

Psalm 99

"Jehovah reigneth; let the peoples tremble: He sitteth above the cherubim; let the earth be moved. Jehovah is great in Zion; And he is high above all the peoples. Let them praise thy great and terrible name: Holy is he" (Psalm 99:1-3).

God rules and reigns over all the earth, its inhabitants, and the forces of evil. No, not everyone obeys Him, but He is stronger and more mighty than His greatest enemy, and will one day subdue them all. In His power, Jehovah destroyed all men, save a few, in Noah's day. In His power, Jehovah decimated the great nation of Egypt. In His power, Jehovah conquered the land of Canaan for His people. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). Yes, people of the earth ought to tremble at the thought that Jehovah reigns!

One man commented as follows on Psalm 99:1-3, "...we are bound to praise a terrible God and worship him who casts the wicked down to hell...The terrible Avenger is to be praised, as well as the loving Redeemer. Against this the sympathy of man's evil heart with sin rebels; it cries out for an effeminate God in whom pity has strangled justice. The well-instructed servants of Jehovah praise him in all the aspects of his character, whether terrible or tender" (C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, Vol. II, p. 223).

"The king's strength also loveth justice; Thou dost establish equity; Thou executest justice and righteousness in Jacob. Exalt ye Jehovah our God, And worship at his footstool: Holy is he" (Psalm 99:4-5).

Though the Lord is to be feared, we are also to know that He is infinitely just and righteous. Jehovah never condemns one who does not deserve it, but often shows mercy and kindness (Num. 14:18). His scales are not unbalanced, and His judgment is not biased. The Lord is thoroughly fair and evenhanded, even with the most rebellious of men. For this, His name is to be exalted and we are to humbly bow before His throne in worship.

"Moses and Aaron among his priests, And Samuel among them that call upon his name; They called upon Jehovah, and he answered them. He spake unto them in the pillar of cloud: They kept his testimonies, And the statute that he gave them. Thou answeredst them, O Jehovah our God: Thou wast a God that forgavest them, Though thou tookest vengeance of

their doings. Exalt ye Jehovah our God, And worship at his holy hill; For Jehovah our God is holy" (Psalm 99:6-9).

Moses, Aaron, and Samuel were men who, for the most part, served God faithfully (cf. Ex. 40:16; Heb. 11:24-29, 32). Moses and Aaron served the Creator before the wicked Pharaoh. Likewise, they led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness. Samuel labored to stem the tide of Israel's rebellion against God. Also, he strove to discipline king Saul. Faithful men like these are heard by God (cf. Jas. 5:16). Their prayers come before His throne and are answered according to His will. Jehovah, too, communicated with them. He gave them guidance and direction. He showed abundant mercy to Israel in the wilderness, though they were a stiffnecked people. Yet, at the same time, He made it clear that sin would not be excused. Thus, the Psalmist says that men are to "worship at his holy hill."

Holy, Holy, Holy

Additionally, note that at the end of each quotation from Psalm 99, the holiness of God is mentioned. Isaiah quoted the seraphims as saying, "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (6:3). Often in the book of Leviticus this is brought out. "For I am Jehovah your God: sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am holy...For I am Jehovah that brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (Lev. 11:44-45). [Do a word search of Leviticus on the phrase, "I am the Lord (Jehovah)"]. God declares that His people are to be holy, separate, sanctified, severed from sin and all unrighteousness, because HE IS THEIR GOD WHO IS HOLY!

The New Testament of Jesus Christ puts it this way, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

Conclusion

Let us never forget that Jehovah reigns, He is to be held in great awe, He is just and righteous, ever merciful, but never winking at sin, and that those who desire to call Him Father, must act in accordance with His holy nature, separating themselves from iniquity.

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