

Epiphany 1
January 10, 2010
Psalm 8

Epiphany is a season during which we think about different ways in which Jesus shows Himself, to us human beings, to be the eternal, glorious God, our Creator, in the flesh, a true human being, a man, created. This is our Redeemer.

Jesus' Baptism clearly reveals Jesus to us as that God in the flesh, God incarnate, to borrow a word from the Latin language.

Psalm 8 also clearly reveals Jesus to us as that God in the flesh, God incarnate.

The Full Majesty of the LORD Is Jesus.

Last Sunday, we heard from Colossians and the words "all things," all things in the heavens and all things on the Earth, all things visible, all things invisible, even all the various kinds of powers and authorities – spiritual, governmental, family were created by the beloved Son. This Psalm says the same thing. We see the majesty and glory of the LORD in the work of His almighty fingers, all the heavens, including the sun and moon and all the stars. I love how the awesome creation is pictured as the work of the LORD'S fingers.

Marvel at the heavens as you look into the sky on a clear night, away from city lights. It makes one feel very small, doesn't it! Yet God is pictures as creating all of it merely using His fingers. Scripture says the Creator did it with a simple, "Let there be" The maker is so strong. And He is wise, as we see from how all of it works together and keeps on going day after day, year after year, century after century. The Father is here too. David says He created man a little lower than the angels and yet crowned the son of man with glory and honor.

The writer of the New Testament book of Hebrews quotes these words of Psalm 8 and realistically says that we do not see man crowned with glory and honor. In fact, we don't even see all flocks and herds, all the beasts of the Earth, the birds of the air and the fish and all creatures of the sea obedient to man.

Yes, when God created Adam and Eve, God placed all these things under the rule of man. But something certainly has happened to upset that. Man attempts to rule the Earth but often botches the job. We also see the Earth rebel against man in all kinds of "natural" disasters – natural and yet so unnatural!

We know what happened! Satan sinned against God and then people – Adam and Eve – quickly followed the devil into sin. Sin has ruined everything. It has ruined us and made death a terrible and sure reality. It ruined our relationships with one another. It certainly ruined our relationship with our Creator! What dishonor and misery sin brings to all of us and to the whole world.

Hebrews is correct. We certainly do not see man crowned with glory and honor. We do not see man rule everything. But Hebrews adds these important words, "But we do see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor."

Jesus is the majestic LORD – I Am, our Lord, Master. Yet Jesus humbled Himself willingly and deliberately! We surely see that in the circumstances of His birth. God could have arranged it so that He was born in the finest of palaces. He chose a manger in a stable instead. He deliberately chose such a life, too. More than that He was born to serve, not only to serve God, His Father, He choose to serve every one of us sinners, lost and condemned sinners, as well!

Who'd ever imagine to see the Savior of the World with a manger for His crib or dying on a cross? Do these things look powerful, majestic, glorious and brimming with honor? Not at all. But our deliverance, rescue, from sin, guilt, -- condemnation, death, the devil's power and from hell came out of it. He deliberately humbled Himself in the flesh to redeem us.

And so, at His Baptism we see Jesus, a humble man, baptized by John. And yet, we see the majesty of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We hear the Father say, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." We see His Holy Spirit, in appearance as a shining dove, come to Him and stay.

At His Baptism, we see Jesus serving us by fulfilling all righteousness. He would live His whole earthly life that way, living in holy, perfect righteousness, to please the Father, to earn our righteousness. On the cross we see Him earn our forgiveness of sin, forgiveness for our unrighteousness.

And, then we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. We see Him rise from the dead, glorious and eternal. We see Him ascend to heaven. We confess Him sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. We see Him rule over every work of God and over all of creation. All things have been put under His feet.

In Jesus Chris, and only in Him, is our forgiveness. Only in Jesus will we be crowned with honor and glory. Only in Jesus will we ever fulfill God's original intention for us to rule over the flocks and herds, the beasts, birds and fish. Only in Jesus will all things come to be placed under our feet.

But with Jesus, because of Jesus, by Jesus, even a little child, even an infant can defeat every enemy of God. Jesus also quoted this Psalm and applied it directly to Himself. He said that when the little children started to chant to Jesus, the day after Palm Sunday, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were right, and they shut down the unbelieving Pharisees and unbelieving leaders. The faith in Jesus of a little child, yes even an infant baptized, will defeat the devil himself.

Because of Jesus, God – The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – is in our Baptism. There in Baptism Christ's righteous life is counted as ours. There the forgiveness Jesus earned on

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the cross and by His death is our forgiveness. There the Father makes Himself our Father and us His children. There the Holy Spirit is given to us for faith, new life and finally for eternal, glorious, honorable salvation and life.

In view of our creation and redemption by Jesus, God in the flesh, let us say, "O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your Name in all the Earth!" Amen.