

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 8 – THE POWER OF GOD’S NAME

I. INTRODUCTION

In this psalm, the name of God is the focus. God has many names and all His names in the Bible describe exactly who He really is. Though God has many names, He has but one personal name, and that is the LORD. This is His covenantal name of God in particular to the nation Israel. As the psalmist exalts the LORD in the highest praise, worship and honour rendered to Him possible, he is also calling upon the whole world (not just Israel!) to bow down before Him. This worship includes even His enemies!

We know God through His names. Every single knowledge of His name should enable us with the help of the Holy Spirit to know Him better and bring us closer to Him by walking in Him in obedience and love. There is power in God’s name. And the most perfect understanding of God’s name is centered upon the person of Jesus Christ. As Apostle Paul wrote, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

A. Title

“To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm of David.” Gittith is believed to be a harp like musical instrument. The psalm is to be sung in worship to praise God with the accompaniment of the harp as conducted by the chief musician.

B. Author

David is the author. He has always been known as “the man after God’s own heart.” His intimate knowledge of God enables him to walk with God intimately. He brings out the beauty of such a relationship that is possible between the Creator and His creatures. If not for sin, how can man not walk with His Creator and enjoy the communion with Him? God desires us to draw close to Him in every way possible because He loves us. But it is us who are always resisting Him and allowing hindrances to enter into His holy presence. Let David’s psalm convict us today.

C. Summary

God is the God of the whole world, even the whole universe. He is the Creator and deserved to be praised by His creatures and creation. This psalm brings out the majestic power of God’s name in which even the enemies were made to bow down before Him in total submission and power. Truly God’s power is all over all without exception. May we be humbly found on His side, gathering our lips and whole bring, giving Him the highest praise, worship and honour that He deserves from us.

The outline of the psalm is as follows: God’s power over His enemies (verses 1 to 2), God’s power in the salvation of man (verses 3 to 4), and God’s power empowers man (verses 5 to 9).

II. GOD'S POWER OVER THE ENEMIES!

A. The Excellency of God's Name in Glory

Verse 1, "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens."

According to Barnes, he explains the word "LORD" 'means properly master, lord, ruler, owner and is such a title as is given to an owner of the land or of slaves, to kings, or to rulers, and is applied to God as being the ruler or governor of the universe. The meaning here is, that the psalmist acknowledged Yahweh to be the rightful ruler, king, or master of himself and of all others. He comes before him with the feeling that Yahweh is the universal ruler - the king and proprietor of all things.'

God is the God of the whole world and He is our personal God. He is not far away that we cannot know Him, now that we have a special relationship with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. Base on this relationship, the psalmist declares "how excellent is thy name in all the earth!' This is not a question but a declaration and the highest acknowledgement given to God. The word "excellent" means the state of being exalted and glorified. Truly God's name is highly exalted and glorified beyond measure, even beyond the end of the world and above the heavens.

B. God Stills His Enemy

Verse 2, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

In the world, we see power resided in those who are great in status and endowed with authority. Those in power would suppress the weak and control them by their whim and fancy. Those under them are at their mercy since they have no strength and power to fight against them. As such, many will want to stay in power and there will always be those who want power to control. There will always be power fight and struggle in the physical realm of the world we are living in.

However, in the spiritual realm, it is totally different. God alone is power. All His subjects lovingly, willingly, obediently come under His power and control. There is no thought of usurping His power. It is not a matter of understanding the reality that no one can fight against God and win. It is a matter of understanding the reality that God's power is good and will always prevail against evil.

The psalmist reveals how God stills His enemies. The word "still" means rest. God will put the enemies to rest. And God does so by using those who are looked upon as the weakest and smallest, and despised among men. The babes and sucklings are those who need the most help for survival. They are worse than animals. At least animals when they were born, with their natural instinct, know where to get food and someday somehow still can live. But for newborn babes, they will surely die of starvation and thirst in a matter of days if left independently. And yet they will be the ones who will be used by God to still the enemies.

