

Theology of Psalm 8 - Dr. Andrew Schmutzer

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Date: 26 April 2026

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[0:00] But maybe on another occasion, Ashley can be part of this endeavor.! Probably by a priest or one of the leaders calling the people to praise in rich liturgical fashion, followed then by a cause for praise.

Here's why they're praising God, often dipping into the attributes of God or His history of deliverance and rescue for them.

And then followed by some form of recapitulation. What's interesting is when we come to Psalm 8, there are not the standard call or cause.

Psalm 8 is entirely unique as a prayer directed entirely to God, not simply about God.

So this is one of the uniquenesses of Psalm 8, and already you know probably more than most people, heaven forbid most pastors, about Psalm 8, but we're going to have a lot of fun.

[1:28] I thought I would take a particular line of inquiry rather than just a mad dash throughout the museum of Psalm 8. I want to consider the theme of our identity, or basically anthropology.

What does Psalm 8 say about who we are as human beings? Who we are ultimately as image bearers, theologically. And it makes me reflect, why is that important?

Because it makes me reflect on broad questions within the history of faith, those of Abrahamic faith, if we were to pan history in three broad phases, almost three millennia, the first question that people of faith are asking is, who is God?

Who is God? This leads ultimately to, ultimately, yes, who is Christ? What's the uniqueness of Christ? Who is God begins the first millennium.

The second millennium might be marked by, how are we saved? How are we saved? What is the uniqueness of our salvation? The third millennium, somewhat startlingly, could be identified by the question, what is a human being?

[2:50] And that's where we're living now. What does it mean to be human? And there's all kinds of mostly sad mile markers about what it means to be a human being.

And how we are compared or even compete with the animals, which the author of Psalm 8, David, would find rather alarming, as we are very unique.

So, with that broad map, let's dive into some particulars. And you have a handout to try to follow along. I'm going to make a lot of observations about the flow and argument if you enjoy both the literature of Scripture as well as its thematic development.

Psalm 8 really illustrates how human identity and its vocabulary in Scripture is applied to people, and it functions largely to convey modes of our being rather than parts of being.

Rather than parts of being human. It's probably better to think of our anthropology as modes of being rather than parts of being.

[4:08] And we'll flesh this out. Nor does Psalm 8 really lay out formulas for spiritual transformation, not its point of interest.

But rather, it's an invitation to living centered on worship through sober wonder. Worship through sober wonder.

Psalm 8 would say you're in fine company if there's still questions about this life that you haven't found answers for. That's okay. Okay. And this is really part of our paradoxical response to the dangerous condition of being human.

Psalm 8 is what we could broadly describe as a cosmic hymn of praise. Its breadth is cosmic. It is not national.

It is not regional. It is cosmic. It is cosmic. Which was much more of a concept and a forum of inquiry that the ancient world knew that in many ways we've lost.

[5:17] In this, there is a rich panorama of the natural world that the psalmist is going to investigate. And this is part of a relational ecosystem that the psalmist is going to consider all throughout the psalm.

And in beautiful form and fashion. When it comes to the psalms, keep in mind, we often have to know how the psalm means in order to know what the psalm means.

The what it means is always tied to the how it means. And that's part of the reason for a somewhat pedantic handout that you have in front of you, but I hope it's helpful nonetheless.

In Psalm 8, beginning with the heavens, David casts his eyes from the greatest heights to the most mundane depths. And this gives us our kind of spine running through Psalm 8.

We start in the heavens. We end on the ground. This is going to give him a number of places to pause and reflect.

[6:25] From the celestial order to our human domain. Now, the reason why that's important to swallow hard and reflect on is because we could be lost in bewilderment if we just stared up.

David verges on that. But instead, there is a movement of grounding in royal mission down. Up is wonderful.

Up is magisterial. Up is the realm of God. Down is the realm of humankind. Paradox is living in tension with both.

So, through the first six verses, the psalmist has woven a cascade then of vertical descent.

Notice in 1b, you have above the heavens. And then you have in verse 3, heavens, moon, stars.

And then you have in 5a, a little lower than God.

[7:29] We might comment on that text-critical problem if you'd like. And then you have in verse 5b, crowned them. There's the head. There's the head.

