

# Psalm 8

by Carl Armerding

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*In Psalm 8, Carl Armerding explores the majesty of God, humanity's significance, and the call to a personal relationship and complete surrender to Him.*

**Duration:** 38:47

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 14:1, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 1:19

**Topics:** "Psalms"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of a new generation in singing praises to the Lord. He shares his joy in seeing young children on the platform, even if they were missing a few teeth, as they sang praises to God. The speaker also mentions the significance of teaching children about Christianity for their future. He then transitions to discussing Psalm 8 and mentions that while he cannot cover all 150 Psalms, he highlights the importance of some of them. The speaker concludes by reflecting on his own health issues and expressing gratitude for God's protection and preservation.

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## Transcript

I think when Jim goes recording, those who are singing, he'd better get one of Dr. Armerding's because we need it. And just because we've listened to a few of you, not more than 400 of you this week, say that wouldn't it be good if Dr. Armerding's would come back next year, I just thought we'd say that the conveners, listening to you as we always do, have decided that that would be a good thing, and we've asked him if he could, and Lord willing, he will return to the conference next year. I hate to think of all you folks that, if you don't get registered early, that are going to be sitting in Durham and Greensboro and Raleigh wishing you were at Bristol, so now may be a good time to attend to that.

It has been a real joy to have our brother with us, a man of real experience, rich experience, and able to bring it down to us in such a way that it makes us feel that we can just relive a lot of that within the Book of Psalms and other things you've had to say. So we'll listen to our brother Dr. Carly Armerding this time. Sometimes when I listen to these lovely introductions, I'm reminded of the story of a funeral in a colored church, and then it's the youth who die, it's the poor fellow who had died.

After he got through, his widow said to one of the children, you all go and look in that coffin seat that's reading your pappy. This morning I'd like to look with you at Psalm 8. Inasmuch as we can't do all 150, should the Lord tarry and leave us here for another year, maybe we'll do some more along these lines next time. But we're skipping over a few, they're very precious.

I might say, however, that many of them have what we might call a rather minor note. Some years ago when I was connected with the Moody Bible Institute, I was asked to give a title to a series of addresses which I was going to give on some of the psalms, and I said, well, I'm going to speak on the pessimistic psalms. And of course there are a good many of them that would qualify as such.

But the Institute was afraid to use the word pessimistic. They were afraid they might offend some of the brethren, so they decided to give it the title of Psalms in a minor key. And that's what we've been looking at somewhat in Psalms 3 and 4 and 5. We might say that a good part of them is in the minor key.

But this one we want to look at this morning is in the major key. Psalm 8, to the chief musician of Pongithi, the psalm of David. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hath set thy glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies that thou mightest steal the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lord in the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.

O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth. You know, of course, that the general title which is given to the book of the Psalms is that it's a book of prayer and praise. And yet it's remarkable that you have to read through seven Psalms before you come to a note of praise in this book.

You notice the last verse of Psalm 7, I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness, will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High, and then the eighth Psalm carries on the idea. Now this is remarkable. It looks to me like there has to be a certain amount of experience, not only pleasant experiences, but very often unpleasant ones, before we really learn to praise the Lord.

Before we really learn to pour out our hearts in worship to him. And that's what this eighth Psalm is. This eighth Psalm, by the way, is referred to at least twice in the New Testament and applied to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We find him applying a part of it himself in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew, and then of course in the second chapter of Hebrews, we have again an inspired reference to this Psalm. In addition to that, we're going to notice one or two other passages which I believe confirm this, that this Psalm has to do particularly with the Lord Jesus. The fact that the Psalm is in the position it is, that is that it's the eighth Psalm, does not necessarily mean that it's the eighth Psalm that David wrote, because these Psalms evidently were arranged by someone, some people think, some commentators think that Ezra was the one who arranged these Psalms.

