

THE TEXT AND THEOLOGY OF
PSALM 8

by
Leslie C. Lofquist

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Author: Leslie C. Lofquist
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Adviser: Donald L. Fowler

Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of the dominion mandate given to man in Genesis 1:26-28. Some would deny this conclusion, arguing that man forfeited dominion in the garden. However, the fruit of the exegesis of Psalm 8 compels one to think otherwise.

In the text of Psalm 8, the glory of YHWH is the theme, glory which is displayed on the earth in three ways: YHWH's greatness (vv. 2b-3), man's frailty (vv. 4-5), and man's kingship (vv. 6-9). The text asserts that dominion has been granted to man and is his present reality. However, David observed that man does not have dominion over that which God said he did. The result of this paradox was great bewilderment in the psalmist. The text closes with David's praise of YHWH, who alone could resolve the seeming paradox.

In the theology of Psalm 8, four major thoughts emerge: God the Creator is majestic and glorious; man the creature is frail, in and of himself; God crowned man as lord of creation; man does indeed presently rule over the world as God's viceregent. The unique contribution of Psalm 8 to anthropology is its seeming paradox. All other references to man in the Bible seem to stress either man in his frailty and depravity or man in his dominion and greatness. Yet, Psalm 8 combines both of these notions into one unique statement on man: man is both weak and strong, frail yet king.

The incarnation of Christ resolved this seeming paradox. What David could only say about mankind in general the New Testament quotations of Psalm 8 (especially Hebrews 2:5-9) could say about Jesus in particular. The psalm is therefore fulfilled in a man, the man Christ Jesus, who has succeeded where mankind could not succeed.

This is not improper hermeneutics. David's meaning for Psalm 8 was given new significance in the light of Christ's incarnation. The "son of man" phrase in Psalm 8:5 is nothing more than a reference to frail mankind which has been given dominion by God. But Jesus came and added new significance to the psalm and the "son of man" phrase, a fact which the New Testament writers recognized. Especially helpful as a hermeneutical bridge is the targum of Psalm 8, which interpreted Psalm 8 Messianically and no doubt influenced the New Testament writers to do likewise.

This understanding of Psalm 8 has various implications. These include: man's dominion as formative activity; man's three relationships (to God, to other men, to creation); the meaning of work; and the relation of the dominion mandate to the Gospel mandate.

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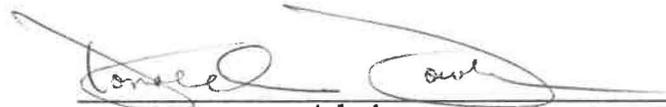

Adviser

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INTRODUCTION

In 1863, T. H. Huxley wrote the following words, with an emphasis which today would be seen as prophetic.

The question of all questions for humanity, the problem which lies beyond all others and is more interesting than any of them, is that of the determination of man's place in nature and his relation to the cosmos. Whence our race came, what sorts of limits are set to our power over nature and to nature's power over us, to what goal we are striving are the problems which present themselves afresh with undiminished interest to every human being on earth.¹

The century since Huxley wrote those words has seen the fulfillment of his anthropological emphasis. Truly, today is an anthropological age.

Psalm 8 has gained a place in today's theology because it raises the question of anthropology. In other eras of Christian thought, this was not the case. Psalm 8 was usually taken up in connection with the doctrine of creation because of its overall theme,² or with Christology because of the use Hebrews 2:6-8 makes of the Septuagint's

¹T. H. Huxley, as quoted by Carl Sagan, The Dragons of Eden, Speculations on the Evolution of Human Intelligence (New York: Random House, 1978), p. 238.

²James L. Mays, "'What is Man . . . ?' Reflections on Psalm 8," in From Faith to Faith (Essays in Honor of Donald G. Miller), ed. Dikran Y. Hadidian, Pittsburg Theological Monograph Series (Pittsburg: The Pickwick Press, 1979), p. 204.

translation.¹ Even in pre-Christian Rabbinic literature, the psalm was seen as an expression of angelic contempt for human beings.² But by many Christians today, all that is known of Psalm 8 is the famous quotation, "what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?" Most are content to leave Psalm 8 alone, once that catch-phrase is given.

This study of Psalm 8 will not be content with that single quotation alone. Rather, its purpose will be to explain the entire text of Psalm 8 with a goal of understanding the psalm's theological implications. It is this writer's thesis that Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of the dominion mandate given to man in Genesis 1:26-28. Therefore, the ultimate goal of this study will be to understand man's relationship to God, to other men, and his divinely mandated dominion over creation. The psalm itself will be the primary source, with secondary sources being the related and parallel passages in the Old Testament and the quotations of Psalm 8 in the New Testament.

With this purpose and method, it is the desire of this writer to understand correctly Psalm 8, a hymnic portrayal of God's glory displayed in man's dominion. In so understanding Psalm 8, might the greatness of God be seen.

¹Simon Kistemaker, The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Amsterdam: Wed. G. Van Soest, 1961), p. 29.

²Conrad Louis, The Theology of Psalm VIII (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, Inc., 1946), p. 113. Hereinafter called Psalm VIII.

As Leupold has written:

the author's [David's] object was not to dwell primarily on the dignity of man but on this dignity in so far as it was one of the most striking demonstrations that can ever be offered of the greatness of our God. The God who can create such a being as man is, must indeed be superlatively great.¹

¹H. C. Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms (Reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961), p. 105.

PART I
THE TEXT OF PSALM 8

CHAPTER I

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE TEXT

The purpose of this short chapter is to present summary conclusions to important questions. The fact that conclusions are merely presented with little discussion is meant in no way to demean the importance of these issues. But these issues are irrelevant to the major thesis of this study. However, they are issues too important to omit entirely from consideration, yet they are not important enough to merit any more than a summary conclusion.

The Hebrew Text

The major textual problem in Psalm 8 is found in verse 2.¹ The phrase אֲשֶׁר תִּנְהַא is extremely difficult since אֲשֶׁר can be a relative pronoun, an adverb, or a conjunction with several meanings,² while תִּנְהַא is usually taken as an imperative form of נָהַךְ . There seems to be no way to reconcile these forms with the context and the rules of Hebrew grammar. In Conrad's words:

Why should the psalmist command God to place his glory in the heavens where it has ever been apparent? How

¹Joseph Reider, "Some Notes to the Text of Scriptures: Psalm 8:2," The Hebrew Union College Annual, 3 (1926), p. 110.

²Louis, Ps. VIII, pp. 28-29.

could he place a relative pronoun, the ordinary function of אשר , before an imperative? . . . There is a real difficulty in the MT. The versions do not solve it.¹

Authors can emend the verb to fit almost any view of grammatical or contextual requirements according to their interpretation of its subject. That subject might be YHWH, name, earth, glory, or the relative pronoun. There are as many solutions offered as there are commentaries on the text.

Perhaps the problem lies in the vowel pointing. Perhaps this is not an imperative from נָחַן but a verbal form from the root נָחַן ("to distribute, sell").² This verb is only used in Hosea 8:9, 10 where most translations have opted for the idea of selling. If "distribute" is allowed in Hosea 8, then perhaps Psalm 8 might be a second

¹Ibid. For a summation of this knotty textual problem, see Louis' entire discussion, pp. 28-38. However, Louis does not address the problem of frequency. Of all the 2007 uses of נָחַן , 1917 are in the Qal stem, with 77 of those occurrences being imperatives (נָחַן never occurs in the imperativial form outside of Qal). In those 77 occurrences, only once is the relative pronoun even in the same clause and that is Psalm 8:2. Clearly, this is a difficulty for interpretation if the root is seen as from נָחַן .

²M. Stuart, "Hebrew Criticisms, No. II. Suggestions Respecting the Much Controverted נָחַן of Psalm VIII. 2," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 9 (1852), pp. 75-76. Although undoubtedly based upon older scholarship, this excellent article gives a compelling technical argument for seeing this verbal root as נָחַן rather than נָחַן . Stuart also cites Ewald's work on the Psalms as one who holds a similar view; Barnes held the same view. This writer would like to ask why such a conclusion would not be valid, despite more than a century's silence on this view?

occurrence of the root הָנַח .¹ This would make more sense in light of the way most translations handle Psalm 8:2. Most of the versions translate it, "Thou who settest (placest, showest) thy glory above the heavens." Is "distributes" very far from this idea?

In verse 6, מַלְאֲכֵי is undoubtedly the correct text as found in the Masoretic Text. Symmachus, Aquila, Theodotion, and Jerome translate it with "God," while the Septuagint, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate translate it "angels."² Although an interpretive translation will be dealt with in a later chapter, this text is correct as stands.

The Author of the Text

With little else to determine the authorship of Psalm 8 than the title (which is of an edited origin), the certitude of authorship is in question. Nevertheless, the title's attestation of Davidic authorship has a claim to historicity in its own right. Therefore, the author of Psalm 8 can be seen as David, dating the psalm in the tenth century B.C.

¹So it has been determined by Gerhard Lisowsky, Konkordanz zum Hebraischen Alten Testament, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958), p. 43.

²Louis, Ps. VIII, p. 43. It is interesting that despite the fact that most of the versions interpret it as "angels," BHS fails to even mention that in the apparatus!

The Literary Characteristics of the Text

David employed two distinct literary devices in this psalm. First, he began and ended Psalm 8 with the same refrain ("Oh, YHWH, our Lord! How majestic is Your name in all the earth"). This technique is known as the envelope/inclusion method, whereby a main thought of the literary section is given in the repeated refrain.¹ David utilized this technique to "frame" the psalm with the repeated thought and in so doing, to emphasize that theme by repetition.² Second, David arranged the psalm into four logical units of two verses each: verses 2 and 3, verses 4 and 5, verses 6 and 7, and verses 8 and 9. The reader will note both techniques are apparent in this study's exegetical outline of the next chapter.

¹Martin Kessler, "Inclusio in the Hebrew Bible," in vol. 6 of Semitics, ed. H. J. Dreyer and J. J. Gluck (Pretoria: University of South Africa 1978), p. 45.