And then you have in 6a, hands. And finally, feet in 6b. We've moved all the way through. And this is the intentional downward painting and cascade of the focus.

Did you notice what heavenly body is missing? I don't mind asking questions if you don't mind being asked. The sun is there.

Which translation do you have? The sun is absent, if that's what you meant. The sun is absent. This appears to be a nighttime contemplation.

Maybe all the more then, things are both visible and allow David to literally look at the sky.

[8:32] Contextually, psalmate appears to break up the initial sweep of laments. After the Psalm 1, Psalm 2, the wisdom and the royal, we start right off into laments.

You wouldn't know that. We don't use those much anymore in churches. Maybe we'll use a penitential psalm. But sometimes we have forms of suffering that we didn't do much about.

Regardless, 3 heading into 7 and 8 is lament. And then we come to Psalm 8. These laments go all the way through Psalm 13.

But its function, Psalm 8, is actually more subtle. In Psalm 8, the psalmist picks up the vow he closed with at the end of 7.

Take a peek back at the closing of 7. Verse 17. I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High. Verse 17.

[9:36] Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your Shem, your name. The psalms are not just one-off journal entries.

They have been edited and placed together in ways that echo and reflect off of each other. All throughout the Psalter. Sometimes very overtly. And here we seem to have a tagline that connects Psalm 8.

And there's more. Psalm 8 is the exaltation of the name. And what is a name in the ancient world? The name, you might think of the Rumpelstiltskin story.

When the name was known, the whole plot took on a whole new depth, right? If you know God's name, you know his character. To know the name in the Older Testament is to know the character. And so that's why they can say, let's exalt, let's praise the name of the Lord. That sounds a little bit odd to us. We change names, abbreviate names, contextualize names.

[10:43] For them, the name was tied to identity. And this is crucial to keep in mind. Let's take it a step further. Many scholars think, with good reason, that name, Shem, those two Hebrew letters, Shin and Maim in Hebrew, are in fact also peppered throughout the entire Psalm.

In words like Ma or Shemayim, what, and heavens. The point being, it seems that the word name, Shem, is cobbled together and spelled through all kinds of linguistic expressions all throughout

Psalms 8.

As it focuses on name. We might come back to that. And then, if we look forward, Psalm 9 verse 2 continues, I will sing praise to your, what?

Name, O Most High. Okay. So themes of justice and enemies, we've not forgotten those. Those are in the prior Psalms.

And those also actually come into Psalm 8. It just doesn't, enemies and foes and crying babies just don't make it into our praise courses. They just don't.

[12:02] But we're going to see if we can figure out what might be happening in those interesting verses. So only when we learn the name of God in the majestic uttermost of the cosmos are we rightly positioned to accept our role.

We must know God's name first. God's name is mentioned first. Then human identity is contemplated. You see a little box there in your handout.

This shows not only the heavens and the earth, the broad bipartite cosmos, which the Psalms love to talk about. There's often music that starts in heavens begun by the angels, and it's answered in antiphonal form by the humans on earthly stage.

And this is very much a kind of idea you see in the Psalms of the Old Testament. There is the creating God. There are three questions.

Do you see that? Oh, Lord, our Lord, how? How? And then in the middle there is a what? And we close with another how? Oftentimes in the Psalms, questions, what we call erotesis, a form of writing that makes a theme linger in the mind, many times a question will be right in the middle.

[13:26] Because questions make us think and contemplate in ways statements don't. Some questions don't have a simple period at the end. It's something we're supposed to meditate on.

A good illustration of this, in fact, is Psalm 113. We're not going to necessarily turn there right now, but right in the middle of Psalm 113 is a question.

Who is like the Lord our God? The one enthroned on high who, anybody know? Who what to the earth? Stoops.

You and I worship a stooping God. And already in this majestic heaven is his home, the earth is where he lovingly stoops, you get incarnational impulses of God.

So this is the little bit of the structure as we move to the human coronation at the center of the Psalm.

[14:30] There is definite praise of the Creator and his care. It's not about searching out the initial acts of creation.

In many ways, Psalm 8 is a homily on Genesis 1. And that raises maybe as many questions for some of us as it might answer.

But here is what David wanted to focus on. Let's review the poem he did write rather than lament the one he didn't. The focus here isn't on the origin of matter or anything like that.

