

# How Great Thou Art

Psalm 8



**Main idea:** Pondering God's glory results in an unadulterated celebration of praise to God's name.

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

## Outline:

David gives us four reasons to praise God for His greatness.

- A. God's Splendor Over All (v.1)
- B. God's Strength Over All (v.2)
- C. God's Sovereignty Over All (vv.3-8)
- D. God's Supremacy Over All (v.9)

## Introduction:

G. Campbell Morgan was a British pastor during the early 1900s (1904-1919) who preceded and mentored the great Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones at the Westminster Chapel before handing over the pastorate to him. He tells the story of meeting, as a boy, a man who had recently been converted to faith in Christ under the ministry of his father. Just a few days after the man was converted, Morgan encountered him in the family garden. The man was holding something small and gazing into his hand with a look of awe and wonder on his face, and this little boy who later was to become a great preacher said, "Sir, what are you looking at?" The man turned his hand, and a leaf fell to the ground, and the man said to him, "the glory and the beauty of God." Everything in life gains meaning when God is in your life.

How different in contrast is the experience of Charles Darwin, the father of the theory of evolution? Darwin turned his back on God, becoming a naturalist and secular humanist. His biography reveals that in doing so, he lost his taste for life. As Darwin grew older, he admitted that he no longer could get anything out of poetry, music no longer moved him, and he thought art was a waste of time. And the poor man lived out his days without wonder and awe. Life without God lost its flavor.

If life has lost its flavor for you, or perhaps you desire to exalt the God who has placed meaning into your life, then this psalm will help. Limburg, the Old Testament commentator, described Psalm 8 as “a psalm for stargazers, but indeed, it is even more, it is a psalm for soul-searchers.” It answers the age-old world view questions such as: Who I am? Who made me? Why am I here? Where am I going? How do I know?

The answers to these internal searching questions about the purpose of human existence are not found by looking *inward*, but by looking *upward* and *outward*. The bank vault of human worth, according to this psalm, is not located in our own existence, but rather in the twin sources of *the God who created us* and *the creation over which that God has directed us to exercise responsibility*.

When the Apollo 11 spacecraft journeyed to the moon in 1969, the leaders of the nations of the earth were invited to compose a message to be included on a small disk that was to be left on that heavenly body. Pope Paul VI, as the political leader of the Vatican, appropriately sent the text of Psalm 8. Psalm 8 is unsurpassed in its amazement, wonder, and delight. Psalm 8 is not just a lyrical poem about God. Psalm 8 is a poem about God and us and our value in His sight. It is not merely a poem about God, but a prayer to God. Notice how David addresses God directly and intimately... “*Your name, You have established, Your heavens, You have ordained,*” and so on.

**What event or experience caused David to cry out in praise?** In this psalm, we discover **four perspectives** that moved David’s heart to praise God, and these are the same things which will move our hearts to praise and worship as well. Come with me to ponder, to meditate, to muse, and to behold *the greatness of God*.

## Context:

Most likely, David wrote this psalm while he was a young shepherd boy at night. Most of the Davidic Psalms were composed after he became king, but this one reflects a time when his life was undarkened by the memories of sins, unhurried by the oppression of enemies, and untroubled by the matters of state. See the man who would be king as a shepherd boy, on some brilliant night on the hills of Bethlehem, lifting up his soul in praise to God. There are no complaints. There are no requests. David does not ask for anything. It is a psalm of inspired adoration and praise. It starts and ends with pure admiration!

The inscription of Psalm 8 gives us two insights which set the stage and background for this psalm: 1) *Who this psalm was for*—It was a song written by David for “**the choir director**” or the chief musician. 2) *It was to be sung with the “gittith.”* What was a Gittith? The word gittith is the feminine form of Gath which was the Philistine village where Goliath came from. So, the person who was born in Gath was known as a Gittite. Because David had killed the champion of Gath, David had several friends and followers from Gath who were loyal to him. According to 2 Samuel 15:18, there were 600 Gittites who followed David. According to 2 Samuel 18:2, David also had a phalanx of bodyguards who were Gittites. So, the Gittith has something to do with Gath or the village of the Philistines. Most likely, it was some type of stringed instrument from their village that was associated with songs that workers or soldiers sang when they were treading grapes after the harvest. It produced a distinct sound that David had come to appreciate. Psalm 81 and 84 are also for the choir director on the Gittith and they are both joyous psalms. So, whatever this Gittith is, it refers to a joyous,

delightful tune with a thanksgiving, joyful style. David borrows this tune or the instrument from Philistine music and applies it to the worship of God.

