

God's Majestic Might

Let us turn to our Bibles to Psalm 76. Psalm 76. Yes, it's the end of the month already.

I don't know why my daughter is just surprised today. It's already the end of the month. Psalm 76.

Let's listen attentively to the Word of God as I read through Psalm chapter 76, or we call it Psalm 76.

In Judah, God is known. His name is great in Israel, and Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Zion. There he broke the arrows of the bow, the shield and sword of battle. You are more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. The stout-hearted were plundered, and they have sunken to their sleep, and none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands.

At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariots and the horse were cast into a deep sleep, a dead sleep. You yourself are to be feared, and who may stand in your presence when once you are angry? You caused judgment to be heard from heaven. The earth feared and was still, and God arose to judgment to deliver all the oppressed of the earth.

Surely the wrath of man shall praise you. With the remainder of wrath, you shall gird yourself. Make the vows of the Lord your God and pay them.

Let all who are around him bring presents to him who ought to be feared. You shall cut off the spirit of princes. He is awesome to the kings of the earth.

Let us pray. And herein, Lord, our Savior, our God, majestic in might and power, may we meditate upon your great works that display your omnipotence, that display your power and your majesty as our king and as our deliverer, to be encouraged thereby, God, to be blessed anew that you are indeed for us and you work and protect and preserve us so that we may praise you all the more. We ask this by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Although a shorter psalm than some other ones, it still packs a punch, as we shall see, praising our creator God, in particular as a wonder and a marvelous mighty Lord who is indeed for us and exercises and shows that power and majesty to that end. So let us see how in particular here.

So I have it divided into two parts, the blessing of God's majestic might, the blessing of God's majestic might.

The Blessing of God's Majestic Might

In Judah, God is known. His name is great in Israel, we read in verse 1. God is known.

As you know, there are many names of God in the Bible, and we know some of the Hebrew or transliterations of the English, how we would say in English, names of God. Jehovah being the most well-known, that is the I am that I am from Exodus, also often described as the covenant-keeping God. He always keeps his word, I am that I am, that I never change is the idea there.

Here, it's Elohim. So it's not in Judah, the Lord is known, that's the name that God has expressed to his chosen people, to the church, not to the world, although they'll hear about it secondhand, of course. This is Elohim, the Lord, your God, comes up in verse II.

Here, it's Elohim that you read in Genesis chapter I, for example, God created the heavens and the earth. When indicating the true God, Elohim functions as the subject of all divine activity revealed to man as mankind, and as the object of all true reverence and fear from men. Often, the word Elohim is accompanied by the personal name of God, Jehovah, as in the Lord our God, or Jehovah our God, sometimes the other way around, often in the Bible, as you maybe never thought about it.

So the psalm here is primarily about the creator God, and the majesty and the might of our creator God, and here that our Lord God Almighty is known to his people of the Old Testament in Judah, of course, and his name is great in Israel. You see the synonymous parallelism of Israel and Judah, and the greatness of God, and how he is known. Very similar ideas, the second line of that poetic parallelism extends a little further, not just that he's known, but that he is known as a great, by implication, majestic and wonderful God.

Among his people of old, the Old Testament church, his name is great in Israel, not just the God of all creation for them, but a God, the covenant-keeping God, they know Elohim as, of course, in a unique way the rest of the world doesn't know. This name of God is the name with respect to his might and power over all creation, and so the unbeliever knows it vaguely. They may not use the word Elohim, they'll just say God.

They know he exists, that God exists, that's written in their hearts, that's written in creation, but the Jews of old and we of today know that God even better than they would ever know him, and that's the emphasis here. This creator God, the God known through general revelation, is known especially to his people in a unique and special way. We are given this privilege, and therefore we exalt and praise him, and he gives some evidence of that in the next few verses.

His name is great in Israel. Where God is known, he should be praised. He is exalted as great.

