

Some Distinctions of the Son of Man

by H.J. Vine

The sermon explores the significance of the Son of man's dominion, redemption, and glory, and how these relate to His place as Head of the universe.

Scripture: Psalm 8:4, 1 Corinthians 15:27, Ephesians 1:20, Hebrews 2:5, Revelation 21:19

Topics: "Christology", "Redemption"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the unique distinctions of Jesus Christ as the Son of man, focusing on His glory and dominion as revealed in Psalms 8 and other Scriptures. Jesus, as the Son of man and Son of God, settled the question of sin on the cross, harmonizing God's attributes and bringing glory to God. Through His revelation and redemption, He reconciled us to God, setting us in His holy presence. The Scriptures progressively reveal His dominion over all creation, angels, and the eternal kingdom, culminating in His supreme majesty as Head over the universe.

Transcript

Notes of an Address in Edinburgh on Psalm 8, and other Scriptures

We will now briefly look at some of the peculiar distinctions which belong to our Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of man, and turn successively to various Scriptures which show development of teaching in relation to His glory in this character from Psalm 8 and onward. We have already had very helpfully set before us many glories that belong to Him in other characters.

The human race, a race of sinners since Adam fell, was subject to judgment and banishment from God, but the Son of man, as promised, came; and He, who was also the Son of God, settled upon the cross the stupendous question of sin. He harmonized all the marvellous attributes of God in regard to the blessing of men, and God was glorified in Him. Hence, when Judas had gone out into the night, He said, "Now is the Son of man glorified." Yes, glorified in the very place where He glorified God, and God has, as a consequence, exalted the Son of man to the throne. God was glorified in Him at the cross; the Son of man is now glorified in God Himself in the highest pinnacle of glory!

But that One, now glorified, brought to us the revelation of God--He is the Revealer. And, then, on the other hand, He has redeemed us by His precious blood--He is the Redeemer. Not only are we redeemed from sin, but to the God whom He has revealed. He has set us thus in His holy presence as reconciled now, so that we can joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received the

reconciliation.

Now let us think of Psalm 8. David, you remember, looked abroad at night, and as he considered the heaven, the moon and the stars that God had established, he raised this question in his mind before God--"What is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man that Thou visitest Him?" It is sometimes said in answer to that question--man is a sinner; he has dishonoured God, degraded His holy Name, and dragged His glory in the dust; thus showing up the awful state into which he had got. Now, while that is true, it is not the answer of Psalm 8, neither is it the answer of Hebrews 2. Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and set over the works of God's hands is the answer.

This being first indicated in the 8th Psalm, we are there specially pointed to the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and, what is a step further, the fish of the sea, as being under His dominion. Of course, the further statement that all things are put under His feet involves far more than that. Truly, all the earth was to come under His dominion as well as the cattle, the fowls, and the fish of the sea. Even when He came down on earth and a question was raised about paying the temple tax, He could command a fish and it obeyed Him (Matt. 17:37). Dominion over the fish of the sea was not said by Daniel (2:38) to be given to imperial Nebuchadnezzar!

But what did David know about the fish of the sea? He was accustomed to look after the sheep! That is how the Modernists and Higher Critics talk. Rather should they ask, what does David's God know about them? Far more than the best of scientific scholars! He made them all, and He made David write those words, "The paths of the seas," long centuries ago, and men have only just found out that fish have their paths in the seas, just as we have ours on the land! God has set the Son of man over all. He has put everything under His feet.

This gives a general statement which is extended from (1) Psalm 8 to (2) Hebrews 2:5-10, then to (3) Ephesians 1:22, and to (4) 1 Corinthians 15:27-28. These extensions from the creatures of the earth to the millennial redemption glory, and then to the heavenly and universal, also, finally, to the eternal, with the distinctive place of the Son, may be illustrated by picturing to ourselves an ivory box suitably crowned; this, when opened, discloses first a copper box, which may be taken to signify the earthly dominion of the Son of man, as brought before us in Psalm 8.

Now notice how the Spirit of God carries us on to something further in Hebrews 2. There it is said, He has not put under angels the administration of the next age, "the age to come," but under Man. We are told in the end of Hebrews 1 that angels are servants on behalf of the heirs of salvation in the present age. They are created a little higher in order than man; and we are told that Jesus was made a little inferior to them as Man, in view of redemption. But mark how afterwards angels are seen to be attendants upon man, for when the Son of man comes in His glory all the holy angels will come with Him. The redemption of Israel will then have come, and the millennial kingdom will then have been set up.

