

# Psalm 8

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For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David.

*<sup>1</sup>O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth,  
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!  
<sup>2</sup>From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength  
Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.  
<sup>3</sup>When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;  
<sup>4</sup>What is man that You take thought of him,  
And the son of man that You care for him?  
<sup>5</sup>Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory  
and majesty!  
<sup>6</sup>You make him to rule over the works of Your hands,  
You have put all things under his feet,  
<sup>7</sup>All sheep and oxen And also the beasts of the field,  
<sup>8</sup>The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes  
through the paths of the seas.  
<sup>9</sup>O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!*

(New American Standard Bible)

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## I. A Psalm of Praise Glorifying God for His works

- a. Authored by King David
- b. Considered to be a Messianic psalm as it is quoted by Jesus and in reference to Jesus in the New Testament
- c. Setting and background of this psalm is unspecified and unknown
- d. Stated to be “For the choir Director upon the Gittith” – this word Gittith is from the word Gath – a city of the Philistines where David took refuge when hiding from Saul. It means “winepress” and is believed to be a particular stringed instrument David learned to play while among the Philistines or a tune sung during the gathering and pressing of the grapes.

## II. Verse by Verse Analysis

- a. Verse 1 – opens with ***O Lord our Lord*** – literally O Jehovah our Adonai (master/lord of the whole earth) One translator reads it – Jehovah – our

prop and our support! <sup>1</sup> ***How majestic*** (excellent in the KJV) ***is Your name*** – magnificent/illustrious and glorious – ***in all the earth. Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!*** Surely God is glorified and seen as magnificent in the heaven above the heavens (stars/galaxies) we know. But at this moment in history, we can easily observe that His name is NOT being honored as magnificent in the earth. This very statement looks forward prophetically to a time when Jesus as Messiah returns to the earth and His name is glorified here!

- b. Verse 2 – this verse is quoted in part by Jesus in Matthew 21:16. The Pharisees won't honor Jesus and yet the children sing His praises. How often God has used the simple faith of children to shame the hard hearted adults!
- c. Verse 3 – the creation of moon and stars are considered “finger work” of God – a light weight activity that God indulged in. John Wesley said it this way, “God created the heavens and the earth and didn't half try!”
- d. Verse 4 – man in comparison to the awesomeness of God's other creation appears to be insignificant. Yet God cares so profoundly for each person that he would leave the 99 to go after the one as a good shepherd does with his sheep.
- e. Verse 5 – the KJV translates it “a little lower than the angels” but many later translations clearly see in the original text the words “a little lower than God.” Other parts of scripture bear out this latter translation if it is a reference to man, as man is to judge angels (1 Cor. 6:3) and angels are ministering spirits to serve the heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14). But this is also seen as a direct reference to Jesus Christ as He lowered Himself to become man on the earth.
- f. Verse 6 – this scripture is quoted in 1 Cor 15:27; Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 2:6-8 an obvious and direct reference to Jesus proving the Messianic nature of this psalm.
- g. Verse 7 – 8 a reference to the dominion that man was given originally in the Garden of Eden before Adam's fall. (Gen. 1:26 and repeated to Noah in Gen. 9:2)
- h. Verse 9 – The psalmist closes exactly as he opened - ***O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!***

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Clarke in the Bethany Parallel Commentary on the Old Testament, p. 977

## ILLUSTRATIONS FOR PSALM 8 -

### FOR VERSE 2:

Celeste Sibley, one-time columnist for the *Atlanta (GA) Constitution*, took her three children to a diner for breakfast one morning. It was crowded and they had to take separate seats at the counter. Eight-year-old Mary was seated at the far end of the counter and when her food was served she called down to her mother in a loud voice, "Mother, don't people say grace in this place?" A hush came over the entire diner and before Mrs. Sibley could figure out what to say, the counterman said, "Yes, we do, sister. You say it." All the people at the counter bowed their heads. Mary bowed her head and in a clear voice said, "God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food."

*Bits & Pieces*, May, 1990, p. 10.

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### FOR VERSE 3:

To help us grasp the vastness of our galaxy, one scientist suggests we imagine a smooth glass surface. Shrink the sun from 865,000 miles in diameter to two feet and place it on the surface. Using this scale, Earth would be 220 paces out from the sun, and would be the size of a pea. Mars, the size of a pinhead, would be 108 paces beyond Earth. But to reach Neptune, you'd need to step off another 6,130 paces from Mars. By now you would be five miles from the sun--but there still wouldn't be room on the glass surface for Pluto! And you would have to pace off 6,720 miles beyond Pluto to reach the nearest star. Yet, this glass model represents only a tiny fraction of the universe.

*Today in the Word*, July, 1990, p. 6.

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