

Message Three

The Excellency of Christ

Scripture Reading: Psa. 8

- I. Psalm 8 shows that God's purpose and plan for man to express Him with His image and to represent Him with His dominion have never changed—Gen. 1:26:**
 - A. The man prophesied in Psalm 8 is the second man, the Lord Jesus, who has recovered man's lost ordination and has fulfilled God's original purpose—Heb. 2:5-9.
 - B. This second man is also a corporate man, the new man, the corporate Christ, who expresses God in His image and represents God to have dominion over all things for the fulfillment of God's purpose—Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11; Acts 9:4-5; Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 2:10-11.
- II. Psalm 8 is David's inspired praise of the excellency of Christ—this psalm speaks of the heavens, the earth, babes and sucklings, man, three categories of enemies, and the Lord's incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, and ascension, the Body of Christ, His coming back, and His kingdom.**
- III. The Lord's name is excellent (majestic) in all the earth, and His splendor (glory) has been set over the heavens—v. 1:**
 - A. In Psalms 3 through 7 it was a mess on the earth, according to David's human concept.
 - B. Here in Psalm 8 the name of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, ascended, and exalted Jesus (Phil. 2:5-11) is excellent (majestic) in all the earth according to the divine revelation, and the Lord's glory is over the heavens in the sight of David.
 - C. The goal of this psalm is to join the earth to the heavens and bring the heavens down to the earth, making the earth and the heavens one—John 1:51; Gen. 28:12.
- IV. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings the Lord has established strength (praise—Matt. 21:16) because of His adversaries, to stop the enemy and the avenger—Psa. 8:2:**
 - A. Babes and sucklings are the youngest, smallest, and weakest among men, indicating the highest consummation of the Lord's work in His redemption.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Three (continuation)

- B. The Lord has established praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings because of His adversaries (within) and for the stopping of the enemy and the avenger (without).
 - C. Satan is God's adversary within God's kingdom, God's enemy outside God's kingdom, and the avenger who roves to and fro over the earth—cf. Job 1:7; 1 Pet. 5:8.
- V. David saw the heavens, the works of the Lord's fingers, the moon and the stars, which the Lord has ordained—Psa. 8:3:**
- A. The moon and the stars indicate that David had this view—a view turned from looking at the earth to contemplating the heavens in the night.
 - B. In this view David had a pure vision to see the pure work in God's creation and ordination.
 - C. The aim in the Lord's redemption is to turn us from the messy earth to the bright heaven.
- VI. What is mortal man, that the Lord remembers him, and the son of man, that He visits him?—v. 4:**
- A. In his view in the heavens, David turned his consideration to man on the earth.
 - B. Man is the central object of God in His creation for the accomplishment of His economy to fulfill His heart's desire.
 - C. The first "man" in verse 4 is *enosh* in Hebrew, and the second "man" is *adam* in Hebrew, both referring to:
 - 1. The God-created man in God's creation in Genesis 1:26.
 - 2. The Satan-captured man in man's fall in Psalm 8:4.
 - 3. Christ as a man in His incarnation for the accomplishment of God's redemption in Hebrews 2:6.
 - D. Such a man God remembers in His economy and visits in His incarnation—John 1:14; Phil. 2:7.
- VII. The Lord has made man a little lower than angels—Psa. 8:5a; Heb. 2:7a:**
- A. This refers to Christ's incarnation with His human living for His all-inclusive death—John 1:14; Heb. 2:9a.
 - B. In His incarnation Christ was made a little lower than angels, physically not positionally, in the sense of being in the flesh.

Message Three (continuation)

VIII. God has crowned man (Christ) with glory and honor—Psa. 8:5b; Heb. 2:7b:

- A. This refers to Christ's resurrection in His glory (John 7:39b; Luke 24:26) and His ascension in His honor (Acts 2:33-36; 5:31a).
- B. This was through His all-inclusive death—Heb. 2:9.

IX. Psalm 8:2-5 shows us how the babes and sucklings are produced:

- A. In order to produce babes and sucklings, God has visited man—v. 4:
 - 1. God visited man by becoming incarnated, by putting on humanity and becoming a man to be a little lower than the angels—v. 5a.
 - 2. God visited man also by living on earth, dying, rising up from the dead, and ascending to the heavens to be crowned with glory and honor—v. 5b.
 - 3. God visited man through the long journey of His process to become the life-giving Spirit to reach us and to enter into us—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; cf. 1 Pet. 2:12; Luke 1:68, 78.
 - 4. The incarnated One has become the life-giving Spirit, and it is this One who produces babes and sucklings.
- B. We become babes and sucklings in the initial stage through regeneration:
 - 1. We are remade, re-created, through regeneration—cf. Matt. 18:3; 19:14.
 - 2. Regeneration reduces our natural activity.
 - 3. The proper, genuine salvation stops our human doing and makes us babes and sucklings to praise the Lord.
- C. The process of producing babes and sucklings continues with sanctification, renewing, and transformation—Heb. 2:11; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- D. The Lord has perfected praise, or established strength, out of the mouths of babes and sucklings for the purpose of stopping His adversaries, the enemy, and the avenger—Psa. 8:2:

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Three (continuation)

1. God overcomes His enemy through babes and sucklings, the youngest, smallest, and weakest among men; this is the Lord's recovery and victory—cf. 1 Cor. 1:26-31.
2. All things will be ruled over by Christ with His Body, and all things will be subjected under His feet—Psa. 8:6-8.
3. The perfected praise of the babes and sucklings is the ultimate consummation of the Lord's work of incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, ascension, and coming back to rule on earth:
 - a. We may praise the Lord, but our praise needs to be perfected; through transformation we are perfected in praising the Lord.
 - b. The perfected praise is the praise for the Lord's incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, ascension, and kingdom.
 - c. In order to praise the Lord, we need to see Jesus, turning our view from the messy earth to the bright heaven—Heb. 2:9; 12:1-2.
 - d. The perfected praise is the strength out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, the praise that defeats the adversaries, the enemy, and the avenger—2 Chron. 20:22; cf. vv. 12, 20-21.
4. "Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name"—Heb. 13:15.

X. God has caused man (Christ) to rule over the works of God's hands and has put all things under His feet: all sheep and oxen, the beasts of the field, the birds of heaven, the fish of the sea, and whatever passes through the paths of the seas—Psa. 8:6-8; Heb. 2:7b-8a:

- A. This word was fulfilled in Adam (Gen. 1:26-28), but it was broken by man's fall.
- B. In Christ's ascension God subjected all things under Christ's feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His Body—Eph. 1:22-23; Rom. 16:20:
 1. In the Body life we participate in the transmission of Christ's subjecting power to put all things under the feet of His Body.

THE PSALMS (1)

Message Three (continuation)

2. The God of peace crushes Satan under the feet of those who live the church life as the practical expression of the Body—v. 20.
 - C. This word will be fulfilled in full in the millennium, the age of restoration—Rev. 20:4-6; Matt. 19:28; Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25.
- XI. O Jehovah our Lord, how excellent (majestic) is Your name in all the earth!—Psa. 8:9:**
- A. Verse 9 repeats the first part of verse 1 to strengthen the thought concerning the excellency of the Lord's name in all the earth.
 - B. This makes the earth as excellent as the heavens, as indicated in the first part of the Lord's prayer: "Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth"—Matt. 6:9-10.