

# Song of the Year

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] All right? Good. Good. Good to be with you again. Yeah, I was supposed to be here last November and then I got sick and I had to cancel out. And I want to thank those of you who knew about it. And I know there were those of you who prayed for me. And I want to say thank you. Recovery was hard. It took a while. I'm doing well now.

But it is very good to be back with you today. And a special surprise is one of my high school classmates is here. That was great. Good to see him again, too.

Thank you. This morning, I'd like to share with you from the book of Psalms, Psalm 8. And I don't know, was this going to be up on the screen? Okay, okay. I'm using the English Standard Version and maybe this is what that is.

But I want to make sure that before I begin that I give acknowledgement to the help that I receive from the thoughts of Dr. Scott Hosey and Dr. Stan Mast, who are pastors but also professors. Some of their thoughts that helped me to prepare this lesson, this scripture passage. So, in our church, we have this practice that when the word of God is read, we stand. And I'd ask you today to stand, please, as we read God's word together.

[ 1 : 3 6 ] O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what's man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you've made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You may have a seat. Will you join me in prayer as we begin?

[ 2 : 4 7 ] Our dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. And we thank you for the book of Psalms. Lord, these passages that we read here in this psalm, they strike to our innermost being.

The psalmists, all those that have written these songs and laments, Lord, it's coming from their heart. They're opening up their heart to you.

And Lord, as we think about Psalm 8 today, we pray that our hearts will be open to, that Lord, the thoughts, the emotions that are within us will also come out.

And that we will feel free to express them to you, knowing that you want to hear from us. Lord, bless us as we study your word together today.

For Jesus' sake, amen. Amen. So, we have just, and maybe we're not completely through it yet. This is kind of the award season.

[ 4 : 0 3 ] You know, the entertainment industry with the Oscars and the Tonys and the Emmys and all those, right? And one of the awards that's given out is Song of the Year.

We see that in the Grammys and in the country music. Not that I watch any of those, but I looked it up yesterday that Song of the Year in the Grammys was by Billie Eilish, Wildflower.

I don't know what it was all about, but Song of the Year. And I would like to have us think that Psalm 8, that this could be the church's Song of the Year.

I'll show you a little bit why I think that. When you read this psalm, what's the first thing that catches your attention? It's the refrain, right?

Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. It begins the psalm and it ends the psalm.

[ 5 : 21 ] And it frames everything that's in between. But I think to understand this psalm, we've got to be able to picture in our minds David, the psalmist.

And I want you to see David as the shepherd, composing this song out in the field at night while he's watching the sheep.

There's total darkness. There's no light pollution. Well, maybe there's a fire behind him to keep him warm, to cook his supper. But the sheep are put away for the night.

Maybe he gets around behind a rock so that that fire doesn't interfere. But he looks up into the heavens. And there's nothing to block the beauty of the stars and maybe the moon.

See his heart. It's filled with praise. It's contemplating God as he sits there in his aloneness. And yet he's not alone.

[ 6 : 28 ] He's with his heavenly father. He's in communion with his God. And he begins and he ends this time of devotion with this refrain of praise.

Maybe some of you have had that same experience. Maybe you've been to a place where there is no artificial light and you can see the stars so clearly.

There are places like that. Or how about the northern lights? I know nowadays with the cell phones it's incredible what colors we can see.

But maybe you can remember a time like me where you saw him with the naked eye. You just out. For me, I was out in the field.

And suddenly you just see the light shooting up into the sky and different colors. I saw it yet a couple months ago.

[ 7 : 33 ] I stepped outside at night. I could see it with the naked eye. But maybe it's a sunset that sets your heart on fire.

The colors as the sun sinks into the horizon. For me, it's a sunrise. We have an east-facing window in our house.

And I love to be able to sit there on a clear day and watch the sun pop up over the horizon. I did it this morning. And it's even better if you're outside to watch it.

You know, I was in November. I was hospitalized for about a week. It was the first time I'd ever been in the hospital overnight.

And I could not sleep well. So there were times, a couple of mornings anyway, where I got up before it was light out. And I went and sat in a recliner by the window.

[ 8 : 35 ] And I was blessed to have an east-facing window. And I could watch the sun come up. I was in Fond du Lac Hospital, so I could see the sun come up over the ledge.

It's a great way to start the day. David sings, Lord, our Lord. If we look at the Hebrew names for God that David is using, he's singing, Yahweh, our Adonai.

Yahweh, our covenant God, whose name is so holy that I almost dare not speak. But the one who lives us.

The one who promises everything to us and keeps those promises. Who provides for us. Yet, is our Adonai, our Lord, our Master.

But yet we serve Him willingly. Because there is joy in serving our God. And we willingly devote ourselves to Him.