That they're not arranged in chronological order is very evident from the fact that Psalm 90, which is a prayer of Moses, the man of God, occupies the 90th place, and yet it must have been a lot older than any of these Psalms that we have looked at so far. So the Holy Spirit has a purpose in putting these Psalms in the position in which we find them. The second Psalm, for example, is identified as such in the book of the Acts, and I think there's real significance to the fact that this Psalm occupies the eighth place, because the number eight suggests to us a fresh beginning.

After seven, which speaks of completeness, we get the eighth, and so in our reckoning of time, we have seven days a week, and even in these days when we'd like to have everything, shall we say according to the decimal system, we find that this simply stays with us. I know that one time they tried to make Sunday one in ten days instead of one in seven, but it didn't work. It has to go according to God's own arrangement that you have in the first chapters of the Bible.

And so this eighth Psalm speaks to us of a fresh beginning, and you and I, thank God, can date that from the days of our conversion, when we got to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior, that was a new beginning. It was from that time on that we began to really pray to the Lord. Now, an interesting thing about this title here is that it introduces the name of a musical instrument.

This word gittit, according to the footnote in my Scopia Bible, the word gittit means wine press, but it is also the name of a musical instrument. And this musical instrument, believe it or not, came from the land of the Philistines. It came from the city of Gad.

Now, this to me is very remarkable, that a hymn of praise should be sung to music produced by an instrument that comes out of the enemy's country. Because if the children of Israel, if the Lord's people in those days ever had enemies, it was the Philistines. And it may interest you to know that these Philistines were really, as far as I can tell from the tenth chapter of Genesis, they were Egyptian in origin, but they came into the land by the shortcut which was known as the Way of the Philistines.

And in that way they represent a good many people who are in the professing church today, but who've never been born again. And these very often become the pitiless enemies that the church has ever had. I could mention some names this morning which are in the press continually about men who occupy high ecclesiastical positions, but who are really enemies of the Word of God.

Yet how wonderful when God takes one of these, and regenerates him, and puts him into the heavenly choir, or uses him in the heavenly orchestra. And that's exactly what happens to this instrument from God. For many years I had a great prejudice against the saxophone.

I didn't think a saxophone could ever play any part whatever in the worship of God. But one night in a conference in Flagstaff, Arizona, where my breath is a good deal shorter than it is here, being 7,000 feet above sea level there. One night I had retired, and I heard a lovely song being played, and I tried to identify the instrument.

I said it couldn't be a cornet, it couldn't be a trumpet, and finally I just decided it must be a saxophone. But I just couldn't connect the saxophone with the hymn that was being played. But the next morning, sure enough, I found out it was a converted saxophone.

And it's been used in the glory of God. And so here is the converted gitty, an instrument coming out of the enemy's territory, and God using it to produce music for him. And this music, of course, I don't need to remind you, is concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

In that verse which is printed on the covers of your hymn books, you'll notice one of the first songs that ever was sung when the morning stars sang together for joy, as we have it in the 38th chapter of Joel. Then later on we have that wonderful song that was sung in the book of Exodus, that song of redemption, after the Israelites had been delivered from Egypt. Then they sang.

And here we have a song which looks on to that glorious day when our Lord Jesus will indeed be celebrated as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And so we begin our song this morning by looking at his name. It says, O Lord, our Lord.

I could just leave it as it's put there in the English and say nothing more about it except to say that we're not only talking about the Lord, but we're talking about him as one who belongs to us. And we belong to him. That's involved in this word our, isn't it? He's our, and we're his.

And you know, this is something which we find is even in the mind of a child, oh how they like to belong. They like to belong. I'm thinking especially of some orphan children who've been robbed of their parents, and sometimes I'm sorry to say the parents have actually deserted them.

To have these little ones adopted into a family, and then to have again the feeling of belonging. This is wonderful, isn't it? And you know, whenever I get down to prayers, and I think of all that the Lord has to occupy him, if I may use that term reverently, in his great creation, to think that he's concerned with me. Concerned with me.

That's what this word visitors, down here in the end of verse four, might have been translated just that way. Or perhaps I'd better say it a paraphrase rather than a translation. But anyhow, this is one of the ideas in the original word, that thou visitest him, that thou art concerned with him.

