



January 29, 2020

Why There Are People on Earth

I look up at your macro-skies, dark and enormous, your handmade sky-jewelry, Moon and stars mounted in their settings. Then I look at my micro-self and wonder, Why do you bother with us? Why take a second look our way? - (Psalm 8:3-4, The Message)

The Shepherd Psalm is a reminder of God's care, protection, and provision for his children; the preciousness of his creatures. It is one thing to understand how our Shepherd is capable of providing for all our needs; of course such an all-powerful, self-sufficient being can take care of us. But what is it about humans that would motivate God to do so? Have you ever wondered why there are people? Not just the abstract question about people in general, but also the specific, personal question, "Why am I in the world?" Your concern and mine is to understand why we are here. Do you have an answer to this question?

The answer is not always immediately clear, even to the writers of the Scriptures. Take Psalm 8:1 for example: "O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens". This verse gives the psalmist's impression about the nature of God, what God is in himself. He set his glory "above the heavens." The heavens themselves merely reflect the glory of God. He then goes on to pose a question about the purpose of human beings:

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? Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. - (Psalm 8:3-5 NRSV)

Next comes the answer:

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. - (vv. 6-8 NRSV)

Then he returns to the main theme, "O LORD our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" (v. 9). What is the heart of the passage? The psalmist is essentially asking God, "In light of the good work you have done—the excellence and greatness of your creation—what good is man?"

Practice: *So I ask you the same question: What good is man? Quite apart from what the Bible says, we know the answer. We believe that people are valuable. But why? Why are you valuable? Why are you something that ought to exist, and why is it right that others should help you exist and reach your potential? And why would the magnificent God who created the universe want to be in a personal relationship with you and be your Shepherd? Take some time to pray over these questions, ask God to open your heart to receive what he may want to teach you as it relates to the high estimate God has for you?*