

“How Majestic Is Your Name”

What is man that you are mindful of him? The son of man that you should care for him?

Have you ever had one of those moments in your life where you were struck with the thought of why me Lord? Why do you care about me? Why do you love me? Why do you show me your mercy and grace? Why are you faithful to me in spite of all my failures and brokenness?

King David is having one of those ah-ha moments in this psalm of praise. He has been humbled, awestruck, and floored by the beauty and vastness of creation. He knows he is but a tiny speck on the earth, one person out of billions, puny and insignificant in his mind, yet he has been brought to his knees, knowing that God loves him, cares for him, knows him by name, and has made him steward (caretaker and manager) over this world.

What has led to this moment is a gaze upward to the stars of the sky. He sees the all of those shining stars and he can't believe (he can) how it is that God would care for him when God has bigger fish to fry.

I went camping two nights ago and unfortunately I didn't see many stars because it was cloudy but on one camping trip I think I got a glimpse of what David is talking about in this text. I went with two friends about five miles into a trail in the Smokey Mountains. It was a cold, clear winter night, and after the sun went down and it got really dark my buddy said look up and when I did I think I saw more stars on that one night than I did on all the other nights combined every other time I had gazed up to them. I did not know there were that many stars in the sky. There were so many up there you could see more white light in the sky than you could see black.

When I saw them I was humbled and my spirit felt moved to praise. I thought of God's promise to Abraham, when God told him to look up into the sky and see the stars because that's how many descendants He would give him. We talked that night about how could someone not believe in God after seeing something like that? It was great conversation but I wanted to do more. I wanted to praise God in an uninhibited way.

I wanted to shout from the mountaintop, “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!” I wanted to strip down to my long johns as David once did and dance before the Lord. I wanted to do all this but I couldn't. I couldn't because I didn't want my friends to think I was crazy. I couldn't do it because I was Presbyterian and we don't do things like that. I also couldn't do it because I can't dance and it was too darn cold, but I wanted to.

When we see something like that it is hard to believe that we as human beings are the pinnacle of God's creation, the high mark. Only we have been created “in the image of God” (having the breath of life breathed into us) for the purpose of having an intimate relationship with God; and only we have the privilege of being declared “very good” on the sixth day of creation, whereas the rest of creation is only declared “good” on the other days. In God's eyes we are the right stuff, the best of the best, but it is hard for us to believe it is true when we are awestruck by the beauty and vastness of His creation.

This Psalm reminds me of what the Lord says to his people in other places of Scripture and of what Jesus himself said in the gospels.

Psalm 139:13-14 (which is one we will look at later in the summer) tells us that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” and that God “knew us in the womb of our mothers” (Ps. 139:13-14). The OT prophets tell us to “fear not” because God has not forgotten us; we are “engraved on the palm of his hand” (Isaiah 49:15-16) and the Lord “calls us by our name” (Isaiah 43:1).

Jesus himself tells us in the gospels to “look at the birds of the air” and “the flowers of the field” and see how God cares for them and then realize that we are more valuable than they. Our Lord also tells us that nothing will happen to us apart from His gracious will and that “even the hairs of our head are numbered,” so to speak.

You mean little ol’ me? Yes even little ol’ you.

God is not a Deist. God has not created the world and left it on its own to run by the laws of nature and random chance. The God who created this world is in control of this world and He created you. You are not an accident. He knit you together in the womb of your mother. He knows you better than you know yourself and calls you by name. He cares for you and he will provide for you. God will be with you in your most difficult times and He will not abandon you.

One of my favorite places in our Reformed confessions (perhaps the most favorite place) in our reformed confessions comes from the first question and answer of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Q. What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

A. That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that he protects me so well that without the will of My Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

That’s what I want to know on my deathbed. I want to know that God loves me and knows my name and that no matter what is happening around me or to my body that it is not happening apart from the knowledge of God or the will of God. I am not just a speck of dust or a random piece of matter. No, I have been created by God in His image. I have the breath of life in me. God knows my name and He loves me.

God loves me so much that he took upon himself human flesh in the God/man Jesus who died on the cross for my sins so that God’s justice could be satisfied and His love given so I could live in communion with God not only now but forever in eternity, after I die.

I, Scott Jeffreys, matter not because I am great but because God loves me, calls me by name, and makes me his own through his Son the Lord Jesus Christ; and I especially want to know that when I look up into the sky and see all those stars and realize how puny I am in the grander scheme of things.

“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!.. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, who am I that you would care for me?.. You have made me a little lower than the angels and yet you have crowned me with glory and honor. Not only that Lord, but you have also made the ruler over the works of your hands and you have put everything under my feet... I can't believe it Lord but I am the CEO of your creation so help me to manage it wisely, justly, and in accordance with your will... How could it be Lord that I am this important to you? I know I do not matter much to some people in this world, but to you, Lord, I am everything... Yes Lord, I am a sinner but somehow, by the grace of God, I am still the apple of your eye. How Lord? Why Lord?

O Lord, *my* Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, amen.