

## **O LORD, our Lord, how splendid is Your Name!**

For God the work of creating huge galaxies was detailed handiwork, like fine needlepoint. We might think that the creation of mankind was even more trivial, since the whole human race is nothing but a microscopic speck compared to just one of God's stars. Yet God created Adam and Eve to have dominion over the universe. He created the sun, moon, and stars to serve them. He created man and woman in His image so they could be righteous and holy and live in happy fellowship with Him. The hundreds of millions of people huddled on the earth are only an insignificant speck in the vast reaches of the universe, yet there is more understanding and comprehension of God in the mind of one child than in millions of stars.

But through the fall into sin, mankind's fellowship with God was broken, and his dominion over the universe was diminished. We can still use the intelligence God has given us to gain a partial understanding and control over the world in which we live. But human beings no longer have an uncontested dominion over the earth. The peace that ruled in Eden is gone.

Now animals kill human beings. Human beings kill animals. And human beings slaughter other human beings. We live in a hostile environment. In spite of modern medicine, our control of diseases is imperfect. Even the tiniest viruses can kill us. We battle against weeds, pests, and diseases, against floods and droughts, in order to produce our food from the soil of the earth. We are killed by our own machines and poisoned by our own pollution. Thousands of people perish in earthquakes and other natural disasters. Inevitably the day comes when each of us must return to the ground from which we were created.

Through sin mankind lost the dominion over the earth that God had entrusted to His highest creatures, but God sent Christ as the second Adam, the Son of Man, in order to regain the dominion we had lost and to restore it to us. Psalm 8 is quoted twice in the New Testament as a messianic prophecy that was fulfilled when Christ came and regained dominion over the world for us. As true God, Christ already had dominion over the whole universe. But when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, He took on a human nature like ours, though without sin. In this state He undertook the work of regaining our lost dominion for us.

During his state of humiliation, God "*made Him lower than the angels for a little while.*" This points to the lowly appearance of Jesus during His humiliation. During His stay on earth Jesus did not look like God or even like an angel, but like an ordinary man. Psalm 8 was fulfilled throughout Jesus' ministry on earth when He assumed the form of a humble servant. Jesus was made "*lower than the angels for a little while*" when He was helped by angels at the time of His temptation and in Gethsemane (Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43). Psalm 8 was fulfilled when Jesus' enemies refused to recognise Him as God and instead ridiculed Him as a lowly carpenter and when they mocked Him on the cross. Psalm 8 was also fulfilled at Calvary when Jesus cried, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" (Matthew 27:46).

But Jesus did not stay in this humble condition. When He had finished His work of defeating sin, death, and the devil, He ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of God. He now has all

power in heaven and on earth. He is crowned with honour and glory. Psalm 8:6 is quoted in 1 Corinthians 15:27 as a statement of Christ's rule over all things.

Just as Adam brought death to all people, so Christ, the second Adam, won life for all people. Adam lost the dominion that had been entrusted to him, but Christ is now ruling the world for the benefit of His people. He will share this dominion with them in the new heavens and the new earth. There the peace of Eden will exist once again. Sin made the glorious view of mankind expressed in Psalm 8 untrue, but Christ, the Son of Man, has made it true once again. When we understand this truth, we can repeat the refrain of this psalm with greater appreciation: "*O LORD, our Lord, how splendid is Your name in all the earth!*"