

Seven Songs

Psalm 8: The Lord's Glory & Man's Dignity

Aug 9, 2015

Introduction

- Joanne opened with some questions:
 - Do you ever find yourself looking up at the night sky and wondering just how big the universe must be?
 - Does your mind ever wander to God and how mighty and powerful He is to have created the entire solar system and everything beyond?
 - Do you ponder why this magnificent God would be interested in you? I do!
- Story: David and Joanne's second honeymoon - stargazing in Turks & Caicos
- Last week Ryan shared a lament, a call to God for deliverance.
 - We learned that God is a God of restoration.
 - Ryan encouraged us to remember the good things God has done
 - A practical way to do that is by keeping a thanksgiving journal.
- Today we are going to study a Psalm of worship and praise, a thanksgiving journal!

Text: Psalm 8

*¹ O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens.*

*² You have taught children and infants
to tell of your strength,
silencing your enemies
and all who oppose you.*

*³ When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—*

*⁴ what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them?*

*⁵ Yet you made them only a little lower than God
and crowned them with glory and honor.*

*⁶ You gave them charge of everything you made,
putting all things under their authority—*

*⁷ the flocks and the herds
and all the wild animals,*

*⁸ the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea,
and everything that swims the ocean currents.*

⁹ O Lord, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!

Context:

- This is a Davidic Psalm
- It is lyrical and meditative.

- David solemnly meditates on, and admires, the glory and greatness of God. He is in awe.
- The Psalm's primary idea is the incredible love and goodness of God towards man.
 - That God should give mankind a second thought.
 - It speaks to the dignity God has placed on us and to the responsibility he has given us to care for his creation.
- Scholars believe David wrote this psalm in his later years, but it clearly contains meditations from his early shepherd days.

Content:

- The first two verses speak of the universal majesty of God
 - In v1 David speaks as an Israelite, who knows his God as Yahweh.
 - He acknowledges that none other than God is the universal sovereign ruler.
 - From this truth that the assurance of faith springs.
 - David knows that he is in the care of the One whose hand controls all and whose will as sovereign no one can dispute.
 - We too are in the care of the one who created all things and holds all things in his hands!
 - No matter what we are facing; trials, tribulations, sickness, even death, God is Lord over it all!
 - v2 All heard the saying "*from the mouths of babes*" - young children are known to speak the truth, even when it is not welcomed!
 - **Story:** Joanne telling her dad about Jesus when she was a very small child.
- What David is saying, is that God uses the least, the smallest, the weakest, the most unlikely to silence His critics
 - We see this most clearly in the Messiah, the Saviour of the world coming as a baby, born to a young couple, in the humblest of circumstances.
- In verses 3 to 8 David marvels at why the creator of all things would be interested in mankind.
 - When he looks at the night sky and sees the work of the Creator's fingers, why would God think about us?
 - Why would the Lord of All care about us? – Rhetorical questions.
 - Let's look at man's smallness compared to God's greatness:
 - In view of this vast, incredible universe, we seem like a speck, an atom, very small.
 - If we compare our actual littleness and weakness with the enormity of the universe, the power of the ocean, the strength of a tornado, the size of a mountain, we can begin to feel pretty insignificant.
 - **Story:** Maui and the boogie board wipeouts.
 - Think along the lines of time:
 - Longest human life span - 100 years - is nothing in comparison to a Great Basin bristlecone pine; they live to an average of 2,000 years!
 - The Redwood Forest in California houses trees that are hundreds of years old!
 - We have trees right here in BC that have outlived generations people.

- What about the forces of nature?
 - If the earth shakes, our cities fall.
 - If the wind blows hard our navies are wrecked.
 - If clouds withhold rain or pour out too much, our crops are ruined and famine strikes.
- And what of man's achievements?
 - They wither and fade, more often than not at our own hands.
 - When we just look at the physical/material side of life it is no wonder that philosophers have said, "is life worth living?"
- And yet God in his mercy crowned man with glory and honour; he made us a little lower than God.
 - The Hebrew word is *'elohim*, can be translated as "gods" or "heavenly beings."
 - God distinguishes man from the rest of creation.
 - He gives us special attention.
 - He bestows upon us an elevated position – WOW!
- In verse 6 the Psalmist writes *"you gave them charge over everything you made, putting all things under their authority."*
 - Commentators believe David was writing not just about man's dominion over the earth, but also prophetically, referring to Jesus and his future authority over all things. (This verse is used in the NT by Paul and the author of Hebrews it, (1 Cor 15:27-28; Heb 2: 5-9) applying it to Christ.
- The Psalmist goes on to tell us that the Almighty Creator has given mankind charge over everything He made.
 - This brings us back to the garden and God's original intent for man before the fall - Genesis 1: 26-28
 - God was preparing earth for man.
 - Before He created us he was providing for us!
 - God has bestowed upon man his image!
 - He made us to be like him.
 - We bear his stamp; we represent him.
 - With that comes the responsibility of caring for all creation, including each other!
- David finishes the psalm as he began, speaking of God's sovereignty over all he created, the ultimate ruler of all.

Conclusion

So what does this mean for us? How does this Psalm inform us about God, about ourselves and how we should live?

1. God is our sovereign creator
 - a. He holds all things in His hands.
 - b. We are in His care, just as David was.
 - c. No matter what we are facing today we can be assured that He has it.
 - i. Illness
 - ii. Job loss
 - iii. Breakdown of a relationship

- iv. Broken dream
 - v. Or even the death of a loved one,
 - vi. God is sovereign, He is in control, He is with us.
- 2. God will use the unlikely
 - a. He often uses the smallest, the weakest to:
 - i. Show His glory,
 - ii. Speak His truth
 - iii. Silence His critics
 - iv. God can and will use us!
- 3. God thinks about us – why?
 - a. He made us in His image
 - b. We are his children
 - c. He cares about us - deeply
 - d. He has given us a position of glory and honour
- 4. God has given us great responsibility
 - a. He has entrusted us with all of His of creation and with each other!

Response:

What is our response to this truth that the psalmist has written? Here are a few things that came to Joanne's mind as she reflected on this:

1. If God is my sovereign creator then don't I owe it to him to show him due respect and obedience? Does he not know what is best for me if he is the one who made me? And should I not trust Him with everything in my life, even the most scary, the most difficult, the most challenging? After all He holds the entire universe in His hands.
2. If God uses the smallest and the weakest to bring glory to His name and to silence his opponents, shouldn't I be open to be used by Him in whatever way He calls me? Not worrying about not being good enough, smart enough, old enough, young enough, or whatever enough?
3. If God thinks about me, and cares so deeply about me, should I not think about Him and love Him in return? If He has bestowed his image on me, if he has placed me in a position of honour and glory, then should I not want to live up to that?
4. If God has given me charge over the earth what am I doing with that responsibility? Am I doing my best to care for the things He has placed in my hands? My physical body, my mental and emotional health, my families, my job, my home, my environment? My fellow man?

Food for thought eh? How does this Psalm speak to you? How will you respond?