

CHRIST SECURES SUPREMACY FOR MAN

HEBREWS 02:05–13

Introduction

This is a great passage of Scripture. It reveals God's eternal plan for the world, His plan for man and for Jesus Christ. It offers a glorious hope for man and his world.

Note verses six through eight; they are a quotation from Psalm 8:4-6. The Psalm was written concerning man, the great glory that God has given to man. But the words can be applied to man and to Christ. What is being said is true of both. But to whom do they apply? Who is Scripture talking about, man or Christ?

The Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest says:

“The question as to whether the Messiah or man is spoken of in verses 6-8 [Psalm 8], is settled easily and finally by the Greek word translated ‘visit.’ The Psalmist is exclaiming as to the insignificance of man in the question, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? That is clear. But to whom do the words ‘son of man’ refer, to the Messiah who is called the Son of man, or to mankind? The Greek word ‘visit’ is episkeptomai. The word means ‘to look upon in order to help or to benefit, to look after, to have a care for.’ This clearly indicates that the son of man spoken of here is the human race. God looks upon the human race in order to help or to benefit it. Thus, the picture in verses 6-8 is that of the human race in Adam” (Hebrews. “Wuest Word Studies,” Vol. 2. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1947, p. 55).

A.T. Robertson, another Greek scholar, points out that “son of man” in this passage does not have the definite article “the.” It does not say “*the* son of man” which is the title used by Jesus so often to refer to Himself. But it says “son of man” which means man, the same as it does in Ezekiel. God addressed Ezekiel as “son of man” some eighty times (cp. Ezk. 21:2; 30:2) (*Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p. 344).

William Barclay, the great New Testament expositor, says:

“The normal meaning of son of man in Hebrew is nothing other than man, as indeed it is in English also. In the psalm quoted here the two parallel phrases: ‘What is man that you remember him?’ and ‘Or the son of man that you visit him?’ are different ways of saying exactly the same thing. The psalm is a great lyric cry of the glory of man as God meant it to be” (The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 16).

The Greek scholar Marvin Vincent says:

“The ‘son of man ’ [is the] Hebrew son of Adam, with a reference to his earthly nature as formed out of the dust.... The direct reference of the words cannot be to the Messiah....” (Word Studies In The New Testament, Vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957, p. 397).

All of this seems to point to verses six through eight applying to man. God’s eternal plan for man — His glorious purpose for creating man — is what is being revealed. God has planned for man to rule and reign with His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. With Christ man is to have dominion over the whole universe. But note: it is only with Christ. It is Christ Jesus who has secured supremacy for man.

- I. God’s plan for the world to come (vv. 5-6).
- II. God’s plan for man (vv. 6-8).
- III. God’s plan for Christ (vv. 9-13).

I. Hebrews 02:05–06 God’s Plan for the World

God’s plan for the world to come is to subject the world to man. This is an astounding statement that staggers the human mind. To think that the future world is to be subjected to man, that man is to rule and reign over the world is just unbelievable to the natural mind. As verse six so accurately says: “What is man” — what is man that God should be mindful of him? Why should God exalt such a creature as man...

- who curses, rebels, ignores, neglects and rejects God?
- who is so lowly a creature that he is barely a microscopic speck in a universe of stars and planets, a universe that has billions of bodies and that seems almost unlimited?

When we have cursed God and have rejected and rebelled against Him so much, why would He not just go ahead and condemn us to an eternity of hell? Why would He not just go ahead and give the future world to angels and let them rule and reign over it for Him? The answer is the subject of the next two points, of verses 6-13. The present point is to declare the astounding fact: God has not subjected the world to come to angels, but to man. We are to rule and reign over the future world — rule and reign with God’s very own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note one other fact: ruling and reigning with Christ — having dominion over the future world — is part of the *great salvation* that Christ has provided for us, and it is a great part. This is what this passage is doing: elaborating and explaining more

fully the great salvation Christ has accomplished for us. Such a great salvation involves a new world, a world that is ruled over by Christ and His followers. We will rule and reign with Christ. We shall have dominion over the world to come, ruling, reigning and serving Christ forever and ever.

