

# His Majestic Name!

Main Idea: God's majesty is displayed in His elevation of minuscule man.

In his book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, A.W. Tozer begins chapter one by saying, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us".

What we think about God greatly affects every part of us. In order for us to be healthy it is essential that our thoughts about God match reality.

And yet far too often this is not the case. In general, our thoughts about God are far too small and our thoughts about ourselves (or mankind in general) are far too big. This is captured really well in a birthday note recently published in the *Statesman Journal*.

*"Twelve. It is a divine, reoccurring number in our world. Twelve is symbolic of the creation of the universe. It has special meaning in nature, math, music, and time. Twelve represents everything that is complete; a harmonious unit. It governs space and time; the operation of the Cosmos. \_\_\_\_\_ is entering the year of this magical number. He is a divine and reoccurring presence in our lives. His creation is our universe. \_\_\_\_\_ is one with nature; he breathes music. He completes us; harmoniously. Unconditionally, \_\_\_\_\_ governs our space and time. He is the center of our Cosmos. Welcome to Twelve!*

*Happy Birthday \_\_\_\_\_! We love you bigger than the sky! With lovies and kissies- \_\_\_\_\_" (Statesman Journal 5/14/17)*

As well intended as these birthday thoughts are, they are extremely man-centric. As wonderful as this young man may be, the universe does NOT revolve around him. The universe doesn't revolve around any of us. It doesn't even revolve around humanity in general, and we should be incredibly grateful for that!

Psalm 8 was written by David (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit). While it has a lot to say about man, it is ultimately Theo-centric and its primary purpose is to increase the size of our thoughts about God. To help us see Him more clearly!

## Psalm 8

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouth of babies and infants,

you have established strength because of your foes,  
to still the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup>When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

<sup>4</sup>what is man that you are mindful of him,  
and the son of man that you care for him?

<sup>5</sup>Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup>You have given him dominion 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 along the paths of the seas.

<sup>9</sup>O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

### YAHWEH – THE MAJESTIC NAME!

In verse one, the theme of this Psalm is clearly stated, “O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”. Psalm 8 is all about the majesty of God. It begins with His majesty, ends with His majesty, and everything in between is pointing towards His majesty!

It is thus very fitting that David begins the Psalm with God’s majestic name... YAHWEH! In our translations we see “Lord” twice, “O LORD, our Lord”. The only difference, is that the first occurrence is in all caps. However, in the original text these are two entirely different words; two different names for God.

The first, “YAHWEH”, is the great name God gave for himself while speaking with Moses at the burning bush. God had just told Moses that He was sending him to Pharaoh to rescue the Israelites from Egypt. Moses asked how he should respond if the Israelites asked who had sent him and God responds by saying “...I AM WHO I AM... Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

I AM is a great, powerful, and majestic name! It means He is eternal, that He exists... past, present, and future, all rolled up in one. It means He is self-existent; that He is dependent on no one and nothing but Himself! He is the Creator and all else is created!

Right after God tells Moses to tell the Israelites that “I AM” has sent you, He repeats Himself but adapts “I AM” into a personal name for Himself when He says, in the very next verse (Exodus 3:15), “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘YAHWEH, the God of your fathers – the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.”

YAHWEH is the name God gave for Himself at the burning bush. The burning bush that caught Moses' attention because it was burning yet was not consumed! It seems that God was using even the burning bush itself, to speak of His eternal; never ending or diminishing; self-existent nature!

Back to Psalm 8. The first name for God that David uses here is the majestic name, YAHWEH! It is a very big name!

The second name is 'ādôn, which means lord, master, or owner.

Thus the first part of the psalm reads like this... "O YAHWEH, our Lord (our master), how majestic is your name! This captures a huge reality! It is a reality that we have the opportunity to get to know and enjoy for all eternity.

### IN ALL THE EARTH

The second portion of this introductory sentence brings the particular emphasis of Psalm 8 into focus. "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" This Psalm is focusing in particular on how God's majestic name is displayed in the earth. More specifically through His work in man (mankind/humanity), as we will see later.

This is the theme of the Psalm. It is presented in verse one and then repeated as the Psalm closes in verse nine.

### HIS STRENGTH DISPLAYED IN WEAKNESS

As we move into the heart of the Psalm we find two parallel segments. I am going to set them side by side on the screen so that you can easily see the parallel thoughts.

The first segment (the end of verse one though verse two) says,

"You have set your glory above the heavens.  
<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouth of babies and infants,  
you have established strength because of your foes,  
to still the enemy and the avenger."

The first line of this segment obviously fits with the theme of YAHWEH's majestic name. His glory IS majestically displayed in the heavens! When we look at the heavens our thoughts regarding His greatness, power, and creativity are dramatically elevated. And yet even the heavens, which are beyond our comprehension, cannot contain His glory! This is a big, wonderful thought. A thought that we resonate with and that clearly fits in with the theme of God's majesty.

What is much more difficult to understand is how the next sentence is related to the theme of this passage. Initially it doesn't make sense, and it seems to come out of nowhere!