You cannot know God and not know him as but great, and marvelous, and majestic. Indeed, there's no other way around it, and his name should therefore be lifted up on high, that we should honor him accordingly, that we are his people, and he is our God, and we should not be ashamed that we are his, any more than David and the Jews of old were ashamed of who he was. And so what you have in the Old Testament, and of course known for us in the New Testament especially, is that we know the same God that the world knows, although they suppress that truth in unrighteousness.

They want to hide it, and we are given the privilege of the word of God to know even more about him. And so that that which is seen by the light of nature is supplemented, and enhanced, and magnified by the light of special revelation of the Bible, and the revelation therein, and the revelation of course that God gives in the ceremonial system. As we slide in here, verse 2, and Salem also is his tabernacle, right, or the tent, probably referring, clearly referring to the temple.

This is written by, later on, it'll be the temple itself. Tabernacle is just the temple in tent form in the desert, right, it's a big tent moving around. But often the psalmist goes from the old times to the present time, and uses different names to say the same thing, because it's poetry, and you want to be creative.

That's what's going on here. He's not going through a time machine. The point here being, the greatness of this creator God, known in the church, is further expressed and unpacked through the ceremonial system, like the tabernacle, and the temple, and the priesthood, and the offerings, and everything else, as we heard this morning, for example, when he explained their function and instituted worship.

And so here, when they know this God, and therefore they know him more than they could know without the special revelation of Moses, and of the prophet, they praise him all the more as a great, majestic God, and creator of their people. And it's a special privilege, to be sure. They had it of old, we have it in the New Testament, we have more grace, we have more revelation, we have Jesus who came in the flesh, and we have four books dedicated to his life and ministry, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

And if this is true, in other words, of them of old, in Judah, God is known, his name is great in Israel, we would say, in the church, God is known, his name is great across the world, perhaps, because the church is now expressed across the entirety of the globe by the New Testament revelation and the Great Commission. So they have that privilege, they have that praise, they have the knowledge, we have greater knowledge, and therefore more reason to honor and to exalt his name on high than they ever did of old. And he continues on here to unpack this theme.

And Salem also is a tabernacle, his dwelling place in Zion, and there he broke the arrows, the bow, and the shield, and the sword of battle. So Salem here is another name for Jerusalem, from the time of Melchizedek in Genesis 14, 18. He's the king of peace, of Salem, the city of peace.

And Psalm 76, too, and Salem also is a tabernacle, and his dwelling place is another reference here, and a couple other places in the Old Testament. Not often, it's an older description for Jerusalem. And of course, Mount Zion is parallel to Salem or to Jerusalem in terms of parallelism of the Hebrew poetry here, saying the same thing differently again.

The city name and the name of the hill of the city that it sits on, because Jerusalem sat on Mount Zion, it sits on a hill. A large hill, to be sure, but it's a hill. And so it's yet another way to describe Israel on Mount Zion.

The hill of Jerusalem was built, quote, it was surrounded on all sides except the north by deep valleys. So it would be very hard to conquer the city. That's why we would put a city on a hill and put the, you know, the ramparts and the walls around it so you could protect and guard three sides at least.

And certainly the fourth side still has the wall there. And the imagery here then is to, again, explain and show why his name is great, because we have the tabernacle. We have his

dwelling place, not as though God is a man and has a body and needs somewhere to rest his head.

A thousand times, no. If God were but a man, then he wouldn't be our God, because nothing but an eternal being could sustain and create and move forward all that we see around us, because we know it's finite. We know the energy is finite.

It cannot last forever. We know there's a thing called entropy. Everything eventually falls apart and is decayed, yet we still can survive somehow.

Creation can only exist if there's an infinite creator, the author and finisher of all things. And so he does not have a dwelling place. The Old Testament Jews were not a bunch of pagans who thought their God was hungry and needed sacrifices, and he was sad and worried about the weather, so he needed a building.

