

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 4.14.2024

PSALM 8 - HOW MAJESTIC IS YOUR NAME

I. INTRODUCTION

Psalm 8:1-9

To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David.

1 O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

you have established strength because of your foes,

to still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,

the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

4 what is man that you are mindful of him,

and the son of man that you care for him?

5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings

and crowned him with glory and honor.

6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;

you have put all things under his feet,

7 all sheep and oxen,

and also the beasts of the field,

8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,

whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

9 O Lord, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

- The superscription attributes this psalm to David.
- Psalm 8 is a hymn psalm, it celebrates God's glory and rehearses who He is and what He has done.
- While the majority of verses have to do with man, man is not the central theme of this psalm.
- The psalm begins and ends with God himself.
- The overriding theme is "How majestic is your name in all the earth!"
- This praise statement bookends the psalm. God's glory is the central theme.

II. GOD IS ABOVE AND GLORIOUS

- David, as a shepherd, would have almost every night observed God's wondrous heavens and that set him to thinking about God's glory in the heavens and on the earth—as he records in this psalm.
- David begins with praising the Lord.
- 1 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!
- David addresses God as Lord, using the name of Israel's faithful covenant God—Yahweh.
- Then he adds, "our Lord", this time using the name "Adonai."
- That is the name the Israelites called God which speaks of his sovereignty.
- He is Israel's Sovereign, the King of all of God's people.

- The importance of God's name--His name stands for everything about his character, everything he has revealed about himself to his people.
- Majesty is a royal attribute. What God has revealed about himself is majestic.
- And this revelation of the Lord is that he is "majestic in all the earth."
- Wherever you look on earth, you will see this revelation of the Lord's majesty.

- But now the focus shifts from the earth to the heavens.
- You have set your glory above the heavens.
- The Hebrew word we translate as "glory" means "weightiness or heaviness."
- The glory of the Lord refers to the weight of all that the Lord is—His value, worth, and importance.
- And David writes that God's glory surpasses that of the heavens, it is above the heavens.
- David is saying that nothing is more glorious than God. Nothing is higher than the glory of God.
- Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.
- The lesser glory, the heavens, declares the greater glory, the Lord's.
- Creation expresses his glory, reveals his existence, wisdom, and mighty power.
- But it is only a limited and partial revelation of the surpassing glory of its Creator.
- Psalm 148:13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven.

- This is why all men and women everywhere are commanded to praise the Lord.
- It is what is rightly due to the only One of supreme worth.
- If his glory is set above the heavens, then it would seem as if nothing under the heavens can adequately praise the Lord.

- Yet that is the very thing that man has the privilege of doing.
- It is our responsibility to praise God. Praise is what the creature owes to the Creator.

III. MAN IS BELOW AND GLORIOUS

- David's contemplation of God's handiwork in the heavens, God's act of creation, which he calls, "the work of your fingers," leads him to be struck by the insignificance of man in the grand scheme of things.
- In this vast framework of creation, man is small by comparison.
- 4 what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?
- David is overwhelmed and astonished that the God of this majestic universe, the God of all Creation, should condescend to think about us and to care for us.
- What are human beings is a fundamental existential question.
- What are we in the midst of this vast cosmos?
- What this psalm does is ground anthropology within its proper theological and metaphysical place.
- God is Creator and man is his creature.
- And God has given man a very special value and place in his creation.
- *"What are we to you, O Lord? That is what David is meditating upon.*
- That is the thought that overtakes him as he contemplates the Lord's handiwork in creation.

MANKIND'S EXALTATION

- Why is God mindful of us? Why does he personally care for us?
- David rehearses what he knows from the Creation account.
- As his creatures, God has given human beings, these tiny little specks of dust in an expansive and seemingly infinite universe, a significance and honor above everything else that God has created.
- David makes this point in two prominent ways.
- First, he writes, Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.
- Notice he uses the word "glory" which he used of God.
- Yet God has crowned man with glory and honor.
- This is the same royal language used to describe God. This identifies man with God.
- Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
- Why has mankind been crowned with glory and honor?
- Why do human beings have inherent worth and value?
- It is because we bear the image of God.
- We reflect God's glory in a way that nothing else in creation does.
- God, in his infinite wisdom, made us to reflect his glory.
- Something about us tells us something about God.
- We will never understand human beings unless we see them as God's special creation, as the crown and pinnacle of his creation.
- David says God has made us "a little lower than the heavenly beings."
- The reference is likely to the angels. The Hebrew term, "elohim" is used, which is the plural form of god.
- This is generally used in reference to the heavenly host.
- We were made midway between the angels of heaven and the beasts below.

