

08.17.25: Psalm 8

From Wonder to Worship

Title: From Wonder to Worship

Scripture: Psalm 8

Main Idea: As we contemplate the relationship between Creator, creation, and people, our wonder turns to worship.

Goldingay's translation of Psalm 8:

¹Yhwh, our Lord,
how mighty is your name in all the earth,
One who put your majesty above the heavens
[or, you whose majesty was acclaimed above the heavens]
²at the word of babies and sucklings.^c
You founded a barricade in view of your assailants,
to stop enemy and requiter.
³When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
moon and stars that you established,
⁴What is a mortal that you should be mindful of him,
a human being that you should attend to him?

⁵But you made him fall short of God by a little,
yet crown him with honor and glory.
⁶You make him rule over the work of your hands,
put all things under his feet,
⁷Sheep and oxen, all of them,
but also wild beasts,
⁸Birds in the heavens, fish in the sea,
what travels the paths in the sea.
⁹Yhwh, our Lord,
how mighty is your name in all the earth.

Bracketed by YHWH – beginning and ending with the proper name of God. His “revealed name” Jones properly establishing the context for understanding all that follows.

The second phrase, our Lord, properly establishes our relationship to this revealed God.

The statement of fact – how majestic is your name, that is true but then upon further reflection is stated again with more significance/development/understanding/wisdom.

The first four verses that set up the question in vs 4 wondering if such a God would be involved with human beings, followed by the next five verses that answer the question somewhat, but address/deal with the answer to that question.

A praise psalm that wholly praises God/is wholly addressed to God, and is unique in lacking a call to praise or a because statement of reasons to praise God.

We cannot separate the God of creation/Creator with creation itself with man's place in creation. God as creator is both greater and beyond his creation and by choice a present reality in his creation.

“Against all the evidence that suggests Yhwh does not rule in the world, the psalm declares that Yhwh is a powerful sovereign here” Goldingay.

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“I am” as Creator of the cosmos and Ruler of history – Waltke et. al.

Kinder on the question in v4 – that fact that only man can ask and ponder such a question hints at the answer already

“Yet the contribution can be felt beyond its function as a mere border. Reaching the end of the poem and retelling the first line, we experience the poetry differently. The line is the same, to be sure, but the recurrence scaffolds the soul by prompting recall of all that preceded it, allowing the Holy Spirit to shape our lives with the knowledge gained and the emotions experienced throughout the poem.” Ethan Jones, Psalms in an Age of Distraction

Intro:

- Hymn
- Of praise
- That invites us to wonder, to ponder, to think
- Begins with God
- Moves immediately to our relationship with the revealed God – Lord
- Then through a series of wonders and even questions
- Finally back to God – He brackets this hymn beginning and end. But there is more to this than simple repetition of a statement about God
- Here? Or with final point? Overall moves from a statement of truth that works through a series of contemplations and then repeats the statement of truth with newly gained appreciation

The wonder of...

Strength in God's economy

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 2
- From the mouth's of infants and nursing babies – the most vulnerable

ILLUSTRATION:

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APPLICATION:

- It has been said that the greatest moral barometer of a culture is how it treats its most vulnerable and there is none more vulnerable than infants and nursing babies.
- Abortion (and assisted suicide) – America continues to sacrifice millions of babies on the altar of convenience and sexual promiscuity
- Then if our babies survive the genocide occurring in the wombs, that baby is far from safe - we must note the evil that is sexual exploitation of children and even babies in our culture
- But beyond God's consistent concern for the most vulnerable is the reminder of the manner in which God's holiness and our sinfulness demands that we come to him
- We read earlier in the OT in Daniel about Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 4:34-7)

Toward the very end of Jesus' earthly ministry, between the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday and the cross later that week... Matthew wrote (ch 21)

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¹⁴The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. ¹⁵When the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonders that he did and the children shouting in the temple, “*Hosanna* to the Son of David!” they were indignant ¹⁶and said to him, “Do you hear what these children are saying?”

Jesus replied, “Yes, have you never read:

**You have prepared praise
from the mouths of infants and nursing babies?”**

¹⁷Then he left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

- We come to him in weakness, but also those who are in him find strength in their weakness – Paul in 2 Cor 12

The wonder of strength in God’s economy and the wonder of...

Order in God’s creation

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 3
- It is understandable but remarkable how often the connection is made in scripture of God and creation
- People for most of history have been much more immersed in creation than we are.

APPLICATION:

- For most of human history we have been tempted to worship the creation in some way rather than the creator
- Our response to the wonder of creation should be a movement toward God and not away from him, toward God’s people and not away from them, toward his covenant community and not away from it, toward the church and not away from it
- We need to learn to “speak creation” to use Dr. Joe Rigney’s phrase

People in God’s dominion

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 4-8
- What is man in comparison to all the grandeur and splendor of creation?
- We alone in all creation are created in his image – imago dei
- We are God’s representatives in creation given the task to exercise dominion over creation

APPLICATION:

- We are not simply a more developed form of animals – we have been created distinct from animals and creation
- Creation is not more important than people! Again we are not worshipping creation but stewarding it, managing it, subduing it and using it to our benefit and to God’s glory

God in all his majesty

EXPLANATION:

- The wonder of all that we have journeyed through leads us to a place of even greater awe and wonder and ultimately to worship
- How great, glorious, majestic, magnificent

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APPLICATION:

- We worship this God of wonders!

Conclusion:

- Respond
- Sing
- Worship