

Psalm 8; 1-9; “Jesus Crowned with Glory and Honor”, A Communion Sermon
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on November 9th, 2014,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.

The name of our Lord Jesus is the most excellent of names. His name is excellent in all the earth, for there are those who have savingly believed in Him, and they call upon His blessed name, all over the world. We have come to this table once again to praise the excellent Name of Jesus; to remember what he did for us in His life of obedience to the Father, and what He accomplished in His sacrificial death for us on the cross. But in remembering our Lord Jesus we must also remember the Father who sent Him. The Father was in Christ, and Christ was in the Father, in all that He did. It is the Father who ordained all the good things that we remember this afternoon, and rejoice everything that He has purposed to do, in relation to our salvation. The world itself was created by the Father, through Christ, and for Him. This is what it means when it says that, “God has set His own glory above the heavens.” Christ is the brightness of His Father’s glory; the sunshine of His Father’s face. There was a work which the Father did, “working in Him”, it says in Ephesians 1: 20, “when He raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.” The Father did this because, “He is rich in mercy”, and “because of His great love wherewith He has loved us,” it says in Ephesians 2: 4.

This is a Messianic Psalm, but Christ is hidden in it. He is disguised, as it were, as one of us in this Psalm. The Son of God is called the son of man in verse 4. And God the Father, who is excellent, who knows how to do everything that He does, well; He sent us His greatest treasure. He gave to us His highly prized Son, in order that He might receive the glory from us for all that He has done in Christ. God has set His glory above the heavens. That is, there is a way that God has so ordered things and done things, in the work of creation and in the work of redemption; that is designed to strike amazement and wonder in the hearts of each one who believes in Jesus Christ. And so we want to see, this morning, that the way that God has done these things brings Him glory. And it brings those whom He saves joy in the remembrance of it. God has set His glory above the heavens. God has set His glory above the heavens, in that He sent His only-Begotten Son in the incarnation. And He set His glory above the heavens in that His Only-Begotten has accomplished redemption. And so let us think together now, about God’s design of our salvation. God has designed our salvation in such a way that it brings glory to Himself and joy to our hearts in many ways. I would like to make 3 observations about God’s glorious design in relation to this great salvation which Christ has purchased for us by His blood.

The 1st thing that I would have you notice, is that God has designed our salvation in such a way that even babes can rejoice over it and enter into it.

Verse 2 says, “Out of the mouth of nursing infants You have ordained strength, because of Your enemies, that You may silence the enemy and the avenger.” You and I are here rejoicing this afternoon in Jesus Christ and His salvation; not because we were so clever or intelligent in ourselves, but because God Himself has revealed to us the importance of Christ to our souls. This was no work of ours; it was all of His grace. We have been born again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We have life in Jesus name. We have been born again; born from above, and now we are new creatures in Christ. We do not boast in ourselves or in our attainments. We do not glory in church buildings, or ceremonies, or a religious priesthood. We now no longer know anything of our own greatness, if we wise. We have simply come to Christ as a little child. And in coming to Christ we have found rest and peace and blessing, just like a little child would, who has just been born. They come to rest upon their mother’s bosom, and they come to take their nourishment there. “Out of the mouth of nursing infants you have ordained strength.”

We would praise Him for what we have received, and glory in His holy name. O my dear brethren, is this still how you look at yourselves and remember yourselves to have been? You were once helpless to save yourself. Even if you have known the Lord for many years, are you not still thankful that the Lord brought you to this place where you understood your need of Christ? Are you not, even now, one who still glories in Christ Jesus and puts no confidence in the flesh? If you glory in Christ, you are the true circumcision. You do indeed have the sign and seal of the New Covenant in the gift of the Holy Spirit who has been given to you. You worship God in the Spirit; you rejoice in Christ Jesus, and you put no confidence in the flesh. (Philippians 3: 3) Jesus Christ has become your righteousness, your life, and your hope. He is your spiritual food and your drink. He is your strength and your rest.