²Ibid.

CHAPTER II

EXEGESIS OF THE TEXT

As a portion of God's Word, Psalm 8 is deserving of an exegetical consideration for its own sake. However, the purpose of this section will be to ultimately point toward the theological implications of the exegesis. Therefore, the exegesis will not be as broad and deep as this writer would like. Yet the exegesis will be of sufficient depth as to expose the truths of the psalm.

The form to be followed will be the Hebrew text: verse one in the Masoretic Text is verse two in most English translations. Since the Hebrew text will be the basis for this study, all verse citations from other sources also following the Hebrew text will remain as they are. In sources following an English translation's verse citations, the liberty will be taken to put the Hebrew verse reference in brackets [].

8:2a YHWH's Glory: Refrain

The psalm opens with a line which, being repeated at the end, is of the nature of a refrain. As discussed in the previous chapter, such a technique is known as envelope or inclusion. This could be useful in adapting the psalm to a cultic use by the congregation: in this refrain

אֲדֹנָיִנוּ ("our Lord") implies that a number of persons are joining in praise, whereas in the body of the psalm there seems to be one voice, expressed in the first person.¹

Central to this refrain is the ascription of glory, majesty (אֲדֹנָיִר) to the name of YHWH. This word אֲדֹנָיִר apparently has as its root a word of West Semitic origin ('*dr*), which originally meant "to be large, huge."² In Hebrew, this root rarely occurs as a verb; the substantive אֲדֹנָיִר, may be rendered "might, glory, honor."³ The adjective אֲדֹנָיִר (the form found in Psalm 8:2, 10) is used primarily in descriptions of the power and splendor of divine beings.⁴ Ahlström concludes with these comments:

Usually, then, '*addir*' appears in contexts which have to do with Yahweh's cosmological or other super-human acts. This explains the secondary meaning "majestic, glorious."⁵

David employs an adjective of glory, splendor, majesty to describe the name (אֲדֹנָיִר) of YHWH. To make such an ascription to the name of YHWH had further ramifications in the Hebrew mind than one might realize today. A name was more than merely the designation by which a person or thing was known. In Hebrew thought, the name and its

¹William R. Taylor, "Psalms," in vol. 4 of The Interpreter's Bible, edited by George Arthur Buttrick, 12 vols. (New York: Abingdon Press, 1955), p. 48. Whether David expressly employed inclusion in Psalm 8 for use in the national worship is not being considered here. Suffice it to say that the language as penned by David would simply allow for adaptation to the national cult. David's main purpose for the use of inclusion in Psalm 8 was not cultic but literary, to emphasize the theme of YHWH's glory.

²TDOT, s.v. "אֲדֹנָיִר," by G. W. Ahlström, 1:73.

³Ibid. ⁴Ibid., p. 74. ⁵Ibid.

bearer were inseparably associated in character.¹ Thus, to praise one's name was to glorify the person concerned. See Psalm 148:13 for a similar usage of ascribing glory to the name of YHWH.

The location of the glory of the name of YHWH is $\text{בְּכָל-לְאֻמֵּי הָאָרֶץ}$ ("in all the earth"). The context of this psalm will demonstrate that the glory of YHWH is displayed on the earth in three ways: His greatness, man's frailty, and man's kingship. In a very real sense then, all the earth truly witnesses the glory of YHWH.

8:2b-3 YHWH's Glory Displayed in His Greatness

The first way David claims that God's glory is displayed in all the earth is by His greatness. This greatness is above that of the heavens (:2b) and is manifested in the weak (:3).

Greatness Above That of the Heavens

The textual problem of verse 2 was discussed in the previous chapter, when the verbal root נָהַן was assumed for this study. A feasible translation of this clause might be: "You who have displayed or distributed Your splendor above the heavens!" NASB also gives this idea.

This suggested translation is based upon the root נָהַן , which could either be repointed as a participle

¹A. A. Anderson, The Book of Psalms, Vol. 1, New Century Bible, ed. Ronald E. Clements and Matthew Black (London: Oliphants, 1972), p. 101.

הַנֶּחֱמָה or as a preterite הִנְחִיחָה. This is most plausible.¹

But the key to this latter part of verse 2 is the fact that the splendor² (הִרְוָה) of YHWH is displayed or distributed above the heavens (עַל-לְשֵׁמַיִם). But how is this prepositional phrase to be understood? It could indicate that the glory of God is higher than the heavens, spread over the whole arc of the heavens, or merely in the heavens above.

Of the 421 occurrences of שִׁמְרָה, eleven times it is the object of the preposition על, seven of those occurrences appearing in the Psalter.³ All seven of the Psalm occurrences are translated "above the heavens" and are in a context of praise to YHWH for His exalted character, for His splendor, for His glory. A locative sense for this phrase (describing the location of His glory as in the heavens) can be dismissed due to the contexts involved. Each occurrence appears in a comparison, comparing YHWH's greatness to the heavens. When so compared, He is elevated, above, pre-eminent, above even the heavens.⁴

¹This was discussed in the previous chapter's section entitled "The Hebrew Text."

²BDB, p. 217.

³Exodus 9:22, 23; 10:21, 22; Psalm 8:2; 57:6, 12; 108:5, 6; 113:4; 148:13.

⁴BDB, p. 755, demonstrates that על "2. expresses excess . . . 3. denotes elevation or pre-eminence."

In light of these similar contexts for the identical phrase, it seems that a conclusion may be drawn for the meaning of $\text{מִי־לְעֵלָיו־לֹא־יִשְׁוֶה}$ in Psalm 8:2. It too speaks of the pre-eminent greatness of YHWH, over that of even the heavens. In a very real sense, YHWH's glory is displayed by His greatness: He is elevated above even the awesome heavens.

Greatness As Manifested in the Weak

Another way that YHWH's greatness is manifested is by the weak (:3). The weak ones here are infants and nursing babies who attest to God's greatness from the mouth (וּמִפִּי־בָּנִים). That is, even the weak testify of His greatness before the adversaries, enemy, and revengeful (:3b). How this is accomplished is subject to much interpretation. But given the overall context of the psalm, perhaps this is pointing out that even the weakest of all humans are superior to all other creatures.¹ This would be even more likely if one could allow that the adversaries and enemies of this verse are related to the Leviathan which is included in the Targum on Psalm 8:8-9²! Even the weakest of mankind is

¹Charles A. and Emilie Grace Briggs, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms, ICC, (New York: Charles A. Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 63.

²See Francis J. Moloney, "The Targum on Ps. 8 and the New Testament," Salesianum 37 (1975), p. 33. There he demonstrates that the Leviathan is added by the Targum to the text of Ps. 8:8-9. See Mitchell Dahood, Psalms, I, The Anchor Bible (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 50-51, for the ANE background of Rahab, Leviathan, et al. in Ps. 8:3. For a broad discussion of ANE parallels in this regard (from an avowedly conservative position), see Robert B. Chisholm, "Leviathan, Rahab, and Tannin" (Unpublished paper presented to Postgraduate Seminar in Old Testament Theology, Grace Theological Seminary, Fall, 1976).

superior to the beasts, birds, fish and Leviathan (evil forces?) of 8:8-9. Because of Creation (and man's superiority in it) even "the babbling of children become a testimony to God's greatness."¹

To further underscore the contrast between the weak and the enemies, note the verbs involved. "From the mouths of infants and nursing babies, You have established (יָסַדְתָּ) strength, because of Your adversaries, to destroy (לְהַשְׁבִּיחַ) the enemies."

The primary meaning of יָסַד is "to found, to fix firmly."² The Piel is usually used in a literal sense (eg. with reference to the foundation of the temple, 1 Kgs. 16:34; Ezra 3:10; Zech. 4:9).³ This usage in Psalm 8:3 would point to the certainty of the establishment of strength in the weak.

Regarding the use of the Hiphil of שָׁבַח, Hamilton has written:

Preponderantly in the Hiphil of *shābat*, God is the subject of the verb. It is a favorite verb of the prophets to describe God's judgment on His people.⁴

Although the verb in Psalm 8:3 is not in reference to God's people, it does have God as subject and is in the context of

¹Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker, The Old Testament Library, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), II, p. 71. See also J. J. Stamm, "Eine Bemerkung zum Angang des achten Psalms," Theologische Zeitschrift 13:6 (Nov.-Dec., 1957):470-478.

²TWOT, s.v. "יָסַד (*yāsād*)," by Paul R. Gilchrist, 1:384.

³Ibid.

⁴TWOT, s.v. "שָׁבַח (*shābat*)," by Victor P. Hamilton, 2:902.

judgment upon the enemies of God. Those enemies will be destroyed in judgment.

David is emphasizing the contrast between the weak and the enemies. As surely as infants have been established to testify of God's greatness (in their babbling), just as surely God's enemies are to be destroyed in judgment. In a very real sense, the weak are a manifestation of God's greatness.

8:4-5 YHWH's Glory Displayed in Man's Frailty

The second way David claims that God's glory is displayed in all the earth is by man's frailty. YHWH is infinitely superior to man.

A Context of Man's Dominion

Once again the heavens prompted a response within David. (This is seen not only in the repeated use of the word for heavens, but also in the use of כִּי. "The כִּי joins vv. 4 and 5 with vv. 2 and 3."¹) In verse 2, the heavens caused David to ascribe glory to YHWH. In verse 4, David's response differed in a sense, but he again responded after he observed (הִשָּׁרָא) the heavens.²

He recognized that the heavens were the very product

¹Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 54.

²Note that the Peshitta read 3 c.p. (third person plural) instead of הִשָּׁרָא (first person singular). It related the activity of observing the heavens to the enemies. It was the enemies, and not David, who "observe the work of Thy hands."

of God's creative activity, "the work of Thy fingers" (מַעֲשֵׂי מְצַבְּרֵי יָדֶיךָ). That word "work" (מַעֲשֵׂי) was an interesting choice for David to make in that here in verse 4 it is used in the sense of God's created heavens. David repeated the same word in verse 7, where he used it in the sense of God's created heavens over which man has dominion. Elsewhere in the Psalter, the same word is used for heavenly bodies (19:2), animals (8:7), and all created things (103:22). The word fits very well into a dominion context.