[ 9 : 46 ] How majestic is your name. Your name. Your reputation. You are the King.

And it shows in everything. Everything about you and everything that you do. This is a great psalm. To lead us in worship.

Not only today. But every day of our lives. There's two things that stand out in David's Jewish mind. That cause him to bring on this outburst of praise. First of all, it's the wonder of creation and the vastness of the heavens.

And remember, he only had his naked eyes. He knew nothing of the galaxies and the galaxies of stars and moons and planets beyond what he could see. But David is praising God for his bigness.

[ 10 : 53 ] The glory of the nighttime sky proclaims God's bigness. His greatness. And that was very important to the Jewish people.

How big their God was. They had all these pagan nations around them. And they had a God for this and a God for that and a God for the other thing.

The Jews had one God. One creator God. Who reigned and ruled over everything. But they often found themselves needing to be reminded of that.

And we do too. In the catechism classes that I've taught over the years. And I've taught high school kids.

And especially when we study the doctrines of grace. I asked the kids. How big do you want your God to be? Do you want a God that you can put in a box and carry with you wherever you go?

[12:03] Or do you want a God who shows enough of himself. That we can believe in him. That we can trust in him. That we can follow him.

And yet there is so much more that within our human minds we can't fully comprehend. You see our world wants definition.

It wants boundaries. And if there's something that goes beyond those boundaries that we can't quite understand. Well then our world is skeptic of it.

He wants that definition. But there's so much of our God that can't be defined. We believe by faith. And we live by faith. And we're going to touch on that a little more in a little bit. But notice also.

Where David says. This big God.

[13:05] Receives his honor. It's out of the mouths of babies. And infants. Out of the weak. And the unexpected. God shows his strength.

And receives his praise. It's always. The opposite of what our world expects. Secondly. What impresses the psalmist.

Is that this big God. Cares about little man. Verse 4. What is man? That you are mindful of him.

And the son of man. That you care for him. Against that. That great vastness of the heavens. Sits the tiny shepherd. Yet he knows.

Deep within his very being. That God. Cares. For him. How? How does he know that? You know.

[14:02] Through the centuries. Men have studied the heavens. And they've studied the laws of nature. That God has set in place. And many have concluded that.

God doesn't care about man. He set the universe. He created it. He set it into motion. And. Then he just. Step back.

To watch it spin off. The deists. Of the 17th. And the 18th centuries. Many of whom. Were the founders. Of our country. They held to that kind of a belief.

God created. And gave men. This earth. And now it's up to them. To do something with it. And today. With our.

Our powerful telescopes. We're able to see. Deep. Deeper. Into the universe. And there are some who question. If there is a God.

[15:00] Does he really pay attention. To this speck of dirt. We live on. They want proof. They don't realize.

What David. What the psalmist. Realized. That the more. God gives. In. In revealing. How great he is. How limitless he is.

The more. Our trust. Grows in him. The point is. It's a revealed thing. Revealed.

Not necessarily. By. The physical. Evidence. But revealed. By the Holy Spirit. The Spirit. Gives the ability.

To see. See through the evidence. Of creation. But to be able to. That God. Cares. For his people. And that's why.

[15:56] Those. Who don't have. The Spirit of God. Opening their eyes. And opening their hearts. They're unable. To see. God's providence. They won't be able to.

Because it is. A measure. Of faith. David goes on. To say. That. Because God.

Made man. Just a little lower. Than the heavenly beings. He also crowns man. With glory. And honor. He comes. To men and women.

In their lives. And he makes them. Princes. And princesses. To rule over. Everything that he has made. That's part of what.

We call. Being created. In the image of God. Be able to rule. To steward. The creation.

[16:53] That God has made. That's something. The animal kingdom. Does not have. God. Notice too. The mindfulness. Of God. What does David mean.

By that. Think of it. This way. How many of us. Here. Watch. Television. With.

A laptop. On our lap. Or. One step further. Watching television. Laptop. On our lap. And the phone. On the arm.

Of the chair. Come on. Okay. I know my wife. Is the only one. We.

Are so. Distracted. There's so. Many things. To pull. Our attention. Away. So that. At times. We.

[ 17 : 48 ] Forget. Where we are. Or. Where we should be. To be mindful. Is to be focused. Concentrating. On just one thing.

And when David. Wrote this. He was focused. Focused. On his God. But when he thought. About the mindfulness. Of God. He was thinking.

Of God's focus. On each one. Of his people. Our God. Is so big. That even. As he controls. Every aspect.

Of the universe. That he's created. He is able. To be laser. Focused. On the relationship. That he has. With each one. Of his children. And he doesn't listen.

With just. Half an ear. Or looking over. Our shoulder. As we're talking to him. How great. The God. We serve. But how can this message.