It's the grandeur of the Creator. And therefore, when I get a sense of the grandeur, what in the world am I doing here? What is my role in light of all this? I had similar thoughts of that when I saw the new photographs coming back from the latest spin around the moon.

We haven't seen so clearly certain sides of the moon. And other pictorial scapes of the earth, right? And thankfully, part of Scripture was read.

[15:38] Wonderful, wonderful thing for that. Let's talk a little bit about the presence of the enemy and avenger. This is by far the most difficult and intriguing part of the psalm.

You have something like this. Through the praise of children and infants or babes and infants, verse 2, you have established a stronghold or a bulwark against your foes or your enemies to silence the foe and the avenger.

Here is, to this point, the longest verse we've seen. Yeah, it is verse 2. It's also the most complex. Why are we mentioning babies? Well, let's note some things here.

Even this hymn of praise addresses the reality of enemies and evil. Even this incredible psalm of praise still mentions enemies.

While the enemy and avenger, then, of verse 2 could be forces of chaos that God addressed at creation, maybe like a Leviathan construct, it could also include more than this, such as perpetrators of international wars, and that seems to be more where David is going.

[17:12] But let's raise some more questions first. Verse 2 may represent an ancient Near East pattern of building a fortress for the creator after the work of creation, to celebrate the achievement

of the creator.

That could be part of what's happening. And after the defeat, then, of representative enemies of chaos. But here, the specific enemy is not David's point.

The nature of the enemy is not the point. Instead, we see an awareness of the enigma of evil in the nature and history of life.

Stunningly here, what is central to this bulwark comes from the mouths of sucklings and infants.

What a majestic paradox. If there's any sound, pushback, or line in the sand, God uses the babblings of babies to note what he's able to do in terms of evil and things that might push back on his creation.

Can you think of any other place in Scripture, maybe the New Testament, where not only children cry out, but people closer to the Lord might say, Lord, tell them to be quiet, or let's push back on the noise, and the Lord responds in what way?

[18:53] Yeah, if you quiet them, what might happen? Look at the response of the cosmos and the creation to the Lord.

There is a rich paradox here of not using the educated and the powerful, but sucklings and infants.

Poetically here, there is an effective counterpoint between mouth and silence in 3C.

Additionally, you have sucklings and infants also that form a word pair, probably meant to push back on enemy and avenger. So the poetic artistry of this is also majestic.

But we can say more. This richly fits the biblical theme of reversal, in which weakness is turned into strength, because no one would suspect it.

Kind of the reason why the hobbits went through Middle Earth, because no one suspected them.

Right? The reason why you would have babes and sucklings is because no one would see that coming.

[20:03] And yet it's naturally weak. Well, babes is used 20 times in the Older Testament, sucklings is used 11, and usually they appear as victims.

They're not crying for milk when we hear them in Scripture. They're crying because of violence.

They're crying because of oppression. And God was aware then of the vulnerability of infants, and he moves to ensure that violence could not always do as it wanted to babies and sucklings.

So children here are uniquely history's victims of violence and abuse. But God uses their voice to push back on evil and outrage.

Do you remember in Matthew as well, with the death of our Lord's peers, Matthew cites statements about Rachel weeping for her children?

Right? So there is precedent for this construct. One may also think then of God who is aware, he steps out, and so divine imminence is willing to remain in agony for the restoration of a rather self-centered and criminal humanity.

[21:38] Divine imminence is willing to remain in agony. To be sure here, we need to him sing to praise to him with humanity, lest we also collude with the krakens of our day.

Mythological constructs, to be sure, but evil does not know any boundaries, does it? When humans forget their creatureliness, they always move toward self-destruction.

When humans forget their creatureliness, they always move toward self-destruction, and nature starts to look like Pride Rock in Lion King.

Why did Pride Rock start to go so south? Because of who was on it. And it spoiled the entire area around.

I know we're talking about Psalm 8, but I thought I would just release the moment and call upon some stories that some of you had in your babysitting.

[22:46] Okay. Significantly, notice that humankind serves as God's vice regents and under kings and shepherds that are supposed to protect.

That's what they're supposed to do. God's investiture of humanity comes at the price of victory over foes and the avenging enemy.