<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouth of babies and infants,  
you have established strength because of your foes,  
to still the enemy and the avenger."

David had been talking about the majestic name of YAHWEH. Our God who is eternal and self-existent! The one who's glory cannot be contained by the universe. And then he seems to suddenly shift his attention from the all-powerful to the incredibly weak; from the majestic to the small; from YAHWEH's heavens to the mouths of babies.

Though surprising, this contrast is strategic and powerful. To understand what the author is saying, it is important to note that the subject has not changed. The subject is still the Lord's majestic name. So David is saying something about how the display of YAHWEH's majesty is magnified in His use of the mouths of babies in silencing and defeating His enemies.

As we take a closer look at this, I would like to ask two questions...

1. What does it mean that the Lord uses the mouths of babies to silence His enemies?
2. How does this display His majesty?

## What Does it Mean That The Lord Uses The Mouths of Babies to Silence His Enemies?

### God Used Children's Praise to Silence Jesus' Enemies

We are given a clear example of this in Matthew 21. Jesus has just come into Jerusalem (what we call His Triumphant entry), He has just cleared the temple, and He is now healing the blind and the lame in the temple. Tension between Jesus and the religious leaders has been building throughout His ministry and it is now reaching a peak. This is where we pick up the story in Matthew 21:15...

#### **Matthew 21:15-17**

<sup>15</sup> But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant, <sup>16</sup> and they said to him, "Do you hear what these 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'?"

<sup>17</sup> And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.

"Son of David" was clearly recognized among the Jews as a title of the predicted Messiah. The religious leaders were furious because the children were singing praises to Jesus as **The Messiah** and Jesus wasn't doing anything about it. He was receiving the praise instead of stopping them. So the religious leaders come to Jesus and ask Him if He hears what the children are saying. In response, Jesus simply says "Yes", accepting the title of Messiah, and then He quotes this portion of Psalm 8, about God's employment of the mouths of babies to praise Him/silence His enemies.

It appears, due to no recorded response, that the religious leaders were indeed silenced! God used the mouths of babies (children) to silence His (Jesus') enemies.

This is a fantastic example of what David is talking about here in Psalm 8, but it isn't the only time God has done this. With a little bit of thought, I am guessing we can all think of examples that are a lot closer to home.

I believe I have experienced this as God has used the mouths of my children to silence some of my own faithless thoughts; thoughts that are ultimately His enemies.

I will never forget a time that I was pushing Everett and Gregory through Target in a shopping cart. We were approaching the check-out area when they decided to start singing “Our God is Greater” at the top of their lungs! I was immediately uncomfortable. While something did need to be done about the volume, the real battle in my mind was about the content. My initial thought was in regard to how offensive the words might be to those around us.

The gospel is offensive to those who are perishing, but no part of me should be ashamed of it. I have the privilege of KNOWING that it is the power of God to Salvation! In that moment I realized that part of me was not really believing the power and goodness of the gospel. God used the mouths of our boys to reveal and silence my unbelieving thoughts.

Another way I have seen this happen is when Everett has expresses his excitement for Heaven. He will say something like, “Dad and Mom, when can we die and go to Heaven?” or “Mom and Dad, I just can’t wait to die and go to Heaven!” The first time he said something like this, it came out of nowhere and surprised me. I have to admit, my initial thoughts were... “something must be terribly wrong for you to talk like that”; “you have so much life left to live”; “it would be terrible if your life was cut short and you went to heaven soon”. But Everett understands Heaven better than I do. It is a simpler understanding yet more accurate. He knows heaven is where Jesus is, and thus there is no better place to be! Once again, my faithless thoughts... Thoughts that are ultimately God’s enemies were silenced and defeated by God, through the faith and the mouth of a child.

I doubt I have any idea of the scope of how God uses the mouths of babies to silence His enemies, but I think these examples give us a taste.

### **How Does This Display His Majesty?**

So on to the second question... “How does this reveal His majesty?” Though there may be more, it seems there are two primary ways that His majesty is seen in this.

The first, is simply in His ability to work through something so tiny and weak. It is one thing to reveal His majesty by using His great power to obliterate His enemies, or to reveal it in the Heavens... But a whole new level of greatness and majesty is displayed when He uses the weak and the small to defeat His enemies!

This is why we love the story of David and Goliath. Imagine if God had simply spoken a word and taken Goliath out of existence. He could have. Or imagine if He had used an Israelite giant to defeat Goliath. He could have. But isn’t God’s power and majesty displayed in a greater way because He used a young boy, with no armor or conventional weaponry, to defeat a war hardened champion?

The second display of majesty, is in His elevation of the weak to a privileged position of being included in what He is doing! Don’t you think higher thoughts about God when you think of the privileged position He gave the young, shepherd boy David as He elevated him from his weakness and used him to conquer one of God’s enemies?

That leads us into the next and final section which further explores this thought...

### **HIS MAJESTY DISPLAYED IN HIS ELEVATION MINISCULE MAN**

<sup>3</sup>When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

<sup>4</sup>what is man that you are mindful of him,  
and the son of man that you care for him?

