

Preaching the Psalms Series

(36)

Psalm 8

Honor God the Creator and Acknowledge His Exaltation of Man, 8:1-9

The LORD'S Glory and Man's Dignity

For the Choir Director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David

Psalm 8:1-9 (NASB)

¹“O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!

²From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.

³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained;

⁴What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him?

⁵Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!

⁶You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

⁷All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

⁸The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.

⁹O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth!”

This is, *Honor God the Creator and Acknowledge His Exaltation of Man, Psalm 8:1-9*.

1. Consider God's majestic name (vv. 1-2).
 2. Consider God's care for us (the human race) (vv. 3-4).
 3. Consider our exalted position over creation (vv. 5-8).
 4. Consider God's purpose: That we acknowledge Him as Lord (our Lord) and praise His name (v. 9).
3. (Psalm 8:5-8) Consider our exalted position over creation.

Psalm 8:5-8 (NASB)

⁵“Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!

⁶You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

⁷All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

⁸The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.”

David moved from contemplating God's care for humans to the confidence the Lord has invested in humans. God has given mankind the greatest assignment: the responsibility of overseeing and caring for His creation. What elevates this task to such an important position?

The earth is God's gift to His Son. All things were created for Him ([Colossians 1:16](#)).

[Colossians 1:16 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁶“For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

God has promised His Son the earth as His inheritance ([Psalm 2:8](#)).

[Psalm 2:8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁸“Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.”

He will one day have everlasting dominion over all creation ([Psalm 72:8](#); [Daniel 7:14](#)).

[Psalm 72:8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁸“May he also rule from sea to sea And from the River to the ends of the earth.”

[Daniel 7:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴“And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.”

This is Christ's reward for submitting to the Father's will in His incarnation and crucifixion ([Philippians 2:5-11](#)). God has committed the care of His Son's inheritance to us—what a privilege!

[Philippians 2:5-11 \(NASB\)](#)

⁵“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.

⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

a. God made man a little lower than the angels (v. 5a).

Psalm 8:5^a (NASB)

⁵“Yet You have made him a little lower than God (‘elōhîm), And You crown him with glory and majesty!”

Psalm 8:5^a (KJV)

⁵“For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels (‘elōhîm), and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”

Translations and commentators differ as to whom specifically man is compared in this statement. The Hebrew word for *angels* (‘elōhîm) is one of the names used to refer to God and it almost always refers to Him. But it is sometimes used of other authorities ([Exodus 22:8](#)).

Exodus 22:8 (NASB)

⁸“If the thief is not caught, then the owner of the house shall appear before the judges (‘elōhîm), to determine whether he laid his hands on his neighbor's property.”

Many believe that *God* is the accurate translation here. If this is the case, David is praising God for creating man in His image and likeness ([Genesis 1:26-27](#)).

Genesis 1:26-27 (NASB)

²⁶“Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

This is a status afforded only to humans, and it qualifies them to rule over the rest of creation.

The translation as *angels* is based on this verse's quotation in [Hebrews 2:7](#).

Hebrews 2:7 (NASB)

⁷“YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS.”

Those who support the translation as *God* note that New Testament authors did not always quote the Old Testament word for word. They also assert that the author of Hebrews was quoting the Septuagint. However, *verbal inspiration* of Scripture extends to the words themselves. The Greek word in [Hebrews 2:7](#) is *angelos*, the exclusive word for angel. This is a case where the New Testament clarifies the Old.

As humans, we are inferior to angels in knowledge ([2 Samuel 14:20](#)) and power ([2 Peter 2:11](#)).

2 Samuel 14:20 (NASB)

²⁰“In order to change the appearance of things your servant Joab has done

this thing. But my lord is wise, like the wisdom of the angel of God, to know all that is in the earth.”

2 Peter 2:11 (NASB)

¹¹ “Whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.”

Additionally, angels have the capacity not to sin ([Daniel 4:13](#); [Matthew 25:31](#); [Revelation 14:10](#)).

Daniel 4:13 (NASB)

¹³ “I was looking in the visions in my mind *as I lay on my bed*, and behold, an *angelic* watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven.”

Matthew 25:31 (NASB)

³¹ “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.”

Revelation 14:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ “He also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.”

But note the point of this verse in the discussion that follows, the great truth that stirred David to exalt the Lord.

b. God crowned man with honor: He made him ruler over God’s creation (vv. 5b-8).

Psalms 8:5^b-8 (NASB)

⁵ “Yet You have made him a little lower than God, ^b**And You crown him with glory and majesty!**

⁶ You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,

⁷ All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

⁸ The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.”

God delegated to man—not the holy, wiser, mightier angels—authority over creation. This is the high honor he has bestowed upon us, the crown that encircles the human head. Additionally, God has assigned angels to serve His people here on earth ([Hebrews 1:14](#)).

Hebrews 1:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

All earthly creatures are under the dominion of man ([vv. 7-8](#); [Genesis 1:26-28](#)).

Psalms 8:7-8 (NASB)

⁷ “All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

⁸ The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.”

Genesis 1:26-28 (NASB)

²⁶ “Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

²⁸ God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Thought 1. We must accept seriously our responsibility as co-regents of God’s creation. As Christian believers, we must be biblically balanced in our stewardship of the earth and its resources. A segment of society takes an extreme position in environmental concerns, failing to recognize that God has given us the earth to meet our needs. Others swing to the opposite extreme and carelessly abuse the earth and its resources. God has given us the earth and its creatures to sustain our lives. We are to use its resources for our needs, but we must be good stewards of what God has committed to our authority and care.

The earth has been severely abused by fallen man. **“The world that was created to be ruled by us has been raped by us instead.”** The death of Christ redeemed all that was lost when man sinned. One day the earth’s redemption will become effective, and Christ will restore to all the creation everything that was taken from it, everything it has suffered while it has been in bondage to sinners (**Romans 8:19-22**).

Romans 8:19-22 (NASB)

¹⁹ “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.”

Thought 2. David’s description of man’s position in creation includes a prophecy of Christ. This is what Christian author **C.S. Lewis** calls **“the ‘over-meaning’, the new weight laid upon the poet’s words”** by the New Testament.

The term *Son of Man* took on special significance when it was claimed by Christ to describe Himself. Christ referred to Himself by this title more than any other name. The author of Hebrews, moved by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, relates this passage to the future reign of Christ over the earth. By His death on the cross, Jesus has redeemed both fallen humanity and the earth, the world which we have so sinfully

abused down through history. As the Second Adam, the perfect man, Jesus Christ will restore man's dominion over the earth, and He will personally rule over us throughout eternity.

Romans 5:14-21 (NASB)

¹⁴ “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

¹⁶ The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification.

¹⁷ For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.

¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

²⁰ The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Hebrews 2:5-10 (NASB)

⁵ “For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.

⁶ But one has testified somewhere, saying, “WHAT IS MAN, THAT YOU REMEMBER HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT HIM?”

⁷ “YOU HAVE MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; YOU HAVE CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAVE APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS;

⁸ YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”

For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.

⁹ But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, *namely*, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.

¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.”