In the parallel line to verse 4a, David clarified the object of the referent: "the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained." The verb he chose here (כִּרְבָּבָה) is also interesting when seen in a dominion context. The root meaning of כִּרְבָּב is "to bring something into a certainty."¹ When the context clearly deals with God's creative acts (as it does in Psalm 8:4), Oswalt claims the references may be divided into three groups, all three of which have royal overtones.

God, as the divine king [1.] has established the heavens as his throne (Ps. 103:19); [2.] and the earth as his dominion (1 Chr. 16:30; Ps. 93:1; Isa. 45:18). [3.] As the divine king, his work is accomplished through wisdom and understanding (Prov. 3:19; Jer. 10:12; 51:15). This in it self leads to the fixity of what he has done.²

For good reason, this writer would like to propose that the usage of כִּרְבָּב in Psalm 8:4 be added to that third grouping of Oswalt. First, the overall context of Psalm 8

¹TWOT, s.v. "כִּרְבָּב (*kûn*)," by John N. Oswalt, 1:433.

²Ibid.

(as will be reinforced later) is one of man's kingship and dominion: God's work is accomplished through His viceregent, man. Second, Oswalt continues in his discussion of פָּיַן by citing the verb's usage in Psalm 89:38 in the context of the establishment of the Davidic covenant.¹ Certainly such evidence is compelling, thereby placing David's response toward observing the heavens in the context of kingship and dominion.

But to further strengthen this concept of man's dominion, David used verbs in verse 5 which show God's great covenantal relationship with man. The first verb זָכַר ("to remember, take thought") is interesting in that "in practically all the uses of זָכַר in the psalter in which God is the subject, He thinks of man in terms of His fidelity to and lovingkindness for man, and often mention is made of God's covenanted fidelity and love (Pss. 9:13; 77 [78]:39; 97 [98]:3; 104 [105]:8, 42; 105 [106]:45; 110 [111]:5)."² The second verb בָּקַע ("to visit") is literally an "action that produces a great change in the position of a subordinate either for good or for ill."³ Although these two verbs are also paired

¹Ibid. See D. Wayne Knife's "Psalm 89 and the Ancient Near East" (Unpublished Th. D. dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, 1973) for an excellent discussion of the use of Ps. 89 in the context of the Davidic Covenant.

²Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 55.

³TWOT, s.v. "בָּקַע (*pāqad*)," by Victor P. Hamilton, 2:731. See also Henry Snyder Gehman, "Ἐπισκέπωμα . . . in the Septuagint in Relation to בָּקַע and Other Hebrew Roots," Vetus Testamentum 22:2 (April, 1972):197-207 and J. Scharbert, "Das Verbum PQD in der Theologie des Alten Testaments," Biblische Zeitschrift 4:2 (July, 1960): 207-227.

together in Jeremiah 14:10 and 15:5 in a context of judgment and vengeance, the meaning of these verbs also fits easily into a dominion context like Psalm 8:5--זכר, in the sense of a covenant relationship between God (the divine king) and man (the viceregent); פקד, in the sense of a positional change for man (from creature to king of creation).

A Context of Man's Frailty

Having observed the moon and stars, David responded in verse 5. This response points to the frailty of man in several ways.

First, the interrogative particle (מד) is poetically in parallel with the exclamatory particle (מה) of verse 2. As Anderson wrote, "in this rhetorical question, 'what' (*māh*) forms an antithesis to 'how' (*māh*) in verse 1 [2], and the point of contrast is the majesty and power of God, and the relative littleness of man."¹

Second, one of the nouns used by David for man would point towards man's frailty. This noun, אָנָשׁ, has as its basic meaning "man" in the sense of "mankind."² The verbal root is uncertain: it might be *'ānash* ("to be weak, sick") with emphasis on man's weakness, insignificance or else it might be *'ns* ("sociality").³ While it is true that the word

¹A. A. Anderson, The Book of Psalms, Vol. 1, P. 102.

²TWOT, s.v. "אָנָשׁ (*'nsh*)," by Thomas E. McComiskey, 1:59.

³Ibid.

frequently is used in the Bible emphasizing man's frailty and humanness (as here in Psalm 8:5), this concept may derive more from the theological framework in which the ancient Hebrews viewed mankind and not necessarily from an inherent root meaning.¹ Of course, the creatureliness, frailty, and danger of man is often emphasized in the Old Testament's use of שָׁנָא (Psalm 103:15; Job 7:1; and here in Psalm 8:5) but that is determined by the context. However, David employed such a context in Psalm 8, therefore allowing שָׁנָא to emphasize man's frailty.

The nouns used in parallel with שָׁנָא have been subject to much interpretation.² Attempts have been made to connect מִן־בְּנֵי־אָדָם of Psalm 8:5 with the Gospels "Son of Man," claiming that David referred to the Messiah in Psalm 8. This connection seems unjustified. The literary device is synonymous parallelism, with no intended interplay between "mankind" and "Messiah, Son of Man."³ However, the New Testament always quoted Psalm 8 Christologically, probably because of that מִן־בְּנֵי־אָדָם reference (Matthew 21:16; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Ephesians 1:22; Hebrews 2:5-8). How this

¹Ibid.

²See Ransom Marlow's summary article on the whole rash of "Son of Man" interpretations: "The Son of Man in Recent Journal Literature," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 28:1 (January, 1966):20-30.

³"No distinction should be made by the interpreter between man and son of man in the psalm, because they are a clear example of the very common synonymous parallelism in Hebrew poetry." Homer A. Kent, Jr., The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), p. 53.

could be done will be discussed in Part II of this study, under the theology of Psalm 8 in the New Testament. Suffice it to note at this point that David meant nothing more than man in general in Psalm 8. The usage of מְדַבֵּרֵינוּ in verse 5 is simply another reference to mankind, in a context of frailty.¹ David meant nothing more.

The Paradox

David portrayed the paradox: man has been given dominion, yet he is feeble, frail, and cannot exercise the dominion given to him. Yet even in this, God was given glory. First, David used terms of inferiority when speaking of mankind. God is infinitely superior to man. Second, David responded in cringing awe at the extent of dominion given to feeble man: "I have been granted dominion over everything, even those awesome heavenly bodies?!" This dumbfounded awe is evident in the use David makes of מָה to begin his questions in verse 5: " מָה is often used in questions to which the answer little, or nothing, is expected and it thus becomes equivalent to a rhetorical negative . . . eg. Ps. 8:5."² So, when David asked "what is man [that he, frail creature, should be granted dominion]?", David expected the

¹Hebrews 2 may in a round-about way give a clue as to why Psalm 8 does not figure in the New Testament Son of Man traditions. The Gospels stress the power of the Son of Man, something which Daniel 7:13-14 allows. Hebrews 2 stresses man's weakness and inferiority, something which Psalm 8:5 stresses.

²BDB, p. 553.

answer: "man is little, he is nothing."

The frailty of man, God's viceregent, led David to respond with those rhetorical negative questions. He was truly amazed at the fact of man's God-given dominion, when confronted with the magnificent moon and stars. And in this response of dumb-founded, cringing awe, God was glorified.

8:6-9 YHWH's Glory Displayed in Man's Kingship

Although verses 4 and 5 were in a setting of the dominion of man, the overall context was of frailty. This, of course, is a paradox which David so acknowledged in the negative rhetorical questions. In verses 6 through 9, however, this is not the case. David wrote the third way God's glory is displayed in all the earth is by man's kingship. No frailty is present in this glowing description of man, the king.

Man, in God's Image, Has Dominion

David's first assertion in verse 6 is astounding: man has been made "a little lower (טַעַל) than God (אֱלֹהִים)"! Yet, since this whole section contains language highly reminiscent of the original dominion mandate of Genesis 1:26-28, such an assertion is not quite so astounding. In fact, in a dominion context, such an assertion might have been expected.

This assertion has been questioned as to whom man is compared, God or divine beings/angels? The word אֱלֹהִים can mean either.

No clue is given by the comparative adverb מְעַלְמָ , since it can make a comparison of place (2 Samuel 16:1), time (Job 10:20), or degree (Exodus 23:30).¹ The Septuagint interpreted that adverb as denoting time, and translated it Βραχύ τι .² It also clearly interpreted אֱלֹהִים as angels, since it translated it ἀγγέλους . Several of the versions are in total agreement with interpreting it as angels (Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate).

A strong argument against the translation "God" is that the psalm is addressed to YHWH, and אֱלֹהִים is only used once, here, in Psalm 8. If "God" is meant here, then why is not YHWH used?³

The answer to all of the above might be the context of Psalm 8 as a poetic restatement of Genesis 1:26-28. Could not אֱלֹהִים have been used purposely by David as a conscious reference to Genesis 1:26-28, so that "a little lower than Elohim" is David's way of saying "in the image of Elohim?"⁴ And this phraseology has vast implications for

¹BDB, p. 590.

²BAGD, p. 147. This is most curious, indeed, since the context seems to be making a comparison of degree and not of time.

³Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology trans. D. M. G. Stalker (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1962), I, p. 45.

⁴David Kenneth Jobling, "'And Have Dominion . . .' The Interpretation of Old Testament Texts Concerning Man's Rule Over the Creation" (Unpublished Th. D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary [New York], 1972), p. 35. Hereinafter called "Dominion."

man's dominion, if it is what David meant.

In Genesis 1:26, God's statement is, "Let us make man in our image (עִלְמוֹתֵינוּ), according to our likeness (תְּדוּמָתֵנוּ)." These two Hebrew words were used in this context in parallel and probably are to be seen as near synonyms.¹ Exactly what do these nearly synonymous words connote?

There seems to be a general consensus on the part of writers that תְּדוּמָתֵנוּ is a more general term and less concrete than עִלְמוֹתֵנוּ.

