

# Psalm 8

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[ 0 : 00 ] Let us turn now to the book of Psalms and Psalm number 8. The book of Psalms and Psalm number 8. In the ESV, that's on page 540.

Psalm 8 and the book of Psalms. O Lord, O 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 is man that you are mindful of him?

And the son of man that you care for him. Yet you have 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 all the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea.

[ 1 : 22 ] Whatever passes along the paths of the sea. O Lord, O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. O Lord, O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

As we know, David was quite simply a genius. And his writing, his poetic writing, is in many ways unsurpassed.

Now, of course, we know that David was inspired. But even so, David takes us often into heights. And we cannot read the Psalms of David without often being filled with awe.

As we comprehend something of the glory and the majesty of God. And this certainly is this type of Psalm. Because you cannot read this Psalm without being filled with a sense of awe and wonder. At how great and how majestic, as David begins by saying, How majestic is your name in all the earth. And as we look at this Psalm, we see God as the God of creation.

[ 2 : 33 ] The God of providence. The God of grace. The God of redemption. We see, in fact, it's a very short Psalm. And yet it is so full that it really governs and covers everything that we can find.

Now, I don't know when David penned this Psalm. We're not told. And there are a few Psalms that we do know something of the background to them. And it's always interesting when you can have a little idea of the background to anything.

And I have no idea exactly when David penned this particular Psalm. But you could imagine, to a certain extent, that there would be something of sitting out in a field at night.

And looking up into the vast expanse of the blanket of stars just all sparkling there. And seeing that this is just a little touch of what God has done.

And I'm sure there are times that we also have looked up at the starry sky. Particularly if you're out in the country and away from streetlights. And you're out where there are no distractions or lights anywhere.

[ 3 : 45 ] And you look up one of these clear, frosty nights sometimes. And the stars are so clear. And you look at them and you're aware that this is something that speaks to us of the finger of God.

Of the glory of God. And side by side with that we're brought to see something of our own insignificance. Because sometimes we think an awful lot of ourselves. And we pride ourselves. We lift ourselves up. And sometimes we think more of ourselves than we ought to. And then sometimes you look up and you think, What is man? Who am I? In relation to this vast universe. And when you look at the sky you realize you're only seeing but just a little tip as it were of the iceberg. Maybe it was an anocation like that. That as David was looking up.

That his heart was overwhelmed. And maybe it was something like that. I don't know. But anyway we find that as David is reflecting upon the glory and the majesty of God.

[ 4 : 49 ] That his pen goes to write. As we know inspired. His spirit inspired. And David says, O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

You have set your glory above the heavens. Now we've always got to remember that the heavens and the earth belong to the Lord. Everything about it. This world that we live in, we've got to remember that this world belongs to the Lord.

We are here. We are given time. We are given our life here. But we are, as it were, stewards. We are accountable. We are responsible before God. And it's something we ought to be thinking about. Because if we do that, it will affect how we live.

It will affect our relationships, one with another. It will affect our work ethic. It will affect everything about what we do. When we realize that we are here by the authority of God.

[ 5 : 56 ] To ultimately to reflect his glory. To live to his glory. And for his glory. And I think it's very important for us to keep coming back to that.

Because we're so often caught up with our self. And our own wee world. And how our world affects me. And what's in it for me. Instead of realizing, yes, don't forget ourselves.

But ultimately, we are here because of him. And we are here for his glory. Now, we find that this world which the Lord has made.

Is reflecting something of himself. And he made this world for his own glory. He took pleasure in it. He delighted in it.

This is something that, like our master craft. In fact, we read in Genesis chapter 1. And into the very beginning of Genesis chapter 2. And we find that the Lord at the end.

[ 7 : 01 ] On the seventh day. That he rested from all his work. And it's like our master craftsman. Having finished the work.

He is resting. And he is reflecting upon all that he has done. After each time, we find him saying, The Lord said it was very good. But there is such a sense of satisfaction on the seventh day.

When it's all completed. And he's looking at this finished work. Perfect. Perfect. And of course, we know that this is part of what makes the Lord's Day.

Which we celebrate. Which we remember every seventh day. The first day of the week. Which now is in New Testament times. Again, we always remember. It speaks to us.

Yes, it speaks to us of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. And his finished work. But we see, first of all, of God's finished work in creation.