David gives us four perspectives which give us reason to praise God.

## Exposition:

### A. God's Splendor Over All (v.1)

- LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth,  
Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

Most of the psalms begin with an imperative to all the congregation to praise God, but this psalm begins differently—it starts with an exclamation of praise spoken directly to God. **"LORD, our Lord..."** This is how prayer begins—by addressing God.

The psalm begins and ends not so much with a *description* of God's glory, but an *exclamation* of it! The exclamation points at the end of verses 1 and 9 are the clues. Notice, that David is not asking a *rhetorical question*, giving *theological instruction*, or even issuing a *moral command*, but rather, he is boldly exclaiming, or openly declaring not a rhetorical question, but a rhetorical exclamation—"how majestic is Your name...how majestic is Your name in all the earth!"

Where do you go to see something majestic? You don't need to travel to Grand Canyon or halfway across the world to see one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Just go right outdoors. David wandered outdoors at night, gazed up, and was moved to give praise to the Creator God.

The word "**majestic**" (*addir*) is an adjective that is translated in numerous ways: such as, "*excellent, glorious, famous, mighty, wide, great, high, noble, splendid, and magnificent.*" Here it speaks of the radiant, revealed splendor of *who God is* and *what He says and does*. In other words, God's perfect character and genius mind are seen in the beauty of His world and the universe.

Verse 1 and verse 9 are identical and repeat the same chorus in this symphony of praise. They bracket the substance of the psalm like parenthesis and express the main point of the psalm with great fervor, and that is, *pondering God's glory results in an unadulterated celebration of praise to God's name*. It's as if David says, "Words fail to describe the glory of God, so let me just exclaim it!"

One of the keys to unlocking the interpretation of this psalm is by understanding parallelism. Some parallelisms are designed to state the truth in one line, and then reinforce the thought or complete the thought in the next line (completive parallelism). Beginning here in verse 1 and in each section, David presents a series of **contrasting parallels** (*two lines of contrast to help see the differences*).

- In verse 1, David contrasts "*the earth...and the heavens*" (*visible and invisible*).
- In verse 2, he contrasts "*infants and adversaries [infidels]...*" (*humans at their weakest and humans in their ignorance*).
- In verses 3-8, he contrasts "*man and the angels*" (*lowly natural beings and heavenly supernatural beings*).

And each contrast is designed to show us that *what* moved David to give praise to God, ought to move us as well. Now, what moved David to make this exclamation of praise?

Answer: *God has displayed His splendor above the heavens!*

The verb “**displayed**” (*natan*) means *to fix conclusively and authoritatively*. It links to the word “**establish**” (*yacad*) in verse 2, which means *to assign a duty* and “**ordain**” (*kuwn*) in verse 3, which means *to set up*. All three terms bring to light to the way God assigns roles in creation to bring Him praise. From the *strong* to the *weak*, from the *spectacular* to the *obscure*, from the *multitude* to the *few*, from *beginning* to *end*, God has designed and appointed it all to set forth *the excellence of His name!* (1 Pet.2:9-10; Ps.57:5, 11; 113:4; 148:13)



Where has God displayed His splendor? “*Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!*”

“**The heavens**” in the Bible speaks of three particular locations. The atmosphere right around the earth known as the clouds and skies is *the first heaven*. There we see the glory of God in a beautiful sunset which paints the sky with lavender, orange, and blue. Or, we see it in a sunrise which sprays rays of light across the sky to awaken the earth. The solar system as we know with its billions and billions of stars and galaxies is *the second heaven*. On a starry night; and with much help from the Hubble Telescope, we can see galaxies with what scientist tell us are a billion suns. Then there is the place of God’s abode or the place of God’s manifest presence, and that is *heaven itself, or the third heaven*. In 2 Corinthians 12:4, Paul spoke of being caught up to that third heaven and hearing “*inexpressible words, which he was not permitted to speak.*”

Now as great as the heavens are, David says, God’s glory is *greater still*. God has “**displayed**” or “*set*” it “above the heavens.” This implies that God’s glory is *too great to express*. God’s glory or the outshining of the greatness of His character cannot be contained by creation. The heavens and the earth can only partially express His excellence because the Creator is greater—far, far greater—than what He creates.