We can't simply talk about praise and worship and joy and security without recalling the cost that was needed to achieve that.

And Psalm 8 doesn't let us forget the cost. I haven't heard one chorus yet. I've heard a few on Psalm 8. I haven't heard one chorus or song or hymn yet talking about verse 2.

I don't think I should hold my breath. And yet we're constantly bickering for more discussion and insight into the nature of evil. Well, human existence is suspended always between glory and

corruption.

[23 : 57] Always has been. Order follows conquest. This is the royal way. The central question comes next.

What is humankind? The theological pivot point is a question lodged at the very center of our psalm and so it kind of takes pride of place.

For starters, humans are those who ask who they are and try to answer the question.

My cats could care less. But we are to take care of animals. This is a homily on Genesis 1. So we'll have some opportunity to reflect on animals but it's humans that are asking the question.

In scriptural terms, this is a theological issue. To the modern mind, the answer could be lodged in the psychological. It could be lost in the neurodivergence of our day.

[25 : 11] Few of you might know what I'm referring to. Or the physical sciences or even the neuroscience isolating the concept of the self. Okay?

That's not necessarily the way the ancient world viewed humanity as rising to the self. But with unique focus on the brain within self-consciousness.

We're trying to figure out what becomes of self-consciousness when we die. Articles are all over the place. Well, following the question, what can we see?

I'm all for integrative learning. A secular starting point, though, front loads its own outcome. Nothing in Psalm 8 recreates or retreats into the radical interiority.

You can stand with David and watch everything he's talking about. He doesn't get lost in the internality of his being. Now, there's a place for that, but what's the focus of Psalm 8?

[26 : 22] The spirituality of this psalm is thoroughly embedded in the world. In other words, human identity is found in terms of transcendence, something outside inside of ourselves, which we observe and we participate together.

David looks to the heavens only to find finitude and frailty in the human condition. Before this towering heights of heaven that display God's splendor, humankind shrivels in stature.

Maybe we ought to do more looking at the heavens. The intrusion of the first person eye in the psalm at this point is not ornamental.

When I look at your heavens, the rest of the psalm is a corporate expression. Oh Lord, our Lord.

And then it generalizes about human beings, but at this juncture, a single voice breaks through tied to a sharp sense of insignificance in the universe.

Here we have a personal recognition that everyone must encounter. Yet the eye of psalm 8 is still elevated in the hour of doxology.

[27 : 48] What is a human being also speaks to a gnawing anxiety. What am I? And this existential reflection distinguishes human beings from other sensate creatures.

This is no modern phenomenon. This has been the foundational question from the very beginning. Not quasars, red dwarfs, or the death of stars. But notice here that awareness of insignificance before this cosmic panorama does not lead to a despairing nihilism.

Because that cosmos is your heavens. It's the moon, the stars that you have established. We do not contemplate a meaningless void, but a panorama of praise.

Well, at the very exact syntactical center, noun for noun, verb for verb, you have this profound question, what is man? By the way, that's not male.

We're not, this isn't about gender at this point. It is, what is the human being? What is man that you should note him? The human creature that you pay him heed. Marvelous expression of Hebrew synonymous parallelism.

[29 : 14] That you have been mindful, that you pay attention. Notice, the psalmist takes it a step further. What is this human before the one who created this vast cosmos?

It's a logical and appropriate question. Is it possible he could forget me when I look at the vastness of all of this?

Referring to humankind, one might expect, who are humans? Right, grammarians? Is man a what? This is interesting. Ma in Hebrew is the pronoun for inanimate objects and it functions as an appropriate, what we call diminutive, an appropriate, you stay in your right place.

What is this impish groundling? It even uses a term, enosh, which is a vulnerable creature. Here's a deeper claim that being human is to be a recipient of God's attention.

[30 : 21] I'll say it again. To be a human being is to be a recipient of God's attention. God doesn't need bookmarks. He knows exactly who and where we are.

That's a God thing. To be regarded by the creator of this universe, to be human is to be regarded, not disregarded, by the most significant other.

This is the daring claim of Psalm 8 for our sense of what it means to be human. Our very nature is attended to by the Almighty.

We are remembered simply and precisely because we are human beings. Psalm 8 doesn't need to mention image of God. It's obvious in the role and the terms that are going to be used that this person is unique.