Job 7:17-18 “What is man that you make so much of him, that you give him so much attention, that you examine him every morning and test him every moment?”

Psa 8:3-6 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.

II. Hebrews 02:06–08 God’s Plan for Man

God’s creation and plan for man is covered in three clear steps.

1. God created man to be lower than the angels for a little time. *Little* probably refers to time, not to being or state and position. When God created Adam or man in the Garden of Eden, he was created lower than the heavenly beings, but higher than all earthly creatures. Man was created lower than the angels, but note: man was to be lower than the angels for only a little time. From the very beginning God has planned to exalt man.
2. God created man to crown Him with glory and honour. In his unfallen state, man was a glorious being with...
 - a noble body
 - an excellent mind
 - unbelievable ability
 - unusual power

Man had everything that was necessary to control and rule over the earth, and most of all he could walk and fellowship with God in an unbroken communion and worship. Just as the Scripture says...

- God set man over creation — over the works of His hands.
- God put everything in subjection under man’s feet or control.
- God left nothing that was not put under man’s control.

What does this mean? It means that in the original creation man (Adam) was crowned with glory and honour, and he held the highest of positions upon earth. Man was in control of all things upon earth, exalted ever so highly. There was

peace upon earth, affection between man and animals, and all of nature was under control. There was no destruction due to violence between man and animals or due to disruptions of nature such as storms, hurricanes or earthquakes. The Garden of Eden was a perfect place from which man could rule a perfect earth — if he could only prove faithful and do as God said.

Man was the most noble and excellent creature imaginable. Fallen man just cannot come close to imagining what it was like in the Garden of Eden. But this brings us to the terrible tragedy of man.

Gen 1:26-28 Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Gen 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Job 33:4 The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Psa 8:5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour.

Psa 100:3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

3. Man is presently seen in a fallen state. His authority and control over the world is not seen — not today, not yet. He is a far cry from being the noble creature he was supposed to be, who has himself and his world in subjection and under control. In fact, the very opposite is true: man does not control the world; the world controls him. Man is enslaved by evil, the evil of nature and of his own heart — the evil of every imaginable thing...

- murder
- suffering
- hate
- adultery
- war
- fear
- greed
- disease
- power
- gluttony
- selfishness
- drunkenness
- envy
- immorality
- jealousy
- cursing
- prejudice
- pride

In addition to these enslavements there are so many more, but the worst enslavement of all is death. Man is doomed to die. And this is the most terrible tragedy of all, for man was originally created to control and have dominion over the earth. But he no longer controls the earth; he dies and leaves the earth.

What happened to cause such a fall for man? What caused him to lose his glory and honour and his rule and dominion upon earth? *Sin — not doing what God said — caused Adam to fall.* And sin — simply not doing what God says — will destroy any person. God knows what needs to be done; He knows what it is that brings life to a person. Therefore, if a person does not do what God says, he loses life. He becomes enslaved to disobeying God, and disobeying God ends up in death. Kenneth Wuest states what the result of sin was upon Adam as well as it can be stated:

“Adam through his fall into sin, lost the dominion he had before enjoyed. He was no longer master of himself. He had become a fallen creature, with a totally depraved nature. He was a slave to sin, the animal kingdom was subservient to him not now through affection but fear. The ground, instead of yielding only good things, now produced also thorns, weeds and other harmful things. Extremes of heat and cold, poisonous reptiles, earthquakes, typhoons, hurricanes, all conspired to make his life a constant battle to survive. He had lost the dominion over all these things” (Hebrews, Vol. 2, p. 56f).