You look at yourself and you see that God has chosen one of the foolish ones of the world, in order that He might shame those people who think that they are wise. You look at yourself and you see that He has chosen you, even though you were one of the weak things of the world. You understand that He did this so that He might put to shame the things which are mighty. You look into your own heart and you see that God has chosen you; one of the base and insignificant persons of the world, in order that He might bring to nothing all those things and people who think themselves someone great in this world. Because of this, the Father's choice and mercy, you have found grace in Christ Jesus, by the simple exercise of faith. Now you know what true wisdom and true strength are. They do not come from yourself. They are not found in yourself. Because of the Father's purpose and grace you now find yourself to be "in Christ Jesus". And He has become unto you wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Do you not now rejoice, dear believer, that it is so?

Now this verse from Psalm 8 is a prophecy which was literally fulfilled when our Lord Jesus came into Jerusalem a few days before His death. You will find this verse about nursing infants in Matthew 21, verses 12-16, if you will turn over there with me. It says, "Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves." "And He said to them, 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.'" "Then the blind and the lame came to Jesus in the temple, and He healed them." "But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' they were indignant and said to Him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?'" "And Jesus said to them, 'Yes, Have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?'" Now, will you please notice who is praising the Lord Jesus here? It is not the great and mighty chief priests and scribes; the religious Jewish leaders of that day. They were indignant because they thought that glory was going to Jesus who supposedly didn't deserve it, because they thought that He was a mere man. But can a mere man, of himself, give sight to the blind and strength and ability to those who are lame? Why couldn't they be happy like the children? Why couldn't they say "Hosanna to the Son of David"? It is because they cannot simply and humbly recognize their need of Him and His grace, and they trust in themselves that they are righteous.

This word Hosanna means "Save, we pray." These children had heard their parents extolling the Lord Jesus as King a little time before as He entered Jerusalem, and now they themselves saw what He could do to heal, and so they are crying out for Him to do the same for them. Not physically, but spiritually. Jesus had said on another occasion that "Unless you are converted and become like a little child, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." "Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me." If you are a true Christian you don't mind seeing yourself as a little child. And we who are here at this table today have done the same thing as the children did that day when Jesus came to Jerusalem and to the temple. We have cried out and still cry out this day, "Hosanna to the Son of David."

Now the 2nd thing that we notice about how God designed our salvation is that He has designed it in such a way that we marvel over God's mercy to consider us, to save us. (Verses 3-5)

The Psalmist says in verse 4, "What is man that you are mindful of him?" And we might add, "What is sinful man that you are mindful of him and that you visit him?" Why does God give attention to you and I? Why does He care for us in the way that He does? Why should He save any of us from our treacherous heart and our terrible sins? He is so great that He made the stars and put them all in place and calls them all by name, and leads forth a constellation in its season. Why should He who is so great and so holy, so wise and so powerful, care for sinful me? It is because this Man was made like us, except without sin. It is because of His Incarnation. This is how God showed His love to a sinful world of fallen men. He made One, His only-Begotten Son, a little lower than the angels. He sent His one and only Son into the world to die on a cross. The Father gave Him, the Father sent Him, and He would suffer in our place. The Father would then crown Him with glory and honor and we might find favor by believing in Him. We have to turn to Hebrews 2 to truly understand this. Turn with me there, to Hebrews 2: 5. "For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels." "But one testified in a certain place, saying: 'What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him?' "You have made Him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands." "You have put all things in subjection under his feet."

The reason that God is mindful of us who are sinful is because Jesus, who is God, was made a little lower than the angels in His being formed as a man. He was given a human nature coupled to His divine nature in the womb of the virgin Mary. Here was a man with no sin; a divine Man. Men were originally created a little lower than the angels. Jesus condescended to come and to take upon Himself our human nature; yet without sin. He did not take upon himself the nature of angels. He took upon Himself the nature of ones who were lower than the angels. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by his life and death He "condemned sin in the flesh". By the great merit of what Jesus did for us at the cross, we who are "in Christ" shall eventually move up to a level just as high as the angels, and perhaps even slightly higher. Is the risen Jesus higher than the angels? He has been raised higher than the principalities and the powers? When we shall see Jesus, we shall be made like Him. We, for His sake, will be crowned with glory and honor. Because of Jesus, the Father favors us as He would His beloved Son. He blesses us with all the blessings which He won, and which He deserved, but which we also do, and shall attain to. Job 36: 7 says that God the Father, "does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous; but they are seated with Him forever, and they are exalted."