And of course St. Peter gives us this thought, doesn't he? He says, casting all your care from him, for he cares for you. He's concerned with you. So much so that he's numbered the very hairs of your head.

Beloved, this is a wonderful feeling, isn't it? And when you get down in the presence of God, to know that you're bowing in the presence of one who's concerned about you. Who, even though there are billions who are dependent upon him for the very breath they breathe, he's concerned about them. And you know, this is one thing that enables one to start a day with real joy and confidence to think that no matter what the world may think, well no matter what even my loved ones may think, here's one who's really concerned.

And all of this is locked up in this little word, our. Oh Lord, our Lord. But there's more than that.

If you have a Bible that makes the distinction, you notice that the first time the word Lord is printed here, it's all capital letters. The second time, you'll notice, it's in just one capital letter and three small letters. Now there's a difference in the original language.

And the printers have tried to make this difference for us in the way they have printed this word. The first occurrence of the word Lord, all capital letters, is the word Jehovah. Or as some of the moderns would like to pronounce it, Yahweh.

But it really means the Eternal One. And if you can read French, you'll probably recognize this. When you read this in the French, l'Eternel, it's the Eternal One.

The Eternal One. In other words, it's the One who was and is and is to come. The One who is, shall I say, the Great I Am.

The One who is self-existent. The One who has all power and life. Here He is.

And yet this is the name which He has taken when He wants to express His covenant relationship with His ancient people Israel. Jehovah. Yes? And how we love to think that the One with whom we have to do is not some individual who is going to pass off the scene, but who was here in the ages past, is here now, will be there in the ages to come.

The same yesterday, today, and forever. Oh beloved, this is He. This is He.

Then the second time the word Lord is used here with just one capital letter, it's another Hebrew name. This name means the Sovereign One. The One who has absolute authority.

And I think this is a thing we need to emphasize and need to remind ourselves of, that we're not only in blessed relationship with the Eternal One through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who Himself could take the title I Am, because He said before Abraham was, I am. Our blessed Lord is claiming that title of deity in the 8th chapter of John. He does as much in the 14th chapter of John, when He said, Let not your heart be troubled.

You believe in God? Believe also in Me. Only one who is equal with God, who is God, could use words like that. I couldn't stand up here this morning and say, you believe in God? You say, why yes I do, that's why I'm in this conference.

Suppose I were to say which God forbids. Well then believe in Me too. Couldn't do that.

But the Lord Jesus could say, you believe in God? Believe also in Me. He's asking for the same faith that we put in God the Father. He is the Eternal One.

But beloved, He's also the one who would be sovereign in our lives. And may I speak to my younger friends here this morning about a very wonderful experience in my own life along these very lines. I have been a Christian for about two years.

When I was reading the twelfth chapter of Romans one morning, where the Apostle Paul says, Brethren, I beseech you by the mercies or compassions of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable or intelligent service. As I pondered that verse in Romans twelve, I said to myself, Carl Armisen, you've never done this. I went to another young chap who was baptized the same night I was baptized.

I said to him, Sam, have you ever read this verse? Yes, read it lots of times. I said, have you ever done this? Well, he said, I don't think I have. I said, well do you know how it's done? No, he said, I don't think I do.

So I thought I'd go to another one of my younger friends in the assembly. I went to him, I said, Arsh, have you ever read this verse? Oh, lots of times. I said, have you ever done it? Have you ever presented your bodies a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God? No, he said, I don't think I have.

I said, do you know how it's done? No, he said, I don't think I do. Well, neither one of these was very much help to me. But I went to Arsh's father.

Oh, dear old brother McCallum, he was really what we would have called in the Presbyterian church a rude inhaler. And he was a dear old saint of God, dear old brother McCallum. So I went to him, I said, Mr. McCallum, I've been reading Romans 12.

And I said, here's a verse that I'm puzzled about. I think I would like to do this, but I don't know how to do it. I said, how do you present your bodies to the Lord? Well, he said, I don't know that there's any particular way in which it's done, but I could suggest a way to do it.

