

מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד

הָבּוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים,

הָבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז,

הָבּוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ,

הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת קֹדֶשׁ.

קוֹל יְהוָה עַל הַמַּיִם, אֶל הַכְּבוֹד הַרְעִים,

יְהוָה עַל מַיִם רַבִּים;

קוֹל יְהוָה בַּפֶּחַח;

קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדָּר;

קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים,

וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת־אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָּנוֹן,

וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ עֵגֶל,

לְבָנוֹן וְשָׁרִיץ כְּמוֹ בָּדְרֵאִמִּים;

קוֹל יְהוָה חֹצֵב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ;

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחִיל מִדְּבָר, יַחִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ;

קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלֹל אֵילוֹת, וַיַּחֲשֹׁף יַעְרֹת,

וּבְהִיבְלוֹ כָּלוּ אִמֵּר כְּבוֹד.

יְהוָה לִמְבּוֹל יֹשֵׁב,

וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם.

יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן,

יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם.

תהלים כט

**PSALM 29.** The mystic Isaac Luria (1534–1572, Safed) would begin the Friday evening service with this psalm. Luria, like many mystics before him, believed that in welcoming Shabbat, one ushers in the very presence of God.

In Psalm 29, the phrase *kol Adonai* ("the voice of God") is repeated seven times—understood in this context to represent the seven days of the week. The thunder and lightning described here evoke the scene of the revelation at Sinai; Kadesh, one of the places mentioned here, is identified in the Bible with the Sinai desert. In reciting this psalm, Shabbat too is imagined as a moment of divine revelation.

Biblical scholars see the psalm as a depiction of a storm coming in from the Mediterranean and passing over the mountains of Lebanon; cedars top those high mountains and are among the world's sturdiest and longest living trees, but God's voice shatters them. The storm continues to move on over fertile land to the Sinai desert, called here Kadesh.

The psalm begins with reference to the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and ends with God enthroned above the primal waters of creation. Additionally, it begins with

an angelic chorus praising God and, as we reach the end, mentions the human chorus praising God in the Temple. Thus earth and heaven, the realms of both the human and the Divine, come to mirror each other as creation and redemption are experienced in a single moment—again, an image of Shabbat.

**CHILDREN OF THE DIVINE** בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים. The general belief in biblical times—and in classical and medieval times, as well—was that many semi-divine beings, sometimes conceived as the forces in the heavens, acted at God's behest.

**THE FLOOD WATERS** לִמְבּוֹל. An allusion either to the primal waters of creation or to the flood in the time of Noah. In the first understanding, this line continues the thought introduced at the beginning of the psalm that God is above the waters—that is, God has power over the waters that form the great mass of earth. In the second interpretation, the theme of God's judgment of sin is now introduced in the psalm.

**WITH PEACE** בְּשָׁלוֹם. This series of six psalms, recited on Friday night before the imagined entrance of Shabbat, began with the word *l'khu*, the call to set out together on a journey, and now ends with the word *shalom*, the blessing of peace, Shabbat peace.