I suppose some of them became more crass that way, especially the northern tribes right after the division between Rehoboam and Jeroboam, after Solomon. The northern tribes fell much further, didn't they? And much quicker. And it seemed like often open-rank pagan thinking and syncretism.

So maybe they thought that way, I don't know. But certainly the godly men like David did not. They knew that God owned a thousand cattle and a thousand hills.

It's all his. Why do I need, we read elsewhere, any of the stuff when I own everything? And the earth is his footstool. That's the God of whom they find greatness in, and majesty, and might, and power, and wonder to behold.

And so this imagery of tabernacle and dwelling place, two similar ideas again, clearly, is that God's special blessing is there. He set up this building for our sake, or for the Old Testament Jews' sake, because they're weak in faith. And what? One is something they can see with their eyes, and touch with their hands, because their faith was weak.

And I know you, I know you feel like your faith is weak sometimes as well, and you're like, boy, I wish I was like David. The difference between you and David, or you and Rachel, other godly women of the Old Testament, is that they needed tangible sacrifices and priests, miracles even. You don't get a miracle, how often have you guys run across miracles recently? You don't get a temple, you don't get a priesthood to point to Christ, you don't get a sacrifice where you can smell the aroma of a burnt animal and realize that's the same idea of God being pleased, as you are pleased physically, he is pleased spiritually.

You don't get any of those tangible things to strengthen your weak faith, because your faith is actually stronger in many ways than theirs was of old. That's the point. And so again, if God is known then, and his name was great then, how much more should he be known and is known in the church today, and great today, and therefore on the flip side, in churches that name the name of Jesus Christ, but live in rank ignorance of who God is, it's a greater shame to them today than it was to them of old.

When you read passages in the Bible, and you read the positive here, the one side of the picture, God is known and his name is great, you can also learn from that the flip side,

where his name is not known, his name is not great, is a sad state to be sure. We don't want that. We don't want that today, we didn't want that back then, but unfortunately it does happen.

It happened in the northern tribes, as you know, the ten tribes, and eventually even in the southern tribes, where they mixed God's great worship and became more ignorant, and unfortunately it happens today. It's a sad state of affairs. Now, examples of his majestic or great might.

Verses three through six, then he, there he broke the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword of battle. You are more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey and the like. And so the picture here of broken arrows of the bow, of the shield, and the sword of battle, that is a broken arrow, and a broken shield, and a broken sword of battle, what he's describing here poetically.

His evidence, he's describing evidence of the Lord's power over the enemies of God and his people. Probably an invasion of Israel. Certainly, whenever God had defeated his people of old, both through natural providence, such as warfare, and certainly through the various miracles of old, the enemies of God were broken.

We should never forget, therefore, as the psalmist here does not forget, God's goodness to his church in all ages. And because of that, he wrote these psalms, David did, and others, as the titles are here, because it's most natural to break out in song, and in praise, and in prayer, when God has done wonderful things for us. And so we should write them down and sing to our God.

We should count them to our children and to our grandchildren. Church survived the persecutions of old, and the enemies would literally come after them with a sword. And even in the New Testament era, into our day and age, they would literally come after them with a sword.

Not only the torture of the Roman Catholic Church, but the Muslim invasion of Europe in the 6th and 700s. So these things, and these acts in which the enemy tries to destroy us with arrows, with shields, with swords of battle, they fall apart against the great wall of God's defense. They did of old, they do today, and no weapon formed against her shall stand, against us shall stand, against God's people shall ever stand.

Sure, we don't have swords today. We don't have shields. Those are kind of quaint ideas.

We got bullets. We got tanks. We got cannons.

We have nuclear bombs. They're not going to destroy the Church. These nations that have these powers will fade away, as we saw over 2,000 years now, since the time of Christ Jesus.

And their weapons will go into disuse, but the Church will still survive. Never forget that. Particular churches may pass and go.