- Which is greater, the Golden Gate Bridge or the man who designed the bridge?
- Which is greater, the life-sized sandcastle, or the man that built the sandcastle?
- What is greater, the Rembrandt, or Rembrandt himself? A Picasso painting, or Picasso himself?
- What is greater, the world of nature or the God of creation? Do you get the point?

Before we grab the application, let us come back down to the earth. The range of David’s thoughts takes us not only “*above the heavens,*” but His name is also majestic, “**in all the earth.**”

Now if you stop to consider the *smallest leaf*, the  *tiniest insect* or turn away from that and look at the *highest mountain*, *widest river*, or the *deepest ocean* and take the time to be honest and pause, you will hear a voice speaking within your conscience saying, “There is a GOD! GOD IS REAL! There is an invisible, eternal, Creator God who has unseeable attributes and unlimited ability. One who is the uncreated Creator.”

- **Romans 1:20**—For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.
- **Psalm 19:1-4**—The heavens are telling of the glory of God;  
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.  
<sup>2</sup> Day to day pours forth speech,  
And night to night reveals knowledge.  
<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words;  
Their voice is not heard.

<sup>4</sup> Their line has gone out through all the earth,  
And their utterances to the end of the world.  
In them He has placed a tent for the sun.

**Application:** Look at the *harmony* of nature, the *intricacy* of design, the *details*, the marvelous *colors*, and think of temperatures of *cold* and *heat*, *solids* and *liquids*, *wind* and *snow*, *sound* and *silence*, and how it all fits together like a jigsaw puzzle; it says, “GOD IS!” And everyone who hears me now knows this is true! GOD IS!

- **Hebrews 11:6**—And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Now, what does this do to you? What does it do deep down in your soul? This is what it ought to do. The hymn writer put it this way,

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!<sup>1</sup>

And if we ponder with David, *the glory of God's majesty*, we too will give praise to God—for God desires heart-praise from His creatures. The first perspective that creates praise to God is His splendor over all.

## B. God's Strength Over All (v.2)

How has God ordained for His name to be praised? How does God ensure that His glory is proclaimed? The answer is, *the lowliest and most unlikely people will announce it*.

- <sup>2</sup> From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength  
Because of Your adversaries,

What this means is that God uses the weak to defeat the mighty or to overcome His foes. This is another way His greatness is displayed. The phrase “**established strength**” is translated *ordained strength or perfected praise*, that is, God has *appointed, constituted, or decreed* that praise be perfected or put on display through human weakness. God's transcendence is *so high* that it is *above the heavens*, but God has also ordained and designed that His praise come from the *smallest and weakest human creatures* to silence and overcome His enemies. Like an audible bulwark, when God's enemies try to silence God's praise, there will arise another voice, like a rampart, from an unexpected source that will be *louder and stronger and higher* than the most hostile forces—it will come from infants and nursing babes.

Now we would be in the dark, I believe, as to what this really means, were it not for our Lord's interpretation in Matthew 21.

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<sup>1</sup> Carl Gustav Boberg, *How Great Thou Art*

Then it happened in Jerusalem.

- <sup>12</sup> And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. <sup>13</sup> And He said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN."  
<sup>14</sup> And *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. <sup>15</sup> But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became indignant <sup>16</sup> and said to Him, "Do You hear what these *children* are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF INFANTS AND NURSING BABIES YOU HAVE PREPARED PRAISE FOR YOURSELF'?"

