

RELIGION

Scripture of the Week

The Bible Speaks On Humanity, Creation And The Environment

BY MICHAEL LINDSEY
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The text for the Sunday School lesson (International Series) for next Sunday is Psalm 8. Let me encourage you again to build a new habit in 1992--the habit of Sunday School attendance. Stronger adult Sunday School classes will strengthen the outreach of your church, and also strengthen your family spiritually.

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic (excellent) is thy name in all the earth!

That is how our text, Psalm 8, begins, and also how it ends. The name of our God is all-important to a right understanding of who he is. The name LORD in most of our versions translates the Hebrew name "Yahweh" or "Jehovah." There is no conspiracy here to obscure the name of our God (as some have claimed); the English translators are simply following the pattern of the New Testament writers, who consistently translated "Yahweh" with the Greek "kyrios," which means "lord," "master," even "husband" in some contexts. (Compare Matt 3:3 with Isaiah 40:3; and Matt 22:43-44 with Psalm 110:1.)

It doesn't matter very much what

pronunciation we give to the names of God (Yahweh is only one of them); much more important is our understanding of who he is, and what his name means. The name LORD or Yahweh comes from their verb for being, and therefore means "the one who is," i.e., the God who is real, self-existent, independent, not bound to people's rituals or sacrifices, like the gods of other ancient peoples. Surely our God is excellent, majestic, and worthy of all our praise and obedience.

And his name is excellent because it reveals his self-sufficient character. Don't let anyone tell you that your church is a false church because it doesn't use the right (English) name for God. They miss the whole point: the names of God are not ritual formulas to follow; they represent important aspects of his character.

King David wrote Psalm 8 and addressed the entire psalm to the Lord. And yet if we read it carefully, we'll see that David is revealing the wonderful relationship between God and humanity, and praising God for that. Some of the deepest questions we can ask as human beings surface in Psalm 8: Are people significant? What makes us important? How do we relate to the rest of

life (and non-life, for that matter) here on earth?

As I see it, there are really three schools of thought today that give answers to these questions. In one case, humanity is really an amazing "accident of evolution." Given billions of years, some cosmic ooze, and a whole lot of luck--or some other mechanism which no-one has discovered yet--and the end product turns out to be us! Aren't you excited? Think carefully before you answer.

If we are merely a highly developed product of matter, plus time, plus chance (as many evolutionists argue), then we have no purpose for existence. We are no more important than a sea fish, or an amoeba, or a pile of rubbish. Or else we are only as important as we choose to make ourselves--and who's to say we're wrong? Someone may argue that his race is superior to all others--who can claim that all people are equal, unless someone created them equal? Someone else may claim that men have the right to abuse (weaker) women and children, because they are inherently stronger--how can evolution, and "survival of the fittest," deny his point? I think that evolution, when followed to its logical conclusions, under-

mines the very basis of human dignity and society.

Fortunately, we still have a residue of Judeo-Christian values in our society, and materialistic evolution as a world view is still widely resisted. The Gallup organization tells us that four out of five Americans would label themselves Christians, and nine out of ten Americans believe there is a God. But it's obvious that a lot of people have adopted a different view of God from the revelation of the Bible. Their lives reflect many strange views of morality, of the value of life, of standards of right and wrong. I call their approach "God is there, but he doesn't communicate." Some of the extremes of the Earth-First ecology movement result from these attitudes. Animal rights activists believe that all animal life is valuable, even sacred. So they must believe something about God. If they are fully consistent, they teach that animals have as much right to exist as people. As a result, some become vegetarians by conscience, and believe all people should do the same. I'm not sure what they expect such animal-eaters as eagles, tigers, salmon and spotted owls to do.

Wouldn't it be consistent for these

folks to train carnivores to eat plant life? Or should that be protected too?

My point is, without some clear revelation of the nature of God, and nature, and humanity, people will often respond to immediate situations, with emotional responses that seem self-contradictory on reflection. Many of my friends have adopted little bits of eastern religion, reincarnation, astrology, nationalism/patriotism, Star Trek optimism and other philosophies. But they don't understand that there is a god, who is there, who has communicated the truth about the human race. We don't need an ET to tell us our past, or our future. God is a Super-Terrestrial, and he's given us all we need to know. What does God tell us, then? (1) That humanity is created in the very image of God himself (Gen 1:26) and as such is only a little lower than the angels, and has crowned him with glory and honour. The Hebrew word translated "the him with glory and honour." The Hebrew word translated "the angels" in this verse is actually *elohim*, which means either "God" or "the gods," depending on the context. I think the former fits this

psalm a lot better, since idols and pagan gods are not even mentioned.

Since mankind has such a status, we are unique in the creation, with a special honor over all the rest. There is no distinction in this honor between male and female (Gen 1:27), nor among any of the races of humanity (Acts 17:26; Gen 3:20).

What else does God tell us? (2) That humanity has a tremendous responsibility to rule over the earth (Ps 8:6-8; Gen 1:26 again), and we will be judged on how well we have handled the marvelous creation he gave us. As such, people have the right to "subdue" the earth, but not to ravage it, to contrail its resources for human benefit, but not to destroy it.