<sup>5</sup>Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup>You have given him dominion 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 along the paths of the seas.

As with the previous section, David begins by looking at God’s majesty as it is displayed in the heavens and then contrasts that with the display of His majesty in something far smaller. He is saying, in light of the greatness of God, whose majesty is displayed in the heavens (specifically in the fact that it was a simple job for Him to create the heavens), why in the world would God care for, or even think of, man?!

But look at what He has done! He has “made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor!”

The word translated “heavenly beings” in the ESV has also been translated as “angels” or even “Godhead”. Whatever the intended meaning, this is an incredibly high and privileged position!

He then says that God “crowned him with glory and honor!” David is referring to the fact that God made man in His image. God made man like Himself in a mental, relational, and moral way. Among other things, God created man in His image with a unique ability to be in relationship. God made man specifically for relationship with God Himself! The more we understand the greatness of God the more incredible this becomes and we see more of YAHWEH’s majesty!

In verses six through eight, the psalmist speaks of another amazing thing God gave to man...

<sup>6</sup>You have given him dominion 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 along the paths of the seas.

God gave man the privilege and responsibility of governing earth, HIS creation! This is very similar to Genesis 1:27-28, which God probably used to influence David’s pen.

### Genesis 1:27-28

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Do you see God’s majesty displayed in His elevation of miniscule man? He has given him a privileged position (just below the heavenly beings), He has made him in His image (crowned him with glory and honor), and He has given him an unbelievable role (dominion over creation)!

### **The Fall and Restoration**

Though I don’t want to spend too much time here, I think I would be remiss if I failed to note the two obvious problems that come to mind. It seems like this plan has all gone awry and backfired on God. Man, who was made in God’s image, seems pretty messed up and not very majestic. Man is also doing a pretty poor job in his dominion over earth. Does this plan really display God’s majesty?

Let me remind you that when man sinned in the Garden of Eden and turned away from God, the image of God in man was marred. You can still see glimpses of it but sin and selfishness and death (which are not at all a part of who God is) became part of who man is, when we walked away from God.

The good news is that from before the beginning God had a plan for restoration! YAHWEH became a man, lived a perfect life, died a horrific death to pay the penalty for our sins, and then three days later came back to life.

Because of Adam and Eve’s initial sin, we are all born sinners and are naturally enemies of God. But because of His incredible grace through Jesus, we have been invited into His family!

Because of what Jesus has done, the image of God in man can be restored and the dominion over earth, that God gave to man, will one day be exercised perfectly when redeemed man has the privilege of reigning with Christ!

This display of God’s majesty goes on for all eternity!

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, I would like to share an illustration that demonstrates how God’s majesty is displayed in His elevation of miniscule man.

Andy Goldsworthy is a British artist who creates incredible works of art out of the simplest, most basic materials.



He takes leaves, rocks, or sticks, which have little to no value, and elevates them by giving them an important role in a breathtaking work of art. I am sure Andy can do amazing things with expensive and beautiful components but it is his ability to elevate yard debris that best displays his skill!

So it is, on a much grander scale, with YAHWEH! His majesty IS displayed in the heavens but there is something extra magnificent about His majesty displayed in His elevation of weak, miniscule man!

## APPLICATION

How should we respond to the truth of Psalm 8? To put it simply, we should let the truth in this Psalm elevate our thoughts about God and join the Psalmist in worship!

This may seem obvious and too simple. However, if A. W. Tozer is correct when he says, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us”, then this is an extremely important point of application.

Our view of God affects how we view ourselves; it affects how we view others; it affects how we view the gift of His Word; it affects how we view the incomprehensible privilege we have of relationship with Him through Jesus; it affects everything!

Consider spending some time this afternoon evaluating how your view of God may need to be adjusted and how that would affect your actions this next week. There are Family Life Group Discussion Questions on the back of your bulletin that may assist you in this.

As we close, would you stand and join me saying the theme line of this passage?

<sup>9</sup> O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!



## "HIS MAJESTIC NAME"

Psalm 8

**Main Idea:** God's majesty is displayed in His elevation of miniscule man.

**Theme:** "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth" (1 & 9)

**His majestic name**

LORD

Lord

**In all the earth**

**Contrast 1:** God's glory displayed through the heavens vs. God's glory displayed through the weakness of babies (1a - 2)

**What does it mean that the Lord uses the mouths of babies to silence His enemies?**

**How does this display His majesty?**

**Contrast 2:** God's glory displayed through the heavens vs. God's glory displayed in His elevation of man.

**"made him a little lower than the heavenly beings" (5)**

**"crowned him with glory and honor" (5)**

**"given him dominion over the works of your hands" (6)**

## “His Majestic Name”

Psalm 8

**Main Idea:** God’s majesty is displayed in His elevation of miniscule man.

1. What are some ways that you find a false (man-centric) view of God affecting you?
2. How does Psalm 8 correct your view of God? How does it correct your view of man?
3. How might a corrected view of God change your perspective, emotions, and actions this week?