What did Jesus mean? What an amazing thought! When God wants to demonstrate His glory, He deliberately picks those things that are *insignificant*, *small*, and *weak* to silence His enemies. It is a divine strategy of God to work through weak things to put to shame haters. God conquers His foes through the weakness of the weak.

Listen to how Paul puts it in **1 Corinthians 1:25-29**,

- <sup>25</sup> Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. <sup>26</sup> For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; <sup>27</sup> but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, <sup>28</sup> and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no man may boast before God.
- **2 Corinthians 13:4**—For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, yet we will live with Him because of the power of God *directed* toward you.

Listen, *the deepest spite, the most hateful malice, and the most open hostility* by sinners cannot extinguish or shut down the power of God's glory. In Luke 19:40, the Pharisees demanded Jesus to rebuke His disciples from giving God praise during His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and He said to them, "*I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!*"

He selects the weakest of creatures to serve as a champion of His strength. God's strength is perfected in human weakness. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10,

- <sup>9</sup> And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Is this not reason to give God praise? Does this not show the greatness and power of God? What God wants from us is sincere, childlike, trusting praise.

The first perspective that gives us reason to praise God—God's splendor over all.

The second perspective that gives us reason to praise God—God's strength over all.

## C. God's Sovereignty Over All (vv.3-8)

- <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.

What is God sovereign over?

### 1. The creating and ordering of the universe

When was the last time you just stopped to consider the heavens? Or, David calls it, "**Your heavens.**" In other words, they are not *self-existent*; they *depend* upon God. They are not just *a part of space*; they are *His work in space*. The heavens are not *God*; they are *the work of God*.

David calls creation "**the work of His fingers.**" This not doubt is figurative language (*anthropomorphism*) to describe not only *God's personal attention to detail*, but also *how relatively easy it was for God to create*. Every craftsman uses his fingers in their work, but when they do "finger-work," it signifies *the easiest part*, for it does not require the strength of other body parts. Genesis says He did it by fiat, "*God said...Let there be...and it was so...*" (*Gen.1*). And the work of His fingers speaks of His special, intimate craftsmanship of the heavens, "**the moon and the stars, which You have ordained.**"

David "**considered...**" the heavens. Will you consider them with me for a moment? The word carries the sense of *looking, seeing, beholding, or regarding*. The future tense is used, which instructs us to make this a habit in the days to come. By looking at the heavens, you would expect to see evidences of His handiwork everywhere. And we do!

- Consider the way God fixed the exact distance of the earth from the sun—just the right distance to support life. If the earth were *further* from the sun, the planet would be too cold for a stable water cycle. If the earth were *closer* to the sun, the planet would be too hot for a suitable water cycle. We are alive today, just because of the right distance.
- Consider the air we are breathing at this moment. God fixed it with *just the right mixture of gases*—78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen. Argon, carbon dioxide, and other gases make up the rest, and we breathe it in as if it all came together so naturally. But God fixed it so! Too much oxygen and spontaneous *fires would break out*. Too little oxygen and we would *suffocate*.
- Consider the tilt of the earth's axis (23.5 degrees) which gives us our seasons. If the earth were tilted *greater*—like Uranus (98-degree tilt)—we would have periodic continental flooding and periods of darkness. If the earth's tilt were *less*—like Venus which has no tilt—the planet would be hotter, and icecaps would expand.

- Consider the proximity of the moon. *God fixed it exactly at the right distance from the earth.* If it were a *fifth of the distance away*, tides would completely submerge continents twice a day. If there were *no moon*, the earth would wobble like Mars. The moon stabilizes the earth like an anchor.
- Consider the rate of the earth's rotation. *God fixed it so that it is exactly right.* If it were a *tenth of the present rate*, plant life would burn during the day and freeze at night. If it were *faster*, wind velocities would rise to catastrophic rates. For example, on Jupiter, there is a 10-hour rotation period, and it has a thousand miles per hour winds!
- Consider the thickness of the earth's crust. *It is just right as God fixed it.* If the crust were thicker or thinner, the oxygen content would be either too small or too great and if the crust were thinner, the volcanic, tectonic activity would be tumultuous.
- Consider the water vapor level in the atmosphere. If the water level were *greater*, there would be a greenhouse effect. If it were *less*, rainfall would be too little for life on the earth. *God has fixed it all just right.*
- The color of the sun...the force of gravity—if stronger or weaker, there would be no life as we know it. This is also connected to the stars...no sun, no light, no heat...life as we know it would be greatly altered. Imagine now, *God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*—crafting the earth, decreeing, determining, and ordaining the foundation of the universe and all its intricate design and detail! Distances, composition, thickness of the crust, color of the sun, the speed of light, the tilt of the earth, the rate of its rotation, the time it takes to go around the sun—what an extraordinary work of fine-tuning by God Himself. *"O LORD, our Lord how majestic is Your name in all the earth!"*