[ 18 : 49 ] Of Psalm 8. Direct us. As we look. To this week. As we look. To this month. As we look. To this year. Or. Beyond.

I'd like to explore. Briefly. Three ways. A more peaceful life. A more purposeful life. And a more praiseful. Life.

So first of all. A peaceful life. We're never alone. God promises. Never to leave us. And he keeps that promise. Now there are those.

Who think. That that paints God. As a stalker. And it makes them. Uncomfortable. And. Maybe that's because. Of some guilt. That they can't. Just can't let go of. But our God.

Is not a stalker. Nor is he. An overprotective parent. But he is one. Who gives his children. Room to grow. While never leaving our side.

[ 19 : 51 ] Does that mean. That we will. Never feel like that. God is sometimes distant. Will we suddenly be free. Of all of our. Is he. No.

Those feelings. Are going to continue. To plague us. But as we walk. Each day. As we seek. To trust him more. As we. Ask. For the Holy Spirit's help.

We will be strengthened. And God. Will shine through. He will. Make himself. Evident. It. You see. Just excuse me a minute.

You see. God's desire. For our relationship. With him. Is to be one of shalom. One of wholeness. And completeness. And he's going to bring it.

In spite of our circumstances. Or our situation. But we also need to seek it. And we need to seek it. With. With patience.

[ 20 : 55 ] And with humility. It's not like. Okay God. I'm ready now. Send it in. Drop it on me. No.

It's more a matter of. Heavenly Father. I don't deserve this. I don't deserve. Your blessings. I don't deserve.

Your love. I don't deserve. To be one of your children. But I'm trusting in you. To keep your promise. Even as I struggle. With my impatience. It was a lesson. That I had to learn. When I was recovering. And I'm sure.

That many of you here. Have been through. Things like that. With chronic sickness. Or chronic pain. Or things that just. Trouble that just hangs on.

[ 21 : 56 ] But God wants us. To experience. Wholeness. And completeness. Even when the pain. Makes it. Hard to see. But then we have to go back.

We have to go back. To David's understanding. Of God's care. We talked about it. As being a revealed thing. Though the physical evidence.

Points in the opposite direction. God's spirit. By faith. Points us to trust. In God's promises. Now I know.

That sounds trite. Especially if you're the one. That's experiencing the pain. But we're called. To hang in there.

To persevere. Hold on to Jesus. Hold on to his promises. And also.

[ 22 : 57 ] Hold on to each other. We are a community. Of believers. And we need. To hold on to each other.

To help us through. Those difficult. Situations. Understanding. The bigness. Of our God.

Also helps us. To view the troubles. Of our world. The wars that continue. To destroy lives. And property. The dire warnings.

Of gloom. And doom. The greed. And the violence. That plague our society. We can be overcome. With fear. Yet God continues.

To show his influence. His image. Continues to be reflected. In the lives of mankind. And not just. In God's own children.

[ 23 : 55 ] There's still. A little image of God. In humans. In humans. Even those. That don't know God. That's why. When. When the need is great.

Compassion. Is shown. When there's storms. When there's floods. When. Whatever it is. And there's people. Who need help.

The body of believers. Steps out. Other. Mankind. Does as well. When. When. When we keep hearing. These things. Of doom.

And gloom. God provides. Ingenuity. To human beings. So that solutions. Are found.

And when. Injustice. Is uncovered. God's people.

[ 24 : 50 ] Are usually the first ones. To point it out. And to crusade. For justice. And bring others. Along with them. God.

Continues. To show. His influence. Even in this. Fallen world. And we've all. Got a part in that. Because God.

Cares for us. Our lives. Have. Purpose. Second point. Purposeful life. God. Chooses. To work. Through.

The lives. Of his people. And we can. Move forward. Facing the future. Becoming. The rulers. That God. Wants us to be. Truly living out.

The image. Of the creator. The spirit. But what does it look like? First of all. It involves. Using the gifts.

[ 25 : 44 ] And the abilities. And the talents. That the spirit. Has given us. To use for God's kingdom. And for the good of others. We all have different gifts. God gives.

Every one of us. An opportunity. To use them. You know. In our church too. There's opportunities. To serve.

To reach out. To our community. To serve within the body. But also. To serve the greater body. Outside. And I know your church. Has the same thing. I remember.

When I first. Started coming. Here. Still worshipping. In the other end. Over there. And you would. Talk about. You had a mission. I think it was.

To homeless. That were living. In a hotel. You would. On a Sunday night. You brought supper. To them. And witness to them. And talked with them. I thought. Wow. That was a great ministry.

[ 26 : 40 ] I don't know. If you're still doing it. But. That was fantastic. I was. That was great. But there are opportunities. God puts them. In front of us. He wants us.

