



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V27 N10 March 9, 2025

PSALMS: CELEBRATING CHRIST IN GOD'S HYMNBOOK

"Psalm 8"

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Personal God

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

"I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Psalm 121:1-2



Where do you go for soul care?



As our modern world rapidly advances technologically, it seems as if *care* is vanishing. Customer Care Services are becoming a premium perk, often costing much more than standard fare. When purchasing software or devices, it is industry standard now to have to pay extra to actually talk to a human in tech support. Most base packages of tech support will most likely come with only email or chatbot support. If you want to speak to someone live you will often have to pay extra. Finding someone who cares about your tech issues often is going to cost you.

Care is getting harder to find in retail spaces as well. How many self-checkout lanes has your local grocery store added recently? Does your favorite retailer answer live phone calls or do they only allow voicemail?

Increasingly, people are interviewing, getting hired and fired all through online portals, voicemails and emails. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is promising more personal touches with audio and video, but it will never be able to replace a real human interaction. Ever-increasing impersonalization can make us feel like no one cares.

One reactionary response to increasing technological isolation is to go "no-tech." Many are going "off grid." Accenture Consulting just released their *Life Trends for 2025* report and recommended something called "Social Rewilding." This is the practice of "embracing experiences that reconnect [people] with nature, enable them to create using their hands and foster genuine connections to their surroundings and other people." When it comes to digital devices, many are seeking JOMO – "the Joy of Missing Out" on digital overload. In all fairness, Accenture is promoting healthy life balance between "high touch" and "high tech" experiences. Swinging the pendulum to more people and less tech will still do little to resolve the feeling of a lack of care that we often experience.

Community is good but may not be the solitary answer for isolation. We also need *communion*. By communion, we mean a spiritual connection to someone who cares supremely. The best expressions of community can let us down. Experiencing our Personal God who "is involved in and cares about our daily lives" can fill our "care-cups" to overflowing. If I connect regularly with the "One from whom my help comes," I can experience the ultimate soul care of the Maker of Heaven and Earth (Ps 121:1-2).

Psalm 8 beautifully describes the care we receive from our Personal God. We were designed to commune with a God who knows us and loves us. "Psalm 8 is Genesis 1:26-28 set to music. The roll call of creatures in Psalm 8:6-8 strikingly parallels the Genesis cosmogony: 'let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of air, over the livestock, over all the earth' (Gen. 1:26). The parallel puts beyond reasonable doubt the poet's transformation of the creation narrative in Genesis 1 into a hymn. In Darwin's theory of evolution (i.e., evolution without divine direction) *homo sapiens* is only on a continuum with animals; the only issue is what kind of animal. The concept of human beings as animals is reflected in the writings of earlier non-Christian intellectuals as well. Aristotle defined humanity as a political animal; Edmund Burke, a religious animal; Benjamin Franklin, a tool-producing animal; and Thomas Carlyle refined that to a tool-using animal. ... In this view evolutionism is too optimistic. Humankind is ... nothing more than an object subject to the same physical laws as other objects. ... Without revelation, *homo sapiens* knows neither its identity nor its rightful place in the scheme of things. That revelation crowns humankind as God's delegated authority over all the earth and instructs the deputy to rule in meekness and dependence upon God" (Bruce Waltke, *The Psalms as Christian Worship*, 272).

Read Psalm 8

For the director of music. According to gittith. A psalm of David.

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! [NIV]

Read in another version

1 O LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

2 *Out of the mouth of babies and infants,*

you have established strength because of your foes,

to still the enemy and the avenger.

3 *When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,*

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

4 *what is man that you are mindful of him,*

and the son of man that you care for him?

5 *Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and honor.*

6 *You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet,*

7 *all sheep and oxen,*

and also the beasts of the field,

8 *the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,*

whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

9 O LORD, our Lord,

how majestic is your name in all the earth! [ESV]