The second important word *demut* apart from the Genesis texts has a greater flexibility than *selem*. It is used in a concrete sense almost synonymously with *selem*, and in an abstract sense of resemblance. Although the abstract quality is there, *demut* is used uniformly in connection with a tangible or visual reproduction of something else. So again as with *selem*, the usage of *demut* urges us very strongly in the direction of a physical likeness.²

"*selem* is a rather concrete term which is normally used in the OT to refer to a model or idol of something and always has to do with a similarity in physical appearance; *Demut* is a more abstract term with a broader range of usage, but it too is normally used in connection with visual similarities."³

¹For an excellent shorter treatment of the question of the image of God and man's dominion, see W. Merwin Forbes, "Theological and Ethical Issues Pertaining to Life and Death," (Th. D. dissertation, Grace Theological Seminary, 1981), pp. 17-33; J. A. Clines, "The Image of God in Man," Tyndale Bulletin 19 (1968), pp. 95-99; TDOT, "תְּדוּמָתֵנוּ," by H. D. Preuss, 3:250-257.

²John Piper, "The Image of God: An Approach from Biblical and Systematic Theology," Studia et Biblica Theologica 1 (March, 1971), p. 16.

³J. Maxwell Miller, "In the 'Image' and 'Likeness' of God" Journal of Biblical Literature 91:3 (September, 1972), pp. 291, 293.

Eichrodt also saw a concreteness in the terms, using the expression "plastic representation" and concluding man's outward form is a copy of God's.¹ Certainly there is a concreteness in these terms, but exactly how is this concreteness to be understood?

Edmond Jacob has advanced a plausible explanation.

The ancient orient shows us with ever increasing clarity that the purpose and function of an image consists in representing someone. An image, that is to say a statue of a god, is the real presence of this god; prayers are addressed to it and its destruction is equivalent to the destruction of the life of the one it represents. The king had his image set up in the remote provinces of his empire which he could not visit in person.²

Jacob's explanation is backed by considerable historical evidence which shows ancient Near Eastern kings erecting steles and statues of themselves. This was done to leave a visible reminder of the king to demonstrate his continued authority and dominion in that location. As far back as Thut-mose III (1490-1436 B.C.) and his first campaign at Megiddo, there is evidence of this practice.³

¹Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, II, p. 122.

²Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1958), p. 167. This same concept has been articulated by Clines, "The Image of God in Man," p. 97.

³James B. Pritchard, ed., Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), I, p. 235. Further examples of ANE kings erecting images as symbols of their dominion over a distant land are given in this same volume: Shamshi-Adad I (ca. 1726-1694 B.C.), p. 274; Ashur-nasirpal II (883-859 B.C.) p. 276; Shalmaneser III (868-824 B.C.), p. 277.

Jacob's proposition seems to be valid. He suggested that at least part of the understanding of דָּבָר of Genesis 1:26 should be drawn from its cultural milieu (Assyrian *salmu*). Based on such an understanding, Moses meant that man, in God's image, is the representative of God, his Creator. Man derived his capacity as representative from God who created him, placed him, and assigned this role to him. Whereas, in the ancient Near East this role was seen as filled by a particular king,¹ the notion of Genesis 1:26-28 (and Psalm 8 by implication), is that "the representative function which the term image implies is not exercised by a particular person, the king for example, but by man who is, according to a happy expression, the 'vizier.'"² Man, in God's image, is God's viceregent upon the earth.

One caution needs to be sounded, however: it is unlikely that the whole meaning of the image of God is meant to be comprehended in dominion. Dominion is an important corollary to the imago Dei, but it is not the sole meaning. The syntax of Genesis 1:26 (a cohortative followed by a simple waw and a jussive) points to dominion as a consequence of the image.³ Genesis 1:26 may well be rendered:

¹See below section, "Man: Crowned to Rule."

²Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, p. 168.

³A cohortative linked to an imperative or jussive by a simple waw expresses intention or intended consequence. See Ronald J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 34. Man was created with a consequence in mind, i.e. dominion.

"Let us make man in our image . . . with the consequence that he may rule."

It is the conviction of this writer that David consciously referred to Genesis 1:26-28 when he wrote man is "a little lower than Elohim." David was saying man is "in the image of Elohim" and, as a consequence, has dominion over the earth, in God's stead.¹

Man: Crowned to Rule

In this section, David continues to describe man in royal terminology. Man, as considered by God, is a regal being.

First David used verbs which connote royalty. In "You have crowned him (תִּצְטַרְתֶּם־הוֹ),"² the word for crowning implies power to rule,² and as such the royal terminology is inescapable. "You have caused him to rule (תִּשְׁיֵלְהוֹ)"³ is likewise a term of dominion.³

Second, that with which man is crowned in verse 6 is described in regal terms: "glory (כְּבוֹד) and honor (תְּהִלָּה)." As Anderson wrote, "glory and honor are frequent royal attributes."⁴ These words were carefully chosen by David so as to not imply that man's glory and honor were

¹This is Jobling's conclusion in "Dominion," p. 35.

²Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 61.

³TWOT, s.v. "מָשַׁל (māshal)," by Robert D. Culver, 1:534-535.

⁴Anderson, The Book of Psalms, I, p. 103.

intrinsically the same as God's: note that the word for God's majesty, glory in verse 2 is a different one (הוֹד). Yet, man is crowned with an authoritative glory and honor, derivative, of course, from God's.¹ "Whereas all creation naturally reflects the glory of God, man as the lord of creation is the greatest glory of God."² This is seen in Genesis and the fact that man was created last, as if to say man is God's greatest work. This is also seen in the usage of כְּבוֹד. "The simple meaning of the word in context implies that the psalmist is using כְּבוֹד in a sense of dignity, honor, renown, resulting from or manifested in his lordship over the earth."³

Third, the apt description "all things under his feet" is kingly language of the victor. It is taken from the act of treading down enemies in battle, from putting the feet on the necks of captives (see also Psalm 18:38; 110:1). This also seems to read like a paraphrase of הִדָּן in Genesis 1:26, 28, which means primarily "to tread (under foot)."⁴

Such royal terminology, as used by David, must be seen in its cultural setting. Kingship was ascribed to man in Psalm 8. How did David's culture understand kingship?

¹Man can never share in God's intrinsic glory. However, man shares in God's authoritative glory by virtue of his dominion.

²Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 106.

³Ibid., p. 107.

⁴TWOT, s.v. "הִדָּן (rāda)," by William White, 2:833.

Kapelrud was correct in this assertion: "it would actually be sensational if kingship in Israel meant something completely different from kingship in other countries in the Ancient Near East."¹ Yet, Israel had certain religious differences in their concept of kingship: "the monarchy . . . never occupied a position comparable to that of the divine kingship elsewhere in the Fertile Crescent."² What, then, was the king's relationship to God in ancient Israel?

YHWH, the lord of the whole earth, delegates his dominion to his son, the king, who is his representative on earth; 'the king is not YHWH's agent or vice-regent.' The king is not only the representative of the people before YHWH but also YHWH's representative before the people; Yahweh commissions his anointed to act on his behalf and to execute his purposes.³

By ascribing royalty to man, David was saying man is God's representative on earth. This was implied in his connection with the image of God and dominion in verse 6 ("a little lower than Elohim").⁴ But now, by using royal terminology drawn from a culture which would understand its significance, David stated that man was God's crowned agent, representative, viceregent on earth.

¹A. S. Kapelrud, "King David and the Sons of Saul," The Sacral Kingship, Supplements to NVMEN 4 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1959), p. 294.

²E. O. James, "The Sacred Kingship and the Priesthood," The Sacral Kingship, p. 67.

³Bertil Albrektson, History and the Gods, Coniectanea Biblica 2 (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1967), p. 51. For an excellent discussion on the ANE king as the divine representative on earth, see Albrektson's entire chapter, pp. 43-52.

⁴See the above discussion in the section "Man, in God's Image, Has Dominion."

David asserted that man is king. However, as God's steward on earth, man the king is to rule with benevolence, responsibility, and care. Rapacious despotism is condemned throughout all the Bible.¹ Genesis 3 created the problem of arrogance and tyranny in man's rule of the earth. But, this does not negate his dominion, only mars it. "If man has been appointed king of the earth, this implies an appreciation of the earth as his kingdom, and it belongs further to the dignity of his calling, that he, the king, should gain right relationship to his kingdom."²

Man's Extent of Rule

The extent of man's dominion, as cited by David, is awesome. He chose two ways of describing this awesome extent of man's rule: by a general statement (verse 7) and a specific statement (verses 8 and 9).

The general statement describing the extent of man's dominion is given in two ways. Man rules "over the works (עֲשֵׂוֹתַי) of Thy hands;" God has "placed all (כָּל) under his [man's] feet."

Regarding this general statement, some have held that it is unlimited in itself but limited by the specific record

¹James Limburg, "What Does It Mean to 'Have Dominion over the Earth?'" , Dialog, 10:3 (Summer 1971), p. 223.

²Erich Sauer, The King of the Earth, trans. Michael Bolister (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962), p. 93.

of verses 8 and 9.¹ In other words, the "all" (כָּל) of verse 7 does not actually describe the extent of man's dominion. And in a sense, this is true, for the only one who has "all dominion" is God Himself. Man's dominion is but derived from God.

However, that which limits the extent of dominion is not simply the list of verses 8 and 9. This can be proved from the word David used in describing "the works (מַעֲשֵׂי)" of God's hands over which man rules. This is the same word used in verse 4 when in parallel with the moon and stars. In fact, it was the point of the above section on verses 4 and 5 ("YHWH's Glory Displayed in Man's Frailty") that man's dominion over the moon and stars prompted a response of awe and wonderment. So, a key to the extent of man's rule is given in the use of the word מַעֲשֵׂי in verses 4 and 7. It is the general statement of man's extent of rule: he rules over the moon, stars, and the earth.