The earth is not an organism, nor should it be worshipped as a mother goddess. These things are being glibly taught today as obvious fact. The truth is, "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the sea, and those that dwell therein" (Ps 24:1). I believe Christians should be in the forefront of recycling efforts, cleaning up toxic waste sites, anti-nuclear activism--not because we "love our mother" (earth), but because we know and love its Creator.

Christmas Give

"There's no place like this place, nowhere near this place. This is the place." This is the place where family needs are met spiritually and physically. See schedule below.

Tuesdays--Free clothes for the entire family

WED. & FRI's--Food Distribution Day.

Times--1:00pm to 3:00pm.
For further information ask for Pat Gamble or Ruth Glass at 288-1092.

CLEAN CLOTHES

Freshen Your Laundry With Baking Soda

(NU) - As nights grow chilly and frost lurks just around the corner, it's time to bring out the winter wardrobe.

Experts suggest baking soda can help freshen those clothes and keep them looking good.

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We need volunteers interested in:

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3. Community News Letter
5. Board Participation

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- Yams • Blackeyed Peas • Sweet Potato Pies
- Peach Cobbler

• 6AM Breakfast

• Hot Food Express Line 11am - 2pm

• Master Charge • Visa • American Express

Steen's Kitchen

289-1935

7332 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

The Prudential

Jim Werner

District Agent, 19 Years Service
11300 N.E. Halsey, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97220
Residence: 503-771-6113

Jesus Loves You!

Allen Temple CME Church

Psalm 34:3

4236 NE Eighth Avenue

(corner of 8th & Skidmore)

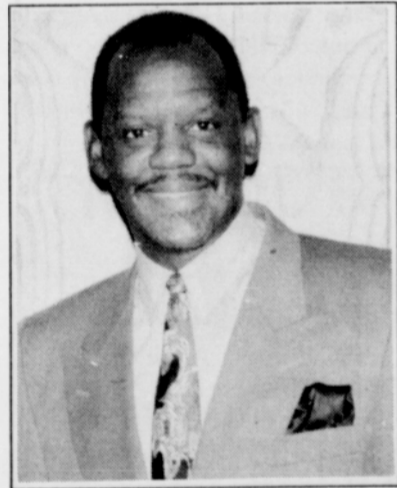
Portland, Oregon 97211

(503) 287-0261

Phillip S. Nelson Pastor

MALLORY CHURCH OF CHRIST

3908 NE MALLORY AVENUE



Minister Gregory Fobbs

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Bible Study

9:30 am.

Morning Worship

10:45 am.

Men's Training Leadership

Women's Bible Class

5:00 pm.

Evening Worship

6:00 pm.

Attended nursery for all services

Wednesday prayer meeting and bible study 7:30 pm.

Radio Ministry Each Sunday, 11:00 AM - KBMS

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Cold-weather goods needed

As winter nears, blankets, heavy coats and other cold-weather clothing are once again atop our list of desperately needed items. Among the other needs: workboots, rain gear and tents (for the homeless), blankets, pillows, bedsheets, baby blankets, pots, pans, dishes, kitchen utensils, tables and chairs, chests of drawers. For details: 284-6878.

Mallory Avenue Christian Church

Disciples of Christ

God's Presence promises
Power through Jesus Christ in
Good Times and Bad Times
Matthew 11:28

"Come to me all you who are
weary and heavy laden and I
will give you rest"

9:45am Sunday School
11:00am Morning Worship
7:30pm Tuesday Bible Study and Prayer

Inter-racial Congregation

126 N.E. Alberta + Portland, OR 97211 + (503) 288-5173



Denise A. Bell, Pastor

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church

8101 N. Fiske Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97203

Church Phone: 289-0147

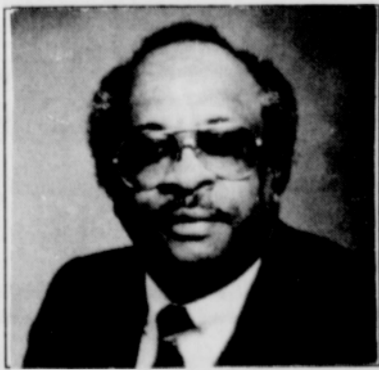
Study Phone: 289-1911

Sunday Service
10:45

Sunday School
9:30

Bible Study
6:00

Evening Service
7:00 P.M.



Pastor, Rev. James C.E. Faulkner

Theme: Whatever you're going to do
for the Lord, do it now

I Peter 4:11



MT OLIVET BAPTIST
CHURCH

WE ARE MOVING
SUNDAY SERVICES
TO

Stone Tower Church,

N.E. Sandy Blvd. & 30th

Worship Services 8:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.

Church School 9:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M.

Bible Study, Wednesdays, 116 N.E. Schuyler

10:30 A.M. and 6:30 P.M.

Radio Ministry each Sunday, 8:00 A.M.-KBMS

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Church Office 116 N.E. Schuyler,