

Psalm 99

In response to the story of complaining in **Numbers 11**, this Psalm stresses God's terrible holiness and sovereignty.

See **verse 8** - "Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."

Psalm 99:1-3 - "The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The LORD is great in Zion; and he is high above all the people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy."

Not only is God sovereign, He is present with His people. And He is higher than those who are puffed up and try to exalt themselves through their complaints. His name is "great" to those in submission to Him, but "terrible" to his enemies.

Rashi - "nations will quake": [This] deals with the war of Gog and Magog. Then the nations will quake, as the matter that is said (**Zechariah 14:12**): "And this shall be the plague, etc."

Psalm 99:4 - "The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob."

Despite His power, God's rulings and decisions are just, equitable and righteous. He is not a capricious tyrant.

In fact, Rashi seems to point to the commandments that deal with treatment of enemies:

"You founded equity": You founded compromise and peacemaking between persons, by Your statement (**Exodus 23:5**): "Should you see your enemy's donkey lying etc." ; (ibid. verse 4), "Should you come upon Your enemy's ox, etc." Now who is it who sees his enemy being kind to him, whose heart will not be inspired to embrace him and kiss him? (Tanchuma).

Jesus - **Luke 6:27-28** - "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you."

Psalm 99:7 - "He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them."

See **Numbers 11:25** - "And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him..."

Psalm 99:8 - "Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."

When we approach God without exalting ourselves, in repentance and submission, he "answers "us and forgives us - but also purges us of sin and our "devices and inventions."