David followed this general statement with a specific listing of those things on earth over which man rules. He gave basically a list of the creatures in each of earth's three spheres of life: land, air and sea. In a very real sense, to the ancient mind, there was nothing else. Man's extent of rule is all-pervasive: on earth's land, air and sea as well as the universe's heavenly bodies. "With noble

¹Franz Delitzsch, A Commentary on the Book of Psalms, trans. David Eaton and James E. Duguid (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1883), I, p. 198.

pride the poet surveys this royal domain of man,"¹ and it is awesome!

Conclusion

In this section of Psalm 8, it was David's intent to show that God's glory is displayed in Man's kingship. That man is king has been proven above. But how this displays God's glory is an understandable question.

For God to be able to create such a creature as man is display enough of His majestic glory. Man, the creature, given authority and dominion as man, the king, is an awesome display of the majesty of God. This quotation, given earlier, merits restatement in this context.

It also is now perfectly obvious that the author's object was not to dwell primarily on the dignity of man but on this dignity in so far as it was one of the most striking demonstrations that can ever be offered of the greatness of our God. The God who can create such a being as man is, must be superlatively great.²

Leupold is correct, but perhaps he missed the point a bit by his emphasis. This was not David's sole object, at least not in this section.

Rather, David's main thought was the fact that man, the noblest and highest of all creatures, is yet not God. In fact, even the king of the creatures must stand before an infinite chasm between him and God. If the king, whose

¹Ibid.

²Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms, p. 105.

greatness was seen in verses 6 through 9, is infinitely inferior to God, how must his domain fare? Must they not be even more inferior? Truly, this is a majestic God who is unspeakably superior to even the ruler of earth, moon and stars! In a very real sense, then, the kingship of man truly does display the glory of YHWH.

8:10 YHWH's Glory: Refrain

David returned to his theme of YHWH's glory by repeating the refrain. As he began in verse 2, so he ended in verse 10.

As noted in the previous discussion, central to this refrain is the ascription of glory, majesty to the name (or character) of YHWH. This glory was seen by David as manifested in all the earth. David demonstrated that YHWH's glory is displayed in three ways on the earth: His greatness (vv. 2b-3), man's frailty (vv. 4-5), and man's kingship (vv. 6-9). In a very real sense, all the earth truly does witness the glory of YHWH. David's praise for God's glory resounds at the beginning of Psalm 8 and re-echoes at the end.

PART II
THE THEOLOGY OF PSALM 8

CHAPTER I

PSALM 8 IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

This chapter will investigate the place and meaning of Psalm 8 in the Old Testament. As such, it will present the theological implications of the psalm itself along with the parallel and related passages. In so doing, it will seek to answer whether the dominion mandate is yet valid in this post-Fall world.

The Psalm Itself

In the previous exegesis of Psalm 8, four major thoughts emerged: God is majestic and glorious; man, in and of himself, is a frail creature; God crowned man as king of creation, to rule as His viceregent; man, in fact, does rule. These major theological themes might be stated more succinctly: God the Creator; man the creature; God and man; man and the world. This section will be subdivided into those themes.

God the Creator

The whole of Jewish theology on God is in a way contained in the second verse of the psalm. YHWH, whose name is great, whose glory the universe proclaims, who is Lord (יְהוָה) of all, is the center of Jewish theology.

That this magnificent and transcendent Person is sole God and Lord of the universe by right of creation is the cornerstone of Old Testament theology.¹ Yet, this all-glorious, transcendent YHWH is knowable because He has made Himself known through revelation to the descendants of Abraham. He is "our Lord (אֲדֹנָיִךָ).

By virtue of the fact that God created the universe, He is the sovereign King of the universe. God's claim to absolute sovereignty over creation is vested in the fact that He is Creator. It is then most appropriate for a psalm which speaks of man's God-appointed dominion to begin with an assertion of YHWH's glory and praise for His creation. God can do whatever He wills as Creator, and Psalm 8 teaches He has willed dominion to man.

Man the Creature

When David referred to man in verses 4 and 5, he spoke in terms of creaturely weakness and frailty. Man is small, inferior, and dependent as a creature. He is insignificant, in and of himself.

Such a point ought to be remembered by those who idyllically ponder the question of David, "what is man?" All too often, Psalm 8 is noted for this anthropological question and then forgotten in the ensuing discourse.²

¹Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 82.

²For a good example of this, see Mays, "'What is Man?' Reflections on Psalm 8." There he begins well, but falters into a quasiphilosophic discourse.

David, in Psalm 8:4-5, sees man as the creature that he is. This is the basis for all else he says about man.

God and Man

God is undisputed Creator and Sovereign, free to do as He wills. Man is a creature, frail and weak. Yet, God has ordained that frail man should rule as His agent. Man's dominion is the direct correlate of his relation to God.

Jobling has made an astute statement about man's relationship to God and dominion.

The great contribution of Psalm 8 to our understanding of man's dominion is in its stress on the counterpoint between man's smallness and greatness, and on his total dependence on God's grace. In himself nothing, he has been made lord of all. That man's position in the world is due to God's grace is indeed clear in Gen. 1, but the counterpoint is lacking there, as well as the sense of wonder. Gen. 1 makes its stately progress through the creation of the heavenly bodies without a pause. It is untroubled in the belief that man is the pinnacle of creation. But when the psalmist thinks of sun, moon, and stars, he stops. Here, surely is the greatest of God's works. That little man is, after all, the greatest, is a marvel.¹

As Jobling has written, that certainly is a marvel!

So, David exposes the true nature of man: small, inferior, and dependent as a creature, but great, superior, and lord among the creatures on earth and creation of the heavens. "In himself nothing, he has been made lord of all."²

¹Jobling, "Dominion," p. 36.

²Ibid.

Man and the World

Does man actually have dominion in this post-Fall world? This question will be handled in a special section later in this chapter.¹ However, Psalm 8 makes its own contribution to the subject and this should be appropriately noted in this section on the theology of Psalm 8.

Throughout the psalm, the language used is that of asserting man's dominion; it simply assumes that man rules. In fact, the point of the entire psalm is that David is awestruck by the extent to which frail man has been given dominion. Is it the teaching of Psalm 8 that the dominion mandate of Genesis 1:26-28 is still operative after Genesis 3 and the Fall? The answer is unquestionably affirmative.

Parallel and Related Passages

Crucial to an understanding of the theology of Psalm 8 is at least a cursory look at parallel and related passages in the Old Testament. More than a passing glance must be taken at Genesis 1:26-28, since it is the thesis of this monograph that Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of the dominion mandate. This is the parallel passage, and will be treated in greater depth than the related passages.

Genesis 1:26-28

This writer agrees with Jobling who wrote that the theological relationship between Psalm 8 and Genesis 1:26-28 approaches the level where Psalm 8 might be seen "even

¹"The Validity of Man's Dominion After the Fall."

as a kind of commentary"¹ on Genesis 1:26-28. What is the essence of Genesis 1:26-28, then, if it shares such a special relationship to Psalm 8?

First, the verbs used (קָדַח and שָׁבַח) might perhaps suggest forcefulness. The verb from שָׁבַח means "to subdue, bring into bondage,"² while its Aramaic cognate means to tread down, beat, or make a path.³ The term is used fourteen times in the Old Testament, nine of which are in contexts dealing with military settings, taking captives, and resettling territories. The second verb, קָדַח, means "to have dominion, to rule, to dominate."⁴ Out of twenty-four usages in the Old Testament, twenty-two have to do with personal relationships, sixteen of which are military-kingly-governmental affairs.

These two verbs are used in parallel only in Genesis 1:28, where they form a hendiadys.⁵ A paraphrase might read, "bring it under control, that is to say, make it your dominion and rule it."⁶ The viceregent is to take control and rule his domain. However, whatever man does to carry out

¹Jobling, "Dominion," p. 33.

²BDB, p. 461. ³Ibid. ⁴Ibid., pp. 20-21.

⁵A single concept, expressed by two words, linked with the conjunction. Both verbs may be used interchangeably, as seen where קָדַח stands alone to make the point in Gen. 1:26, and is then used in the parallelism of 1:28 to make the same point.

⁶Forbes, "Theological and Ethical Issues Pertaining to Life and Death," p. 167.

his rule may be understood as dominion, whether that be care or subjugation. Therefore, the verbs need not demand forcefulness at all time in dominion. Man, as king, can find emphasis on the care, nurture, formative activity of his domain. Certainly Genesis 2:15 would substantiate this.

A second point made in Genesis 1:26-28 is the role the image of God has in man's dominion. As already demonstrated above,¹ the imago Dei denotes regality. Man has dominion because he is made in the image and likeness of God.

Third, the object of man's rule is given in Genesis 1. Although the mandate allows the thought to move beyond the animal world (the spheres of sea, sky, and land were perhaps all-encompassing in the ANE; also, the process described in Genesis 2:15 allows for a larger scope), the stated object of man's rule in Genesis 1:26-28 is the earth alone.

Fourth, the context of God's blessing is that in which the dominion mandate is given. It is in direct conjunction, as well, with the ongoing historical process to "be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth." "Man subdues the earth, it seems then, as he fills it; the more men, the more complete the subjugation."² The stress is on the striving forward, the looking to the future. Again, this

¹See the sub-section "Man, In God's Image, Has Dominion" in the exegesis of Part I.

²Jobling, "Dominion," p. 26.

would indicate that the forcefulness of the verbs in Genesis 1:28 may be toned down to allow for man's emphasis on a future-looking formative activity.

Of these points, several things may be noted in relationship to Psalm 8. The activity connoted in Genesis 1 is one of future-looking care and nurture while that of Psalm 8 merely suggests the present activity of ruling and dominion. Before the Fall, man was to look to the future and simply care for his domain; after the Fall, man was unable to fulfill this mandate as was intended.

Hengstenberg makes a valid point when discussing the difference between the concept of dominion before the Fall and that of dominion after the Fall.

