

# HOW EXCELLENT IS THY NAME

## Psalm 8

### I. WHY DO A SERIES ON HOW TO PRAY?

#### A. TO SERVE GOD MORE EFFECTIVELY

##### 1. FIVE GOALS

- Outreach/evangelize
- Disciple young persons
- City-wide ministry
- Training lab for ministry
- Global church

##### 2. EFFECTIVENESS

- **Ph 4:13**—*I can accomplish all things through Him who strengthens me.*
- **Jas 5:16**—*The effectively powerful praying of a righteous person can accomplish much*

#### B. FOR OUR BENEFIT

1. To know God better
2. To meet our own needs
3. To help others

#### C. BEING CHRIST-FOLLOWERS

1. Obeying His command—**Lk 18:1**—we should **always pray**—and never lose heart
2. Becoming like their Master—Christ-like
3. Following His example—He prayed continually

### III. HOW TO PRAY

- ❖ **DRAW CLOSE TO GOD—SPECIAL ACCESS—TO “OUR FATHER”**
- ❖ **INTERCEDE URGENTLY FOR AND WITH EVERYONE WE KNOW**
- ❖ **PRAY FOR GOD’S PEACE UPON OUR COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORS**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL BE INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE AMIDST TURMOIL**
- ❖ **THAT OUR WITNESS WILL BE GODLY AND DIGNIFIED**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL FAITHFULLY PROCLAIM CHRIST AS THE TRUTH**
- ❖ **THAT WE WILL EFFECTIVELY RECLAIM THE LOST**
- ❖ **THAT THE FATHER WILL SHOW HIMSELF IN A MIGHTY WAY**
- ❖ **FOR HUMILITY—NOT TO US, O LORD—THAT WE GLORIFY HIM ABOVE ALL**

## IV. BACKGROUND

### A. “HALLOWED BY THY NAME”—HOLY IS YOUR NAME, O LORD

#### 1. THE NAME OF THE LORD

##### a. Men using “**the name of the Lord**”

1. Men first began to call upon the Lord—days of Enosh [son of Seth]—**Gen 4:26**
2. Invoked on most serious occasions

##### a. **Worship**

- Abraham (Bethel **Gen 12** and Beersheba **Gen 16**)
- Isaac (**Gen 26** Beersheba)
- Moses (**Ex 34** Sinai)

##### b. **Serving** God

- Aaron and priests—to serve in “the name of the Lord”—**Dt 18:5**

##### c. **Blessing** people

- Priests—were to do so—**Dt 21:5**
- David did so—**II Sam 6:18**—when bringing ark to Jerusalem

##### d. **Cursing** people

- Elisha did so—**II Kgs 2:24**—42 profane boys—‘she-bear’ attacked them

##### e. Validating **prophecy**—**Dt 18:22**—when “in the name of the Lord”—must come true

##### f. Swearing solemn **oaths**—**II Sam 6:2**—David and Jonathan

##### b. God used “the name of Lord”

1. To reveal Himself—I AM—**Ex 3**
2. In proclaiming His name—He declared the glory of His presence—**Ex 33:19**

#### 2. THE HOLINESS OF THE LORD

##### a. **Character** of the Holy

- Pure—sacred—[associated with glory/ultimate power?]

##### b. **Proximity** of the Holy

- Apartness—sanctified—entirely separate—[supernatural/above the heavens]

c. God's Holiness

1. **Unapproachable** Person

- God warned Moses—do not come near hear; remove your sandals—**Ex 3**
- God warned Israel—keep distance from Mt. Sinai—**Ex 19**
- Moses could not see Him and live—**Ex 33**

2. **Sacred** name

- Not to be profaned—taken 'in vain'—Third Commandment—**Ex 20**
- Unutterable—since Talmud Jews do not speak it outside reading Torah and prayers

3. The **Great Gulf**—between the holy and profane

**EXAMPLE: world's longest bridges**

- **Lake Ponchartrain Causeway—longest USA—24 miles—6<sup>th</sup> longest world**
- **Danyang-Kunshan Grand Bridge [E. China]—longest in world—102 miles**

**EXAMPLE: distance to edge of universe**

- **Big Bang = 13.8 billion light years ago**
- **Ever-expanding—with *increased* acceleration!**
- **Current radius = 46 billion light years—[total size/diameter = 92 billion]**
- **One light year = 9 trillion miles [at 186,000 miles/sec]**
- **From earth to edge = over 400 billion-trillion miles =  $4 \times 10^{23}$  miles**

4. The **Mystery** of Holiness—see **Is 57:15**

- a. His name is Holy!
- b. He lives in Heaven—high above—and removed
  - The Lofty One—who is Supernatural
- c. But He also lives with the lowly of spirit—the humble and contrite!