The Corinthian Church is gone. Church of Athens is gone. Other churches are wiped away.

But the Church of God across the world, the global entity, will always be there somewhere in this world until Christ returns. And we shall be preserved, of course, in our soul, especially. As long as our majestic and mighty Lord is our God, He will preserve and break the bows of the enemy.

And He is more glorious, therefore, and more excellent than anyone else who has power and might. And the mountains of prey is the interesting way of describing it here, the mountains of prey. So it's either a metaphor for the enemy armies that were in the mountains around Jerusalem, or simply a description of the animals themselves in the mountains.

In either case, it's a picture of something powerful, something that can take them out. God is greater than these things. Probably the armies, because the stout-hearted were plundered, and they have sunk into their sleep.

None of the mighty men have found the use of their hands. And at Erebus, God and Jacob, both the chariot and horses, were cast into deep sleep. So there it is, the armies against God and His people.

And God is greater than all of them. They have nothing in comparison to Him, the stout-hearted, verse 5, that is, the most brave of the enemies of God, coming to take on the Church of the Old Testament. Or even today, who wish to terrorize the Church of God, were plundered, and they have sunk into their sleep as though they were dead.

And none of the mighty men have found the use of their hands. I guess like the idea of they're shaking, they can't pick it up, they're weak, because they're terrified of the power of God Almighty. And the majesty of Him brings them to their own shame, and they are brought to naught.

And therefore, God, in the description here in verse 6, rebukes the horse and the chariot, the mighty powers of their day and age. They were quick and swift, they were well-armored, and they were well-protected, and they could run you down. You can imagine how terrifying it is to foot soldiers, because most of the men back then were foot soldiers.

They made up, I don't know what it would be, 80% of the army, easily. The rest would be, anybody can learn how to ride a horse. To ride a horse, not only ride a horse, but ride a horse and kill with it.

Pick, use a weapon while using the horse and attack people with it. And of course, the chariot, which took a little more coordination, and just mowed you down. And God just really speaks.

And both the chariot and horse were cast into a deep sleep. They'd just stop and fall over, as though they were dead, stopped in their tracks, we would say today. They are but nothing before Him.

He rebukes the enemies. At your rebuke, O God, all of this falls to naught. And today, the emphasis of God's might in history is important for us to remember that God is for us, but not just physically in the sense of God preserved the church of old in the Old Testament, and

through the last 2,000 years from people who would literally take the sword and try to kill them, but especially spiritually in the kingdom of God.

That the power of Jesus Christ, the enemies, even in the high places, were conquered in their heart by the preaching of the Word of God, where we use spiritual weapons, the weapons of truth, to take down the lies of Satan. And so the history of preaching in the church is a history of using the sword of the Spirit to take on the enemy of this world. Our weapons are spiritual, and they were spiritual in the Old Testament, but often many things, again, were physical because their faith was weak, and they needed those physical things to prop up their weak faith.

In the New Testament, we have a lot less of that. We have simply the Word and sacrament. We have baptism.

It's physical. It's tangible. We have the Lord's support.

It's physical. It's tangible. That's it.

We don't need anything else. We don't have a special place to meet anymore, like in Jerusalem. There's no more Holy Land.

They're not holy over there anymore unless they repent and follow Jesus. It's very reduced to these two simple things, Word and sacrament. And even the sacrament plays, of course, a second fiddle in many ways to the preaching and the truth of God's Word, as Paul reminds us of I Corinthians I. What's baptism compared to the preaching of the gospel, he says? I don't care if anybody ever got baptized.

Are you a believer? Have you trusted in Jesus Christ? Quit bragging about baptism, as I summarized Paul there. And our praise and our prayers to God as well rebuke His enemies. The unbeliever doesn't like to hear the Word of God preached, especially the law of God.

They take it as a rebuke. They take it as a personal offense often. I've run across that in myself.