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle repeating phrases in v. 1a and v. 9.
- Draw a line connecting "glory" in v. 1 and v. 5.
- Underline each reference to "heaven" or things in heaven in Psalm 8.
- Double underline each reference to "earth" or things on the earth in Psalm 8.
- Draw brackets around each use of "you" or "yours" in Psalm 8.
- Draw a line connecting "set" in v. 1b and v. 3c.
- Write the word "highest" beside v. 1b and the word "lowest" beside v. 8c.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. What is significant about Psalm 8:1a and 8:9?
2. According to v. 1b, who is responsible for “glory” and where does such glory reside? What does this say about our Lord?
3. What stands in stark contrast to v. 1?
4. The psalmist describes “the heavens” as the work of the Lord’s “fingers” (v. 3). What does this phrase suggest about God and his creation?
5. What kind of poetic parallelism is found in v. 5 (synonymous, antithetical, or synthetic)? How does this parallelism enhance the meaning of v. 5?
6. How do vv. 5-6 illustrate the majesty and glory of our Lord?
7. What is included in being made a “ruler” over the works of God’s hands (v. 6)?
8. God sets his own glory “in” or “above” the heavens (v. 1b). How does God show his majesty in all the earth (consider vv. 2, 5-6)?
9. What connections do you see between Psalm 8 and Genesis 1?
10. Outline any progression of thought you see in Psalm 8 and explain what this teaches you about God.

Psalm 8 is a favorite psalm for many. As a Praise Psalm, it seeks to draw the reader or singer into the experience of praising God for who he is or what he has done. Psalm 8 is the first praise psalm in the collection. The psalm is unique in that it does not start with a formal call to worship but begins with its first words directly praising God. Psalm 8 is the only psalm of 150 Psalms that begins with the formal names of God, "LORD, our Lord." The psalm is focused exclusively upon God and addresses him directly throughout. The psalmist does not speak to others or even to himself. "You" or "your" are found throughout the psalm. "The import of this nuance is that Psalm 8 is not just a poem about God. Psalm 8 is a poem about God and us and about our relationship with God. The opening exclamation prepares the ground for the rest of the psalm by foreshadowing later themes. The Lord is called our lord. The title lord is a royal title. When applied to God, it refers to God's transcendent power and nature (cf. Pss. 135:5-12; 147:5; Neh. 10:29). In this verse, the title evokes God's infinite superiority to humans but also foreshadows the psalm's idea that humans are God's royal representatives amid creation. The suffix our lord also underscores the relationship between humanity and God that is at the heart of this psalm and indeed the heart of the Psalter as a whole" (Rolf A. Jacobson, "Book One of the Psalter: Psalms 1-41," in *The Book of Psalms, The New International Commentary on the OT*, 122).

Psalm 8:1a (and 8:9) not only name God as LORD (Yahweh) and Lord (Adoni), but also emphasize that the "name" of God is "majestic" or "excellent" in all the earth. As God is observed in his creation in this psalm, it is important to note which God is responsible for all this amazing creation. The psalm was written in a world where most people worshiped stars and moons as powerful deities. God having a name, *Yahweh*, distinguished him from other false gods that the nations worshipped. Natural revelation such as creation can point us to the possibility of a god, but can never fully connect us to the true God. God, revealing himself through special revelation, by speaking his name, and sharing his promises can connect us to the true source of our worship.

The psalmist is also careful to distinguish God from his creation. Psalm 8:1b states about God, "You have set your glory in the heavens." The ESV states, "You have set your glory *above* the heavens." God is not a glorious heaven or heavenly bodies. Instead, God "sets" or "outfits" the heavens with his glory. God is outside or above all creation and places the effects of his glorious design in the heavens. This explanation of God's interaction with his creation would set him apart from other, polytheistic deities who are often connected with the sun, moon, stars or other grand aspects of our known world and universe. God is not a great creation, but the great external or transcendent cause for all creation.

As grand as the created heavens are, God also displays his greatness through the least likely of channels. Psalm 8:2 leaves the glorious heights of heaven (v.1b)

and descends to the weakest and most vulnerable on earth, "nursing babies" (v.2a). God is so great that he does not need armies or fortresses to display his splendor. Instead the LORD can use even the cries and mumbling of infants to show his praise. Such simple prayer or praise from his people can showcase his powerful response. His power and presence in response to the praise and prayer of his followers can overcome the most formidable of foes. God is exalted through our human weakness and is glorified when we praise him even if our praise is faint or ill informed. This infantile imagery is highly illustrative and not literal. The psalmist is stating that God is glorious in and of himself. We would do well to praise him. Jesus referred to Psalm 8:2 when speaking about those praising him (Mt 21:16).

The psalmist returns to lofty descriptions of God again in Psalm 8:3. He describes God as creating heavens, moons and stars. He is most likely gazing at the night sky. Even without a telescope, the psalmist is amazed at the glories of a starlit sky. He again highlights that God is above and beyond the wonders of the night sky. He states that the heavens, stars and moons are "the work of your fingers." As large as stars and moons are, to the Creator they are like small toys, easily formed and moved. The psalmist's consideration of the heavenly creation is again cause for praise. Consideration implies contemplation and deep thought. Again he states that God "sets" things in place in the heavens (cf. Ps 8:1b).