Look at the planning of the personal God and the wonderful accomplishments of God just in creation! We have not considered how our planet is dwarfed by the size of four other planets—*Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune*; the "gas giants" as they are called. Neptune is 318 times bigger than the earth, and yet, it is not on Neptune, but on *this earth* that God focuses in and gives His attention.

Friends, do you see how just considering the works of God's fingers ought to produce praise? We have not even touched this *galaxy* we are a part of called *the Milky Way*. No one knows how many stars and suns there are in it. Some suggest 60 billion! Others suggest 400 billion suns in the Milky Way! The Hubble Telescope has so far detected 80 billion other galaxies in the universe. The planets are like grains of sand on the seashore in God's universe, and He is our heavenly Father!

God is great! *"O LORD, our Lord how majestic is Your name in all the earth!"*

The psalm seems to swell to its finale with the question in verse 4, and it all makes sense. What is God sovereign over? Not only *the creating and ordering of the universe*, but also...

## 2. The creating and governing of man

- <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.

- What is man? Man is *a creation of God*. He is not the result of *an evolved cell*. He is not a result of *spontaneous combustion*. You are not an accident or merely an intellectual animal. You are a creation of God—"Yet You have made him..." (v.5).
- Where is man? Man is in *God's earth* and *cared* for by God Himself.
- What is man's purpose? His origin is from the earth; we are made from the dust of the ground (*Gen.2:7*). In many respects, man is inferior to other creatures—certain insects and animals live longer than we do; certain creatures such as angelic beings are stronger and more active than we are. Compared with the greatness of God, we are feeble, frail, and insignificant, and yet, *God has bestowed, encircled, and decorated man's head with a crown of glory and honor*.
- What is this crown of glory and honor? Calvin thinks that it is "the distinguished endowments which clearly manifest that men were formed after the image of God...the reason...by which we can distinguish between good and evil, the principle of religion which is planted in them; their intercourse with each other; the regard to what is becoming (ambition), and the sense of shame which guilt awakens in them...all these things are clear indications of pre-eminent and celestial wisdom."<sup>2</sup>

And now David seems to rehearse the truth found in Genesis 1,

- <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,

Not only did God create man and governs man, but God also created *all animals* (wild/tame), *birds of the heavens*, and *fish of the sea*.

I was given a cognitive memory test to see how many animals I could name in 30 seconds, and I was frustrated at how poorly I did because I knew there were so many more animals I could have named if given the time or ability for quick recall. But later I discovered that if you just name as many animals as you can starting with each letter of the alphabet, it helps.

God created the...Antelope, Anteater, Aardvark. Beaver, Bobcat, Bison, Badger. Cheetah, Cow, Chinchilla. Dog, Donkey, Deer. Elk, Elephant. Fox, Falcon, Frog. Guinea Pig, Goat. Horse, Hare, Hippopotamus, Hog. *God made them all*. The Ibis, Iguana, Impala. Jaguar, Jackal. Koala Bear, Kangaroo. Lynx, Lemur, Lion, Leopard. Meerkat, Mongoose, Monkey, Mouse. Nightingale, Nurse shark, Nanny goat. Orangutan, Octopus, Ostrich, Otter, Owl. Panda, Panther, Peacock, Pelican. Quail. Rabbit, Rat, Robin, Rhino, Reindeer. Seal, Sheep, Skunk, Squirrel, Snake, Snail. Tiger, Tortoise, Turkey,

<sup>2</sup> W.S. Plumer, *Psalms (Geneva Series of Commentaries)*, p.127

Termite. Umbrellabird, Uakari (Monkey). Vampire Bat, Vulture. Walrus, Weasel, Wolf, Wolverine, Wasp. Yak, Yorkshire Terrier. Zebra, Zebu (ox).