Maybe you have as well. They may not say it that way, but you can tell they're kind of offended. They don't, why don't you pray that way? What kind of a prayer is that? Why do you talk this way? What is this about law and judgment? I thought you guys were all about grace.

Well, it's both. It just depends where you are with respect to God, of course. What you need to hear.

The Spirit, of course, rebukes the heart of the wicked and converts them. It converted us. It converted you, brothers and sisters.

He conquered you. You were His enemy through the spiritual truth of the Word of God. That leads us to the second point.

The Fear of God's Majestic Might

That's the blessing of the majesty of God. It's known in the church especially. We have the preaching.

We have the sacraments. We don't have the tabernacle, to be sure. Yes, we have greater revelation, and this is a good and blessing for us.

And so God's name is greatly and great among us, and His majesty is seen among us, but also feared. You yourself are to be feared. The fear of God's majestic might, verses 7 through 12, where we read of the fear of God a couple of times.

The word is used here. You yourself are to be feared, and who may stand in your presence when once you are angry? Let us recall the association of Elohim with fear, with the idea of fear, and the definition I gave earlier from the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. When indicating the true God, Elohim functions as the subject of all divine activity.

He is the one doing all the divine activity revealed to man, so in nature and in the Bible, and as the object of all true reverence and fear from men, because He is the Creator God, and we are His children. Although fallen in a rebellion against Him, there should be this reverence and fear from men upon Him. And in general, of course, we should fear the Lord God's might and omnipotence as we fear terrifying rhinos and majestic elephants.

I have pictures. I like to take photography now and then. We go to the zoo, and I always bring my camera.

I'm expecting, I want to find a new animal and take pictures of it, and I like to take pictures of the big animals, of course, like a rhino. And I have a rhino that pops up on my desktop, and the desk, you know, desktop pictures in the background, cycles through. And this is a rhino.

We were looking at the rhino today as I was going over my notes. They're terrifying in person, but they're in that deep pit. You don't want to meet in person.

They look really great and quiet, and they don't look like they're doing a whole lot. They don't even look angry sometimes, but you don't want to get near one. They're actually terrifying.

We got pretty close to an elk once up at Estes Park when they were running through the Central Park there, that circle park in the middle. I think many of you have probably been there. And the forest rangers were trying to keep everyone away from the elk.

We got pretty close. We probably shouldn't have got that close. They are huge.

And I was like, honey, don't get any closer. That thing is just, who knows what it's going to do? So that's a natural fear of based on what? Partly ignorance. What's the animal going to do? But what's behind that? It is greater than you.

It is larger than you. It is more powerful than you. So you have a natural fear.

It's not a sinful fear. It's a different kind of fear. It shouldn't be a slavish fear towards God, of course.

So there's a natural fear that we ought to have as believers and as humans in general. You fear things much greater than you that could squish you without a thought. But we also know the Elohim of the majestic might is also our Father.

So there's a different kind of fear as well. Not only a natural fear that you should have, even if there was no sin, because God is infinitely greater. There's just no comparison between me and a rhino and God.

But the kind of fear that you have in a family, in a family relationship where your parents tenderly care for you and preserve you from harm, but you fear their judgment, you fear their disappointments, because you desire to accomplish their will and to do good unto them. A godly fear. And he unpacks this fear here particularly of a dangerous judgment where God is not your father, but only your judge.

In verses 8 through 9, who can stand in your presence when once you are angry, right? That divine wrath of a judge, not the petty anger of a child. You cause judgment to be heard from heaven. The earth feared and was still when God arose to judgment to deliver all the oppressed of the earth.

This is just judgment, such power that the world sees and hears as though it came from heaven. Of course, in the Old Testament background here, the many deliverances were by miracles that did get people's attention. They were public miracles.

People saw them. They weren't hidden. In my upbringing as a charismatic, all the miracles are often private and never really seen.