**Is 57:15**—*For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high an holy place— and also with the contrite and lowly of spirit in order to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite."*

**B. THE HOLY NAME—USED IN PRAYER**

1. No prayer before the Lord's Prayer addressed God's holy name directly
2. Three came close

- a. Two—dealing with thanksgiving— **I Chr 16:35** and **Ps 106:47**
    - o Asked God to save Israel—so they could give thanks to His holy name
  - b. One—by David—**I Chr 29:16**
    - o Thanked God for supplying materials for Temple—a “house for His holy name”
  - c. So—God’s holy name evoked → thanksgiving—for salvation and provision
3. Fourth instance—**Psalm 103**

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.*

- a. But it is a **Song of praise**—not a prayer
  - b. **Instructs** us what to do—to *bless* His holy name
  - c. **Reasons**—to bless His holy name
    - 1. For His **works**—‘benefits’
      - Pardons—all our sins
      - Heals—all our diseases
      - Gives us [crowns us]—with goodness and mercy
      - Renews—us like the eagle
      - Vindicates the oppressed—by His righteous deeds
    - 2. For his **character**
      - His loving-kindness = goodness
      - His compassion = mercy
      - His patience = slow to anger—not punishing us as we deserve
  - d. *Everything* that exists—should bless His name
    - o Angels
    - o Hosts who serve Him—His ‘army’
    - o All His works—in all places of His dominion—all creation
4. In the Lord’s Prayer—Jesus tells us to address the Father
- a. By *calling* on His holy name
  - b. Pivotal point in Model Prayer
    - 1. Basis for affirming His **kingdom** and **will**—[seek first His kingdom/righteousness]

2. Basis for asking **provision**—[do not worry—the Father knows your needs]
  3. Basis for **forgiveness**—His holiness eradicates our sin
  4. Basis for **protection**—His holiness guards our steps
- c. Jesus closes the gap—between the holy/majestic and the unclean/humble

### C. A SCRIPTURAL PRAYER THAT DOES THIS—**Psalm 8**

1. IT **CLOSES THE GAP**—BETWEEN THE MAJESTIC AND THE MUNDANE
2. BUT STILL SHOWS APPROPRIATE **HUMILITY** BEFORE ALMIGHTY GOD

### V. TEXT

*1 O Lord, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your glory above the heavens! 2 Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to make the enemy and the revengeful cease. 3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained; 4 What is man that You take thought of him, and the son of man that You care for him? 5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God, and You crown him with glory and honor! 6 You make him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, whatever passes through the paths of the seas. 9 O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth!*

### V. EXPLANATION

#### A. CONTRAST—BETWEEN MAJESTIC AND MUNDANE

#### **HOLY OTHER GOD—VS—LOWLY HUMANKIND.**

1. Holy Other God—**verses 1 and 3**
  - a. *O Lord, our Lord*
    - o Sovereignty and dominion
    - o One of a kind
  - b. *How excellent is Your name*
    - o Majestic—noble—great name—manifested by His glory [as with Moses on mountain]
    - o Omnipresence—in all the earth
  - c. *Who have displayed Your splendor [glory] above the heavens*
    - o Supernatural nature—above all
    - o Holiness—glory—apart from all
  - d. *When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers*
    - o Creator—God Almighty [*pantokrator*]

- o Omnipotence—and omnipresence

2. Lowly Humankind

- a. **Created—natural** order
- b. **Lackluster**—no glory [by ourselves]
- c. **Common names**—of earthbound tribes
- d. **Insignificant**—one of about 100 billion [total human population in history]
- e. **Transitory**—our days are like grass
- f. **Fallen**—and rebellious
- g. **Impotent**—no power [by ourselves]—helpless without Him

**B. THE GREAT MYSTERY—verse 4**

1. Why do you care . . .

- enough to remember us?
- enough to visit us?