To use the gifts. That he has given us. We just have to be open. To them. We have to be looking. For them. To them. And not be afraid.

But be willing. To step out. You know. David sings. Of God. Having. Crowned mankind. With glory and honor.

What does that mean? Well it involves. The glory and honor. That God deserves. And which we give to him. Being turned back.

By God. On those who follow him. Some examples. Someone takes food. To another. Who is unable to prepare food.

[ 27 : 38 ] For themselves. There's a crown of glory. In her head. Someone takes the time. To listen. To. Or to give attention. To someone.

Who wants. And needs. To be heard. There's a crown of glory. On his head. Someone takes the time. To fix. Or repair.

Or make a repair. That another can't do. Or can't afford to do. For themselves. There's a crown of glory. On his head. One. And one more.

And I saw this. At a high school. Basketball game. There was a player. Who was dribbling the ball. Along the baseline.

Under his own basket. And he lost his balance. And he fell out of bounds. But as he was falling.

[ 28 : 36 ] He threw the ball. Back in. But he threw it into. An opposing player's. Hands. Who immediately took it. And threw it to one of his teammates.

To start a fast break. But the player. Who caught the ball. Rather than. Then joining his teammates. In a five on four. Fast break. The first thing he did.

Was reach down. And pull the opposing player. Back up on the floor. And then he ran down together. There was a crown of glory. On his head.

And I'm sure you can think of. More examples. Is the crown. Our goal. To feel it. Resting on our head. No.

The goal instead. Is to mirror. The love of Jesus. In all that we do. And that crown. Appears as a result. So a peaceful.

[ 29 : 40 ] Life. A purposeful life. And then finally. But not any less. Significant. A praiseful life.

Because God cares for us. Because he's focused on us. Our lives. Our lives. Can be filled with praise. As we look to the future. David recognizes this.

As he sits in the quiet. And reflects. The greatness of his God. He considers. The vastness of the heavens. He considers. His own littleness. And he considers.

How God raises his people. Out of that smallness. To be rulers. Over all that he's made. And then David's thoughts. In those final verses. Of Psalm 8. They take into account.

The whole of the animal kingdom. I mean that was what he was familiar with. How he was ruling over. All of the animal kingdom. And then.

[ 30 : 39 ] He's just overwhelmed. And he shouts praises. To his heavenly father. What are we going to do? Will we take the time.

From our busyness. To allow ourselves. Time to focus on. The greatness of our God. We need those times. Of mindfulness. As much as David did.

Our Lord Jesus. Has reached into. Our littleness. He gives us peace. To know that. That we're redeemed. And that we.

Are loved. He gives purpose. To our lives. So that we know. That we have a place. In his kingdom. And a place. At his table. We can't help.

But offer our voices. In praise. Just like David. But wait. God's greatest display. Of his mindfulness.

[ 31 : 38 ] Of his focus. And of his love. Has been shown to us. In what we. We've just celebrated. Good Friday. Resurrection Sunday.

And go back. Even further. To Christmas itself. We've been talking about. How God. Raises us. From our littleness.

To become rulers. That he wants us to be. But his greatest gift. Was Jesus. Coming to join us. In our littleness.

The great God of heaven. Becoming little. Like us. Philippians 2.

Verses 5 to 11. Puts it this way. Have this in mind. Have this mind. Among yourselves. Which is yours. In Christ Jesus. Who though he was in the form of God.

[ 32 : 35 ] Did not count equality with God. A thing to be grasped. But made himself nothing. Taking the form of a servant. Being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form.

He humbled himself. By becoming obedient to the point of death. Even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him. And bestowed on him. The name that is above every name.

So that the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow. In heaven. And on earth. And under the earth. And every tongue. Confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord.

To the glory of God the Father. And all God's people said. Amen. O Lord.

Our Lord. How majestic is your name. In all the earth. May that be our song. As we look ahead.

[ 33 : 32 ] To tomorrow. To this week. Or to the coming year. May this be. Our song of the year. For 26. And for however long.

Our Lord tarries. Until he comes again. Will you join me in prayer. Our dear Heavenly Father. We thank you again.

For your word. And we thank you. For the challenge. That you have given to us. To trust in you. Knowing that you are.

Our king. Our Lord. The one who is overall. And yet cares. About each one of us. Individually. Knows. Knows us better than we know ourselves.

And the challenge Lord. Is to trust you. And then to serve you. To carry on the work of your kingdom. In this world. To see those opportunities.

[ 34 : 33 ] Where we can be used. By you. Fill us with your spirit. We pray. Open our eyes. Open our hearts. Lord we want to be used.

For Jesus sake. Amen. Amen. Amen.