[ 8 : 03 ] And so the heavens and the earth speak to us of the glory of God. Now, again we see the wisdom of God in everything. We see the power of God in everything.

Think of just the wisdom of God. We take so much for granted. Just look, for instance, at the grass. Imagine if grass was red. Or purple.

And you'd say to yourself, well that's a bit absurd. Because we're used to grass being green. But one of the beautiful things, as you know, about the like of the grass. It's green. Is green is so restful on the eye.

We talk about the 40 shades of green. And it's true. Sometimes, maybe we don't have so much green in the islands here. But often when you go to the mainland, and there are areas there where just vast expanses of greenery.

And between the shrubs and the leaves and the trees and the green in the fields. And they're all different shades. And you say to yourself, yes there are 40 shades of green. Can you imagine if grass was red?

[ 9 : 09 ] How harsh it would be. How jarring it would be upon our eyes. But the Lord in his wisdom has made everything right. He has made everything perfect. Even in this fallen world, we're able to acknowledge and see the wonder of it.

And so, everything is reflecting the wisdom, the power of this great creator God. As he made everything with intricate precision.

And I think the more that people study the sciences and delve into biology and anatomy and chemistry and physics, the more they will come to understand and marvel at how amazing this world is that we live in.

And so, the psalmist says, O Lord, O Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. And as we look around the earth, we should have this.

We should be seeing God in everything. God in nature. God is full. In everywhere you look, we ought to be seeing the hand of God.

[ 10 : 19 ] You have set your glory above the heavens. Now, the Jews used to talk of three heavens. There was the first heavens where the birds flew, which is fairly close to us.

And then there was the heavens, the starry heavens, away this expanse, away beyond us. And then they talked about heaven as the abode of God, what would be termed as the third heaven. But the glory of God is in all this and beyond all this. The heaven of heavens, we're told, cannot contain him.

And then David, he says in verse 3, When I look at your fingers, when I look at the, sorry, when I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place. And again, here we see something of the artistry of our creator God. We know of that.

[11:17] We were singing that in Psalm 89. Thou hast an arm that's full of power. Thy hand is great in might. But here it comes to the finger of God.

And it's here we're seeing almost the precision and the artistry as God makes with precision, with exactness, minutely, everything, the intricacy of everything.

And I'm sure there are times even if you were to dissect a flower, when you begin to examine the human body bit by bit, it's quite extraordinary how it's all pieced together, all tied together, all working together.

And this is what the Lord as the master craftsman has done. When I look at the heavens, the work of your fingers. Something of great beauty.

That's what the idea that we have here. The moon and the stars, which you have set in place. Remember that God has set everything in place. It's not random.

[12:25] It cannot be. If the sun had been set in a different place, we would fry, we would frassle, we would burn up. If it had been set further back, we would freeze.

Everything has been set in its right place. God is a God of order. He has set everything perfectly in place.

And he upholds everything by the word of his power. Let us stop for one moment and reflect upon this God.

Here is this creator God who has made everything, who controls everything, who rules over everything. Let me ask you, first and foremost, is this God your God?

Tonight, let me ask you, do you worship this God? Do you serve this God? You know, we've got to serve somebody. It doesn't matter who you are.

[13:22] It doesn't matter where you are. Everybody serves somebody. Some people serve themselves. Some people serve systems and philosophies and ideologies.

Some people, their life is governed by other people. We're always serving somebody. We might not realize it, but we do.

I hope you're serving the living God. There is no one greater that you could serve.

There is nobody greater you could follow. There is nobody greater that you can bow down before and worship. Indeed, to bow down and worship before any other is idolatry.

But let me also ask the question. Again, as you go through life, and I'll speak just now to those who are following the Lord, let me ask a very basic question here.

[14:17] When we're reflecting here upon the greatness, the majesty, the power, the glory, the dominion, the authority of God, Lord, do you spend your life going to the Lord and saying, right, Lord, please, will you do this for me?

Will you do that for me? Will you do the next? This is what I want to do. Will you help me with this? Will you help me with that? Will you help me? Lord, this is what I'm going to do. Or do you go to the Lord and say to the Lord, Lord, show me today what to do.

Lord, here I am as your servant. Because, again, it's coming back to this idea that so often we're caught up with ourselves. Now, don't get me wrong.