And so he told me, he says, go to your room with your Bible, close the door, lock it if necessary, so that you won't be disturbed. Open your Bible to this verse and tell the Lord you want to do this. Well, that's very simple.

I went home, did exactly as he told me, got down my knees. You know, when I started to say, Lord, I want to do this, a cold sweat just came up. I began to realize the implications of this.

You know, this meant something. It meant that my eyes, which I use to look around, to read and so on, that's going to be part of it. And these ears by which I listen to things, whether they be beautiful music or some salacious filthy tale, this is part of it.

This tongue with which I speak, which can utter lovely phrases from the Word of God, or might even be used to curse and to swear, that's part of it. This hand, that I could use for so many things, something else. And these feet could carry me places where I ought never to go.

Oh, how the cold sweat came onto me as I began to think about the details of this, what it meant to surrender this to the Lord. Mind you, I was a teenager then, 17 years of age, but I can never forget that blessed experience after I had gone over this whole thing, realized some of the serious implications of it. And also the shortcomings, because as a boy of 17, I suffered greatly with asthma.

In fact, I knew what it meant to sit up night after night, never to go to bed. I believe I saw the morning star rise more often than any member of my family, because I would sit in a big Morris chair by the window where I tried to get a little bit of sleep at night, so that there wasn't really much to offer the Lord, just a crippled body. But it was a tremendous and a wonderful transaction.

And you know, beloved, and I'm speaking again directly to my younger friends, this thing preserved me. Oh, it kept me back from many things, which I thank God for today, as I near the four score line, to think that God kept me back from habits that would have ruined this body long ago. I thank God that even though there's lots of the machinery inside that's really worn out, you know there's more things can be wrong with you and me than with your Ford car, if it's that many things wrong with your car, it'd be in the garage.

But you and I are here, the doctors look us over, and they tell you what's wrong with your vision, what's wrong with your hearing. They tell me that I ought to be wearing two hearing aids instead of one. And your heart's particularly enlarged, you've got scar tissue in your lung, your kidneys aren't exactly where they ought to be.

I know that because the lady who took a picture of them one day was disappointed after she took the picture and couldn't find them. And you've got an ulcer and all these other things. When you add all this up you say, well what have you got left? But thank the Lord he's able to use even this, and proves again what he proved to the Apostle Paul, that his strength is made perfect in you.

And beloved, I just want to pass on to you with an old man this morning, the blessedness of making a complete surrender. A complete surrender. Let this be a personal thing between you and the Lord.

You get alone in your own room and just turn it over to him. Oh, it'll do a lot of things for you. It'll close your eyes to a lot of things that you'll wish you'd never seen.

It'll close your ears to a lot of things which later on you wish you'd never heard. I'm sure I'm telling, I'm expressing the feeling of every mature Christian here this morning that lots of things we've heard in our lives we wish we had never heard. How they intrude themselves upon us, even in our moments of worship.

These things come back and say, oh Lord I wish I'd never heard that. Well it's a wonderful thing to turn the ear over to him, turn the eye over to him, the hand over to him, the tongue, everything. Oh Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name.

You know, when he says how excellent is thy name it means he's compared it with something else. You don't think, you don't say one thing excels another without implying that you've made some comparison. You know, sometimes we Christians are accused of simply following along in the steps of our parents.

Well, I'm willing to be accused of that, because I think my parents took the right road, see. And I'm very happy to think that I had leaders like my parents who led me in these paths. So when a fellow says, oh you're just simply following along with your parents, thank you for the compliment.

I had parents who were worth following. I had the funeral of my dear old dad who died when I was nearly nine or two. My brothers said to me, you better take dad's funeral, we'd like for you to express for all of us, because I'm the oldest.

I think of my dad lying in his casket there, and I could say to the assembled people, my father was a noble man. He was a noble man. He was a Christian who lived Christ before his sons and daughters.

Yes, this is a wonderful heritage. But dear friends, I've also made some comparisons for myself. And in the course of one's studies, you get to studying what is called comparative religion.

