

*** The Heights Baptist Church * Series: The Psalms *
* Topic: Our Majestic God * Psalm 8 * 7/6/25 ***

MAIN POINT

The beauty of creation testifies of the glory of God and the worth of those He made in His image.

INTRODUCTION

Has observing or experiencing something in creation ever made you feel small? If so, share your experience with the group.

Have you ever struggled to believe that God cares about you personally? Why?

In Psalm 8, David praises God for revealing His majesty in a surprising way—through creation, through people, and through infants (v. 2). Psalm 8 helps us begin to understand the uncommendable glory and majesty of God, and also helps us see that all human beings have worth and value, not because of what we do or how we live, but because God has made us in His image.

UNDERSTANDING

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PSALM 8:1-4

Considering the first two verses of this Psalm, how do you think David viewed his relationship with God?

According to David, where is the glory of the Lord?

The term “LORD” in verse 1 refers to the divine name Yahweh, the “I am” name that God called Himself to Moses in Exodus 3:14. What does this term imply about the nature of God?

God is the ultimate being. God is eternally in the present, with no beginning and no end. He has always been and always will be God. He depends on nothing in order to exist, while everything in creation depends on Him for its existence. This name implies that He is above all things—He is wiser and more beautiful and wonderful than everything everywhere. All creation exists to praise Him.

How is God’s majesty revealed in creation?

What does the contrast between the heavens (verse 1) and children and infants (verse 2), further demonstrate God’s glory?

How might holding a newborn in your arms move you to worship God?

What does God demonstrate about Himself by using infants to triumph over His enemies?

God’s majesty is highlighted in verse 2 in that God not only stoops to care and provide for infants, but that He makes them the means of His triumphs. God could conquer His enemies in any number of dramatic and powerful ways, but He instead chooses to overcome them through the praises of children and nursing babies. This is an incredibly important theme in the Bible—God triumphs not through grand displays of power but through profound and mysterious displays of humility.

Think about what David is really asking in verses 3-4. How would you re-ask his question in your own words?

What motivated David to ask “what is mankind, that you should notice them?”

Can you relate to what David was feeling?

David glimpsed at God’s majesty when He looked to the heavens and wondered aloud why God would even think about humankind. In the first two verses we read that the glory of the Lord is in the heavens, but David also noted that God’s majesty fills the earth. God’s glory fills the skies and stretches across the universe in all directions, but His majesty isn’t so far away that we can’t savor the glory and power of His name here on earth. Although we may sometimes feel small, we can enjoy the majesty of God because He is a personal God. We can know Him and be known by Him.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ GENESIS 1:1, JOB 38:1-3, AND PSALM 19:1-2

What do these verses tell us about the purpose of creation?

The creation declares the glory of God to us. It is accurate to describe the creation as a general revelation about God (we see how powerful and glorious He must be), while the Bible is His special revelation, through which He reveals details about who He is and who we are to us.

What do these verses tell us about God?

Note to study leader: As our knowledge of the heavens has grown over the millennia, the power of God continues to be demonstrated to a greater and greater degree. In David’s day, he saw countless stars in the night sky. In 1600 AD, astronomers generally thought the milky way was some sort of heavenly river, or cloud-like celestial band. Then in 1610, Galileo observed the milky way through a telescope, and realized it was made up of countless stars, too far away to be seen individually. Our concept of the heavens became much larger! To put it into perspective, if the orbit of Pluto around the sun were the size of the rim of a coffee cup, the Milky Way galaxy would be the size of North America. Then in 1924, Edwin Hubble discovered that the Andromeda Nebula, wasn’t actually a nebula at all. It was a whole separate “universe”! He went on to find many more galaxies, and our understanding of how big the universe is became much larger again! To put this into perspective, our Milky Way galaxy is just one of maybe a trillion galaxies in space. What an awesome God we serve!

What attributes of God come to mind when you think of God as Creator?

God created both heaven and earth. The word for God used in Genesis 1:1 is “Elohim.” This title means “strong one”, sovereign one”, or “Lord”. Remember that no matter the opposition, our God uses infants and toddlers to shame His enemies. The Strong One makes weak things strong.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MATTHEW 21:15-17

How did Jesus fulfill Psalm 8:2 in this story?

**What does this emphasis on children in Psalm 8 and Matthew 21 tell us about what God values?
What does that tell us about how we should live?**

Babies and children represent weakness and vulnerability. God has chosen to exercise His rule and power in the world through the praise of babies and children because He wants to make crystal clear to the world that this is a work of God, so that “no one can boast in His presence.” The God who is majestic over all creation chose to become man and dwell among us dying on the cross for our sins.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 1:27-29

Why does God choose weak and lowly things to shame the strong?

