

Psalm 8:1-9
When God shares His glory

Introduction: In book 1 of the Psalms. The theme of book 1 is: God is faithful to His word, that He is, despite all apparent evidence to the contrary, on the side of the righteous and that He does fulfill His promise to support His king. (Grogan, 206) This psalm follows a series of psalms (3-7) in which the psalmist faces with God attacks from his enemies. Psalm 7:17 includes praise to Yahweh. Psalm 8 builds on that praise. It is the only Psalm that is addressed entirely to God.

Superscription: *To the music director, on the Gittith* (a musical instrument from the Philistine city of Gath?). *A psalm of David.*

Recognition of God's majesty—8:1-2

- 1) God displays His Majesty from one extreme to the other (a merism)
 - a) Publicly displayed on earth—¹ *O Yahweh, our Adonai^{pl}, how majestic [addir] is Your name (His essence) in all of the earth,*
 - b) Attractively displayed above the heavens—*Who set [Qal pf. nathan] Your majesty [hod] above the heavens.*
- 2) God uses seemingly weak things to display His Authority—8:2 ² *Out of the mouth of children and nursing infants You have established [Piel pf. yasad] strength in response to Your adversaries,*
 - a) *Why? in order to put an end to one who is an enemy and one who is taking revenge.*

The significant question concerning the significance of humanity—8:3-8

- 1) Observation of God's possessions—8:3
 - a) ³ *When I look [Qal impf. ra'ah] at Your heavens, the works of Your fingers,*
 - b) *the moon and the stars which You have prepared [Poel pf. kun],*
 - c) The psalmist sees creation as the theater of God's work and not as objects to be worshiped. Remember the distinction between astronomy (the study of the stars) and astrology (the worship of the stars).
- 2) Question rooted in the insignificance of humanity—8:4
 - a) Emphasizing man's mortality—⁴ *what is mankind [enosh] that You pay attention (Qal impf. zakar) to him*
 - b) Emphasizing man's frailty—*and a son of man [adam] that You take care of him [Qal impf. paqad]?*
- 3) God's design for human dignity—8:5-8
 - a) Humanity is NOT divine—⁵ *And You have made him [Piel impf. chaser] a little lacking in comparison to God*
 - b) But God still graciously shared His glory with humanity—*and You crowned him [Piel impf. atar] with glory [kabod] (dignity, weighty) and splendor [hadar] (externally visible).*
 - What is God's purpose of man having glory and splendor

- i) ⁶ *You made him have dominion [Hiphil impf. masha] over the works of Your hands, (cf. Genesis 1:26)*
- ii) *You have put [Qal pf. shith] all things beneath his feet:*
 - (1) Land creatures
 - (a) Domesticated—⁷ *all sheep and cattle,*
 - (b) Wild animals?—*even beasts of the field,*
 - (2) Air creatures—⁸ *bird of heavens*
 - (3) Sea creatures—*and fishes of the sea passing through paths of the seas.*
- 4) Characteristics of our God-given dominion.
 - a) Our dominion is a **delegated** dominion, a subordinate role to God's dominion. We are never to attempt to rule independently of God.
 - b) Our dominion is an **incomplete** dominion. Adam rebelled against God by following the advice of a subordinate creature, the serpent.
 - c) Our dominion is to be a **doxological** dominion. Doxology gives dominion its context and legitimacy. God intended for humans to have such power and authority, but without praise to God humans only pervert and abuse that power. (Ross, 1:290)

A repeat of the recognition of God's majesty—8:9 (repeat of 8:1)

- 1) Displayed on earth—⁹ *O Yahweh, our Adonai^{pl}, how majestic is Your name in all the earth.*

New Testament uses of this Psalm to point to Christ

- 1) First Corinthians 15:20-28 uses 8:6 in reference to Christ. It is guaranteed to be a completed subjection in the future. Christ will accomplish His work to the glory of the God the Father.
- 2) Hebrews 2:5-9 uses 8:4-6 in reference to Christ. It may be an incomplete subjection at this time, but God is not finished. Christ willingly became part of the humanity described in Psalm 8. This is part of the wonderful truth of the incarnation.