

**The Message of Israel's Poets and Writers:
Reframing Life: A Faith Perspective
Reframing Worship
Psalm 8**

Intro: Crossroads Sunday; Lord's Supper; Baptism. We will spend five Sundays in the Poets and Writers then move on to the Major and Minor Prophets. August 31 we will begin the NT.

The appropriate worship of God is absolutely fundamental to our emotional and spiritual health on this planet. Worship itself is the foundation for all truth. It expresses love for the Creator God who saves us by his grace. Worship expresses knowledge of ourselves, our limitations and our potentialities. Worship acknowledges our place in the created order. Worship declares our purpose—bringing God glory.

Let's interpret this psalm as we interpreted the framework of the Book of Job—from the covenant that God makes with humans. If we do so, we will see the basic confessions that are part and parcel of God's Old and New Covenant—the greatness of God, the purpose of his glory in all the earth, and the surprise that God's loving kindness extends to humankind and places us at the pinnacle of his created order here on earth.

God gave you the physical and spiritual faculties through which you may know him and make yourself known to him. Through these abilities and perceptions you can reframe your worship so that it fits the criteria of Jesus—in *spirit and in truth*. Jesus said that God was searching for people who would worship him this way. The Psalm mentions many experiences of praise. Here are three experiences that may help reframe our praise:

I. We Feel Small (in reframing praise)—*When I consider your heavens* (v3). Do you know this retreating feeling of insignificance, your diminishing size in light of God's world?

A. The Bigness of God: *You have set your glory above the heavens* (Psalm 1:1c).

1. David stood upon the mountains and enjoyed the view of a wide expanse of countryside. But when he saw the heavens, he sensed the immensity of the God who made it.
2. God made this world with his FINGERS. He SET IN PLACE the constellations. As Job declares (9:8-9), *He alone stretches out the heavens and treads on the waves of the sea. He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south.*
3. God made it all. He did not need his biceps—just his fingers to make the sun and moon and scatter the stars in space. He worked with the constellations with his fingers, arranging them as we would pieces of a puzzle. “Your heavens” are stretched out above us so that, even in contemplating them, our spirits are drawn from this planet into the celestial realm.

B. The Smallness of Man—*When I consider your heavens* (v3)

***I had a recurring dream when I was a boy and lived in the desert near El Paso. My bed would start growing until it stretched beyond the horizon in all directions, and I would see a tiny, little me in the middle of this great wasteland, with my mouth open in terror, but I could make no sound.

We diminish to near invisibility when we contemplate the greatness of God, the expanse of space. *What is man that you are mindful of him?* (Psalm 8:4).

C. Appropriate Praise—*You have ordained praise* (v2).

What God wants from us, when we discover our tiny place in his big world, is praise. Praise is the appropriate response because it indicates that we are people of faith whose lives are turned toward the God who made us and loves us.

1. Praise with our lips—*from the lips of children* (v2). God has ordered vocal praise from his people. Jesus said if we keep silent the rocks themselves will cry out.
2. Praise with our hands—*You made him ruler over the works of your hands* (v6). We praise God when we do our work and care for the resources of our planet in obedience to him. Just as the work of God's fingers prompt our praise, so the work of *our fingers* is an appropriate expression of praise back to the Creator.

II. We Hear Children (in reframing praise)—*From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise* (Psalm 8:2).

A. Jesus quoted this psalm after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and after the cleansing of the Temple. In Matthew 21: 14-16, *The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. 16 "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise'?"*

B. The adults should have been giving praise, but they are too twisted in their understanding to see that the healing of the blind and lame is something for which to give God praise. The adults are more concerned about their vested interests than about the people whose lives are being changed through the power of God. The children lead the way because they are not inhibited by presuppositions, territorialism, and unbelief.

C. Truthfully, we are all children and infants in comparison with our God. We think we have such a steep learning curve as we major from the cradle to the grave, but in the eyes of God we remain little children. He might say over us, "Oh, he is so smart." But he sets his remarks in the context of a comprehensive knowledge that hears the utterance of our lips as we hear the prattle of children.

D. God is pleased to have his name praised by the lowly, the young, and the poor. He sees no difference between the high and mighty and the meek and lowly on our tiny planet. In fact, he prefers to receive praise from the children, for their praise is usually more pure, more free from selfish motives and hunger for the spotlight.

E. Praise is Ordained to Silence the Enemies, Foe, Avenger v2

1. Ordained means that it is established and required by God
2. Vocal praise brings silence to the Accuser. We heard last week Satan's accusation against God and Job. Here we have one of the secrets to silencing the Enemy—Praise.

III. We See Jesus (in reframing praise)—*You put everything under his feet* (v6).

A. The Apostle Paul sees Jesus. He applies a portion of Psalm 8 to the Savior when he quotes the phrase, "He has put everything under his feet." Paul says this means that God put everything under Christ (1 Corinthians 15:27). He says the same in Ephesians 1:22, "And God placed all things under his feet."

B. The writer of Hebrews sees Jesus. He takes the same approach: (Hebrews 2:6-9): *But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? 7 You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor 8 and put everything under his feet." 8 In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

C. The ancient Hebrews saw the Messiah in this Psalm. This is a Psalm of Culmination. The Hebrews used this psalm as part of the celebration at the end of the vintage, the harvesting of grapes. In their theology, before Christ came, this psalm was applied to that event at the end of all things when God would swing wide his sickle and reap the harvest of the earth—the concluding vintage to the history of man.

D. Reframing our praise, then, we move from the consideration of the heavens to considering the One who is crowned with glory and honor. We move to the wrapping up hour. And we see Jesus.

E. Our praise of God is

1. for his condescension in sending his One and Only Son.
2. for his love for us in giving of himself.
3. For the incarnation of God in Christ Jesus.
4. For the redemption that he purchased through the death of Christ upon the cross.
5. For the salvation that is ours through the work of Christ.
6. For the promise of a New Heaven and a New Earth wherein dwells righteousness.

Conclusion: To really worship, you must receive Christ as Savior. This is the culminating work of God on the earth. If we fail to see this truth, we fail to see the great thing God has done on our behalf.