, god is either regarded as completely imaginary, or as having very little to do with the everyday lives of people. And if god does exist he certainly doesn't judge, but they imagine that he is always ready to usher us to a *better place* when we die. Well, Psalm 29 is just what we all need to set the record straight.

One commentator opens his comments on this Psalm with these words... “The towering majesty of the Lord dominates this poem, with the opening scene in heaven, where supernatural beings pay Him homage; with the violent sweep of the thunderstorm in from the sea, down the whole length of Canaan and away into the desert; and the serene climax in which, as the thunder recedes, the Lord appears enthroned in judgment over His world but in blessing among His people.”<sup>1</sup> I invite you to immerse yourself fully in this Psalm. Imagine yourself there. Worship with the angels. Be dazzled by the lightning. Hear the trees *CRACK!* Feel the ground shake with thunder. Be saddened by the flood. Then experience the peace that God brings to his people.

<sup>ESV</sup> *A Psalm of David.*

- <sup>1</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.**  
<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**

These two verses have the first four out of eighteen times in this eleven verse Psalm that the name Yahweh (LORD) is mentioned. It is the name God gave himself at the burning bush with Moses. **O heavenly beings** (O... mighty ones, NKJ) are the angels. We are in the throne room of God. The angels are declaring the LORD's glory and strength. This is the theme of the seraphim in Isaiah 6:3. **The glory due his name** is God's revelation of who he is, as seen in his words and works. The angels are called to declare God's glory and strength, then worship him in the splendor, the beauty, of his holiness. And as we are there in God's throne room we can't help but be inspired to do the same.

- <sup>3</sup> **The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD, over many waters.**  
<sup>4</sup> **The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

The voice of the Lord is immediately identified as thunder over the roar of the sea waves. It is a proclamation of God's power over nature.

---

<sup>1</sup> Derek Kidner, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, 1973, p. 124.

The storm now bears down on land and reveals its range as well as its force. A couple places will be mentioned. **Lebanon** and **Sirion** are a reference to Mt. Hermon (see Deuteronomy 3:9). The southern slopes of Mount Hermon extend to the Israeli-occupied portion of the Golan Heights, where the Mount Hermon ski resort is located. **Kadesh** is in the NE Sinai Peninsula, where Israel lingered for 40 years. So the storm is pictured rolling down the Israeli coast from north to south. And the thunder makes the ground shake.

- <sup>5</sup> **The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.**
- <sup>6</sup> **He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.**
- <sup>7</sup> **The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.**
- <sup>8</sup> **The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

**Flashes forth** pictures the lightning. And, you again have the shaking of the thunder. The next verse has an interesting alternative to its first line.

- <sup>9</sup> **The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth  
and strips the forests bare,  
and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"**

If you own multiple translations you will find that some of them take the same path as the ESV. Others will take the same path as the NLT. <sup>NLT</sup> **Psalm 29:9** The voice of the LORD twists mighty oaks and strips the forests bare. In his Temple everyone shouts, "Glory!" The reason for the two translations isn't because there are different words in the ancient Hebrew texts. The reason is because of the vowels that were added to the original text much later. A different set of vowels results in a different translation. The thunder could cause the deer to give birth prematurely. But the lightning and accompanying wind easily could bend the mightiest of trees and strip the forest bare.

God's temple is not a reference to the Jerusalem temple. It is a reference to the whole world that He created.

- <sup>10</sup> **The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**

The word for **flood** is significant. The only other place it is found in Genesis 6-11, and only of Noah's flood. So verse 10 shows God's power, not just as raw force but also as the instrument of His judgment. Then verse 11 ends this Psalm with a message of blessing and peace for his people.

- <sup>11</sup> **May the LORD give strength to his people!  
May the LORD bless his people with peace!**

The song we have from the first two verses of this Psalm begins with Psalm 29:1-2, but then references Jesus. Read Jesus' own words in John 8:58. Jesus identifies himself as, "I am" (Yahweh in Hebrew). The Jews understood that, and they picked up stones to stone him. So our chorus has the correct theology.

*A question you have to ask yourself is, "Am I on the inside or on the outside of Christianity?"*

But whoever you are you should ask this question... "How big is my God?"