Of course we go to the Lord with all our problems, with all our needs, in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving. Let your requests be made known unto God.

Of course we do. But we should be going to the Lord and saying, Lord, lead me. Guide me. I want to be your servant.

[15:21] I want to do your will in this world. And God will lead us. God will direct us. So that we are doing what he wants us to do, rather than us going to him and saying, well, Lord, this is what I want to do.

A, B, C, D. Please, this is the way it's got to be. Because we'll find, as you go through the Bible, and you look at the lives of God's people, it's always the Lord that leads his people.

That is the right way. And the Lord shows us. The Lord, and he always leads us according to his word. He always directs us according to his truth. So it's imperative that we are seeking to follow, obey, and serve this great God.

What a wonderful creator. And then David, as he is thinking about the greatness and the majesty and the glory of God. Then he turns back and he says, what is man that you are mindful of him? Isn't that extraordinary? Have you ever thought about this? What if I'm so small that God misses me out?

[ 16 : 36 ] What if God forgets about me? Sometimes we can feel so insignificant. We would say, well, surely the Lord isn't too concerned about me.

You know, sometimes we can get crippled like that and think, how can the Lord take time with someone like me? And in a sense, David is overwhelmed with his thought, but he knows that God is mindful of him.

And that's quite an extraordinary thought, that for every single one of us, God is mindful of us. He's thinking about us.

And in fact, it goes beyond being mindful of us. It tells us, what is man that you are mindful of him? And the son of man that you care for him.

Now, can you imagine what this world would be like? Now, of course, it cannot be. But many people live as if there is no God.

[ 17 : 45 ] I would hate to think that God doesn't care for me. I would hate to think that God was never mindful of me.

And yet there are loads of people who live out their life every single day. And they never think of God. And they don't care whether God cares for them or God is mindful of them.

And they don't realize what they're not thinking by living in that particular way. But what emptiness. What futility. What hopelessness.

And you know, that's... When you take God out of the equation, life becomes... Life really becomes meaningless. What is man that you are mindful of him?

And the son of man that you care for him? You see, you have made him... We'll see this in a moment. You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings. A little lower than the angels. In fact, the word here is into the very name of God.

[ 18 : 50 ] And crowned him with glory and honor. Because we read there that man was made in the image of God. Now, this raises all kinds of issues and questions.

Because if you take God out of the equation, then nothing has any meaning at all. It takes human rights.

We talked today, there's so much spoken about human rights. Humans have no right if you take God out of the equation. They have no right more than a jellyfish.

They have no right more than a stone. They have no right more than a plant. Everything has its own rights if we follow down that road and take God out of the equation.

Each thing has its own right. So that the animal world, the animals and the fish and the birds have every bit as much right as a human.

[ 19 : 51 ] We have no right. One person has no right over another. And that puts an end to all ideas of racism or ageism or sexism or any of these things.

It puts an end to morality and ethics and everything. How can there be if there is no God? If there is no absolute right and wrong? It leaves the whole universe in a total mess.

And I cannot. I sometimes try to come from another direction, another angle and say, where do they come? Where do they make a purpose and meaning of anything if there is no God?

Because at the end of the day, nothing is worthwhile. This world, even atheists will agree with it. This world can't keep going. And everything is going to fade out.

And that will mean at the end of the day, if there is no God, nothing has ever meant anything. And no wonder Solomon wrote, as he looked at life, taking God out of the picture, and he said, vanity of vanities.

[ 20 : 58 ] All is vanity. But thankfully, that's not how it is. And it's little wonder, but there is so much despair and despondency in society when people are living as if there is no God.

It's so empty. It's so worthless. But we find here that it says that the Lord, you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings.

We find that a little lower than Elohim, the God himself, the man who was made in the image of God and crowned with glory and with honor.

Now, of course, as we were talking to the young folk this morning, we saw how, like a mirror, the smashing or the dropping of an egg, of how that image was smashed.

But Jesus has come to restore. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that even in the smashing, yet man has still been made in the image of God.

[ 22 : 06 ] There is a dignity about man. There is a morality about man. Mankind, and when I say man, I use it in a generic way. Mankind, the human race, male and female, has been made a living soul.

We are spiritual beings. We are different to anything else in creation. We're the highest point of creation. We reflect the image of God.

And that is why it is so important to highlight just how high a being the human creation is.