Before that event, the obedience of all creatures toward the appointed vicegerent of God, was a spontaneous one; after it, his subjects revolted against him, as he against his Lord. He must maintain against them, as against the resisting earth, a hard conflict, must on all hands employ art and cunning and though, on the whole, he remains conqueror in this warfare, yet, in particulars, he has to suffer many defeats.¹

It seems that man rules in the sense an oft-scarred lord rules.

Another difference between Genesis 1:26-28 and Psalm 8 is the object over which man rules. Genesis 1 teaches that man's domain is simply on "the earth" while Psalm 8 includes the moon and stars in the context of man's rule. Psalm 8 should not be seen as contradictory, but simply as the divine commentary on the actual extent of man's

¹E. W. Hengstenberg, The Book of Psalms, Vol. I, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1851), p. 136.

rule.¹ It should be accepted.

Besides the obvious parallel in discussion of dominion, another agreement between Genesis 1 and Psalm 8 is the fact that dominion is the consequence of the imago Dei. This is seen in Genesis 1:26 ("Let us make man in our image [lit. - as our representative] and let them rule"). This is also seen in Psalm 8:6 ("made him a little lower than Elohim [lit. - in Elohim's image, as His representative]"). This was discussed in detail in the exegesis of Psalm 8:6 in Part I.

Psalm 8 is the divine commentary on the original dominion mandate given to Adam. It is the poetic restatement paralleling Genesis 1 in many regards, expanding it in others. As earlier quoted, Jobling's statement has great relevance in this context of Psalm 8 and its relationship to Genesis 1.

The great contribution of Psalm 8 to our understanding of man's dominion is in its stress on the counterpoint between man's smallness and greatness, and on his total dependence on God's grace. In himself nothing, he has been made lord of all. That man's position in the world is due to God's grace is indeed clear in Gen. 1, but the counterpoint is lacking there, as well as the sense of wonder. Gen. 1 makes its stately progress through the creation of the heavenly bodies without a pause. It is untroubled in the belief that man is the pinnacle of creation. But when the psalmist thinks of

¹Whether or not one holds that Psalm 8 and its dominion statements are valid in this post-Fall world does not matter here. Psalm 8 claims that man's rule extends to the heavenly bodies, and this should be allowed to stand. Whether this dominion is yet valid, or was invalidated by the Fall, does not matter in this divine commentary.

of sun, moon, and stars, he stops. Here, surely is the greatest of God's works. That little man is, after all, the greatest, is a marvel.¹

Genesis 9:1-7

Although not explicitly mentioned in Psalm 8, Genesis 9:1-7 is nevertheless related to it. The two must be seen in their shared relationship to Genesis 1:26-28.

Following the universal flood, a similar mandate was given to Noah as was given to Adam. Both mandates refer to man in God's image and to man's dominion. However there are some changes.

First, Genesis 9:1-7 includes neither כַּבֵּשׁ nor יִרְאוּ וְיִפְּדוּ from Genesis 1:26-28. Instead, it mentions the animals' "fear and dread" of man. However, dominion and fear are not to be understood as in contrast to one another. Rather the concepts are similar, although admittedly viewed from different perspectives. Adam's mandate was given before the Fall, emphasizing the future-looking responsibility of care and formative activity. Noah's mandate was given after the Fall, emphasizing the added dimension of resistance to the dominion of man. But both mandates deal with the consequences of man being in God's image (i.e. dominion) and that care for creation which has been given to man.

Second, the matter of vengeance and murder is raised in Genesis 9:1-7, when it was never mentioned in Genesis 1:26-28. Again, the different perspectives must be understood

¹Jobling, "Dominion," p. 36.

since Adam's mandate was given before the entrance of sin while Noah's mandate needed to take into consideration the effects of rebellion. However, both mandates were given to the only living humans who needed to understand their place in God's plan for creation.

With these admitted differences, however, Genesis 9:1-7 is to be seen as a restatement of Genesis 1:26-28. This is how Genesis 9:1-7 relates to Psalm 8. Both are restatements of the dominion mandate given to Adam in Genesis 1:26-28. Both Genesis 9:1-7 and Psalm 8 depict man in relationship to God, man, and creation. So, although no explicit reference to Genesis 9:1-7 is made in Psalm 8, they nonetheless are clearly related as restatements of the dominion mandate after the Fall.

Psalm 19

The relationship between Psalm 8 and 19 is based upon their similar theme of praise for God's creative glory. "Many think of the psalms as parts of a greater poem singing the glory of God in the heavens by day (Ps. 18 [19a]) and by night (Ps. 8)."¹

From one point of view, Psalms 8 and 19 are simple "nature psalms."² However, they both are primarily unique hymns of praise. Westermann wrote: "The creation Psalms

¹Louis, Psalm VIII, p. 99.

²Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms, p. 100.

are the only group of Psalms of praise in the Psalter in which one motif developed into an independent Psalm."¹ He included both Psalm 8 and 19 in this category.

Mowinckel saw another relationship between these two psalms. He saw them both as evolved poems with a distinctively mixed style; that is, both contain different styles within them and both have internal evidence of being edited/evolved into one single poem.²

The chief difference between Psalm 8 and 19, however, lies in the reason for praise in Psalm 8. YHWH is praised because of the glory of His name (or character) in all the earth as it is displayed in three ways.³ The creation motif is used in Psalm 8 only as it heightens David's wonderment at the extent of man's dominion: it is over even the moon and stars, which give awesome evidence of God's greatness.

Psalm 143 [144]:3 and Job 7:17

In Psalm 143 [144]:3 and Job 7:17, is found the same question asked about man as David asked in Psalm 8:5. The difference is in the answer given to the question.

¹Claus Westermann, The Praise of God in the Psalms, trans. Keith R. Crum (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1965), p. 139.

²Sigmund Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962) I, pp. 96-97.

³These three ways God's glory is displayed: in His greatness; in man's frailty; in man's kingship. See the exegesis contained in Part I.

Psalm 143 [144]:3 asks, "YHWH, what is man that Thou dost take knowledge of him, or the son of man, that Thou dost think of Him?" The reply is radically different from Psalm 8: "man is like a mere breath; his days are like a passing shadow." The Job 7:17 reference is not in the form of a question, but the language is almost identical. (Some even see Job's reference as a biting parody of Psalm 8: 5-6.¹)

What should be thought of all this? Do Psalm 143 [144]:3 and Job 7:17 demonstrate that the dominion mandate is invalid in this post-Fall world? Why would the answers given, differ so much? Louis correctly wrote:

Although the answers are different, nevertheless, they do not exclude one another. Ps. 8 refers to the weakness of man in the first strophe, but it does not stress his weakness. The passages just mentioned above do not stress the greatness of man, but they do not deny it. The context--this is especially true in the case of Job--makes clear which of the qualities of man is under consideration, his greatness as the superior creature or his inferiority as a mere creature. As was noted in the theology above, man is the greatest of the little things of God. His grandeur is never absolute. These passages help to make plain the true state of man and keep the enthusiasm of the poet of Ps. 8 from drawing an idealistic picture of man.²

Once again, the uniqueness of Psalm 8 and its contribution to anthropology is seen. Most contexts emphasize either man in his strength and dominion (Genesis 1:26-28) or man in his weakness and frailty (Psalm 143 [144]:3; Job 7:17). But Psalm 8 sets up a tension, a counterpoint

¹Kirkpatrick, The Book of Psalms, pp. 39-40.

²Louis, Psalm VIII, pp. 100-101.

between man's frailty and dominion. David never solved this paradox in Psalm 8, he merely praised YHWH. He came to the paradox, stated the problem, then did all that he could do: leave it with God, and praise Him.

The Validity of Man's Dominion After the Fall

Perhaps the reader might wonder why this issue is buried so deep in this monograph. Suffice it to say, that it was this writer's intention to allow at least the Old Testament to speak for itself before any conclusions be presented. It is then most appropriate that this often sensitive issue be discussed at this point.

Leupold is representative of those who reject the notion of man's dominion after Adam's disobedience.¹ He sees Psalm 8 as a remembrance of what once belonged to man, but was forfeited by the entrance of sin.

The reference [Ps. 8:6] is obviously to the primordial man, the first Adam before the fall, in the fullness of his powers and attributes, the very reflection of the majesty of the Almighty, who had patterned man after Himself . . . Nowhere is man's dignity asserted more clearly and boldly than in this passage.²

This is a fairly common position, adopted by many.³ They usually see man's dominion as forfeited completely by Adam with the Fall, and regained just as completely in the Second

¹Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms, p. 104.

²Ibid.

³Other well-known men who held this view are Delitzsch, A Commentary on the Book of Psalms, I, p. 201 and Alexander, The Psalms, p. 40.

Adam, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 2:8-9 is given as proof.¹

Many others hold that the dominion mandate of Genesis 1:26-28 is valid despite the entrance of sin and has not been forfeited.

Man is an earthly king, with a territory and subjects. This dominion, given him at creation, has never been entirely lost.²

It is the thesis of this monograph that Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of Genesis 1:26-28 and, as such, is in agreement with this position that dominion has not been forfeited.

The dominion mandate is still valid in this post-Fall world. First, the language of Psalm 8 is hardly that of reminiscence over what once was man's, but now is gone. Rather, it is confident language of what now belongs to man. If this is stripped away, by saying that Psalm 8 merely reflects on man's forfeited dominion, then what does that do to the overall theme of wonderment in David's words? What is amazing and awesome about what man no longer has? Second, what would happen to the related mandate of reproduction/monogamy? Since monogamy is presented as an eternal principle before and after the Fall (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:22-33), so is the dominion of man (Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 8).

¹See the next chapter and its crucial, but brief, explanation of the Hebrews 2 citation of Psalm 8.

²The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, ed. Francis D. Nichol. 7 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), III, p. 649. Others who hold this view are Hengstenberg, The Book of Psalms, I, p. 136; and Perowne, The Book of Psalms, p. 152.