And you look at other names besides the name of the Lord Jesus. You look at the name of Mohammed, and you read his history, and there's no comparison between him and the Lord Jesus. And then you read the story of Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, who has millions of followers today, just like Mohammed has in the Muslims.

And you look at the Buddha, and you say to yourself, well, he doesn't compare with my Lord. And so I read something of Confucius, and I compare his sayings with those of the Lord Jesus, and I say, no, he doesn't compare with him. And then I come down to more of the moderns, like Descartes, of whom we referred the other night, and some of these like Jean-Paul Sartre, and Hemingway, Harry Sutherland, Henry Miller, a few of these.

And you compare what they've said and what they're saying with what the Lord Jesus says. There's just not any class between them. He's in a class by himself.

Yes, he's excellent. This is a wonderful thing. And this enables me, as a Christian, to look the whole world in the face.

Because I say, what I have, whether I live up to it or not, what I have is so far superior to what they have to offer, that there just isn't any comparison. How excellent is thy name in all the earth, who has set thy glory

above the heavens. Well, you say, a being like that must have a wonderful choir to sing his praises.

No doubt these are trained voices that have been to this and that conservatory, and so on and so forth. But you know, when you look at this second verse, you say to yourself, it isn't so. Out of the mouth of faves and suckers.

Why did he bring it down to this? Well, this is a brand new generation, you see. And he just brings a new generation into being to sing his praise. And so, dear friends, we can see and hear a suggestion of the necessity for the new birth, before we can really enter into the Lord's choir to sing his praise.

Last night, looking at these dear young people here on the platform, this was a thrill for me. I believe last night was one of the highlights of this conference for me, to see these children up here, even if a good number in the front row were minus two or three teeth. But they were singing the praises of the Lord, and it just, as the old Scot would say, it just warmed the cockles of my heart.

It really did. This is the kind of people the Lord has in his choir. And if ever you wanted an argument for teaching children something which they can use later on in their Christian lives, you had it last night.

You had a concrete example of it. It really did. Oh, how sweet to be able to teach the children a language which the Holy Spirit can make more real to them in the years to come.

This is it. Out of the mouth of faith and suppleness. Now it's this very passage of Scripture that the Lord Jesus refers to in the 21st chapter of Matthew.

When he says to them, have you never read? When they objected to the praise that he was receiving, these children were saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! And they objected, but he said, have you never read? And he refers to this 8th Psalm, and in so doing he claims it for himself, you see. And I accept the praise of those children given to himself in Matthew 21. But then you'll notice as you come down, the psalmist compares everything here with the creation around him, and he can't find anything there that moves him like this.

But what does move him is that man who is so insignificant in comparison with this creation should yet be the object of God's concern. And that's what we've already touched on this morning. But now for a word or two in closing, but I see my time is gone.

I'd just like to refer you to a couple of passages of Scripture in the New Testament which also could be linked up with this. Let us turn first of all to Ephesians 1. Ephesians, the first chapter. And here we're going to see a text of Scripture, or at least a thought, which we find in Psalm 8. Notice please, speaking of the exceeding greatness of God's power in verse 19, Ephesians 1 verse 19, verse 20, which he wrote in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

Far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things, to the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. All things under his feet. That's Psalm 8, isn't it? Hath put all things under his feet.

Then let's turn back to 1 Corinthians 15 for a verse. 1 Corinthians 15, beginning at verse 24. Then come at the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet.

Very manifestly, the apostle is referring back here to Psalm 8. When he says all things are put under him, it is manifest that he has accepted which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. That is, our blessed Lord carries his humanity with him even into eternity.

And it is only in that sense, of course, that he is subject. But think of this, all things under his feet. He is in perfectly full.

Beloved, what a Savior we have. You know, the more you ponder the faith psalm, the more you come to appreciate the one whom we adore as our Savior and our Lord. And even though the clock now says 10 o'clock, I think we'd like to sing one or two stanzas of hymn number two.

And our hymn. Hymn number two. All hail the power of Jesus' name.

Let angels prostrate fall, bring forth a royal diadem and crown him Lord of all. Hymn number two, the first and the last stanzas. And of course, you won't fail.

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