

AWESOME GOD

There are certain phenomena that can bring things to a complete stop. One is a powerful thunderstorm. When conditions are just right, you can witness an extreme lightning display. If you've been close to a lightning strike, you probably remember the charged air, the super-bright flash, and the chest-rattling sound of the thunder. It truly is a display of nature's power.

How would you describe God's power? In our modern world, we might use images of a rocket launching into space. We might relate it to an atomic explosion. For an Ancient Near Eastern person, there was no better example of unbridled power than the thunderstorm. That's exactly why David uses it as a metaphor for God when he speaks.

In Psalm 29:1-2, the poet begins with praise for Yahweh. He calls on the strongest people to acknowledge the LORD's glory and strength and offer to him the worship he deserves. In verses 3-9, the power of Yahweh is described like a thunderstorm moving in from the sea. God's voice is like lightning and thunder. As it moves over the land, the lightning is drawn to taller objects such as the mighty cedar trees in Lebanon. However, they are no match for God's voice. If you haven't see a video of a tree being struck by lightning, I suggest you look one up. Also, refer to Exodus 19 when the presence of Yahweh descends onto Mount Sinai - very similar descriptions of lightning and thunder and trembling and shaking.

Finally, in verses 10-11, David describes the position of Yahweh. He is the ultimate power and authority. He is King over all creation. He is also gracious and beneficent. In some of the psalms we have felt the despair of David crying out to God. In others we have rejoiced in the victories and deliverance that the LORD provided for his anointed king. Sometimes, however, you need to stop, consider, and stand in awe of the glory, majesty, splendor, and awesome power of our God!

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