

## May 17 - Saturday

*O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!*

### Psalm 8:9

Psalm 8 begins and ends with this declaration – *O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!* The word majesty provokes an image of grandeur and is used to describe the stately and regal ways of kings and queens. Subjects address their monarch with the phrase “Your Majesty.” This is the world of the Psalmist and people in the Bible used this imagery when they speak about God. A lot of hymns composed in the past centuries borrowed heavily the language and images of the monarchy. With the advent of contemporary music in worship, there is a shift in language projecting a more intimate and personal relationship with God. In the presence of the king and queen, a subject follows strict rules of decorum and protocol. This is the idea behind a formal and orderly structure of worship. When using the personal, intimate and relational imagery the worship format shifts into a more informal structure. All these points to us that our language about God is expressed based on our day to day experience and our deep longings and needs.

Biblical language is cast in a manner that reflects the experience of the writers. *LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!* is something that the Psalmist can identify closely. We could use the same language but I believe God also encourages us to express our faith in a language closer to our hearts. Can you think of ways in declaring faith using contemporary imagery? This is an exercise of creative imagination, an exercise that will surely enrich our faith and helps us appreciate the depth of what we are talking about – God, whom the Psalmist addressed as Lord, Sovereign!

### Prayer

*Enlarge our imagination O God  
in our sincere desire to describe  
and express who you are in our lives. Amen.*

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## May 16 - Friday

*You have given them dominion  
over the works of your hands;  
you have put all things under their feet,  
all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of the field,  
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.*

### Psalm 8:6-8

Dominion is a word that implies power and authority. One translation renders verse 6 this way; *You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things.* (Psalm 8:6<sup>NLT</sup>) Looking at the world, it is evident that humans “rule” the earth not the lions not the elephants. Beasts may be stronger but at the end, we are smarter and have the ability to contain them, we can put these beasts “under our feet.” But dominion is not only about exercising authority, it is also about proper management and stewardship on behalf of the owner. This is a very important and urgent concern these days as we deal and treat endangered species on land and sea. The Psalmists understood that our dominion, our authority is not inherent, it is given. Therefore, we are accountable of this power to the one who gave it to us who is God.

Another thought that comes to mind is the idea that God gave us dominion over the animals of the fields and of the sea but God has not given us dominion over other human beings. We are not authorized to have dominion over them for only God can exercise dominion over humans. This primary principle is worth pondering considering the intricate web of relationships that span across the globe – be it economic, political, socio-cultural and religious. A lot of energy and resources are spent today on having dominion over other people and other nations. The world of the Psalmist may not be as complex as what we have today but the same principle still

applies – we are given dominion not as an absolute right but as a privilege of sharing power on God’s behalf and never to control or imposes our will upon other human beings.

## **Prayer**

*O Lord, our God  
Remind us to be responsible stewards  
of the power you have entrusted to us. Amen.*



## **May 15 - Thursday**

*Yet you have made them  
a little lower than God,  
and crowned them with glory and honor.*

### **Psalm 8:5**

“A little lower than God...” The translators of the King James Version of the Bible use the word angels rather than God. They were perhaps a bit scared or reluctant to use God but the Hebrew word *Elohiym* is just that – God! In fact, the same word was used when the serpent said to the woman in the Garden of Eden; "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and *you will be like God*, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:5 KJV)

Being like God and a little lower than God are two different things. Being like God makes one in equal footing with God. But a little lower than God makes that sharp distinction that we cannot be God at all. The interplay between being like God and a little lower than God happens in day to day living. At times, we are tempted and often act as if we are God. In Psalm 100:3, the writer reminds us with these words: *Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the*

*sheep of his pasture. (KJV)*

The distinction between the Creator and the creatures is a very important line. At the height of successes and achievements one can easily forget that we are still accountable to a power higher than us. Today our human capability from transportation and communication to medicine and construction and in all aspects of life will lead the serpent to say, “See you are like God” you can do all these things. On the other hand the Psalmist will say, “All these things are living testimonies that you indeed made a little lower than God.” What’s our take with these propositions? The point of departure from where we stand on these two propositions defines not only our outlook in life but also shapes what we believe. The Psalmist begins with this affirmation of faith – we are made “a little lower than God!”

### **Prayer**

*You are God and you created us.  
Keep this truth always --  
in our heart, mind and soul. Amen.*



## **May 14 - Wednesday**

*When I look at your heavens,  
the work of your fingers,  
the moon and the stars  
that you have established;  
what are human beings  
that you are mindful of them,  
mortals that you care for them?*

### **Psalm 8:3-4**

Who are we that God is mindful and care for us so deeply? This

awareness of God's concern for us even though we are mortals is the beginning of faith in the divine and respect of other human beings. When we put ourselves in contrast with the vastness and the variety of God's creation, we realize that we are but a small portion of the grandeur of everything that God puts in place in the universe. Stars and moons, suns and planets, comets and galaxies were there long time ago and perhaps will still be there even when our earth and all of us shall pass away, but in the midst of all of this God took notice of this creature called humans whose lifespan is but a moment compared to eternity.