This makes it clear that we need God, and He doesn't need us.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PSALM 8:5-9

Who gives human beings value (v. 5)? How does God display that value to us (vv. 6-8)?

How does knowing that God has granted mankind "honor and majesty" change the way you think about the people around you?

Because God has granted people "honor and majesty," we know that every single person has value. That means that those we sometimes ignore, like the poor and needy, are made in the image of God. This also tells us that those we consider our enemies also have value. People are not valuable because of what they do or how they live. They are valuable because God made them and bestowed honor on them.

What does the dominion God granted to people over creation tell us about Him and about us?

God's true greatness should not just be measured only by His creation of the vast universe. His greatness also should be measured by His creation of humans and His care to the smallest need of those made in His image and likeness. In creating men and women and bestowing honor on them, God expresses grace to us—we do not deserve such honor. Even though we have ruled His creation selfishly and recklessly, God still loves us and proved His love for us by sending Jesus to die for our sins (Rom. 5:8).

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ GENESIS 1:27-28 AND JEREMIAH 17:9

What do these two passages reveal about us as people?

We were made in God's image, and were given dominion over creation, so we have great value in His eyes. But since we chose sin as a human race, we also have inherited a sin nature, in which nothing good dwells, and which separates us from Him unless we come to Him through faith in Christ.

"With (the tongue) we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God." James 3:9

"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out." Romans 7:18

APPLICATION

How should the fact that we are a child of God change the way we view our life? What kinds of things may be keeping me from internalizing this truth?

Think of someone in your life who is difficult to love. How might considering that God has created us in His image help you actively love that person?

PRAYER

Thank God for displaying His majesty through creation. Thank God for valuing us as His children. Ask God to help us point others to Christ by humbly serving them as Christ has served us.

COMMENTARY

Psalm 8

Introduction: This Psalm is identified as a Psalm of David, and calls itself a “gittith”. It is not clear what this term actually means, but based on it being directed toward “the director of music”, “gittith” is thought to be a musical term.

8:1. This hymn of praise could also be called a creation hymn (along with 19:1-6; 33; and 104) in its focus on earth and the heavens, terms describing the whole of creation (Gen 1:1; Ex 20:11; Neh. 9:6). “Majesty,” a synonym for “honor” or “glory,” and “name,” representing the person and not just the designation, are parallel. They demonstrate that God and His glory fill all of creation. This language distinguishes God from His creation (He is transcendent) but also shows that He is present (He is immanent) within it.

8:2. Even the feeblest of humanity, with their sometimes-inarticulate speech (mouths), function as firm testimonies (a stronghold) of God’s glory and silence the enemy and the avenger. According to Jesus, “children” and their simple faith are the best representatives of God’s kingdom (Mt 18:4). Paul also made a similar argument when he described God’s use of weakness and foolishness to “shame the wise” of this world (1Co 1:26-29).

8:3-4. The vastness of creation is contrasted with the smallness and insignificance of man. This is in the form of a question: How is it that God would remember and look after (both words mean “pay attention to and care for”) people? This is perplexing in light of the difference between the size and scope of the cosmos and the relative puniness of humanity. The terms “man” and “son of man” are parallel and are used to describe humankind as a collective whole (146:3; Num 23:19; Isa 51:12).

8:5-8. The answer to the perplexing question in verse 4 is found in these verses, which are essentially a commentary on Gen 1:26-28. While the perception is that humans are insignificant in the grand scheme of things, the reality is found in God’s purpose for creating humanity. The word translated as God (Hb ‘elohim) is plural here and could be understood as indicating “gods” or “heavenly beings” instead of its usual sense of a plural of majesty emphasizing God’s greatness. Therefore the Septuagint, which is quoted in Heb 2:7, translates it as “angels.” The point is the same in both cases, even if the referent is different: Because of their divinely given purpose, humans are functionally closer to God and the angels than to the animals. “We have been made ... lord over creation,” expressing humanity’s function of dominion (Gen 1:26). The image of everything under his feet is developed in the rest of Scripture as a picture of the reign of God’s King, Jesus Christ (the second Adam), over His kingdom (1Co 15:25,27; Eph 1:22; Heb 2:8).

8:9. The psalm ends as it began, forming an “inclusio” (essentially “bookends”) for its content.