As in verse 2, the psalmist again leaves the glories of heaven and considers the state of lowly humans. As wondrous as the heavens are, the psalmist is overwhelmed with the truth that this Creator would be mindful and care for people (v. 4). That God is mindful of human creations speaks to God's all-knowing sense and that he is not too busy to care for those made in his image. That God cares for humans suggests that God is not only omniscient but is also all-loving. Psalm 8:5 states that God creates us with status slightly lower than the highest of heavenly creatures and God "crowns us with glory and honor." Not only does he love and care for us, but he also blesses us with his favor and gives us opportunity to serve as his royal representatives of the rest of his creation (Ps 8:6-8).

We do not rule over God's creation through our own conquest. Instead we are stewards of God's earth. "They so rule when they stop predators from damaging their crops and herds: the statements imply a promise that the life of the farmer can work. But the horizon is larger than that and recalls the OT's vision of the animate world living in harmony (Isa. 11). That suggests a larger commission. When the work of creation was finished, this did not mean it had already reached its destiny; humanity's calling was to take it there. How extraordinary that God should want to use humanity thus! Of course, humanity failed from the beginning, and the creation has to continue to look forward to reaching its destiny and groan for its redemption (Rom. 8:22), but how grievous that in our own time we despoil it instead" (John Goldingay, *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament: Psalms 1-41*, 160).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *name* “In later Judaism, the divine name was held to be so sacred that the title was always used in place of the name; but here, the name is enunciated, and then immediately the psalmist goes on to praise the majesty of the ‘name’ (v 2b). The word ‘name’ here represents not only God, but also God’s revelation of himself, and it is critical to an understanding of the theme of revelation in the psalm as a whole. Thus God’s ‘name’ and God’s ‘majesty’ (v 2c) are poetically synonymous, for the majesty of both God’s person and creation are revealed to mankind in the divine name and all that it implies. The majestic name of God both permeates the earth and transcends the heavens, thus evoking the words of mortal praise. And as this psalm begins with an exclamation of the majesty of God’s name, so too it ends in the same words [v. 9], indicating in part that it is the majesty of the divine name which provides the central theme of the psalm and which provides the clue to its fundamental meaning” (Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, vol. 19, Word Biblical Commentary, 107).

v. 1 *glory* “*Yhwh* is a powerful sovereign here (e.g., Pss. 95–98). That is so because *Yhwh* asserted sovereignty at the Beginning over the entire cosmos. The line complements v. 1a–b with a testimony to *Yhwh*’s ‘majesty’ (*hōd*), again suggesting awesome power and authority (cf. 1 Chron. 29:11; Job 37:22; 39:20; Isa. 30:30; Hab. 3:3). *Yhwh* asserted this not merely on the earth but also in the heavens, and not merely ‘in all’ the earth but ‘over’ the heavens ([Ps] 57:5, 11; 108:4–5; 113:4; 148:13). The context suggests that this is more than a hyperbole. It indicates recognition that God is greater than all created reality and is in authority over it and over all other supernatural powers” (Goldingay, 155).

v. 2 *children* “Refers to the tender age where the child depends upon an adult for support. *Yōneqîm* (literally, ‘sucklings’) denotes a child not yet weaned, an act accomplished by the child’s third year. The compound, ‘children and infants,’ in its seven occurrences refers to the helpless offspring of a people threatened with annihilation by a ruthless foe (1 Sam. 15:3; 22:19; Jer. 44:7; Lam. 1:16; 4:4; Joel 2:16). It is an apt metaphor for ancient Israel who, trapped as a small and insignificant state between the giant superpowers of Egypt and Mesopotamia, found strength in their dependence upon their God. It is also apt for the church which, in a world armed with military and political power, also conquers by faith. ... The psalm found a literal and symbolic fulfillment when children praised the lowly Jesus as he rode on the colt of a donkey. ... [The poet] implying that the petition and praise of the meek withstand the assault of I AM’s enemies against them. In sum, through the grateful praise of I AM’s dependent people—not the rhetoric of eloquent orators—I AM commences his work of defending them and of slaying their attackers” (Waltke, 261).