The writer to the Hebrews says here in verse 9 - "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God might taste death for everyone." Jesus Christ in His Divine nature as God before He came into the world condescended to become a little lower than the angels, which is where we, as men, are now. He came into this world, so that by His tasting death for everyone, He might bring many sons to glory, as it says in verse 10. He has been crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, tasted death for us who believe. We who have believed in Him shall never die spiritually. Because of His tasting death for us, we are here today to remember Him by partaking of the Elements of the bread and the cup. We remember, and we marvel that He would die for us. How great is the mercy and grace of God towards us that He would send His dearly beloved, and only-begotten Son to taste death for me, so that we could taste life; and not only taste, but partake completely of the gift of eternal life. He will raise us up with Him, someday to be higher than the angels, and to be with Him forever.

Surely as we come to the Lord's table we should try to think of words which would be adequate to express our thankfulness for all that Christ has done for us. Turn with me to Psalm 57, verse 9 - "I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations." (Among the

Gentiles) “For Your mercy reaches unto the heavens; let Your glory be above all the earth.” The glory of what Christ has done for us in His death and resurrection is that we who are Gentiles have been brought into covenant with God, through Christ. We who are Gentiles, who were “strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the world”, have been brought near to God. “We who once were afar off,” it says in Ephesians 2: 13, “have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Let us think about these awesome and blessed realities of what He has done for us so that we can draw near to Him now. Let us come down front to remember what He has done for us, and to partake of His Supper.

The 3rd thing that we can notice about how God designed our salvation is that He designed it in such a way to let us know, that because of His sufferings we shall also reign with Him. (Verses 6-9)

Man was, in the creation, given dominion over all things, all the sheep and oxen, all the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. In Hebrews 2: 8 it says, “For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him.” But now we do not yet see all things put under Him.” And in verse 5 it says, “For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.” No, the Lord Jesus has died and is risen from the dead to give to us, the redeemed children of men, the full dominion over the New Heavens and the New Earth, wherein will dwell righteousness. All this, because of His sufferings. All this because He was worthy to be crowned with glory and honor. To make us perfect, to bring us to glory, the Captain of our salvation was made complete or perfect in His sufferings. We who believe are one with Him, and now, and we will forever receive the benefit of those sufferings. We are united with Him in His death and resurrection by faith. We are being sanctified by grace and we are learning to suffer with Him that we might reign with Him. He is not ashamed to call us His brethren.

You will notice in this Psalm that David only mentions the moon and the stars and not the sun. The reason for this is that God has set Jesus Christ, who is His glory, above the heavens. He who is the Sun of righteousness, who has run his earthly course as a strong man to obey His Father God on our behalf; did indeed lose His life on the cross for our sakes. And He has indeed been exalted far above the heavens. We have indeed been raised with Him from our death in sins, to be "seated with Him in the heavenly places; spiritually now, and bodily and physically in a glorified state later on the Day of the Resurrection. “The darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.” As we remember the Lord Jesus, let us remember that the Father has exalted His glory far above the heavens; far above the moon and far above the stars. Oh, what a great and eternal inheritance is ours; we who have believed in Jesus Christ. He once suffered for our sins, but He is exalted now; He is seated there at the right hand of God. He intercedes for all who are His saints continually. What He suffered, His wounds and His stripes, plead for us now. This was what we deserved, but He bore it. And God was pleased with Him, when He held wrath against us. And that wrath was removed at the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. And He has gone to prepare a place for us. What is man when you consider him in light of the heavens which He has made?

How great and significant is he in relation to the moon and the stars that God has created? In terms of himself; in terms of his sin; man is nothing and less than nothing. But in terms of Jesus Christ, he is very much like the moon and the stars. If you look up at the sky on some starry night, and you see how great the starry heavens are, and you think of how little and insignificant and sinful you are in comparison; consider this. That because Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness was sent into this world, to be the light of the world; sent into this fallen world of sinful men with healing in His wings; because of this, we who would otherwise be insignificant in God’s sight, (why should He take notice of us at all), shall shine as the stars in the firmament of heaven someday. Daniel Chapter 12, verse 2 says, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to Everlasting Life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” “Those who are wise shall

shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever.” Christ is God’s glory, and He is our glory as well. Let us worship Him now.