

Psalm 8

Introduction – This is a glorious psalm on several levels. It sings beautifully of the excellency and glory of the Lord, *our Lord*, in the first and last verses. It also shows forth this glory in the grand scheme of the universe as well as the little details of a babbling infant. The glory of man's humility before God and yet exaltation over all of the creation show forth both the great cultural mandate for mankind as well as declaration of the glory of God in all the makings of His hands.

And the capstone of the glory of this Psalm is its use throughout the New Testament; and it is in that use we learn to properly interpret all that is being said of the new humanity in Christ upon this earth.

“O Yahweh, our Lord” (vv 1, 9) – This psalm is a wonderful description of the place and purpose of man. But none of that can be understood outside reverent and fearful wonder of the surpassing majesty of God. Man will never understand nor submit to his destiny unless he is able to say, “O God, that is, *my Lord*...” All understanding begins with worship. All folly begins with the denial of this truth (Rom 1:18-20).

The Importance of the Noise of Babies (v2) – God defeats His enemies with the babbling sounds of infants. We want to push this aside as poetic license far too quickly. What in the world could a baby know? How in the world could John the Baptist leap in his mother's womb for joy? We know far less that we think about what a baby knows and doesn't know.

Glorious Humility (vv3-4) – When we consider the vastness or the intricacies of God's creation, and then realize that we puny little humans are doing this, it puts the soft heart into a state of overwhelmed awe and thankfulness for the uncountable kindnesses of Almighty God.

And Yet a Crown (v5) – And yet this piece of dust has been set just below the rank of angels, decked out with a particular honor. This verse leaves us with some questions of interpretation which the NT commentary will give to us later.

Vice-Regents (vv6-8) – Man, pre-fall and post-fall, remains under the command to take dominion of the works of the hands of God. This is the glory of God's image-bearer, and is connected to the work of Christ, the second Adam, to redeem the world.

To fully understand this and all of Psalm 8, we must turn to the rest of the scriptures and let them instruct us. As we do this, we must remember that the NT is our authority for understanding what the OT teaches.

“Out of the mouth of babes” (Matt 21:12-16) – The highly respected theologians of the day were quite distressed over Jesus. He had come into their temple making a mockery of their financial dealings and then healing the blind and the lame. The children, filled with joy, named Christ properly the Son of David with all the proper implications. Filled with envy and anger, the church leaders turned to Christ and said, “*Do You hear what they are saying?*” Jesus responded with Psalm 8. There is also a possible allusion to this verse in Matt 11:25 as well. God's way is to reveal Himself to those who get under, who become like little children, and who are little children, not to the self-important who continue to shoo the little babies away from Christ.

“under His feet” (Heb 2:5-9) – The writer is arguing that Christ is better than the angels, and as he quotes Psalm 8, we see his application is that Jesus, for a time, was placed under the angels (as a man), but now He and all of the new humanity in Him are crowned with glory and honor over all things. Before, the world was in subjection to angels, but now, in the age of Christendom, it is put under mankind in Christ.

“under His feet” (1 Cor 15:25-28) – The popular idea today is that Jesus is in heaven while the devil has his way on earth until it gets really bad. Then, Jesus will deal with the first enemy, death, by rapturing His church into heaven. Do you see this in the scripture? Psalm 110 teaches that Christ is sitting in heaven until all His enemies are made a footstool. Then Christ will come to earth and destroy the last enemy – death. His enemies are destroyed through the preaching of the gospel and the discipling of the nations, which is the fulfillment of the cultural mandate of Genesis and of Psalm 8.

“under His feet” (Eph 1:20-23) – Here we see that in Christ, mankind comes into his dominion properly.

Christ, the New Man, Understood – Jesus Christ is the new Adam, the second Adam. He is not an isolated Individual. He is the new humanity. The work of the second Adam, it is promised, will be greater than the first (Rom 5:17). Abraham was promised the world (Rom 4:13) which means that in the years to come, this earth will be populated by spiritual descendants of the second Adam. Jesus Christ has come to take away the sins of the world (John 1:29) and not to condemn the world (John 3:16-17). And the fulfillment of Psalm 8 is the reason that Jesus could say the words of Matt 28:18-20. Everything has been placed under the feet of Jesus. But we are His body; we are His feet.

It is Palm Sunday – You can either join in with the chief priests and the scribes, muttering that this Jesus has no place here upon this sorry earth (or “do you hear what this optimist is preaching?”). Or you can lift up your voices with the children, and become like little children, and cry out – “*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!*”