This brings us to a further box within the copper one, to a silver box signifying this, for all is placed under His feet. Not only the cattle, the fowls, and the fish, but His kingdom and dominion will be complete. He will be the "Prince of the kings of the earth."

"Kings shall fall down before Him,

And gold and incense bring."

From Him the law shall go forth as Administrator of the whole world. He shall "judge the world in righteousness," and what will He do? He will make men sing for very gladness! "Shall He die, and His Name perish?" Hallelujah! The answer is given in Psalm 72, "His Name shall endure forever: His Name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed . . . and, blessed be His glorious Name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory: Amen, and Amen."

We must, however, go a step further. Within the silver box we discover a golden one, and, to arrive at the centre of all, that, too, must be afterwards opened. The Spirit of God carries us to heavenly heights in Ephesians 1, where again Psalm 8 is quoted. Our Lord Jesus Christ is there seen as raised again from among the dead by the surpassing greatness of the power of God, and set at His right hand in the heavenly places above every range of authority in the universe; all things being put beneath His feet in this age, as well as the coming one. To what heavenly majesty does this take us?

But now, let us notice a glorious fact. He is Head over all these things to the Assembly which is His body. Not only Head of the assembly, but Head over all this vast range of glory to the assembly. Do you often ponder this fact, that being saved, sealed by the Spirit and brought into the body of Christ, you are livingly linked up with the Man at the right hand of God, who is set over all? You are vitally united to Him, and to share with Him in the glory over which He is the Head. Yes, you are, through grace and power Divine, a member of His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

We come now to our last Scripture. We might imagine that we could not get beyond the golden glories just spoken of! We opened the covering box of crowned ivory, also the copper and silver boxes; and now within the golden box we discover a resplendent diamond of surpassing beauty--the Person Himself, who is set over all! It says in 1 Corinthians 15 that there is but One in the vast universe who is not put under the Son of man. What? Is there then an exception to the completeness of His supremacy? Of necessity, "He is excepted, which did put all things under Him." Who is that? The eternal God Himself! He is the only exception.

What a place for Man! But that Man first settled the great question of sin at the cross, and glorified God in so doing, when, as Son of man (which Adam, the first man, was not) He came to seek and to save. Though He suffered, and was spitefully entreated by the religious and political leaders of Israel, yet He spoke of the time when He would come in His kingdom in glory, it is striking that among the precious stones connected with the Assembly the diamond is not named (see Rev. 21:19-20). It is the first of minerals, the hardest and most beautiful, and is therefore reserved as a symbol in relation to Christ (see Ex. 28, etc.).

"His beauty shineth far above

Our highest note of praise."

For He who became Man is none other than THE SON. This is the Person in whom all centres.

We are told in 1 Corinthians 15:24, that the end will come when He will give up the kingdom to Him who is God and Father, having brought everything into subjection unto Himself, and into order through His mediatorial work. There will not be a disturbing element then for ever and ever, blessed be God! Not a thought or motion contrary to Him who is holy, and who in His nature is love. God Himself shall be "all in all." "ALL," objectively and subjectively. "ALL," transcendentally and responsively. The ever-blessed GOD

Himself all to us and in us all.

Finally, let us replace the boxes; but retaining the diamond, we place it upon the crown of the ivory box, which covers those of copper, and silver, and gold. His glory is set "ABOVE THE HEAVENS." All things are put under Him! To this height of supreme majesty are we brought, and we find all centring in the Son, who became Man--the Son of man--now the Head of the vast universe of bliss, resplendent in His personal glory.

But now, mark! as we behold Him supreme in that heavenly splendour, having as Man upon earth taken the place of subjection to God (though still the Son), we see Him retaining that wonderful place eternally. In His life here He added, we may say, a fresh distinction to Himself by the things that He suffered, for He "learned" one thing in this world, as Hebrews 5:8 tells us, "though He were Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered" (N.Tr.). We, too, necessarily suffer; but we learn much in and by the suffering. It is the school of moral instruction, the university where we study at the present time. But the Son, having as Man taken the lovely place of subjection to God, is seen as Head of the universe and yet a Man subject to God for eternity, retaining that distinction for ever and ever.

What a thought! But why subject? Why should the Head of that vast universe be in subjection? Because all under Him is now answering to the mind of God without one single thing to disturb, and God Himself--Father, Son and Holy Spirit--is all in all. What could tell us the story of the devotedness of Christ like this? The story of the glory of His rich grace will be declared as no saint or angel could tell it, as we see Him there, subject to God for ever and ever. Eternal praise be to His great and holy Name!

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