

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith VIII. Praising God For His Gracious Elevation Of Man's Dignity (Psalm 8:1-9)

I. Introduction

- A. Charles Darwin in his book, The Descent of Man, wrote, "The Simiadae then branched off into two great stems, the New World and Old World monkeys; and from the latter, at a remote period, Man, the wonder and glory of the Universe proceeded," cited in Bolton Davidheiser, Evolution and Christian Faith, 1976, p. 26. "Darwin could hardly have said more plainly that he believed we evolved from monkeys," Ibid., Davidheiser.
- B. Evolution thus lowers man's dignity to that of a mere animal, Ibid., Davidheiser, p. 34.
- C. Yet, Psalm 8:1-9 teaches the dignity of man that God placed on him in Genesis 1 with great application for us:

II. Praising God For His Gracious Elevation Of Man's Dignity, Psalm 8:1-9.

- A. Verse one in the Hebrew text comprises the introductory remarks in the English Bible (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 981), but we stay with the numbering system in the English translations for clarification with this lesson.
- B. Thus, David wrote, "O Jahweh, our Adonai ('*adon*', "Lord", Ibid.; B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 10-11), how majestic ('*ader*', Ibid., p. 12) is Your Name ("reputation," Z. P. E. B., v. Four, p. 364) in all the earth! You have set (*natan*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 678-682) your splendor (*hod*, Ibid., p. 217) above the heavens," Psalm 8:1.
- C. He added, "From the lips of children ('*olal*', Ibid., p. 760) and nursing infants (*yanaq*, Ibid., p. 413) you have ordained (*yasad*, Ibid., p. 413-414) power ('*oz*', Ibid., Kittel; H. A. W., T. W. O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 659-660) to put an end to (*shabat*, Hiphil [causative], Ibid., B. D. B., p. 991-992) the foe ('*ayab*', Ibid., p. 33) and he who avenges himself [sinfully, cf. Deut. 32:35] (*naqam*, Ibid., p. 667-668; Hithpael [intens. reflex.])," Psalm 8:2.
- D. In verses 3 and 4, David considered God's view of man in the creative order, saying: "(v. 3) When I see, reflect upon (*ra'ah*, Ibid., p. 906-909) Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have established (*nun*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 465-467; Polel [intensive]), (v. 4) what is mankind ('*enosh*', Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., T. W. O. T., v. I, p. 59) that you remember, are mindful of (*zakar*, Ibid., B. D. B., p. 269-271) him? and the son of common man ('*adam*', Ibid., Kittel; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 45-48) that you pay attention to (*paqad*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 823-824) him?"
- E. David then marvels at God's elevation of man in Genesis 1:26-28 at the creation of the universe, adding: "(v. 5) For You have decreased him (*haser*, Ibid., p. 341) [to be] a little (*me'at*, Ibid., p. 589-590) less, lower than Elohim (the Creator God of Genesis 1 (!); Ibid., Kittel, p. 1-2), and crowned him with glory and honor!"
- F. Building on his recollection of the Genesis 1 account of special creation, David notes in verses 6-8: "(v. 6) You have made him ruler over the works of Your hands; You have set all things under his feet, (v. 7) all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field; (v. 8) the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea; all that pass through ('*abar*', Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 716-719) the paths [possibly the migratory routes] ('*orah*', Ibid., p. 73) of the seas" where man himself cannot naturally go apart from his use of a ship!
- G. In a closing summary praise of God's gracious exaltation of the dignity of man, David declares: "O Jahweh, our Adonai ("Lord" again, cf. v. 1), how majestic is Your Name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:9)

Lesson: David praised God for highly exalting man at the Genesis 1 creation so that he is a little lower than the Creator God Himself in ruling over all animal life forms, be they on land where man can go or in the seas where he cannot naturally go without his use of ships. Indeed, God uses even children and newborn, nursing infants to defend His reputation against His foes, for He is so sovereign and powerful, that is all He needs to achieve it!

Application: (1) Psalm 8:6-8 supports the divine inspiration of Genesis 1:1-31 in its allusion to man's ruling position over all animal life forms as is taught in that passage, H. C. Leupold, Expos. of the Psalms, 1974, p. 101. Similarly, we should hold to the divine inspiration of Genesis 1! (2) Since Psalm 8:1-9 then supports the divine inspiration of Genesis 1, and since that passage counters all forms of evolution by presenting the special creation view, we should reject all evolutionary theory and hold to special creation. (3) Psalm 8:1-9 thus also upholds the view that man exists in God's image as is taught in Genesis 1:26-27, so we must support capital punishment as it is based on the premise that man exists in God's image, Genesis 9:6. (4) David wrote Psalm 8:1-9 after man's fall into sin, so according to Psalm 8, even fallen man still has divine authority to rule all animal life! (5) If God is so sovereign that He can ordain newborn, nursing infants to achieve His will, He can use US to achieve His will!