2. Why have you made Yourself **vulnerable?!**

**C. THE GREAT RISK—verses 5-8**

1. You have shared your splendor with us

- a. Made us a little lower than angels
- b. Crowned us with glory/majesty
  - o Same qualities of God—in **verse 1!**
- c. Given us dominion/stewardship over your works

2. You have closed the gap!

**D. OUR GREAT RESPONSIBILITY—verse 2**

1. To speak as God's children—infants/babes

- a. Jesus thanked the Father
  - o For revealing His mysteries to simple children—not the 'wise'—**Lk 10:21**
- b. Jesus rebuked religious leaders—who opposed the children proclaiming "Hosanna . . ."

**Mt 21:16**—*Yes, have you never read, "Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for Yourself?"*

2. God uses the weak to show His strength

- **I Cor 1:25**—*God's weakness is stronger than men*
3. The purpose = to make *His* adversaries cease—see **verse 2**
    - a. Just as God used Israel—through miracles of deliverance—to reveal Himself to the nations
    - b. He promised to use Israel—**Dt 28:10**
      - o His name bearers—in “the name of the Lord”
      - o He blessed Israel at Gerizim—so the nations would ‘fear’ them
      - o Ultimate purpose—for nations to ‘fear’ God
    - c. **Examples**
      - o **David and Goliath**—**I Sam 17:45**
      - o **Gibeonites**—**Josh 9:9**
      - o **Queen of Sheba**—**I K 10:1**
    - d. Bearing “the name of the Lord”—requires great trust
      - **Ps 20:7**—*Some trust in horses and chariots—but we trust in the name of the Lord our God*

#### E. ULTIMATE PURPOSE—TO GLORIFY HIS NAME—**vv 1 and 9**

- *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!*

### VI. APPLICATION

1. We go forth—to proclaim the Holy name of the Lord!
2. What IS the Holy name of the Lord ?
  - a. The Holy One of Israel’—**Is 47:4** and **Is 54:5**
  - b. **Identity** = His name is the **Lord of Hosts**—[mightiness]
  - c. **Role** = **Redeemer**—our Savior—[one of the ‘great things’ He has done]
3. Our **purpose**
  - o **Not** to defeat **our** enemies
  - o But to bring peace—between *God’s* adversaries and Him
  - o We are—redemptive agents of peace
  - o We help God—**close the gap** between the holy and the unholy!

#### **Examples of Significant Gaps**

##### **Achievement Gap**

94% white adults graduate high school—78% Latinos

**Race-employment Gap**

Texans 18-34—white unemployment 7%—Latinos 9%--Blacks 18%

**Gender-Pay Gap**

US females earn 77% of males

**Economic Gap**

Upper income (21%) earn \$639k

Middle income (46) earn \$96k

Lower income (33%) earn \$9k

**What about the Spiritual Gap?**

Great generation (born before 1945) 11% no religious affiliation

Baby boomers (1946-64) 17%

Generation X (1965-80) 23%

Millennials (1981-96) 35%

**Growing gap in each generation!—see PEW survey below!**

---

**Unaffiliated Make Up Growing Share  
Across Generations**

*% of each generation that identifies current religion as  
atheist, agnostic or nothing in particular*

	2007	2014	Change
Silent generation (b. 1928-1945)	9	11	+2
Baby Boomers (b.1946-1964)	14	17	+3
Generation X (b. 1965-1980)	19	23	+4
Older Millennials (b. 1981-1989)	25	34	+9
Younger Millennials (b. 1990-1996)	n/a	36	n/a

2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30,  
2014. All changes are statistically significant.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

---

4. We “call on the [Holy] name of the Lord” for

- His kingdom to come—and His will to be done
- Provision—not just for us—but also for them
- Protection—keeping us from temptation
- Redemption—“forgive us our sins”—we pray for
  - Our **own** salvation

o *Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord*—Acts 2:21—Rom 10:13

- For those who cannot do so—**intercession**—we bridge gap between holy and unholy



## VII. INVITATION

### GLORIFY THY NAME

Father, we love You, we worship and adore You,  
Glorify Thy name in all the earth  
Glorify Thy name, glorify Thy name  
Glorify Thy name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love You, we worship and adore You,  
Glorify Thy name in all the earth . . .

Spirit, we adore You, we worship and adore You,  
Glorify Thy name in all the earth . . .