

only does God pay attention to man, but he even communes with him. He cares for him. He provides for him, causing the plants to grow in their seasons, providing colour and beauty in nature surrounding us, giving us comfort and help. He speaks to our mind with his word, he speaks to our soul with his Spirit, he speaks to our heart with his love. He guides us, he leads us, he has charted a plan for our lives. He works on our behalf.

Verse 5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour.

Here in verse 5 David changes his tune. Man is important. He is just a little lower than the angels, and he is crowned with glory and honour. How is this possible? Certainly not through man's own efforts could he achieve this. It is God who has done this wondrous thing.

The least important word in this phrase is "him" - man. The best man can achieve is so limited. It is God who has elevated man, and this should cause our hearts to rejoice. In ourselves we may be weak, like babies and children, but in God we are just a little lower than the heavenly realm, and we are crowned with glory and honour. This should give us confidence. We are not inferior. We are important – to God! We are part of his marvellous creation.

Verse 6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

This is amazing. God has given us rule over all his creation. He did all the work for us. He has turned it over to us. Man is one of the weaker creatures, and yet he is master over the most powerful creatures. He is also master over the earth's natural resources. He has learned to harness the hidden energy lying deep inside the earth, and inside the atom. The chemicals in the earth are under his control. He uses them, changes them, transforms them to his use.

Verses 7-8 All flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.

Mankind is also in control of the animal kingdom. Even the beasts of the field, he can tame and turn to his own use, as all of us have seen when the circus came to town. How can man do this? The animals are bigger and stronger. God has given man dominion, and it is man who is the master.

Verse 9 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

David concludes this psalm with the same words which began it. Inside these two bookends of praise to God, he has stated and presented his reasons for the excellency of God's name in all the earth. He has made his case, he has won the argument. We are compelled to lift our heart toward the heavens and join him in praising God, saying... **O Lord our Lord, how majestic is your name.**

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How Do You View God?

Psalm 8



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How Do You View God?

Psalm 8:1-9

It has been said that, "This Psalm presents the concept that how you view God determines how you view yourself." In these days of uncertainty, I believe this Psalm can help us. It is a psalm of David written to be played on the Gittith which was some form of stringed instrument like our present day guitar. I can imagine David sitting under the stars late one evening with his ancient version of the guitar composing this most beautiful psalm.

Albert Barnes comments, "If we may judge from the Psalm itself, it would seem probable that it was composed by night in the contemplation of the starry heavens – naturally suggesting, in view of the vastness and beauty of the celestial luminaries, the littleness of man. This also filled the mind of the psalmist with wonder that the God who put all the stars and planets in place, should condescend to regard the condition and wants of a being so feeble and frail as man, and should have exalted him as he has done over his works." © Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament, Psalms, vol. I, pg. 70, Baker Book House

Verse 1 O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.

David opens the psalm with awesome praise of God. How majestic is God's name – how noble, how excellent. His name is above all names. The world does not hold the name of God in high regard – only those who call him their Lord as David does here in this verse, "Yahweh, my Lord," truly revere him.

Only those who know, love and serve him can begin to understand his majesty. Others may intellectually be able to have some idea of the scope of his greatness, but only those who experience him with their heart as well as their mind can begin to feel the immenseness of his nobility.

God may be above all and lifted high above our understanding, but he shows his love to us by giving us the gift of his glory displayed in the heavens.

As MacDonald comments, "The majesty of the Lord is evident in all creation, if a person only has eyes to see it. Every area of natural science teems with evidences of the wisdom and power of the Creator. God's glory is higher but the heavens, the planets, the stars, the limitless universe give us a partial view of how very great God really is." © Believer's Bible Commentary, O. T. vol. pg. 557 1990, Thomas Nelson Publishers

Verse 2 From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.

Paul wrote in 1Corinthians 1:26-28, "Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important, so that none can boast in his presence."

God is no respecter of persons. We who are nothing in ourselves, are everything in him. He does not only choose the rich, the powerful, the brilliant, the strong, the beautiful. He also uses babies and children – the weak, the disadvantaged, the destitute. From their words he establishes a stronghold. Their words are an expression of simple trust and this confounds the wise of this world. God uses the child to bring praise to his name. No wonder Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not stop them" (Matthew 19:14).

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Matthew Henry wrote in 1710, "It is here foretold in Psalm 8, that by the apostles who were looked upon as mere babes, unlearned and ignorant men (Acts 4:13), and by the foolishness of their preaching, the devil's kingdom should be thrown down, as Jericho's walls were.... The gospel is called the arm of the Lord and the rod of his strength; this was or-

daind to work wonders, not out of the mouth of philosophers or orators, politicians or statesmen, but of a company of poor fishermen. Sometimes the power of God brings to pass great things in his church by very weak and unlikely instruments, and confounds the noble, wise, and mighty, by the base, and weak, and foolish things of the world, that no man may glory in his presence, that the greatness of the power may be of God, and not of man...." © Matthew Henry's Commentary, vol. III, pg. 266, MacDonald Pub. Company

Verse 3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place.

God has given us a visible reminder of his divine power. We see the universe in all its complexity – the moon, the stars. We are in awe how they all function according to his natural laws. They didn't evolve to their fixed positions; they were placed there by the power of God. They are all established and ordained by the fingers of God.

I like the words of Ray Stedman who wrote, "The interesting thing is that 30 centuries after David wrote these words we feel the same impression when we consider the starry heavens. Though we are now able to go to the moon, which David could only see, yet all the knowledge that has been gained about the universe in which we live only serves to deepen our impression of the tremendous wisdom and power of God. How vast is the universe in which we live! © Ray Stedman: Psalms of Praise pg. 32 © 1988, Regal Books

Verse 4 What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

In verse 3, as we examined the heavens, the stars, and the moon, we felt how truly insignificant man must be, and we have to agree with David in verse 4 – **What is man that God is mindful of him?** In comparison with the vast universe, what is man? A speck, an infinitesimal bit of dust.

Why should God pay any attention to him? Not