v. 3 *fingers* “The vast expanse of the firmament impresses the psalmist deeply, but it does not overawe to the point where the personal dimension of faith is squelched. This hymn is a prayer to God, not merely a poem about God. This aspect of the psalm is even more striking when considered in light of the psalmist’s ancient Near Eastern context. Many in Israel and among her neighbors worshipped the heavenly bodies as divine bodies. In this pagan conception, the heavenly orbs were endowed with sentience, power, and identity. Here, they are merely objects that testify to their Creator’s glory—indeed, the psalmist belittles them by calling them the works of your fingers” (Jacobson, 123).

v. 4 *mindful* “In the world of human kings, a peasant subject might languish unknown and uncared for in the furthest reaches of the empire, but Yahweh remains mindful of all those whom he has made for a purpose. The two terms the psalmist uses to indicate the interest and care with which God attends to his human creatures are instructive. The first comes from the Hebrew root *zkr*, which indicates ‘remembering, calling to mind.’ ... The second is from the root *pqd*, which can mean something like ‘hunt up, seek out; long for, take care of.’ It is as if God’s calling to mind his human creatures sparks such a longing for them that he must seek them out and lavish care on them” (Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms*, vol. 1, The NIV Application Commentary, 205).

v. 5 *angels* “*’elōhîm* has been interpreted as a reference to God (NAB, NJB, NRSV), or to ‘angels’ (LXX, Syr. Targ., Heb. 2:7, KJV, JPS) and to ‘heavenly beings’ (NIV, cf. TNK). The literary form, a paean of praise to God, argues against its normal meaning, ‘God.’ Had the poet intended God, he might be expected to use ‘yourself,’ because in the rest of the psalm he addresses God as second person, not as third. Although Hebrew poets frequently shift their perspective from direct address to God to indirect statements about God, they do not normally alter their stance in the same clause... In Ps 8:6 of mankind, who in comparison with the rest of nature approximates an *’elōhîm*.’ The LXX is probably best construed as a dynamic equivalent. B. Childs says: ‘The Greek translation has offered an interpretation, but one which does not in itself do an injustice to the Hebrew.’ In his mortality and weakness the human being stands in antithesis to God (cf. Num. 23:19f), but in his role of ruler he approximates a heavenly being” (Waltke, 268).

v. 6 *rulers* “Man is God’s appointed governor (vassal) over creation. His function on earth is to maintain order, to shine his light on creation, and to keep a beneficent relationship with all that God has created on earth and in the sea. ... The Great King has appointed man to maintain dominion over creation (‘put everything under his feet’) and not be controlled by creation. All creatures, domesticated and wild, are subject to man’s authority” (Willem A. VanGemeren, “Psalms,” in *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, 114).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Worship our great God who created all and rules all, even through those as lowly as us.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



PARENT CONNECTION

One of the greatest gifts we have as a parent is watching the wonder and awe of our kids as they discover new things. Our newborns figure out they have hands and stare at them endlessly, even tasting them, only to discover they're attached. Ouch! Our toddlers learn their legs were meant for walking and then running, and pretty soon they're twirling with delight asking us to watch over and over again. Our elementary kids go from learning to read to reading to learn, and their brains are flooded with newfound knowledge. Their first flight, learning to drive, understanding the intricacies of the human body, falling in love – the privilege of watching our kids discover life is astounding. Undoubtedly, the very best parenting moment is when the light bulb goes off and our kids turn toward Christ as their Savior. We get a front row seat as they discover their place in God's magnificent story. I don't know about you, but I find it mind-blowing that the Creator of the universe, the One who hung the stars in the sky and breathed life into every animal, made our children and entrusted them to us as parents. It's radical and ridiculous. What a humbling privilege to open God's Word and disciple our children, cracking the door of discovery. We get to shed light that God made them, He loves them, He wants a relationship with them, and He deeply cares about them (even more than you do). Spend some time this week praising God for the privilege of parenting. Ask God to help you lead and guide your kids to praise Him with wonder.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Psalm 8

1. How does the psalmist describe God's name in verses 1 and 9?
2. What is the psalmist comparing in verse 3 and 4?
3. What job do humans have? (see Genesis 1:28)

What Do You Think?

How does knowing God created and loves every human being change the way you think about and treat other people?

What Do You Do?

Many of the Psalms were meant to be songs of praise to God. Using items from your home, make a musical instrument and turn Psalm 8 into a song of praise to God.

CORE COMPETENCY: Humanity

I believe God loves everyone and we all need Jesus as our Savior.

MEMORY VERSE: James 1:2-4

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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OUR MISSION
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.