*God made them all*—according to their kind. And God's creatures are bright and beautiful, big and small, all things wise and wonderful, all things hidden and seen.

I was fascinated by the Blue whales this week. They are the largest animal species in the world, the leviathan of the sea, the most gargantuan beast on the earth, yet we know very little about them. What we do know staggers the mind! Did you know that their tongue weighs as much as an elephant? Their heart is larger than a car. Their blood veins are large enough for a human to swim through. David speaks of all these living creatures as if to call us to join the great chorus.

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All creatures of our God and King  
Lift up your voice and with us sing,  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Thou burning sun with golden beam,  
Thou silver moon with softer gleam!

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thou rushing wind that art so strong  
Ye clouds that sail in Heaven along,  
O praise Him! Alleluia!  
Thou rising moon, in praise rejoice,  
Ye lights of evening, find a voice!

O praise Him! O praise Him!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!<sup>3</sup>

All these creatures were supposed to be under the dominion of man. But is that what we see? No, man is not ruling; he is being ruled by *sin*, *self*, and *Satan*. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, they gave up that rule (*Gen.3:1ff*).

Quoting from Psalm 8, the writer to the Hebrews explains *what we see now* and *where our hope lies*.

- <sup>5</sup> For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. <sup>6</sup> But one has testified somewhere, saying,

"WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM?

OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM?

<sup>7</sup> "YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS;

YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR,

AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

<sup>8</sup> YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET."

For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

<sup>9</sup> But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

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<sup>3</sup> William H. Draper, *All Creatures of Our God and King*

Although dominion was lost by *the first Adam*, dominion is restored by *the Last Adam* (Matt.28:18ff), and our honor and glory are restored if we trust Him, believe Him, and commit and entrust ourselves to Him.

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.  
Then shall I bow, in humble adoration,  
And then proclaim, "My God, how great Thou art!"<sup>4</sup>

God's splendor over all. God's strength over all. God's sovereignty over all

#### D. God's Supremacy Over All (v.9)

- <sup>9</sup> O LORD, our Lord,  
How majestic is Your name in all the earth!

Just like the first verse—there is no variation in the design or of the application. It is simply a devout repetition of words of adoration. What was lost *by sin* is recovered *by faith* in the incarnation and mediation of *Jesus Christ*. His work is done. His conflict is over. His temptations are ended. His invitation is open. His return is soon. His supremacy reigns.

#### Conclusion:

Splendor. Strength. Sovereignty. Supremacy. What would God have us know, feel, or do?

Ascending to the throne of France at age four to rule for the next seventy-two years, Louis XIV enjoyed the longest reign in modern European history. Intoxicated with his own power, this self-consumed emperor called himself the "Great Monarch" and declared, "I am the State!" But in 1715, King Louis XIV, like all other rulers, abdicated his throne to death.

His funeral, just as he prescribed, was nothing short of spectacular as the great cathedral was packed with mourners to pay final tribute to their king in his solid gold coffin. To dramatize the deceased ruler's greatness, a solitary candle burned above his jewel-laden casket. Thousands waited in hushed silence, gazing at the solitary flame.

At the appointed time the funeral service began. Bishop Massillon, who presided over the state funeral, stood to address the mourners, which included the assembled clergy of France. When the bishop rose, he did something that stunned the nation. Bending down from the pulpit, he extinguished the lone candle that represented the greatness of Louis XIV. The people gasped. Then from the darkness echoed four gripping words, "ONLY GOD IS GREAT!"

And so it is. How will your soul respond? Sing. Surrender. Be still. Be saved by coming to Christ today.

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<sup>4</sup> Carl Gustav Boberg, *How Great Thou Art*

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.