

STUDIES IN PSALMS

are contrary to the spirit of the New Testament (Matt. 5:43-48; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60). Such imprecations cannot be regarded—

- 1 as referring, not to individuals, but to the moral enemies of the soul.—(ARNOLD).
- 2 as predictions of a future yet to come, when all the unrepentant wicked shall be punished.—(HORNE).
- 3 as curses, not of the Psalmist, but of his enemies; by supplying, for example, the word *saying* at the end of verse 5 of Psalm 109.

Towards an understanding of this problem the following points should be considered.

- 1 The writers lived in the dispensation of Law and not of Grace (John 1:17).
- 2 The intense provocation to which the sufferers were subjected.
- 3 The utterances need not be regarded as expressions of personal vindictiveness.
- 4 The belief that Israel's enemies were God's enemies (139:21, 22).
- 5 The sharp distinction which we draw between the sinner and his sin, was not recognized by the Hebrews; they regarded them as identical.
- 6 The imprecations disclose a zeal for righteousness.
- 7 The unit of old was the family, not the individual, so that a man's fate was the fate of his family (109:9-13).
- 8 The belief that the righteous must be rewarded and the wicked punished in this life, for there was then no revelation of a final Judgment.

PSALM 29

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

Glory in the Temple and in the Tempest: Jehovah's Kingship of Judgment in the Past and of Blessing in the Future.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1, 2, Angels Called to Worship in the Heavenly Temple.
Stanza II., vers. 3, 4, Commencement of Storm on the Mediterranean.
Stanza III., vers. 5-7, Bursting of Storm in the North. Stanza IV., vers. 8,

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9, Sweep of the Storm to the South. Stanza V., vers. 10, 11, Jehovah's Abiding Kingship will Ultimately bring Strength and Blessing to his People.

(Lm.)—Psalm by David.

- 1 Give unto Jehovah ye sons of the Mighty,¹
give unto Jehovah glory and strength;
- 2 Give unto Jehovah the glory of his name,
bow down unto Jehovah in holy adorning.
- 3 The voice of Jehovah is on the waters—
the God of glory hath thundered;
Jehovah is on mighty waters:
- 4 The voice of Jehovah is with power,
the voice of Jehovah is with state.
- 5 The voice of Jehovah is breaking cedars,
aye! Jehovah breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon
- 6 He maketh Lebanon² skip about like a calf,
and Sirion like a bull-calf of wild-oxen:
- 7 The voice of Jehovah cleaveth open and letteth out flames
of fire.
- 8 The voice of Jehovah whirleth—about the wilderness,
Jehovah whirleth—about the wilderness of Kadesh:
- 9 The voice of Jehovah whirleth—about terebinths,³
and strippeth—bare forests;
And in his temple⁴ the whole of it is saying⁵—"Glory!"
- 10 Jehovah for the flood sat enthroned,
and Jehovah will sit enthroned a king to the ages:⁶
- 11 Jehovah will give strength to his people,
Jehovah will bless his people with prosperity.

(Nm.)

PARAPHRASE

PSALM 29

Praise the Lord, you angels of His; praise His glory and His strength.

1. Heb. *'elim*: prob. a synonym of *'elohim*, and like it a plural of excellence; and therefore—"sons of God," like the more usual form in 89:7, Job 38:7. Cp. also 8:5, 82:1, 97:7.

2. So, almost certainly (w. Br.) should Lebanon and Sirion be distributed. For "Sirion," see Deu. 3:9.

3. So *Gt.*—*Gn.* And so Br.

4. Or: "palace."

5. "Everything saith"—Del. "All are saying"—Dr.

6. *Ml.*: "to concealed duration."

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2 Praise Him for His majestic glory, the glory of His name. Come before Him clothed in sacred garments.

3 The voice of the Lord echoes from the clouds. The God of Glory thunders through the skies.

4 So powerful is His voice; so full of majesty.

5, 6 It breaks down the cedars! It splits the giant trees of Lebanon. It shakes Mount Lebanon and Mount Sirion. They leap and skip before Him like young calves!

7 The voice of the Lord thunders through the lightning.

8 It resounds through the deserts and shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the Lord spins and topples the mighty oaks.¹ It strips the forests bare! They whirl and sway beneath the blast. But in His temple all are praising, "Glory, glory to the Lord."

10 At the Flood, the Lord showed His control of all creation. Now He continues to unveil His power.

11 He will give His people strength. He will bless them with peace.

EXPOSITION

This is in every way a magnificent psalm,—exquisite in form, splendid in imagery, lofty in sentiment, and probably prophetic in adumbration. We can scarcely fail to perceive how fitting an instrument for producing it was the sweet singer of Israel who penned the 8th psalm, the 18th and the first part of the 19th, in all of which the same gift for reflecting the beauties of Creation can be detected. Perhaps the most precious element in this psalm is the firmness with which it grasps the manifestation, in nature, of Jehovah the God of grace. The thunder of the tempest is his voice. Scarcely less precious a feature is the light swiftness of the movements by which, in the opening stanzas, heaven and earth are united; and, at the close, the past is run on into the future. He that sat enthroned at the flood sits enthroned still. He who executed judgment then, is guiding all toward blessing on and through his people in the ages to come. Meanwhile, though the storms are still raging here below, heavenly worshippers, as through an open door, are permitted to let us know, that everything is being well guided

1. Or, "makes the hinds to calve."

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to that great far-off event to which the whole creation moves. The God of nature is the God of grace. Jehovah is no tribal God, but the Maker of heaven and earth.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. "Thy will be done on earth *as it is* in heaven" so prayed our Lord. Read verses one and two. Shall we not here also imitate angels? How?
2. What are the "sacred garments" or "the beauty of holiness" with which we are to be dressed before we worship before Him?
3. "This surely is one of the most graphic descriptions of a thunderstorm in all literature." Please work out and discuss the two parts: vs. 3-6 and vs. 7-9.
4. Notice how often God is named or referred to in these eleven verses. God is in the storm. Is God in the storms of our lives today? Discuss.
5. While the storm rages on earth in the temple of Jehovah all the angels are saying—or singing "glory". Discuss the significance. (vs. 9).

PSALM 30

DESCRIPTIVE TITLE

A Song of Joy on Recovery from Sickness.

ANALYSIS

Stanza I., vers. 1-3, Declaration of Praise and its Occasion. Stanza II., vers. 4, 5, Call on Levites to Praise, with Words Supplied. Stanza III., vers. 6, 7, Record of Experience Prior to the Sickness. Stanza IV., vers. 8-10, The Prayer offered During the Sickness. Stanza V., vers. 11, 12, Great Joy Beautifully Expressed.

(Lh.) Psalm—Song of the Dedication of the House¹—By David.

1 I exalt thee Jehovah for thou hast drawn me up,
and hast not gladdened my foes concerning me!

1. Cp. prob. 2 Sam. 5:11, 12.