Having said all of that, however, several things must be noted. Although the intrusion of sin and depravity does not obviate the dominion of man, it has marred man's dominion. "Whereas, in the pre-fall context the entire creation was in harmony with itself and its Creator, now it is out of harmony and recalcitrant."¹ As man has rebelled against his Lord, so the earth rebels against its lord. But, Stigers has correctly assessed the relationship between the dominion mandate and the Fall.

That the ability to fulfill the mandate was marred by the fall is no negation of this purpose. Toil was not laid upon man because of the fall, nor because he did not have honorable labor to perform before the fall; rather, now man's work would be performed with frustration, sweat, and weariness, in the midst of the curse of weeds, thorns, and wasting pests and predators. Fallen man must not think he can have the beneficence of an unfallen state in his life after his fall. Labor was to be actually a blessing in the fallen state to lead him to appreciate what he had lost and lead him to God. Whether in the pre-fall or the post-fall state, man was to find labor honorable and beneficent, forming a fixed element in his culture.²

Another note of importance is the relationship of man's dominion to Christ's dominion. The New Testament clearly states that not all things are subjected to man (Hebrews 2:8), but they will be to Christ (Hebrews 2:9; Romans 8:20-21).³ Therefore, Psalm 8 cannot stand alone.

¹Forbes, "Theological and Ethical Issues Pertaining to Life and Death," pp. 170-171.

²Harold G. Stigers, A Commentary on Genesis (Grand Rapids: Zondervan's, 1976), p. 71.

³Again, the next chapter will deal with the crucial interplay between Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2.

It does assert that man's dominion is yet valid, but because of Genesis 3, not all things are subject to man.

Conclusion

Psalm 8 contains four major thoughts: God the Creator, is majestic and glorious; man, the creature, is frail in and of himself; God crowned man as lord of creation; man does rule over the world as God's viceregent. Psalm 8 is vitally related and in parallel to Genesis 1:26-28 as a poetic restatement of that dominion mandate. As such a restatement, it is also related to Genesis 9:1-7. Psalm 143 [144]:3 and Job 7:17 are related passages which ask the same question about man, but they answer in a radically different way: they emphasize man's weakness, compared to the emphasis on man's strength in Psalm 8. The dominion ascribed to man in Psalm 8 is valid in the post-Fall world.

Throughout this chapter, one recurring note was mentioned: the uniqueness of Psalm 8 in the theology of man. All other references to man stress either his frailty and depravity or else his dominion and greatness. Yet Psalm 8 combines both notions in a unique statement on man. Man is both weak and strong, frail yet lord.

The result of the unique statement in Psalm 8 was great amazement in David. He saw that man did not have dominion over all which God said he did; the moon, stars, all earth's creatures, were not "under foot," yet man still ruled! This paradox brought David to the end of his own understanding, and so he simply uttered praise to God. It

was almost as if he gave up trying to comprehend it all, and just allowed God to resolve the question in His own time.

And resolve the paradox, He did. This occurred in the person of the Last Adam, of whom the New Testament reveals as King and Lord of all. The answer to David's paradox is in the New Testament and it is found in Christ.

CHAPTER II

PSALM 8 IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

As the last chapter demonstrated, David portrayed man as frail, yet lord. This paradox left him no answer other than dependence upon God's glory--he could only praise YHWH for wisdom which could solve the seeming paradox. There were no other answers for him.

The New Testament's understanding of Psalm 8 is most interesting in this regard. It provides an answer for those who, like David, are perplexed by man's frailty versus man's dominion.

Since the relationship of Psalm 8 to the New Testament could easily involve a separate monograph, this portion of the study must be severely restricted. It will simply give a summarizing overview of all New Testament references other than Hebrews 2, which merits a separate, though also brief, treatment of its own.

Summary of All New Testament References to Psalm 8 (Except Hebrews 2)

Psalm 8 is directly quoted in Matthew 21:16, 1 Corinthians 15:26, and Ephesians 1:22. Each of these references quote and apply Psalm 8 to Christ in His dominion/dominionizing. Does this prove that Psalm 8 is speaking

solely of Christ, as the Second Adam, and that man's dominion was totally forfeited after the Fall? Since every New Testament quotation of Psalm 8 applies it Christologically, does this mean that David wrote only about Christ and Psalm 8 has nothing to say regarding man's dominion? Does all of this prove man totally lost his God-granted dominion in the garden? The answer to these questions lies in the way Hebrews 2 understands Psalm 8.

Summary of the Quotation of Psalm

8 in Hebrews 2:5-9

There is a great debate over the interpretation of Psalm 8 by the writer of Hebrews. The crucial verse is verse 8: ". . . 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" (NASB). Note the critical third person personal pronouns "him" (αὐτῷ). To whom do they refer: Christ or man in general, Adam in specific?

Two Interpretive Options

One group of exegetes holds that the interpretation of Psalm 8 is Christological throughout, and that the personal pronouns in Hebrews' quotation of Psalm 8 subsequently refer to Christ. The two main arguments given are: the New Testament quotations of Psalm 8, whereby the psalm is always quoted Christologically; and the term "son of man" in Psalm 8:5 as a clue that Christ alone was in mind in Psalm 8. These arguments lead the adherent to the view

that Psalm 8, then, refers entirely to Christ (and, by implication, man does not have dominion).¹

In response to this position, it will be demonstrated below that the New Testament references which quote Psalm 8 and apply the psalm to Christ do so for very good reason. But for now, it can be said that the "son of man" argument is not an appropriate one for two reasons. First, the use of "son of man" in Psalm 8:5 is a simple case of synonymous parallelism by which David meant nothing more than mankind.² Second, Hebrews is quite remote from the Synoptic "Son of Man" tradition, in that the reference to human weakness in Hebrews 2:8 ("we do not yet see all things subjected to him") hardly fits the association of the title with power.³

Another group of exegetes holds that the author of Hebrews had mankind in mind in verse 8, and Jesus is introduced in verse 9 as a key to how the psalm applies to mankind. Kistemaker writes:

The words of Ps. 8:4-6 were understood generally to refer to man; and the author to the Hebrews does

¹As an opponent of this view of Psalm 8, Jobling makes an honest admission. "The christological argument is nevertheless strong, especially when presented with a clear account of the hermeneutical processes involved," p. 209, note 22.

²Kent, Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 53.

³Jobling, "Dominion," p. 208. Also, whenever the Gospels used the title "Son of Man," they used the definite article before both nouns (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου). Interestingly, the Septuagint renders Psalm 8:5 without the articles (υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου).

not intend to alter this interpretation. But realizing the incapability of sinful man, he considers the quotation fulfilled in the sinless humanity of the Son of God. Thus the exegesis of the psalm citation is applied to Jesus, and in him it is directed to man (2:9).¹

Kistemaker sees Hebrews 2 unfold as a kind of exegetical syllogism.² It could be portrayed as follows:

Major Premise: God subjected all things to man and left nothing of that which is created unsubjected to him (vv. 5-8a).

Minor Premise: At the present time all created things are not yet [a prophetic character] subjected to man (v. 8b).

Conclusion: It is Jesus who has fulfilled this prophecy; He as human being has subjected all things to Himself (v. 9).

The combination anthropological-Christological view of Hebrews 2:5-9 gives a clear understanding, then, of the paradox which David acknowledged in Psalm 8 (frail man versus man the king). There is a conflict in human experience between appearance and reality, but it has been resolved in Jesus.³ What the psalmist wrote about man is not borne out by what we see of mankind as a whole. But to the man Jesus, the words of the psalm do apply. The psalm, which has to do with mankind, is therefore fulfilled in a "man" and a

¹Kistemaker, The Psalm Citations in the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 96. This source is invaluable for understanding Psalm 8 and its meaning in Hebrews 2.

²Ibid., see p. 102.

³Jobling, "Dominion," p. 208.

"son of man."¹

There is, however, a long leap from Psalm 8 which celebrated God's majesty and the power to which He raised insignificant man, to Hebrews 2:5-9 which applied that same hymn to a specific individual, the Messiah Jesus Christ. How did this come about? What were the factors which allowed for such an interpretation? This is a hermeneutical problem.

The Question of Hermeneutics

Regarding the hermeneutics of Hebrews, Jobling was correct. "The exegetical technique of introducing Old Testament texts not as referring to Christ, but as finding fulfillment in him, is characteristic of Hebrews."² This technique is also a hint in answering the questions surrounding the Testament quotations of Psalm 8.

The way the New Testament used Psalm 8 may very well be reflective of Hirsch's distinction between meaning and significance.³ Meaning is that which is represented by a text, its grammar, and the author's truth-intentions as indicated by his use of words. Significance merely denotes a relationship between that meaning and another person,

¹The terms used in Psalm 8. Be reminded that these are in synonymous parallelism and so nothing special is to be read into the "son of man." The reference is merely to a man, a member of the human race.

²Jobling, "Dominion," pp. 208-209.

³E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Validity in Interpretation (New Haven: Yale University, 1967), pp. 8-9 especially.

time, situation, or idea.

David's meaning in Psalm 8 was that man was given dominion by God, and the "son of man" phrase refers to mankind. But, Jesus came and added new significance to the psalm in general, and the "son of man" phrase in specific. Hebrews 2:5-9 saw the meaning of Psalm 8 as referring to man's dominion which took on new significance when viewed in light of Christ.¹

Psalm 8 is not directly a Messianic psalm. That was not David's meaning. However, with the Incarnation of Christ, new significance was given to language which allowed for it.² The "son of man" in Psalm 8:5 took on new significance when viewed in light of Christ. Therefore, the New Testament writers in general, and Hebrews 2:5-9 in specific, could validly go to that psalm for Messianic implications.

¹Francis J. Moloney, "The Reinterpretation of Psalm VIII and the Son of Man Debate," New Testament Studies 27:5 (October, 1981), pp. 656-672 demonstrates that the Targum of Psalm 8 applies the psalm to the awaited Messiah. It is interesting that Moloney on p. 660 dates the Targumim of the Psalter to the first century A.D. The rabbis of the first century interpreted Psalm 8 Messianically. Should it be any surprise that every New Testament writer who quoted Psalm 8, each aware of the rabbinic interpretation, similarly interpreted the psalm? With this as a traditional understanding of Psalm 8, and the appearance of Christ Himself, no wonder Psalm 8 was always seen Messianically by the New Testament. The targum of Psalm 8, then, is a helpful hermeneutical bridge between the meaning of Psalm 8 and its significance in Hebrews 2.

