

PSALM 8

PALM SUNDAY PRAISES FOR THE LOWLY KING

*O LORD, our Lord! How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!*

*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.*

*When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man [Son of Man!] that You visit him?*

*For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor.
You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet,*

*All sheep and oxen—even the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas.*

O LORD, our Lord! How excellent is Your name in all the earth!

People like to cheer for the underdog--in a ball game, an election, a lawsuit, or war. Because the big boys and their big machine "always" win, it's good to see the little guy come out on top. God operates in just that way. I Corinthians 1:26-27 says, "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base [common] things of the world and the things which are despised, God has chosen and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence."

Psalm 8 says the same. It begins giving all praise to the Father for helping out lowly man. *O LORD, our Lord! How excellent is Your name in all the earth.* The Lord and His name is above all. His "name," is not just the letters of His label G-O-D, etc., but His reputation—powerful, wise, eternal, holy, merciful, compassionate, kind and forgiving even for those who know better! He has a glorious world-wide reputation, whether people honor it or not. Unlike someone who shines at one job, but struggles at another, God struggles at nothing. *You have set Your glory above the heavens!* He surpasses all.

God's glory isn't based simply on physical things. It's based on His holy, sinless truth and His holy, sinless love, by which Jesus came to redeem sinners. When Pontius Pilate asked Jesus if He were a King? Jesus answered, "My Kingdom is not of this world. . . . I have come to bear witness to the truth. He that is of truth heeds my voice." Pilate scoffed, "What is Truth?!" The world—the sinful world--doesn't buy into God's Truth of sin and grace. But our text says, *Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength.* God's glory is displayed through the simple childlike trust in the heart for the Savior from sin. The helpless sinner—you—succeed! "If you have faith like a grain of the mustard seed," Jesus said, "you will be able to move mountains" (paraphrased Matthew 17:20-21). Or—what makes a church great? In man's eyes--architecture, packed house, packed calendar, political and community involvement. In God's eyes—hearts clinging to Jesus, not because He shows the example how to get self to heaven, but because He is the self-sacrificing Shepherd of lost sheep. Trust Him.

Why does the Lord use childlike faith? The text says, *Because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.* God's truth in simple hearts makes Satan and all evil operators look bad, particularly on Judgment Day. On Palm Sunday, childlike faith in Christ exposed the anti-Jesus sentiment of the rulers. Lowly Jesus of Nazareth was favored by the crowds and welcomed into Zion as the Promised King and Savior. Not by, the leaders. When the little children sang His praises, it was to the chagrin of the leaders. In Matthew 21:15-26 we read, "When the chief priests and scribes saw . . . the children crying out in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! they were indignant and said to Him, Do You hear what these are saying? And Jesus said to them, Yes. Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?' He quoted this very Psalm to them! Your childlike faith seems weak, but is victoriously powerful, over evil and Satan.

God continually gives attention to the insignificant. *When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him?* God made Adam and Eve as the crown of His creation, the center of His attention. This doesn't merely mean, man was a bigger better

animal—as the evolutionist says.. Not so! Man is a far different sort of creature—superior thought, superior speech, superior maneuverability of body, fingers, and hands! With that, man may seem “big” to himself. But remember, but remember man is answerable to God for right and wrong, and failed. Animals have no Ten Commandments. They are not morally answerable to God nor subject to eternal condemnation. Man has an eternal soul answerable to God—for which Jesus died! Without Jesus we are nothing. Actually even in comparison to the vastness and majesty of the universe—the moon, the stars, the northern lights--***What is man that You are mindful of him?*** It is purely God’s grace and mercy by which people are received by Him and declared Not-Guilty by Him through His Son. You are insignificant. The older I get, the more I realize it about myself. What can you possibly brag about to God? What can you take pride in, before God? Your thriftiness, your sociableness, your determination, your toughness, your independence, your lovableness? Someone who knows you could pick apart all your good qualities, and God sees even more. Yet God cares about you, because God is love. He is “mindful of man,” in love.

In our text, at this point the Psalmist takes a turn, from talking about “man” in general to talking about a very special man. It is easy to miss it. Many others have missed it—Bible translations included. But the Bible itself makes it clear. ***What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man [Son of Man] that You visit him?*** The Psalm now talks about The Son of Man, not just “a son of man / another person,” but Jesus. In the New Testament, Jesus Himself used this term in reference to Himself. “The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). Jesus is THE son of man—the one representative of the human race who carries the day and reconciles us to the Father. He stepped-in, to make peace for sinners with the holy Lord.

The Psalm writer asks an unusual question. ***Why are You mindful of the Son of Man that You visit him?*** In other words, “Why do You pay attention to, look after, the Son of Man?” He should, shouldn’t He; for He is the Son of God. The Father visits Him because, ***You have made him a little lower than the angels.*** Is this really talking about Jesus? It is ordinary man who was made a little lower than the angels, wasn’t it? It sounds like this may not be talking about Jesus, but just ordinary man. Not so. The Bible itself stipulates that it is Jesus. In Hebrews 1-2, the Scripture speaks of the superiority of Jesus to the angels. “To which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son, today I have begotten You’ ?” (Hebrews 1:5). “To which of the angels did He ever say, ‘Sit at My right hand till I make Your enemies Your footstool’? (Hebrews 1:13). It continues and quoting our text, Psalm 8, saying that this “Son of Man” was made lower than the angels, but now has all things under his feet!” (not so the angels). Based on the Hebrews passage, the second part of Psalm 8 is definitely talking about Jesus. Hebrews goes on to say, “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus our humble Savior is indeed our Lord!

Was He actually made “a little lower than the angels?” Yes, in His “Humiliation.” On earth He fully had all glory and honor. Yet as a baby He had to nurse from mother, learn to walk and to talk. As an adult He had to sleep, eat, drink. As the human sacrifice for sin—yours and mine--He had to die and be buried. He willingly set aside the full use of His honor and glory. He was “for a little” lower than the angels, lower than the “mighty ones,” lower than God. But ***You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.*** On the third day Jesus rose from the grave in honor, with indeed ALL things under His feet—the things of this earth—sheep, oxen, beasts, birds, fish; the things beyond this earth, the moon and the stars; even Satan, sin, death, hell, and all evil! His “Exaltation!”

Talk about the low man coming out on top! Jesus, the carpenter and teacher of Nazareth—of all places—was welcomed into Jerusalem that day as a King to the joyous shouts of the people, “Hosanna!”-- “Come save us now!” But He would shortly submit to scornful treatment and even death on a cross, a weakling and pushover—all because He loves you! Then His glory! Imagine the dismay in the heart of Satan on Easter Sunday morning! “I live, and You lose! Now even lowly sinners, you and I, are honored by the King with heaven! Trust Him.

On Palm Sunday we see clearly, “God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base [common] things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence” (I Corinthians 1:26-27). And on Palm Sunday we also see clearly, ***What is [ordinary] man that You are mindful of him? And [what is] the Son of Man that You visit Him? For You have made Him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned Him with glory and honor. You have made Him to have dominion over the works of Your hands . . . O LORD, our Lord! How excellent is Your name in all the earth!*** He labored to comfort you—today, every day, and forever!

So be it! Amen!

Pastor Kanzenbach---