Last year, I had the experience of being treated to a tour in the American Museum of Natural History. We went into The Hayden Planetarium where we were entertained with the spectacular show about the origin of the universe. The experience was so real, the booming sound, shaking of the grounds, the flashing of the lights transports you into another world. It helps one appreciate not only the whole process of creation but its wonder and grandeur. One could not help but say wow but at the end of the show the ultimate question remains unanswered – did all these things just happened in random act or there is someone whom we call God who direct everything for a purpose? This is beyond scientific research. One does not have to deny science in order to believe in God. Questions of faith operate in a different plane. God's mindfulness and care for us is taken as a posture of faith. The Psalmist interprets what happen in life as God's intentional work and not just random acts by chance.

It is also prudent to remember that God takes care and is mindful not only to a select group of human beings. The Psalmist did not even say God is only mindful to those who believe, to those who are righteous, not even to people who consider themselves 'chosen.' God is mindful to all regardless of color, race or creed. Here we are presented with the wonder of creation and the marvel of God's love and care for all.

## **Prayer**

*O God,  
You are mindful and caring to each of us*

*May we be also mindful and caring to others, Amen.*



## **May 13 - Tuesday**

*Out of the mouths of babes and infants  
you have founded a bulwark  
because of your foes,  
to silence the enemy and the avenger.*

### **Psalm 8:2**

How can there be strength in babies? Babies are weak and dependent to adults. They cannot survive on their own. “Within a few hours of birth, many animals are not only feeding but standing up and walking around. By comparison human babies are virtually useless.” (BBC Science and Nature) But the Psalmist sense what we can call “baby power.” A power ascribed to God “to silence the enemy and the avenger.” I am wondering who these enemies and avengers were? Was the Psalmist thinking about those who do not acknowledge the majestic God? Maybe, so instead of directing their eyes at the heavens to appreciate God’s power in a striking distance, the Psalmist proposes someone close at heart, the babies whom they care and love.

There are wide range of choices in cell phone ring tones today, from classical to punk music, from strange sounds of animals to recorded sounds of significant others urging to answer the phone immediately. Recently I heard one unique tone that of a laughing and giggling baby. When it rings one cannot help but look around and wonder where that baby is. Babies possess a power of attraction that disarms even the toughest person. Today, it is not unusual to hear grandpas and grandmas doing “apostolic” duty, many thought that this is some kind of a full-time ministry job in the church, but not at all. It comes but from the word “apo” meaning grandchild – grandparents doing baby sitting for their

grandchildren. Before the “apo” came many promised not to be drawn into this mundane task but when these babies start giggling and smiling, one can see grandpa whose bodies are stiff as hard wood and whose voices are course as the goats who are hungry acting like contestants of American Idol or Dancing with the Stars. Babies are powerful disarmament agent and the Psalmist got this sense of power from them long time ago.

Today our world is beset with war and conflict. Maybe it would help if all the leaders and all of us would pause for a moment and take a look at the faces of the innocent babies in our midst – the babies we tenderly love and painstakingly care, much more hold them close in our chest – and ponder profoundly about the sacredness of life. Making a collage of picture of babies from all over the world, especially those whom our country called as enemies and part of the “axis of evil” would be a good project to remind us of the majesty of God, not just our God but the God who made us all.

### **Prayer**

*O Lord, our God thank you for the infants and the babies whose capacity to strike intense joy deep within makes all of us in awe and in wonder. Amen.*



## **May 12 - Monday**

*O LORD, our Sovereign,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
You have set your glory above the heavens.*

### **Psalm 8:1**

In the Philippines, children of the 60’s and the 70’s and especially those who grew up years earlier value the light of the full moon so

much. I remember the game we call “patintiro” when we mark the road with water and play to our delight by running and catching each other. The game was more fun at night and was made possible of the moon whose gracious light shines so brightly. Everybody looks forward to the rising of the moon because without it the streets were so dark. With the coming of electricity significant changes happened not only in our schedule of play time but also on the way we look up to the sky and wait for the moon to rise. As years passed by more and more children did not care about full moon whose lights illumine our dark streets before. We come to know more about mercury and the halogen lights. And it did not take so long before many failed to notice and appreciate “the glory above the heavens.”

Times have change and we cannot go back to where we had been. Advances in technology continue to reshape not only how we live our lives but also our outlook of the universe and our faith in God. If the Psalmist was born on the 20<sup>th</sup> century we will have a different imagery depicting the majesty of God. The vastness of the sky, the multitudes of twinkling stars, the serenity of the moonlight, the intensity of the heat of the blazing sun, the occasional surprises of the comets that appeared on the horizon, the constancy of the constellations and the placement of planets in the sky – these are but few of the wonders that the Psalmist attributed to God. The Psalmist eye was set on the heavens and reminders of God’s glory unfolds.

Today we ask; where do we set our eyes to be reminded of the glory of God, a majestic God that we can truly worship? Take time to get out and take a look at the heavens can you truly resonate with this verse - *O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens.*

### **Prayer**

*O God, allow us to pause for a while  
and look at the heavens.  
Open our eyes, open our hearts. Amen.*