

The Psalms: Structure, Content & Message
Sunday Morning Bible Study
Chapter 6 – Creation Psalms

INTRODUCTION

- Page 93: Creation Psalms
- Review the motif “praise of the Creator” from Chapter 5 (pp. 89-91)
- Which psalms are creation psalms: 8, 19A, 104, 139, (148)

PSALM STUDY

- Pages 93-96
- **Psalm 8**
 - Begins and ends with praise of God’s glory
 - Turns from vast horizon of the heavens to human beings as God’s creations
 - “Even the babbling of a tiny infant bears witness to God’s creative power and is thereby stronger than all the gainsaying of God’s enemies (v. 2). God considers tiny beings as close to the divine, and shows this by letting them rule over the work of his hands—animals of all sorts” (93).
- **Psalm 19**
 - The heavens declare the glory of God, not in order to reveal God (natural revelation), but in order to exalt, praise, and laud the God whose existence and activity is presupposed as the most real of realities.
 - ASIDE: Natural Revelation: “The disclosure of God through nature or the natural order. Some have argued that his disclosure is accessible to all through reason; others that it is known only from the perspective of faith.”¹
 - Psalm 19 is not teaching us that people can know God through nature. It teaches us that even nature does what we are supposed to do: declare the glory of God to all nations.
 - “God was so real and so powerful to the people who prayed these psalms that creation also must have been conceived of as participating in exalting and praising God’s glory” (94).
 - Creation psalms are important in our day
 - New discoveries in science and nature
 - Many people try to deify or exalt nature
 - “Either the stars, the atoms, and the earth are only matter—then we human beings must be understood as coming from matter and consisting of matter—or else the stars, sun, and earth are related to God just as we are; they are creatures. In that case the ultimate meaning of their existence is the same as that of humans: existing to the praise of God’s glory” (95).

¹ McKim, Donald K., *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press), 1996.

- **Psalm 104**
 - Praise of God's greatness
 - Moves to a description of creation
 - In place of a description of the creation of the world at the beginning we hear of God's creative activity at the present time.

DISCUSSION

- What is your view of creation? Is it good? Is it bad?
- What is the purpose of creation?
- What can we learn from creation?