

WHAT IS MAN? PSALM 8

August 21, 2026 / Mark McCartin

BIG IDEA: Small enough to worship. Crowned enough to matter.
Loved enough to belong to God through Jesus.

Where do we come from?

What are we?

Where are we going?

- Paul Gauguin

THE QUESTION

“What is mankind that you are mindful of them?” Psalm 8:4

Competing answers: Nietzsche / Sartre / Camus / Russell / Dawkins...

"In the visible world, the Milky Way is a tiny fragment. Within this fragment the solar system is an infinitesimal speck, in that speck our planet is a microscopic dot. On this dot, tiny lumps of impure carbon and water complicated structure crawl about for a few years until they are dissolved again into the elements of which they are compounded." - **Bertrand Russell**

"The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference." - **Richard Dawkins**

Ps 8:3–4 *“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, **what is mankind** that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?”*

1 THE MAJESTY OF GOD (Psalm 8:1–2, 9; 19:1; Isaiah 40:26)

Psalm 8:1 *“LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.”*

“LORD”—Yahweh—the covenant name of God.

“**I AM WHO I AM.**”—Exodus 3:14

The heavens reveal the greatness of the self-existent Creator. Psalms 19:1–

Look up: The moon and stars are the work of God’s fingers (8:3).

Look again: God displays strength through the praise of children (8:2).

Personal response: I am not the center of the universe—and I do not have to be.

2 THE MINDFULNESS OF GOD Psalms 8:3–4; 103:14; 139:1–18; 1 Peter 5:7
Psalm 8:4 *what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?*

Psalm 8:2 *You have taught children and infants to tell of your strength, silencing your enemies and all who oppose you.* (NLT)

Though we are small in the cosmos, God knows and cares for us.

He knows me: My thoughts, circumstances, and life from the womb.

He cares for me: I can cast my anxieties on him (1 Peter 5:7).

Personal response: My worth is received from God, not earned by performance.

3 THE MISSION OF MAN Psalm 8:5–8; Genesis 1:26–28

Psalm 8:5 You made them only a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor.

God crowns humanity with dignity and entrusts us with stewardship.

Our dignity: Every person bears God’s image—not just the strong or successful.

Our calling: Care for people and creation as representatives of the King.

Remember: You are crowned—but you are not King.

4 THE MAJESTY OF GOD IN JESUS Psalm 8:9; Hebrews 2:5–10, 14–17

We do not yet see everything as it should be—“but we see Jesus.”

He became one of us: The Creator shared our flesh and blood.

He died and rose: Jesus confronts sin and death and restores our hope.

Our response: Trust Christ; live under the good King.

Hebrews 2:9–11 *What we do see is Jesus, who for a little while was given a position “a little lower than the angels”; and because he suffered death for us, he is now “crowned with glory and honor.” Yes, by God’s grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone. God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to bring many children into glory. And it was only right that he should make Jesus, through his suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation. ¹¹ So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.*