

Psalm 8
"How Majestic is Your Name"
Circumcision and Name of Jesus

January 1, 2026
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, West Salem, Wisc.
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Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

"O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:1).

The year 2025 has ended. Welcome to 2026! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

With a new year, often comes renewed hope and positive thinking. Fitness clubs thrive on hope and positive thinking these first days and weeks of January. They advertise deals in their hope that you would join their club, pay the fees, and *maybe* actually exercise.

There is something about a new year. It is a renewal. It feels like a fresh start. And each newly arrived year reminds us that we have arrived to another year of our Lord. And that "Year of Our Lord" – that A.D. "Anno Domini – comes with peace, hope, certainty and joy. The Year of Our Lord 2026 is truly in the hands of our Lord!

You see, your future is not in the hands of fate, or chance, or any random occurrence. Your future is in the hands of the Lord! You know, the One who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was placed in a manger, who was nailed to a cross for you, who died and rose for you to give you forgiveness, life and salvation! He reigns for you as everything is under His feet!

Today's reading from Psalm 8 is fitting for a New Year as it speaks how majestic God's Name is in all the earth. The triune God is certainly majestic! He showed ***"His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"*** (Romans 5:8).

We spoke together earlier: ***"O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory above the heavens"*** (Psalm 8:1). As we spoke those words, we are calling on Yahweh, the very personal name of God as our King, our Ruler. We are confessing the name of the only true God as our Ruler.

And His Name is majestic! Yahweh alone is, and always has been, and always will be the One who exists and, by extension, is always present to act on our behalf for us and for our salvation!

God's majesty is also found all throughout the created order. Yahweh is praised by huge galaxies and by tiny babies. The sun, the moon, and the stars testify to the majesty, power, and wisdom of God. But their testimony is without words. Their testimony is without love. But more precious than the testimony of huge galaxies are the simple prayers and songs of a little child. Even infants, who cannot communicate without crying, can praise God in ways that we do not understand.

The Psalmist writes: ***“When I look at your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the Son of Man that you care for Him?”*** (Psalm 8:3-4).

For our majestic God, His work of creating galaxies was detailed handiwork, like fine needlepoint. But man? What is man compared to the sun, moon, and stars? Man is but a speck compared to just one of God's stars!

Yet, God created Adam and Eve to have dominion over the universe. He created the sun, moon, and stars to serve them.

God created man and woman in His very image, so that humanity could be righteous and holy and live in happy fellowship with Him. In the grand scheme of created things, man appears to be insignificant, but God created everything for you and me.

But through Adam's Fall into sin, humanity's fellowship with God was broken – *it was completely split apart*. And because of the Fall, man's dominion over the universe was gone. Now, we can still use our intelligence that God has given us to maintain partial control of things, but in the grand scheme of things, we no longer have uncontested dominion over the world God gave us to steward.

Now animals kill human beings. Human beings kill animals. Human beings slaughter other human beings. Earthquakes, floods, tornados, hurricanes can wipe us out. Even the tiniest of viruses can kill us. We now live in a hostile environment. And one day, unless Christ returns first, we must return to the ground from which we were all created.

The Psalmist writes: ***“Yet You have made Him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned Him with glory and honor. You have given Him dominion over the works of Your hands; you have put all things under His feet”*** (Psalm 8:5-6).

Psalm 8 is quoted twice in the New Testament as a messianic prophecy that was fulfilled when Jesus Christ came and regained dominion over the world for us.

Certainly, as true God, Jesus already had dominion over the whole universe. But when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, He took on a human nature like ours, though without sin. In this state, the Second Person of the Trinity undertook the work of regaining our lost dominion for us.

As how puny humanity may seem in the grand scheme of things of the entire universe, God created humanity in His image. God created the sun, moon, and stars, and all of creation for us humans. God loves humanity so much that He took upon Himself our flesh to save us.

As God became man for us, Jesus made Himself lower than the heavenly beings – the angels. (Hebrews 2:6-8)

And during His ministry on earth, Jesus did not appear to look like God or even an angel, but like an ordinary man.

Psalm 8 was fulfilled throughout Jesus' ministry on earth when He assumed the form of a humble servant. Jesus was ***“made a little lower than the heavenly beings”*** when He was helped by angels at the time of His temptation and in Gethsemane. Psalm 8 was fulfilled when Jesus' enemies refused to recognize Him as God and instead ridiculed Him as a lowly carpenter and when they mocked Him while crucified on the cross. Psalm 8 was fulfilled at Calvary when Jesus cried out: ***“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”*** (Matthew 27:46).

But Jesus would not stay in this humble condition. You see, when He had finished His work of defeating sin, death and the power of the devil, He ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of God. He now has all power in heaven and on earth. He is crowned with honor and glory. St. Paul quotes Psalm 8 in 1 Corinthians 15:27 saying: ***“For God has put all things in subjection under His feet.”*** Paul writes this to remind us that Jesus rules over all things – *in heaven and on earth* – for us!

So, just as Adam brought death to all people, so Christ, the second Adam, won life for all people. Adam lost the dominion that had been entrusted to him, but Christ is now ruling the world for the benefit of His people. And by faith in Him, we are given the reward of Christ's victory as we are now heirs of His kingdom, including the new heaven and new earth.

On this New Year's Day – the eighth day of Christmas, the day we remember the circumcision and naming of our Lord, the Second Person of the Trinity received His name: “Jesus,” which means “the Lord saves.”

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is the name of Jesus, who has come to save us! Amen.

*The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.*

+ SOLI DEO GLORIA +