Someone else who saw, someone else who saw, someone else who did the miracle. Hello? What do you have in the Old Testament? Hundreds. Yeah, even thousands of witnesses.

You couldn't hide it. That's the kind of judgment God's going to bring ultimately, as we heard this morning, right? This is poetry, so he's speaking of many things conceptually that can include things of the past, things of the present, and ultimately things of the future, the great return of Jesus Christ, where he sits on the throne and judges the world. And so this power of God Almighty will be seen and has been seen of all there, but that is the great judgments of all where the nations of Syria, Babylon, Egypt were thrown into the Red Sea, were but foretaste of the great judgment where Christ Jesus shall return.

Our God is not a petty God, but a God who delivers the oppressed. His anger here in verse 7, as it is elsewhere in the Bible, is not, oh, you stepped on my toe. Oh, you said a bad thing about me.

It's not that at all. It is a just and upright creator whom we have infinitely offended by our desecration of his creation, and the highest part of his creation being us, our soul and our body used for pathetic lusts and sins and unhealthy desires. And here in particular, God who arose to judgments as though, again, remember, judges and kings were one in the Old Testament often.

Certainly every king was a judge, although not every judge was a king. And God is the great majestic king here, and he's going to rise up to judgment, arose to judgment, though

getting off the chair, about to execute the enemies, to deliver all the oppressed of the earth or of the land, but ultimately of all his people across the world. The word could go either way.

The church. The oppressed here clearly is not what liberals like to think of an oppressed, which is always someone without a lot of money, but the oppressed spiritually, even physically, for spiritual reasons. That is, we hate the church in which to drive you into the ground, so we're going to bring poverty upon you.

As we know, brothers and sisters, perhaps, and certainly in the Middle East and Africa and Asia are physically poor, but that is, in one sense, incidental to their spiritual poverty before God, of course, that they know who they are before him, and they are humble before him. But the oppression here, the oppression of them is for a wrong reason. It's the wrong people to oppress.

You shouldn't oppress people in general anyways, but especially God's people. It's kind of the flip side. You take care of random kids in the sense of, you know, the neighborhood kid comes through your house or he scrapes his knee on riding a bike like they do in our neighborhood, and you help them.

Sure, but who are you especially going to help? Your own family. You put more effort into your own family, and so we should not oppress anybody, but you especially should not oppress the apple of God's eyes. The church.

Either the Old Testament or the New Testament. God will vindicate, God will protect, and God will judge those of old and of today who hate his people and hate their Lord and will not repent. That's what's going on here.

It's a just judgment. It's again a future glimpse of Christ Jesus who would deliver the oppressed church in a final and complete and public manner before the enemies of the world who will tremble at his vengeance. They will find him in awe.

Verse 12, he is awesome. We're awe-inspiring to the kings of the earth because they are quaking in their boots. That's the picture.

The wrath of man praises God. Verse 10, I always remember this verse because it's quite interesting in the history of the church and of preaching. Our forefather, John Witherspoon of the Presbyterians, the first moderator of the General Assembly of 1787, the same year in which we met to redo the Constitution, make the Constitution from the Continental Congress into what we have today.

They met Philadelphia. We were meeting to create the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church for the whole entire colony. And Witherspoon had preached in 1776 this psalm, and particularly this passage, surely the wrath of man shall praise you.

With the remainder of wrath you shall gird yourself. And he mentions in that sermon, this is one of the very few if the first sermon I ever preached that dealt with current political events. And it was 1776.

War. The wrath of man. War is certainly about the wrath of man.

And this language here is describing poetically that man's wrath, although contrary to our own thinking, can actually praise God. That is, he uses it for his glory. And the remainder of wrath, the wrath of man, you shall gird yourself as though it were a belt.

God uses, in other words, man's sin and his wrath for his glory and ultimately for our good. That's what he's describing here. This poetic parallelism again, 10a to 10b, the wrath of man shall praise you.