Gen 1:26-30 *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground — every thing that has the breath of life in it — I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.*

Gen 2:17 *“But you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”*

Gen 3:19 *“By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”*

Rom 5:12 *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Rom 8:06 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.*

1 Tim 5:06 *But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.*

Prov 21:06 *A fortune made by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapour and a deadly snare.*

Isa 59:02 *But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*

Isa 64:7 *No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins.*

Ezek 18:4 *For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son – both alike belong to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die.*

III. Hebrews 02:09–13 God’s Plan for Jesus Christ

God’s plan for Christ is the most wonderful thing in all the world. It offers the only hope man has of ever fulfilling his purpose upon earth. Man is fallen and enslaved by evil, and he lives in a corruptible and dying world that is engulfed in suffering. But in the midst of all the suffering and death, he sees Jesus. And in seeing Jesus, he sees hope – hope that all the sin and evil, death and suffering of this world can be conquered and overcome. How? By what God has planned in Christ; by what God has done in Christ.

1. God made Christ a little lower than the angels to suffer and taste death for everyone. The word “taste” means to experience or to partake of. God sent Christ into the world to experience death for every one.

Note the words “crowned with glory and honour.” Even when Jesus was upon earth, He possessed the glory and honour of God. He had the full measure of God’s Spirit. He obeyed God perfectly, never sinning. Therefore, He secured the perfect righteousness; He stood as the Perfect and Ideal Man before God. This meant a most wonderful thing: as the Ideal and Perfect Man, whatever Christ did would stand for man. Being the Perfect and Ideal Man...

- when He died, His death would cover man and free man from ever having to die.
- when He arose, His resurrection would cover man and assure man that he, too, would arise and live eternally.
- when He was exalted into heaven, His exaltation would cover man and make it possible for man to be exalted into heaven and to rule and reign over the universe for God.

Jesus Christ suffered and tasted death for every man, and because He has died, God has crowned Him with the glory and honour of heaven. God has exalted Him to the height of heaven, to His own right hand of authority and power.

The point is this: Christ has made it possible for man to be restored to his destined glory and dominion. Christ has made it possible for man to live eternally with God and to fulfil his purpose for God. Christ has made it possible for man to recover his dominion, to recover his rule and reign in the world that is to come. This was part of God's eternal plan for Christ.

2. God sent Christ into this world to show man the very nature of God (v. 10). Note what Scripture says: it was fitting to the very nature of God to create everything, to create them for Himself. This is a tremendous statement, a glorious truth. It tells us why God created the world and why He created us. He created us *for Himself*:

=> that we might know, believe and understand Him (Isa. 43:10).

=> that we might know the riches of the glory of His grace and of His kindness to us (Eph. 2:7).

God wants us to know Him — His glory, majesty and dominion, His love, grace and kindness. This is the reason He created us and ordained us to rule and reign for Him throughout the universe. But after Adam fell and lost his fellowship with God and his dominion over the earth, how was God going to reveal who He was? How was He going to reveal His nature of love, grace and kindness? There was only one way: through Christ. God had to send His own Son to earth to reveal Himself, to show man that He was loving, gracious and kind — that He wanted to flood His grace and kindness upon man. This He did in two ways.

- a. God reveals who He is — He reveals His love and kindness — by bringing many sons to glory. When a person believes that Jesus Christ died and arose for him, the death and resurrection of Christ covers the person. God takes the person's

belief and counts it as the death and resurrection of Christ. God identifies the person with Christ; He actually *counts* the person as having died and been resurrected with Christ. Therefore, the person stands before God in the righteousness of Christ; the person stands before God as righteous. Consequently, when God is ready for the person to depart this world, the person is righteous and acceptable to God. God is able to transfer the person into glory. Quicker than the eye can blink, God takes the believer into heaven, right into His own presence. Through Jesus Christ – through His death and resurrection – God is able to bring many sons into glory. Thus the eternal purpose of God for men is fulfilled.

⇒ The believer will know God face to face; he will know the riches of the glory of God's grace and kindness when he enters heaven.

Mat 13:43 *“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.”*

John 14:2-3 *“In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

John 17:24 *“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”*

2 Cor 4:17 *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

2 Cor 5:08 *We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*

Phi 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

Col 3:4 *When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

1 Th 4:17 *After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*

2 Tim 2:10 *Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.*

⇒ The believer lives before God in glory and praise and worship. He shall serve the Lord Jesus Christ, ruling and reigning with Him forever in the new heavens and earth.

