

How Do You Know the True God?

The *International Sunday School Lesson* for Sunday, October 3, 2010
Psalm 8:1-9

*“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; What is man that You take thought of him,
And the son of man that You care for him?”* (Psalm 8:3-4—NASB-U).

“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—NRSV).

“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?” (Psalm 8:3-4—KJV).

David, the shepherd boy destined to become Israel’s greatest king and ancestor of the Messiah, spent untold hours looking at the heavens as he watched over his sheep. As he meditated on the beauty and extent of God’s creation, David marveled that God took note of human beings and even cared for him. He concluded that God watched over His fold of people in ways similar to his watching over his fold of sheep. In addition, God revealed His love and care for David to such an extent that He inspired David to write these words, beloved by all believers everywhere, “The Lord is my Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1).

The Book of Genesis reveals why our world is no longer as God created it originally. Still, David wrote in poetry what the Apostle Paul later explained about our knowledge of God, “Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made” (Romans 1:20). Through reason and reflection, nature reveals many truths about God. Because God cares for us, He also took time to speak to people, work in their lives, and inspire them to write the Bible. Knowing that people sometimes misunderstand mere words, the Word of God became flesh, lived among us, and demonstrated the grace and truth of God (see John 1:14-18). Jesus proclaimed God’s care by revealing, “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me” (see John 10:11-18). — Copyright 2010 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Questions for Further Thought

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1. To you, what is the most important truth that this psalm teaches? Give a reason for your answer. Make a list of what others say in your class or group.
2. If you found question 1 to be a difficult question, what two truths competed in your mind with regard to which truth was the most important truth to you? Give a reason for your answer.
3. What are some of the reasons you like to read the psalms? If you do not enjoy reading the psalms, why not? How might you use a psalm to praise God? To pray to God?
4. What does it mean to you personally when you think of God himself crowning you with glory and honor. How can a person demonstrate humbly the fact that God has so crowned him?
5. What difference does it make to remember that God has created human beings different in kind to animals? What are some of the consequences when people do not view others as having been created in the image of God? How can disbelieving in, or not teaching the true value of human beings as are created in the image of God, lead to the dehumanizing of other people? How might the church teach others the true value of all human life? How might this change society?