This will be a total shock to the enemies as well as God's way of humiliating them for their wickedness. They deserve such treatment since they are puffed up with pride and with hearts that are wicked to the core. Indeed God's power prevails!

It may seem to us that the wicked are not being punished for their wickedness as we see in the world today. The world is getting from bad to worse. The immorality of men has escalated beyond our imagination and has proven that God's Word has come true in all its predictions of the extent of evil that will occur in the last days. Let our confidence be in the Lord's power that one day we shall witness in great glory how wicked men be humbled and severely punished ultimately.

III. **GOD'S POWER IN THE SALVATION OF MAN**

A. God's Work of Creation

Verse 3, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;"

The creation of God is evidently present before our eyes. Many a times we admire them for the beauty and greatness these creations by God. The word "ordained" means to bring into existence. Truly the works of creation are God's works. He alone does it without any help.

The psalmist observes and studies the creation and cannot help by comparing man to all these other creations that God made. Somehow man is given a special place in God's heart in the midst of the whole creation. It is a place which God did not give to angels, or any other creatures except man. How special is man in God's heart?

B. God's Pinnacle of Creation

Verse 4, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

'Who am I a puny man whom God be interested in? This is what the psalmist is asking. "Am I really so special?" The answer from God's perspective is in the affirmative. God is "mindful" of man. The word "mindful" means taking notice and giving attention. God takes note of us, one by one.

In fact the word "visitest" is even more meaningful and insightful to what God is doing to man. It means paying attention, with the idea of caring. After man fell into sin for the first time, all could have been lost and over for him. But God offers the gospel to him because He cares. God wants sinful man to be saved, and not perish.

Despite man's continual rebellion, God continues to care for him by being patient, forbearing, forgiving and full of compassion. He sent prophets and messengers to warn, deliver and save them. He allows oppression and persecutions to come upon them, not to destroy them but to provoke them to return to Him again. It is all for their salvation and spiritual good which God Himself have chosen to be merciful and gracious to them.

Man is God's pinnacle of creation. This is the privilege and honour you and I must realize what we truly possess in our hand all by the grace and mercy of God. As such, we must acknowledge God, praise Him and exalt His name up high above every name.

IV. GOD'S POWER EMPOWERED MAN

A. God Made Man In His Way

Verse 5, “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”

It is understood here as God has made man a little lower than Himself. Perhaps the reason KJV translators translated it as “angels” is because of Hebrews 2:9. The connection between God and man is not to be broken. God alone is the source of glory and honour. And it pleases Him to give man the glory and honour. Who can refute this fact? Who can stop God from bestowing such glory and high honour upon man? No one absolutely!

This is how God made man in His way, so unique and special. As was recorded in the first book of the Bible, God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7b). And also it was declared that “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

How did God crown man with glory and honour?

B. God Empowers Man in His Way

Verse 6, “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:”

Verse 7, “All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;”

Verse 8, “The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.”

The LORD has crowned man by making him to have dominion over the works of His hands and by putting them under his feet. God has bestowed upon puny and insignificant man the power to dominate over His creatures! These creatures include all sheep, oxen, the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea. God alone created them and even the rule over them alone. And yet, God gave this privilege and honour to undeserving man (Genesis 1:26-28)! These creatures can swim and run faster, fly, and are stronger than man, yet they were put in subjection to man because the LORD decreed it. The excellency of the name of the LORD is seen in the honour He gave to man.

C. God Be Glorified Forever!

Verse 9, “O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!”

David ended this psalm by repeating the words of verse 1. It is like a bouquet of flowers that are now tied up nicely in a bundle with a scarlet string. Indeed there is power in God's name: The power that is over all His enemies, the power that gives salvation to man, and the power that empowers man to worship and serve Him.

How can we His people not praise the Name of the LORD? We must! This is the cry of David! We who know Christ as our Lord and Saviour have so much to praise Him for as our Creator and our covenantal LORD! May God help us. Amen.