

Series: Psalm

Title: Holy Sovereign Just Mercy

Text: Ps 99: 1-9

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**Psalm 99: 9: Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.**

Three times the Spirit of God says exalt and worship Jehovah—for *the LORD our God is holy*. Our triune God is holy in his nature and holy in all that he does.

**Psalm 99: 1: The LORD reigneth;** God is sovereign. He reigns from his throne in glory. God is holy in his sovereign reign working all things

**Psalm 99:1...he sitteth *between* the cherubims.** That is where the mercy seat was. This is even more blessed than his sovereignty over all providence. He is holy and reigns in sovereign mercy.

**Psalm 99: 4: The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.** Our Lord is holy therefore he reigns in sovereign mercy justly/ He established equity and he executeth judgment and righteousness in his people, his church, his holy hill.

**Proposition:** The LORD our God is holy. He is sovereign. He is merciful. He is just. It is him making his people behold him and his holy sovereign just mercy that makes us bow and worship and exalt and praising him alone.

**Subject:** Holy Sovereign Just Mercy

## **GOD REIGNS ABSOLUTELY**

**Psalm 99: 1: The LORD reigneth;**

Our great God and Savior reigns over all at all times with all power in heaven and in earth. God is working his will at all times according to his eternal purpose so that nothing comes to pass except what God wills.

1 Chronicles 16: 31: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let *men* say among the nations, The LORD reigneth.

Some try to take God off his throne in creation. It shows that sinners are totally depraved when men would rather attribute creation to a big bang rather than God who created all things. The bible does not bother proving God's existence and sovereignty in creation. It is futile for us to try. The Spirit of God simply declares it. We should too.

Genesis 1: 1: In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Others reject the truth that God rules every last detail that comes to pass in time. It shows the sinner's ruined condition that sinners attribute providence to luck or karma or the stars. God rules all things in heaven and earth and all deep places. Providence is God reigning and bringing to pass his will.

Ephesians 1:11...God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

## **GOD REIGNS IN SOVEREIGN MERCY**

**Psalm 99: 1...he sitteth *between* the cherubims;**

This is even more blessed than God's sovereign reign. God reigns in sovereign mercy. The *mercy seat* was between the cherubims. God commanded Moses to make two gold cherubim—*angels, messengers*—on top of the ark on each side.

Exodus 25: 20: And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be...22: And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims...

God is sovereign in mercy.

Romans 9:18: Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.

It is only in Christ that God will meet with a sinner and commune with us. Only in Christ the Mercy Seat will God show a sinner mercy. Christ is our High Priest and Christ is the Lamb whose blood put away the sins of God's elect and made us righteous. Christ is the Mercy Seat—the Propitiation—in whom God will meet with and commune with those Christ redeemed by his precious blood.

1 John 4:10: Herein is love not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [*to be*] the propitiation for our sins.

Our LORD God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is described here as the holy sovereign reigning King. His throne is the throne of sovereign mercy! *He sitteth between the cherubims* because God our Savior finished the work. God is propitiated. He is satisfied, appeased toward his people in and by Christ satisfying justice for us. *He sitteth* because the work is finished and he everliveth to make intercession for his people. If you believe on the Lord Jesus then,

Hebrews 4:16: Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

His is the throne. The LORD reigneth. He is the sovereign King reigning on his throne. He dwells between the cherubim. His throne is the throne of sovereign mercy and grace. Christ is himself the Propitiation—the Mercy Seat—where God promises to meet with the believing sinner.

## **GOD IS JUST IN SOVEREIGN MERCY**

**Psalm 99: 4: The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob...6: Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them. 7: He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar: they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them. 8: Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions. [sins]**

God is holy. Those he chose to save are sinners. God would only show us mercy justly. That is why the Son of God took flesh. He established equity in Jacob by fulfilling the law for us. Christ established equity by bearing our sins and the justice due to us. He executed judgment and righteousness in Jacob on the cross. The law said we had to die. God carried out the death penalty upon each of his people in Christ on the cross.

He is holy and sovereign to bring the gospel to us and work judgment in our hearts in regeneration. The Spirit of God makes us behold Christ and we behold we are the sinner. He alone is our Righteousness in whom God is just to show us mercy.

Romans 3: 23: For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. [that is how all boasting is excluded]

The Lord is holy in his sovereign reign to show mercy justly to his people throughout our lives. He uses Moses, Aaron and Samuel as the example--"*Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.*" He uses these three because God originally set up his church to be led by his servants declaring his word. Moses and Aaron were the first. Samuel was the last. Then they wanted a king like the heathen nations.

But he also uses these three because if these faithful men sinned and needed mercy then the rest of us will need mercy too. They were his ministers who our LORD dealt with personally showing us our holy Lord is able to sovereignly reign in mercy doing what is just in each of his Jacob's in his church, his holy hill. Moses, Aaron and Samuel—like all God's people—called upon the LORD because he first called them. But the focus here is that the LORD answered them. They called upon the LORD, and he answered them. What a blessing! God answers his people. In his holy sovereign power—from his throne of mercy—he answered them.

Numbers 7: 89 And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy seat that *was* upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubims: and he spake unto him.