The reader soon hears in Psalm 9, remember, we've put you on notice that you should cast an eye before and after the psalm you are studying.

[31 : 29] Quote, he remembers them, 9-12. He remembers them. He does not forget the cries of the afflicted. That's the very next psalm.

In the Christian tradition, it is the assumption that to be human is to be known, to be attended by the creator. In other words, it seems to belong to the nature of God to care about the human condition. He does know. What divine attention means is a place in our world, a place we inhabit that can only be described in royal and divine terms.

At one point in God's diatribe with Job, God says, are you crowned with glory and honor? Another one of those loaded questions that Job didn't see coming.

Answer implied, no, that's tied to your place in character. But that's the terms that show up here in Psalm 8. Those are the terms that show up in Psalm 8.

[32 : 44] Moving from finitude to nobility, this insignificance of the human beings, relatively speaking, is mysteriously matched by an intractable dignity that is granted to people at creation and exercised in dominion over the earthly order.

Human beings are both fragile and invested with divine power, verses 6 through 8. Let's just read those together, 6 through 8. You made them rulers. By the way, caused to be.

It's a hyphil stem. You nod back to Genesis 1. You made them rulers over the works of your hands. You put everything under their feet.

All flocks and herds and animals of the wild, the birds of the sky, the fish of the sea that swim the paths of the seas. And there's the closing earthly realm of our psalm.

But what is the reason behind God's magnanimous attention? We can find some anthropological description here. Psalm 8 extols God's benevolence in behalf of humankind, which enables humankind to act on behalf of God.

[34 : 07] God vests us with a shepherding and an acknowledgement and a worship we are meant to direct back to God. I always think of the posture of Hannah when I read that.

Give me a child and I will give him back. Wait, what kind of request is that? That sounds self-defeating.

God gives so that we can receive royal identity and dignity in serving on behalf of God. Here is the matter then of universal concern of human identity and role.

Humans, the human role is defined in relation to the rest of creation, especially the animals. Why? That's day six. That's day six.

Particularly the high carriage, large animals that were also made from the ground. The psalmist then does not equivocate. Humankind is placed atop a hierarchy of dominion.

[35 : 16] I know we don't like this term, but that's precisely because we need to reanimate it. This is analogous to God's relation to the celestial cosmos itself.

And Psalm 115, 16 reminds us, the heavens are Yahweh's heavens, but the earth he has given to human beings. So as both the celestial sphere and the human creature are subject to God, so the animal world, both domestic and wild, are subject to human beings.

The animal kingdom has been annexed into God's kingdom so that humanity as the surrogate to their Lord can flourish.

And this is part of the nature of creation that unfortunately we're more used to arguing about than worshiping in. But that's fodder for David's worship, not argument.

There's key parallels that can be observed. I just want to note a few here. Notice the beasts, the birds, the fish in our psalm here, they reverse the order of Genesis 1, and they highlight the rulership and domesticated animals of day 6.

[36 : 42] Psalm 8 reverses that. In fact, elsewhere in the Old Testament, they are reversed quite commonly to show destruction and decimation. Habakkuk does this, Zephaniah does this.

But Psalm 8 reverses the Genesis 1 order, the royal imagery contained in the commission dominion over, the Radha Beit of 128, now becomes an assumed reality in the Mashal Beit of rule over. Commission and royal honor have come together. Now, Genesis 1 lodged human status in the divine image, thereby effecting dominion over all life.

In the same way, human beings reflect God's glory. This is a royal prerogative and responsibility. You know, the animals are also made and called from the ground, and God calls them nefesh chaya, living beings, but he never breathes into Fido's nose the breath of life.

Only people. Only people. God never speaks in direct discourse to the animals. Do this, do this, do this, do this. Only to people. And so animals are acknowledged, but they're not placed on the same plane.

[38:08] Gerald Wilson makes this comment. He was a psalm scholar who's passed away, is now praising the Lord that he wrote about. Humanity is God's viceroy, with one foot planted in the creaturely world, and the other in the divine realm.

So, Psalm 8 places animals under the feet of humankind. We are to shepherd them. This is power for dominion, this is not a dominion of power.