Mat 16:27 *“For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.”*

Mat 25:23 *“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’”*

Mat 25:34 *“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.’”*

Luke 1:33 *“And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”*

Luke 12:42-44 *The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.”*

Rom 8:16-17 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit, that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

2 Tim 4:1 *In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:*

Titus 3:7 *So that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

Rev 5:10 *“You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”*

Rev 20: 4 *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God.*

They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Rev 21:1-7 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”*

Isa 9:7 *Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Isa 32:1 *See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice.*

Jer 23:5 *“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.”*

Dan 7:14 *He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.*

- b. God reveals who He is, His love and kindness, by making the author of our salvation perfect through suffering. The author of our salvation is, of course, Jesus Christ. The word “author” (archegos) means the pathfinder, the pioneer, the founder, the originator. It means the one who blazes forth and cuts through something so that others may follow. Jesus Christ opened up the way or trail to God. This He did by suffering all the experiences of men — perfectly.

He remained perfect through all His sufferings. He never sinned; He never failed, not even once. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered — perfectly. And by such, He secured a perfect and an eternal righteousness for man. He is the perfect pioneer who has cut the perfect path to God. He is the Ideal and Perfect Man who stands for and covers all persons...

- all who believe and trust Him to cover them.
- all who believe and trust Him to make them presentable to God.

God reveals who He is in Christ. We know that God is loving, gracious and kind because He sent Christ to suffer for us. It is His sufferings — all that He bore and endured in purchasing our salvation — that shows us what God is like. God is love.

=> His sending Christ to bear the guilt and punishment for our sins shows us that He is love.

=> His promise to exalt us into glory shows us that He is love.

But remember: this is all through Christ. This is part of God's eternal plan for Christ. God planned for Christ to save us so that we could see and know that He is loving, gracious and kind.

Rom 5:8-10 *But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Eph 2:4-7 *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

1 John 3:1 *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*

3. God sent Christ to share equally with the ones who are made holy, the believers. Note: the person who makes believers holy and sets believers apart is Christ. The word *holy* means to be sanctified, to be set apart and separated to God. It means that a person has turned away from the world and separated himself

from the world and its sins and has set himself apart to live for Christ. Note these glorious facts.

- a. Both Christ and believers are of *One*, that is, of God. They have the same Father (v. 11). Through Christ believers are born again, spiritually born of God. They are adopted into the family of God. God becomes their Father just as He is the Father of Christ. Through Christ believers have the same Father as Christ.

Rom 8:15 *For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”*

Gal 4:4-6 *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*

- b. Both Christ and believers share the same position, the position of brothers (v. 11). Christ is not ashamed to call a believer His brother. But remember why: because believers trust Him as their Saviour and have set apart their lives to live for Him.

Mat 12:50 *“For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”*

Rom 8:16-17 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit, that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

Eph 2:19 *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.*

Eph 3:15 *From whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.*

- c. Both Christ and believers share the same worship (v. 12). This is a picture of worship, of Christ declaring the name of God to His brothers in the midst of the church (cp. Psa. 22:22). Christ lives within the hearts and lives of believers, stirring them to learn more and more about God and to worship Him more and more.

Rom 15:6 *So that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Heb 13:15 *Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name.*

1 Cor 6:20 *You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

1 Pet 2:9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*

Psa 7:3 *O LORD my God, if I have done this and there is guilt on my hands,*

- d. Christ and believers share the same truth (v. 13. Cp. Psa. 18:2; Isa. 8:17.) When Christ was upon earth, He trusted God perfectly, never sinning or disobeying Him. Therefore, Christ is able to present believers to God. Christ leads believers to trust God and to learn to trust Him more and more.

John 6:28-29 *Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”*

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Eph 6:16 *In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.*

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

1 John 3:23 *And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ■*