Yet it says, what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him? This word, care for him. In fact, if we were reading from the AV, it has the words, that you visited him.

Now, that's interesting. Because if we follow that line, where has God visited us? It is with Emmanuel, God with us.

[ 23 : 12 ] And that takes us back. Remember how John the Baptist, when he was prophesying, he spoke about how Jesus was coming. And he said he has visited and redeemed his people.

So when the question that David asks, what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him? We go and point to the cross.

That's how God cares for us. And if ever you doubt the care of God for you, please go back to the cross.

Because there is a supreme display of God's care and God's love and God's concern.

Because it isn't just that God is mindful. God takes action for us, to us. It's one thing to be mindful of a person. You know, sometimes you'll say to somebody who's going out, maybe there's something going to happen.

[ 24 : 11 ] Somebody's going to go through something difficult. And you say to them, oh well, we'll be remembering you. And that's good. And you remember them, they're in your thoughts and they're in your prayers.

But you can even do more than that. You'll say, well, I won't only remember you, I'm going to do this for you. That takes it further. Well, that's what we have here.

God isn't just mindful of us. He is taking action regarding us, caring for us. And he is concerned for us at all times.

But you know, the amazing thing here is that God's way of dealing with us is so different to the way that we would expect.

And his way of visiting us was so different from the way that we would expect. Because when the Son of God came in our nature, he came as the babe of Bethlehem.

[ 25 : 12 ] He came as one who was despised and rejected. And that's where it brings us all round into verse 2, where it says, Out of the mouth of babes and infants, you have established strength because of your foes.

And you know, this is a particular part that Jesus quoted. Do you remember the time when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey or on the ass's colt?

And then following on from that, he cleansed. There was a cleansing of the temple. And he was healing the lame and dealing with the infirm. And the people were praising him and shouting, Hosanna.

And the scribes and the Pharisees were incensed. And they went to Jesus. And they were rebuking Jesus and saying, Are you not hearing what these people are saying?

And Jesus quoted out of the mouths of babes and infants. You see, the way of the cross is so altogether different to anything that we could have expected.

[ 26 : 21 ] And tonight, the sad thing is that there are so many people who look on the cross and they see it as foolishness. Just as it says in the days of the Greeks and of the Jews in Paul's day.

They looked on the cross and they looked at the way of salvation as to the Greeks it was to foolishness. To the Jews it was a stumbling block.

Because so many people think they can make themselves right. That's what we're saying to the young people today. We're talking about Humpty Dumpty. And how he fell and how all the wise,

even the king's men, couldn't put him together.

And we applied that to the way that we ourselves fell. And the wisdom of man cannot repair what has happened. And the strength of man cannot repair.

And suppose you give all your time and energy and wealth to restoring yourself and getting yourself right with God. You haven't the abilities or the capacity to do so.

[ 27 : 22 ] That's why Jesus came. Because God cares. God cares for you. He cares for me. And he came into this world to restore, to renew.

Do you tonight know God's restoration in your heart? Do you belong to God? God, I hope you're not out on your own.

In an empty world. Because this world, while it's full of many great things, can be very cruel. And it can be very empty. And the Lord is saying to you tonight, There is no need for you to be on your own.

In fact, he's saying to you, Don't try and go through this world on your own. Come with me. Put your hand in my hand. Trust your life into my care and into my keeping.

Here is the Lord who has dominion and authority over all. And as we see here, he has given us the responsibility. He has put into our stewardship the care of this world.

[ 28 : 32 ] Where he has given dominion over everything to us. Oh Lord, oh Lord. How majestic is your name in all the earth.

Can you say that with all your heart? Not just say it. Do you mean it? Let's pray. Oh Lord, oh God.

We give thanks for the fact that we are able to come to worship the King of Glory.

King of Majesty. The King of Might. May we appreciate more and more all that God is and has revealed of himself to us.

We are frail creatures. We are weak in so many different ways. But we give thanks, oh Lord, tonight for the strength which thou art imparting to us. Thy strength made perfect in our weakness.

Oh Lord, we pray to bless and pity us. Shine on us with thy face. Bless every home, every family.

Grant us peace and give us of thy grace.

[ 29 : 38 ] Part us with thy blessing, we pray. And forgive us our sins. In Jesus' name we ask it.

Amen. Concluding.