Let's then make some brief notes on this royalty and honor. The psalm highlights human worth in each of the four lines of verses five and six.

The subject of the verbs is God. God is the subject. You have made, you have crowned, you have, you have, you have.

By the way, that really cleans up the syntax of worship, too. It's very obvious who's praising and who's the one praised. It is a part of human identity to create its own world of culture out of a world that is there.

[39:28] Rule of the natural order is a divinely given vocation. Some final thoughts, then, before we move to some closing so what, some implications at the bottom of your sheet.

While sin negatively affects life of people, nowhere in Psalm 8 or the wider canon is the creation's evaluation good removed from the earthling.

In fact, many texts in the wake of sin will reinforce the creator's evaluation using stronger terms. Isaiah hears this, you are precious in my sight and honored, honored, which the chosen picks up and makes great hay with.

Isaiah 43, 4. So, crowned with glory and honor is a celebration. It's not a concession. It's a celebration. While we certainly need to hear that we can think of ourselves more highly than we ought, yes, it is also important for us to hear that we often think of ourselves less highly than we should.

When our Lord came in his incarnation, he didn't come in the form of a bird. He came in our form, uniquely to redeem us.

[41:01] And in fact, every time God shows up throughout the canon of Scripture, he shows up in human form. to speak less highly of the human than is to diminish the quality of the Creator's crafting.

The blessing and commission of the creation mandate in 128 indicates that God values us and places confidence in us, commissions us.

We have both blessing for propagation and commissioning for governance. God honors what we do and what we say, though not uncritically.

Our words and our actions count. Adam, you name them. They make a difference to the world and to God, not least because God has chosen to use human agents in getting God's work done in the world.

We need the constant reminder, brothers and sisters, that the goodness of God, in fact, the very Godness of God cannot be bought at the expense of diminishing his creatures.

[42:14] I want to point out something else. Notice the dignity of speech. Appropriately, psalm 8 is intensely performative, bursting with discourse of praise, and this conveyed in obvious form from the mouths of infants.

Why use them? I thought they're meant to be seen and not, and never mind. The stronghold of God's creation is not defended by measured decree or divine cadence, but by the untrained and unrestrained babble of nursing infants.

How ironic in these brief verses. Their babble heralds the proclamation of God's name. The outcome of this discourse and praise, whether of babies or antiphonal choir is the same.

This is the relational ecosystem that places humankind at the pinnacle of God's created order. If spoken language in its most inarticulate form can sustain divine fortresses, then how much more is this the case with the psalmist's eloquent writing?

And David wrote 73 of them. The praise of psalm 8 verges on a sacrament of dialogue. What is a human being that you regard, that you care for, that you think of, that you visit?

[43:46] This is never an abstract question. In fact, the pursuit of this theological question is never far from tragedy. It is always asked in dialogue with God.

This foundation is a key clue to the fact that the psalms are not going to answer our identity questions about who and what we are as human beings except in relation to God.

Never as an isolated entity. Put another way, the question of the human in the biblical context is also always a question about God's way with humankind.

So if the psalmist asks with a loaded question, we should stick around to see what sort of answer we get before jetting elsewhere. Psalm 8 is a celebration.

Here is God's grace and God's craft. It is a public reminder of created ecosystem in which humankind has been granted unmatched commission.

[44:57] David uses these doxological words to reinforce the fortress of God's refuge. Next to babbling babies, David's high praise buttresses this bulwark of God.

As a reminder, we cannot break away from the psalms structure. In fact, Brueggemann makes a stunning insight. He says, quote, at the center is an affirmation of human power and authority.

Yes. At its boundaries are affirmations of praise to God, thankfully. The center, verse 5, the boundaries, 1 and 9, must be read together.

Either taken alone will miss the point. Human power is always bounded and surrounded by divine praise. Doxology, doxology gives dominion its context and legitimacy.

The two must be held together because praise of God without human authority is abdication and leave it all to God. But to use human power without the context of praise of God is to profane human regency over creation and to usurp more than has been granted.

[46:18] Isn't that a fabulous observation? You need both the commission from God with the praise from man, both the what in the middle and the how on the outside.

There is balance that helps people change and grow. Some of you are rightly thinking, okay, that's fine, that's fine, schmutz.

