



their wellbeing. This is our God. There is nothing common about our God. Our goal should be to glorify God in every moment of our lives.

Second, we need to fear the Lord. The Psalmist looked at what the Lord had done for Israel and declared, **“Tremble, O earth, before the Lord”** (Psalm 114:7). The word translated “tremble” is used

figuratively in Psalm 114, but literally means to *“twist, writhe... be in severe pain, or anguish”* (Brown, Driver, and Briggs, 297). Rahab understood the fear of the Lord, **“The terror of you has fallen on us... all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you.”** (Joshua 2:8). Do we properly fear God? Paul wrote concerning our Lord,

At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

If after we have observed the power and might of God we have not come to **“tremble... before the Lord,”** we can rest assured that one day we will. One day all creatures will fear God. It should be our aim to recognize who God is, and properly fear Him now.



point when he described God as, **“the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow”** (James 1:17). God does not vary or change. Why do I emphasize this point here? We need to recognize whom we serve. We serve the God who spoke everything into existence (Colossians 1:16), and destroyed the world with a great flood (2 Peter 3:5-6). This is the God who guided His chosen people out of Egypt. He parted waters, moved mountains, and made constant provision for

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4700 Andrews Ave.
Amarillo TX 79106
806-352-2809
www.olsenpark.com

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BULLETIN OF
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Faithful Sayings

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
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6:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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Deacons:

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Kyle Pope
Andrew Dow

“Tremble, O Earth, Before the Lord”

(Psalm 114) By Andrew Dow

The book of Psalms is a beautiful collection of poetry. The authors, inspired by the Holy Spirit, address topics that are relevant in every time period. They wrestle with their own weakness, speak out about their frustrations, and give praise and glory to God. This book, although written for a different time and people, holds great value for the Christian today. Our aim in this article will be to note one Psalm in particular, and see what application we can make.

The Text of Psalm 114

Psalm 114 begins by retelling a historical event. **“When Israel went forth from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah became His sanctuary; Israel, His dominion”** (Psalm 114:1-2, NASU). The exodus from Egypt was a story with which all Israel should have been familiar. The Psalmist’s mere allusion to the exodus should have placed vivid images into the Jewish mind concerning God’s power and love for His people. These first two verses are simply a concise history of Israel. Coming out of Egypt (vs. 1), Israel made its home in the Promised Land (vs. 2).



With the historical setting firmly in mind, the Psalmist addresses how these events were accomplished. **“The sea looked and fled; the Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams; the hills, like lambs”** (Psalm 114:3-4). While the author does use simile and personification to bring his statements to life, we must not forget the fact that he is describing



very real events. The author provides clear allusions to the division of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21) and the crossing of the Jordan River (Joshua 3:14-15). These two miraculous events were instrumental in bringing about God’s salvation of His people. The statements in verse four call to mind the scene at Mount Sinai. Moses describes, **“Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN QUAKED VIOLENTLY”** (Exodus 19:16-18, emphasis mine). This was just another feat that demonstrated the power of God to lead His people out from Egypt.

The Psalmist continues by asking some rhetorical questions, **“What ails you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?”** (Psalm 114:5-6).

The Psalmist observes history and then simply asks, “why?” What caused these unique events to happen? The people in Canaan knew what had caused these things. Rahab admitted,

The terror of you has fallen on us... all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt.... When we

heard it, our hearts melted... for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath” (Joshua 2:8-11).

What caused these wonders? The Lord God of heaven and earth!

The seventh verse of Psalm 114 is the main point. The Psalmist writes, **“Tremble, O earth, before the Lord, before the God of Jacob.”** The Psalmist calls the whole earth to recognize Israel’s position in relationship to an all powerful God. When we see the Lord’s absolute power over His creation, our responsibility is to tremble before Him. The Psalmist concludes by reminding us that this God also had the ability to turn **“the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a fountain of water”** (Psalm 114:8; cf. Deuteronomy 8:15) in order to make provisions for His people. Certainly the fear of God ought to be upon all the earth.

Some Application

Psalm 114 is a wonderful and terrifying display of God’s power and majesty. The might of the Lord was such that waters fled from Israel’s path, and the mountains skipped in her presence (vss. 3-6). The lovingkindness of the Lord is such that the rocks were turned into water for Israel’s provision (vs.

8). These are impressive reminders of our Lord’s power and might in all circumstances. However, these would do little good if we did not take the initiative to make application to our lives. It’s easy for us to look back at these powerful events and view them as nothing more than a good story. Allow me to make just two observations.

First, we must recognize that this is the same God that we serve today. This is a point we make often, but, when dealing with a text like this, it’s an important reminder. God spoke through the prophet Malachi saying, **“For I, the Lord, do not change”** (Malachi 3:6). James made a similar