- But we see in Genesis 1:26, ("The God said...") the word Elohim is used speaking of God's determination to make man in his image and after his likeness.
- David is linking men and women to God, being slightly less than him in whose image they are made.
- David did not write under the inspiration of the Spirit that we have been "made a little higher than the beasts."
- We are closer to God than we are to animals.
- Wilson in his commentary on the Psalms writes, *"Humans have been catapulted far beyond their seeming weakness and insignificance—not by any value of their own but simply by the action of a free divine choice and grace that causes the human jaw to drop and the mind to reel."*
- Second, David writes that man has been given a special responsibility as a reason as to why God is mindful of us and cares for us.
- V6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet,
- Man has ruling authority over God's creation.
- That is man's role as ruler over the world and all of its creatures.
- This is another way we share in God's likeness. Rulership is something normally ascribed to God.
- Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
- Man's dominion was to be an extension of God's glory.
- It is the way we represent God in the world.
- As God's vice-regents, man was to subdue the earth and make it like the rest of the garden paradise.
- Authority was given to man over everything on planet earth.
- But here's what we must never forget. It is not dominion to do whatever we please.
- Our dominion corresponds to and is subordinate to the rule of the Creator.
- We are supposed to use our dominion over creatures and creation in a way that serves the Lord's purposes.

MANKIND'S FALL

- Unfortunately, we know that man committed cosmic treason.
- The image of God in man is fractured because of man's sin and rebellion.
- Creation was subjected to frustration and futility.
- Death entered into God's good world.
- The earth was cursed and man's work would become exceedingly difficult.
- And because of sin, man's worship would turn inward and downward. Worship was corrupted.
- Rather than worshipping the Creator, rather than seeing all of creation point to the surpassing glory of the only Sovereign, mankind exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things (Romans 1:21-23).
- They exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! (Romans 1:25).
- The result of all of this is the dishonoring of our bodies, the devaluing of human life, sexual distortion and deviancy, and human depravity.
- The result of this is abusing the power and rulership and dominion given to us by God to suppress, and control, and lord over people in an ungodly way.

MANKIND'S HOPE

- The importance of man to God in creation, the crowning glory of his creation, sets the stage for God's glorious work to redeem man after the fall.
 - The salvation of man is proof of God's love, care, and concern for man.
 - What does God do in man's sinful and rebellious state?
 - God sends the true and perfect image-bearer, the true man, the second Adam, the true image of God.
 - Hebrews 1:1-4 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. 3 He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.
 - God takes the initiative, in an act of pure grace, to rescue humanity.
 - He was "made a little lower than the angels," in his incarnation, becoming like us, but he is "superior to the angels and his name more excellent than theirs."
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- 2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.
 - In the midst of the splendor of creation and the glory of God that surpasses the heavens, God has enemies that have set themselves against Him and against the Lord's anointed as we saw in Ps 2:1-2.
 - David references the weakest and frailest humans among us, babies and infants and he declares that God will silence his seemingly strong enemies by the praises from the weakest of all.
 - The chorus of praise raised by his redeemed children will silence the clamor of the wicked.
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- We see v2 fulfilled in the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.
 - Matthew 21:15-16 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, 16 and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, "'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise'?"
 - The chief priests and teachers of the law knew the meaning of this Psalm.
 - They knew Jesus was designating them as the enemies of the Lord and His anointed.
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- The writer of Hebrews points to this Psalms ultimate fulfillment in Christ.
 - Hebrews 2:5-10 For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. 6 It has been testified somewhere, "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? 7 You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, 8 putting everything in subjection under his feet." Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. 9 But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and

by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

- Heaven came to earth, God became a man in the person of Jesus.
- God who made us in his image, was made into our image.
- The God who is mindful of us also became like one of us.
- The one who is the Almighty came as a frail baby.
- The God whose glory surpasses the heavens, tasted death for us, and is now crowned in glory and honor.
- He laid his crown down in his incarnation, so that we could be exalted and lifted up.
- How much does God care for and love us?
- He gave his only Son, to taste death on our behalf, to bring many sons to glory.

- This psalm calls us as God's people to remember and rejoice in God's magnificent and beautiful work of creation.
- We must remember our intended role and calling to care for God's creation as God's vice-regents.
- And as God's image-bearers, we exist to glorify God, reflect his glory, and make his glory known to the ends of the earth.
- This psalm reinforces our understanding of man and his relation to God and his place in creation.
- We should always champion the value and dignity of human life.
- We should actively combat the lies of the world concerning man's inherent worth and identity as God's crowning glory of creation.

- The psalm ends as it began.
- Yet our understanding of the ground of praising the Lord has shifted from the first verse to the last.
- At the beginning, our praise began by affirming the surpassing majesty and glory of the Creator.
- At the end, we stand in awe of the unexpected grace that has elevated his human works to unimaginable heights of glory, honor, and responsibility; sharing God's image, and in Christ, to share in his divine nature.
- We lift our voices in praise, joining the chorus of the redeemed, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?