What about the New Testament? Let's make some observations. Notice as we move to the New Testament, the animals never talked. In contrast to humans and babbling babies, the animals remain mute within the cosmic chorus.

This is a human enterprise. Humans are the shepherds, not the animals. Jesus is the son of man and picks up some of this language from the Enosh to the Ben Adam.

The anthropology of Psalm 8 became one of the main elements of initiation to Christology, especially Hebrews 2, 7-9. What is a human being?

[47:25] There is also an incarnational answer to this identity question. There is an incarnational answer to David's question.

The Ben Adam, under whom all things have been made subject, is the one who emptied himself, being born in human likeness. Following these words, these cognate words of the Aramaic, Daniel 7-13, the writer of Hebrews speaks of the son of man, which is always the phrase Jesus uses of himself, who descends from heaven.

Thus, the divine son was made a little lower than the angels. And that's what the LXX picks up on. For a little while, he was made lower than the angels.

How? By becoming a human being. Though God always intended to place even angels under human authority, here a new layer of anthropology is struck.

Because the humanization of Jesus, shown for a little while, a little lower, his suffering, then crowned with glory, finally exalted the cosmic Christ.

[48:44] He has all things now placed under his feet, Philippians 2. Right? That's 2, 7 through 11. So Jesus has done what Psalm 8 promised would be the case of the Adam.

A space has been opened up and the author of Hebrews argues that Jesus fills it. Technically speaking, that does not make Psalm 8 messianic.

It's not promising anything. But it is filled out and filled up in the life and ministry of our Lord. And so that is a rich use of Psalm 8 in the book of Hebrews.

One of the roots of this new Adam is thus to be found in the cosmic hymn of the marvel of the name. This is a Christology of participation.

The Old Testament, in fact, does not tell us who man is, but it is only the Old Testament of all the world's sacred literature which tells us what is the significance of man.

[49 : 55] Here's some closing thoughts of relevance. Notice that dialogical personhood, I think, must be captured. It must be recaptured. Dialogical personhood must be recaptured.

We were made in dialogue for dialogue. Let us make humankind in our image according to our likeness. Adam doesn't speak until there's someone like him to speak to.

Dialogue is crucial to our identity and our most ecstatic we sing. wherever you find the people of God at their greatest glorification of who Christ is in their life, you find them in song.

All throughout. More poetry when you turn to the early chapters of Revelation. More praise. So the bumper sticker I saw recently heading home from the Eisenhower, exterminate people, save kittens.

That gives us a chilling insight into the sad thinking of our culture. The theological anthropology of Psalm 8 shows us the artistry and the welcome of words.

[51 : 21] We no longer believe in words. We use them, we abuse them. We hide behind them. We blog never intending on dialoguing. We're going to need to recapture some of this beauty of words.

Part of our royal shepherding of creation is to enable all creation to give unfettered praise to God. Second of all, second observation, the language of the soul, the language of the soul and image has been replaced today with the language of the self love and identity.

The theological meaning of what it means to be human in Psalm 8 is about a royal creature, not a royal gender.

God has a name and a character and humankind also has a name and an identity.

Third of four closing observations, divine commission gives authority its flourishing impact. worth.

But worth comes from outside of us, not generated or mustered from inside us.

[52 : 59] Worth came this way, not this way. Praise is our gift back to God. Remove this transcendent relationship and all that remains.

Remove this transcendent relationship and all that remains is politics. Or as one biblical writer put it, the worship of the creature rather than the creator.

I don't remember who said that, but I'll think about it. Finally, neither the creator nor his vice regent are absorbed into the creation. The goal isn't to become one with the world.

The goal isn't to become lost in what is beautiful, which is interesting because it seems art has returned back to two-dimensional stick figures. Is that what we think of ourselves?

Is that really what we think of ourselves? the theological anthropology of Psalm 8 allows for no rigid deism or a mystical pantheism.

[54 : 17] The trees are your mother, the rivers. I seem to remember something about that. Or a narcissistic physicalism. I am my body.

What a redundancy. What does that mean exactly? I am my body. Society, contemporary society's resistance to human definition masks a rebellion to divine accountability today.

Psalm 8 can help clean up the syntax of our worship because it cleans up human identity. It's about God. And humans have a glorious role to play but it always begins with worship.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.