He spake unto them in Christ—"He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar." Holy God only speaks with a believing sinner through Christ our Mediator, in Christ our Mercy Seat. But through Christ the LORD speaks to us by his gospel, into our hearts by his Spirit.

By Christ speaking into their hearts they were faithful—"they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance that he gave them." It is showing they were faithful by Christ speaking into the heart, revealing that in him God is just to show us mercy. He makes his people willing by his power. The result is "*they kept his testimonies.*" They believed the witness of God concerning his Son. They only kept the law perfectly through faith in Christ who kept it perfectly for his people. Christ is our Righteousness. The same was true of Moses, Aaron and Samuel and all the saints in their day. But by Christ's Voice, we indeed delight in the law of God in the inward man. We desire with our new heart to keep his testimonies perfectly but faith believes in Christ we have!

By the Power of his Voice "*they kept his ordinances.*" They observed the passover and ceremonies of the old covenant. That was the equivalent of worshipping the Lord like we gather together to do now as his church to hear the gospel preached.

Our Sovereign Shepherd gathered and united us as his church. He gave us his gospel and baptism and the Lord's table. By his Power he keeps us assembling together.

But they were not without sin. Yet he made them behold his holy sovereign just mercy for Christ's sake—"Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions." Inventions here means their sins. Moses, Aaron and Samuel were faithful but they were not without sin nor were the saints to whom they ministered nor any of his saints. When his people sin it displeases God. But by his same holy sovereign mercy God justly chastened and corrected them.

Aaron sinned when he rose up against Moses. God chastened Aaron sorely. Their sister, Miriam, was made a leper when Aaron was one who sinned, as well as she. God told him to intercede for her. And Moses interceded for them both. In that intercession, we see a type of *Christ sitting between the cherubims*. Since he satisfied justice for Aaron, God the Father, for Christ's sake, showed him mercy and forgave Aaron. It is Christ sovereignly working in our heart and in his providence to make us behold Christ's all-prevailing intercession. It is the Spirit of our Lord making us behold it is for Christ's sake that God shows mercy to his children justly. This made Aaron bow and worship God! Christ work was equitable and just. God forgave Aaron for the sake of his Son.

Moses failed to sanctify the Lord before the people, when he cried out, "*Must WE fetch you water out of the rock for you?*" There was no WE to it! Christ is the Rock and he alone gave the Water. Moses smote the rock twice. Christ was smitten once. He satisfied justice for his people. Christ nor any of his people can be smitten with justice again. So God chastened Moses for that. Moses was prevented from leading the people into the promised land. But in that God sovereignly worked to show us the gospel. Moses (the law) cannot take us in; Joshua (Jesus, Savior) is the only one who can take us in to heaven. When the Lord chastens us, he is able to show us Christ in our hearts just like he brought forth that picture by chastening Moses. That is how our Lord works what is just in Jacob. He makes us behold him showing us mercy and forgiveness because Christ satisfied justice on our behalf. That makes us bow and exalt him and worship him.

Samuel exalted his sons to be judges in Israel. But they took bribes. That was the excuse the children of Israel used to reject Samuel. But God said they really rejected God and wanted a king like the heathen nations. That was all great chastening to Samuel. But Christ was able to show Samuel his holiness. God, for Christ's sake, showed Samuel sovereign mercy and forgave him. God was able to speak into his heart and keep Samuel looking to the Lord alone. So it was with the elect to whom they each ministered.

Our Savior is holy. He reigns in perfect holy sovereignty. God our Savior has sovereignly ordained every affliction and brought it to pass for his glory and our good. Sin is our fault. No excuses. But every good and perfect gift is from God above. So we glory in him for every good thing.

He is able to take vengeance on our inventions. Our heavenly Father is faithful to chasten us in love. But because he poured out vengeance on Christ in place of his people, he is just to show us mercy and bring us to confess our sins to him. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It is beholding his holy, sovereign, just, mercy working in all providence to make his word effectual in our hearts to make us behold Christ on his throne. That is how he makes his child tremble, moves us, and keeps us worshipping and exalting the Lord. It is the goodness of God that leadeth thee to repentance. He gives faith, renews faith, grows us in faith and keeps us worshipping and exalting Christ. He keeps us continuing with his people in his holy mountain. God sovereignly sanctifies every affliction to our hearts, growing us in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This makes us trust one another to our all-powerful Head and Savior. This may be the Psalm from which Paul was inspired to write Philippians 2:

Philippians 2: 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing *be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:...12: Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation [your daily dealings with one another] with fear and trembling. 13: For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. 14: Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

We are sheep and sheep wander.

Prone to wander Lord I feel it  
Prone to leave the God I love  
Hear is my heart, o take and seal it,  
Seal it for thy courts above.

But our sovereign Shepherd is able to gather them and bring them back to him to his holy hill, his church. Our heavenly Father loves to see Christ bring his prodigal son's home. The heavenly host rejoices when he brings his wandering sheep home. It is our Sovereign, Holy Shepherd who gathered us in the first place. It is he who is able to turn the heart of his child and gather his wandering sheep. Therefore, read verse 9 and do it, "**Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.**" Amen!