

Psalm 8: What is Mankind that You are Mindful of Them?

Psalms 8:1-9

¹ *Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

You have set your glory in the heavens.

² *Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.*

³ *When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,*

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

⁴ *what is mankind that you are mindful of them,
human beings that you care for them?*

⁵ *You have made them a little lower than the angels
and crowned them with glory and honor.*

⁶ *You made them rulers over the works of your hands;
you put everything under their feet:*

⁷ *all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,*

⁸ *the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.*

⁹ *Lord, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

The Greatness of God (v. 1)

¹ *Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.*

When the psalmist gazes at God's creation He is awe struck by the **majesty** and **glory** of God

1. What does creation tell you about the Glory of God?
2. What does creation tell you about your place in this universe?
3. What does God tell you about your place in this universe?

Praises of Children (v. 2)

² *Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.*

1. Reflect on verse 2 (above). As much as all creation displays the God's **majesty** and **glory**, His **strength** and **power** are found in the **praises of little children**.

Out of such frail material as children's praise, God builds a towering castle that will withstand the works of the enemy.

2. Reflect on the contrast:

God's Creation (Heavens and Earth)	The Praise of Little Children
Greatness of creation	Small, insignificant, and weak
Huge, glorious, mysterious, strength, power, wisdom ... etc	The simple and weak material that God uses to build a mighty fortress to silence the enemies
Reveals God's glory and majesty	Reveals God's glory and majesty

What is Mankind that You are Mindful of Them? (vv. 3-4)

³ *When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,*

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

⁴ *what is mankind that you are mindful of them,*

human beings that you care for them?

“It is only if man stands in awe of the greatness of God, which strikes terror into his heart and makes him aware of his total insignificance, taking awe as a starting point and the basis of his thoughts, he learns to gain a full understanding of the divine miracle which is made manifest in the relationship between Creator and creature, the miracle namely that it did not seem too small a matter for this Almighty God “to be mindful” of human beings and lovingly “to care” for them. As soon as man comes to realize his total insignificance in the sight of God from whom he cannot demand anything, he clearly recognizes that the innermost nature of his relationship with God is that of incomprehensible grace.” (Artur Weiser)

The psalmist, King David understands how small and insignificant he is when compared to God. He is weak, lacking in understanding, sinful, fragile (and the list goes on). Yet David is amazed by the fact that God has called him, anointed him for His glorious purpose, loved him and cared for him. God reaches out to David with grace and love.

1. Have you experienced such grace in the presence of God?
2. What does it tell you about God?
3. What does it tell you about yourself?

The Dignity of Mankind (vv. 5-8)

⁵ *You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.*

⁶ *You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:*

⁷ *all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,* ⁸ *the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.*

The IVP background commentary says this of the dignity God has given us:

“The status of the human race in Israelite thinking was very high when contrasted with the status people were given in Mesopotamian thinking (as seen in the Babylonian epic of creation). In the Mesopotamian view, the gods had no plan to create people as an integral part of the world that they had set up for themselves. People were only brought into existence as a consequence of the gods becoming tired of working so hard to provide for themselves. Humans were made to be servants to deities, who had no interest in hard labour. In this way of thinking, human dignity was achieved through the idea that the gods needed them. Here, instead, people rule over all other creatures.”

- i. In the creation account, God created man in His image and He was given dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28, *God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”*)
- ii. Mankind sinned against God and lost their God-given authority. But God still loved them and provided a way for salvation and restoration. Jesus is our salvation. Now all creation is under His control. Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, and everything is under His feet. Everything on earth—beasts of the field, birds of the air, fish of the sea—submits to his authority. Everyone who is in Christ will reign with him as well (2 Timothy 2:12).

Hebrews 2:5-9

⁵ *It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking.*

⁶ *But there is a place where someone has testified:*

*“What is mankind that you are mindful of them,
a son of man that you care for him?*

⁷ *You made them a little lower than the angels;
you crowned them with glory and honor*

⁸ *and put everything under their feet.”*

In putting everything under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them.⁹ But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

- iii. In Christ, the worth, significance and dignity of being human is fully revealed.
 - We are God’s children; we are called to bear His name.
 - We are purchased by the blood of the Lamb.
 - God gave His Son so that in Him, we may have life and access to the Him.
 - God the Holy Spirit dwells within us.
 - We are His Holy Temple set apart for His good work.
 - We are light and salt, called to be transformed in His likeness so that His glory may be seen in us.
 - We are His beloved children and when our time here is over, He calls us home to reign with Jesus Christ throughout eternity.

When We Feel Small and Weak

- i. God has always used the small and weak for His glorious work.
 - He called a childless couple (Abraham and Sarah) and made them a nation.
 - He delivered a nation held in slavery and captivity and called them to be His holy priest.
 - Jesus chose 12 ordinary, insignificant people to be His disciples. (and the list goes on)

Our frail and weak state is the material that God will use to build His glorious church. He does this because He is mindful of us. We have a place in His heart.

- ii. Read and reflect the following verses:

1 Corinthians 1:26-31

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him. ³⁰ It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. ³¹ Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.”

2 Corinthians 4:7-9

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

Exodus 4:10-12

¹⁰ Moses said to the Lord, “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” ¹¹ The Lord said to him, “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the Lord? ¹² Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”

Prayer and Worship (v. 2)

² Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies

We tend to forget that God does amazing things through the simple prayers and praises of His people. We forget that it is God who hears our prayers and receives our praises. God does not seek eloquent and elaborate prayers. He is not impressed by the form of prayer and worship. He looks to the heart.

God is Omnipotent / God is Love

- i. We worship God because we celebrate His **glory** and **majesty**. He is the only God who has created all things. He is the only God who is able to give life and sustain it. He is the **omnipotent** God. There is none who can be His equal.
- ii. In this psalm, David celebrates of the revelation that God's amazing **power** to create all things, is present in His **love** for us. His unlimited **power** to do all things is equalled by His unlimited **love** for us. The **glory** and **majesty** of God is displayed on the cross, where the depths and heights of His love is revealed to us. He gave His life for us. He loves us. We matter to Him.

Meditate these verses:

Ephesians 3:17-21

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Isaiah 51:16

¹⁶ I have put my words in your mouth and covered you with the shadow of my hand—I who set the heavens in place, who laid the foundations of the earth, and who say to Zion, 'You are my people.'

Luke 12:6-7

⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.⁷ Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Isaiah 40:26-27

*²⁶ Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.
²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God"?*

Prayer Items

1. Praise and thanksgiving: "He mindful of us" and "He cares for us".
2. Revival and Spiritual Growth. May God accomplish His will for His season.
3. Conditional MCO: as people go back to work and with the increase of social engagement we pray for protection; trust in the Lord knowing He is good, He cares, and He is sovereign
4. Those who are sick (Covid-19 & others) & their family; cure & vaccine: researchers
5. Front-liners: medical officers; armed forces
6. Leaders & government: wisdom, compassion, righteousness
7. Economy: especially those who are badly affected: poor, homeless, more vulnerable people (elderly, sick), refugees
8. Church: our response & calling as "light, salt and city on a hill" – be the Gospel of God's love
9. Salvation of souls
10. Church family