The remainder of wrath, you shall gird yourself. You shall gird yourself as though it were a belt to hold yourself up, just prop up your purposes and goals in this world. The wrath of man there, in the shorthand for the evils of man, not just war, used by God's providence for his glory.

If man's most viral sin brings God praise, certainly other sins can as well. And the greatest sin, of course, was their attack upon his son, Jesus Christ. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, as we see in Acts chapter 2 when Peter preaches his sermon.

It is the sins of men are a tool in God's hand. Men wish to lash out a God of wrath, but he turns it to his own use. If the Lord uses it for greater ends than the petty revenge of earthly tyrants, for the heart of the king is in the hands of the Lord.

It moves whatsoever he wills. How then is man's wrath and how can it lead to the praise of God? It points to the need of a Savior. The wicked outbursts of men and women, both bodily and in their souls, shows their need of a Savior, that they are indeed wicked, and they're on their way to hell.

The praise of God is in people seeking him out because they recognize this fact, that they need a Savior. And so it brings them, if they are moved by the Spirit and conviction, to salvation, not just to the awakening of the terrors of death, but away from that to the joys of Christ and embracing our Lord and Savior. It also helps the church in her maturation and growth.

Hebrews 12.1 we read, excuse me, 12.5, and you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons. My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him. For whom the Lord loves, he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives.

How is the church scourged by God? We forget the Old Testament church was scourged by God by actually being literally attacked by Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon, or the Philistines and the land around them. Actual wrath and anger and war was part of how God chastised the Old Testament church. And I see no difference in the New Testament church, why it would be any different.

And when we are under this, we need to realize God uses the anger, the wrath, the sin of men, not just anger in the simplest sense, but it's a shorthand for all the sins of men, for our chastisement so that we would learn to be humble before God, and to submit to his providence, and to cry out for mercy. Verse 11, make vows to the Lord your God, that here we have Jehovah, first time in the text, and pay them, and let all who are around him bring

presence to him who ought to be feared, that as God ought to be feared. So these are voluntary vows to offer sacrifices before God if something amazing happened or God blessed the harvest, for example, and they ought to take to heart the vows before the Lord, and godly fear and joy because God is a majestic God, and they ought to fulfill their vows.

It's an encouragement to them to do the right thing. And the latter half of verse 11, all those around him bring presence to him who ought to be feared, God ought to be feared. So there it is, the third time the word fear is used in this section.

The majesty of God should bring about godly fear, of course always mixed with love. Love is there. The Old Testament, you see a lot more fear to be sure.

Love is mentioned in the Old Testament. Loving God is mentioned there, but fear is especially highlighted because God collectively said, you guys need to learn, like little children, the hard way. And children learn a lot through discipline, spanking and the like.

They don't like it, it's scary, but they learn quick. And then lastly, verse 12, he shall cut off the spirit of princes, that is, of course, bad princes, those who are enemies against God and his people, and he is awesome to the kings of the earth, awe-inspiring, all those of might and power like a prince or king, and their majesty is nothing compared to the majesty and might of our God Almighty. They will quake in their boots, and they stand in awe of God.

They are dumbfounded. There's nothing they can say on the great day of judgment. There's nothing they can do.

All the power that they thought they had will avail them nothing when Jesus Christ returns. They cannot buy him off, they cannot attack him, nothing like that. The majestic might of God Almighty can no longer be denied in that great day when Jesus Christ shall return.

And the majestic might of our Lord shall be seen before all. Come quickly, Lord, we pray. Amen.

Father God, we do thank you for this psalm as it paints a glorious picture of who you are and how the nations are judged by you for the sake of your people who are oppressed and you preserve and protect them, and that the wrath of man is girded about you and used in a way we cannot fully understand for your glory to lift up and exalt your name for the good of your church. Father God, may we rest in that truth and promise and rely upon and praise and sing praises of the majestic might that is you. We ask this by the blood of Jesus Christ.

Amen.