²God, the Holy Spirit, allowed for David to use the "son of man" phrase, by which David meant mankind. All the while the Holy Spirit knew the significance which Christ would later add to the phrase.

Time of Fulfillment

The adverb οὐπω ("not yet") is a clear indication in Hebrews 2:8 that the author considered the subjugation of verses 7 and 8a a prophecy of things that would come to pass. When will the creation be dominionized? Verse 8 contains a hint in the verb ὑποταγμένα.

The perfect tense of the participle is indicative of a process involving time. There is a beginning at which time the subjection began. At present there is a continuing, lasting, action until the end will have come in which the subjection is complete.¹

The beginning of dominion occurred in Genesis 1, and it continues in the weakest of ways through man. But the final dominionizing will occur in the future through Jesus Christ.

Specifically, when will it occur? That is answered in verse 5: in "the world to come." And who will cause it to occur? That is answered in Romans 8:19-22: creation anxiously awaits for the "manifestation of the sons of God." When Christ, the Dominionizer, returns to establish His kingdom on earth, then will the complete and final subjugation of creation occur. "The reign and conquest of enemies must needs be, but it lies in the future, at and after the Parousia."²

¹Wilbur B. Wallis, "The Use of Psalms 8 and 110 in 1 Corinthians 15:25-27 and in Hebrews 1 and 2," Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 15:1 (Winter 1972), p. 29.

²Ibid.

Conclusion

The New Testament always quoted Psalm 8 Messianically. Some would therefore interpret David's meaning for Psalm 8 as strictly Messianic, and by implication, teach that man's dominion was forfeited in the Fall. This chapter rejected such a notion.

Rather, this chapter used the crucial quotation of Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2:5-8 as not only the key in understanding the resolution of David's paradox (frail man versus man the king), but also as a hint for answering the questions surrounding the New Testament quotations of Psalm 8.

What the psalmist wrote about man is not borne out by what we see of mankind as a whole (Hebrews 2:5-8). But to the man Jesus, according to Hebrews 2:9, the words of Psalm 8 do apply. The psalm is therefore fulfilled in a man, the man Christ Jesus, who has succeeded where man could not succeed. What David could only say about man in general, Hebrews 2:9 could say about Jesus in particular.

This is not improper hermeneutics. David's meaning for Psalm 8 was given new significance in the light of Christ's incarnation. David's meaning in the psalm was that man was given dominion by God, and the "son of man" phrase is nothing more than a reference to mankind. But, Jesus came and added new significance to the psalm and its "son of man" phrase. The New Testament writers were not afraid to see this new significance, in the light of their familiarity with the targum of Psalm 8. There the rabbis of the first

century A.D. interpreted Psalm 8 Messianically. The targum of Psalm 8 provides a helpful hermeneutical bridge between the meaning of the psalm and its significance in the New Testament quotations.

The time fulfillment, when all creation will ultimately be subjugated, is seen prophetically in the New Testament. The beginning of dominion occurred in Genesis 1, and it continues through men who reign in Christ's stead. But the final and perfect dominionizing will occur in the future through Christ as His return (Romans 8:19-22; Hebrews 2:5). Then, all creation will return to Edenic conditions (following the Millennium) and creation will once again be perfectly submitted to God, under rulership of the man Christ Jesus for all eternity (Revelation 21).

CONCLUSION

It was the thesis of this study that Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of the dominion mandate given to man in Genesis 1:26-28. It has been demonstrated from an exegetical treatment of the psalm that such is truly the case. Although the over-riding theme of Psalm 8 is the glory of YHWH, one crucial sub-theme is man's dominion as an evidence of YHWH's glory.

In the theology of Psalm 8, four major thoughts emerged: God the Creator is majestic and glorious; man the creature is frail, in and of himself; God crowned man as lord of creation; man does indeed rule over the world as God's viceregent. Psalm 8 is vitally related to Genesis 1:26-28 as a poetic restatement of that dominion mandate. This related Psalm 8 to Genesis 9:1-7 in a shared relationship to Genesis 1:26-28.

Psalm 8 makes a unique contribution to anthropology. All other references to man in the Bible seem to stress either his frailty and depravity or else they stress his dominion and greatness. Yet Psalm 8 combines both notions in a unique statement on man: man is both weak and strong, frail yet lord.

The result of this unique statement was great bewilderment in David. He saw that man did not have

dominion over that which God said he did. The moon, stars, all earth's creatures were not "under foot," and yet man was still said to rule! This paradox brought David to the end of his understanding and he simply praised God, allowing Him to resolve the paradox in His own time.

The Incarnation of Christ resolved David's paradox. In the man Jesus, the words of Psalm 8 do apply. What David could only say about man in general, the New Testament quotations of Psalm 8 could say about Jesus in particular. The psalm is therefore fulfilled in a man, the man Christ Jesus, who has succeeded where mankind could not succeed. And He will return to see that all of creation is perfectly and finally in subjection once again, as it was in the beginning, before the Fall (Romans 8:19-22; Hebrews 2:5; Revelation 21).

Having summarized this study, the implications for today are many and varied. However, certain implications are more important than others, and so these must be discussed and others ignored before this study is complete.

First, it was earlier seen that the language of Genesis 1:26-28 need not exclusively refer to forcefulness and conquering. Just as important is the forward-looking activity which is not a part of force, but a simple formative activity. The reference to Genesis 2:15 substantiated this. Since man was given the dominion mandate before the Fall (Genesis 1:26-28) and afterwards (Genesis 9:1-7), the activity of dominion must be able to be performed in a similar way (although after the Fall, the activity is undeniably

altered). The implication is that man's dominion is more than a forceful conquering or a static condition of rulership; it involves formative activity as well.

Second, the dominion of man, whereby he rules and is engaged in formative activity, is in actuality but a part of man's three-fold relationship. He is related to God, in that he is in His image. He is related to other men, in that he is to be fruitful and multiply. He is related to creation, in that he is God's viceregent over creation. To ignore one of those relationships is to ignore that which is divinely ordained. This means that as expositors of the Word, we must not concentrate solely on one or two of those relationships to the detriment of the others. Yet, most preachers incessantly address the first relationship of man (to God), occasionally address the second relationship of man (to other men), and completely ignore the third relationship of man (to creation). To be true to man's three-fold relationship, the preacher must also address man's relationship to the cosmos. He must ever seek to relate all that is in creation back to Christ.

Third, and closely related to the above, is the meaning of work. Christians must "subdue" creation in the light of Biblical principles, for God's glory. In other words, as men learn more about creation, they develop more callings to use their new knowledge. And it is through these ever multiplying callings that man is further subduing the earth. God expects Christians to serve Him in work

regardless of what legitimate profession or trade we might be involved in. When we go to our job, whose principles are we building on? For whose glory are we "subduing" the earth in our formative activity (plumbing, law, medicine, farming, art, house-keeping, etc.)?

Fourth, the dominion mandate cannot be viewed alone. The dominion mandate requires the necessity of the Gospel mandate of Matthew 28:19-20. Depraved man is totally unable to be rightly engaged in dominion, in formative activity. The inadequacy of frail mankind in Psalm 8 makes that point clear. But, these two mandates must not be isolated from each other. The issue is not either/or, but both/and. We are to address both redemption to all humans (Gospel mandate) and address redemption to all creation (dominion mandate).¹ In other words, redemption speaks not only to man, but to creation. We must not forget to so speak in terms of both mandates. Logically, however, the Gospel mandate must precede the dominion mandate for one's only hope is in a right

¹The Christian who seeks to explain how Christ relates to the unsaved as Redeemer is the one who relates redemption to humans. The Christian who seeks to explain how Christ relates to his profession, his calling, his sphere of dominion, no matter how seemingly insignificant that sphere may appear, is the one who relates redemption to creation.

relationship to the Creator through the Redeemer.¹ But, this logical precedence must not relegate the matter of the dominion of a man to a paltry silence. All too often, this is the case.

Perhaps this is far astray from Psalm 8. If one holds that Psalm 8 is solely Messianic with no implications for man's dominion (except to imply he has forfeited it completely), then such discussion surely seems outlandish.

However, if one holds that Psalm 8 is a poetic restatement of the dominion mandate of Genesis 1:26-28 (as this study has sought to demonstrate), then such implications are not only natural, they are also essential and valid. In fact, more could even be said.

In closing, may it again be noted: Psalm 8 is a beautiful hymn of praise to YHWH for His glory, as displayed in His greatness, man's frailty, and man's kingship. Psalm 8 is a unique statement on man: man is both weak and strong, frail yet lord. Praise God for the answer to this seeming paradox, the answer as found in the man, Christ Jesus.

¹Please note this statement. It is not the writer's desire to be misunderstood on this point. Unsaved man's only hope is in Christ. He may do some kind of formative activity, exercising his dominion as a human, but his only hope for an eternally lasting contribution is by first being rightly related to his Creator in salvation. Then, and only then, if his formative activity is done in accordance with God's stated will, he will have made an eternal contribution.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANE	Ancient Near East
BAGD	Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich. <u>Greek-English Lexicon</u> . 2nd ed. revised and edited by Gingrich and Danker.
BDB	Brown, Driver, and Briggs. <u>Hebrew and English Lexicon</u> .
<u>BHS</u>	<u>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</u> .
<u>"Dominion"</u>	Jobling. "' <u>And Have Dominion . . .</u> ' The Interpretation of Old Testament Texts Concerning Man's Rule Over Creation."
NASB	New American Standard Bible
<u>Psalm VIII</u>	Louis. <u>The Theology of Psalm VIII</u> .
<u>TDOT</u>	<u>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</u> .
<u>TWOT</u>	<u>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</u> .

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