

Psalm 8:2

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/ps/ps-8/psalm-82/>

Though God is all-powerful, He has chosen to use the youngest and weakest creation, Man, to silence His enemy, Satan.

David turns from expressing amazement and awe at the vastness and splendor of God's creation, and His sovereign rule over all that is in it, to ponder humankind, how God's glory is displayed through us, and how our existence serves a purpose against God's *enemy*. David describes how: *From the mouth of infants and nursing babes* God has *established strength*. It is paradoxical here that *nursing babes* are the vehicle through which God has *established strength*. This strength established by God is *Because of His adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease*. Who are the *adversaries* of God? Who is His *enemy*, who is the *revengeful*? And how do *nursing babes* get the *strength* to cause all these to *cease*?

The ultimate enemy of God is the Devil, Satan, who tempted Adam and Eve and led them into sinful rebellion, which resulted in our separation from God. Satan (which literally means, "the accuser") opposes God's will and seeks to destroy humans (1 Peter 5:8). Jesus calls him a murderer and the father of lies (John 8:44). Enmity with God is found by living outside of His will, in rebellion to His created reality and order. Satan is the father of such enmity. Satan led a third of the angels to follow him in rebellion against God (Revelation 12:4) and, as a murderer, desires to destroy humanity. It is likely that Satan is *revengeful* against humans for taking his place, being appointed to rule over the earth. Satan's desire to reign is disclosed in the book of Isaiah:

"For you have said in your heart:
I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation"
(Isaiah 14:13)

In what way is *the enemy*, Satan, *revengeful*? It seems clear that Satan's intent was to rule over both earth as well as heaven. The phrase "sit on the mount of the congregation" is literally "mount of the congregation to 'tsaphown'." Here, the Hebrew word "tsaphown" may refer to a mountain north of Israel where Canaanite gods were said to dwell, gods who would rule over earthly kings. The term likely became a metaphor for "north" as well as earthly dominion. It seems then that Satan's goal was to seize authority over all the earth, as well as in heaven ("exalt my throne above the stars of God"). The "stars of God" probably refers to the angelic realm. And Satan planned to seize the power by his own strength, as he says "I will exalt my throne."

Satan apparently failed in his attempt to seize power, since God delegated to humanity power over the earth (Genesis 1:26). However, humans failed the assignment, as the first Adam fell. Perhaps at this point Satan did gain authority over the earth, since Jesus called Satan the "ruler of the world" (John 14:30). However, now God has endowed Jesus (the second Adam) all authority

over heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18; Romans 5:14) because He became fully obedient, and servant of all (Philippines 2:8; Matthew 9:35). The one who attempted to seize power will be brought low (Isaiah 14:15-17), and the one who became the servant of all has been exalted above all. Jesus is fully human, as well as being fully God (John 1:1-10) so has initiated fulfillment of Psalm 8. All believers who follow Jesus as obedient servants can share Jesus' reward to rule the earth, fulfilling God's design for us (Revelation 3:21).

The full expression of an infant ruling over the earth begins its full restoration when Jesus Christ comes to earth as a human infant. As this prophecy from Isaiah states:

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,"
(Isaiah 9:6-7a)

God reigns in heaven; as the Lord's Prayer states, God's will is always done there (Matthew 6:10). But God appointed humans to reign over earth. For that, Satan desires revenge against humans. Accordingly, verse 2 calls Satan *vengeful*.

In spite of Satan's power, the *strength* of *infants and nursing babes* somehow works against Satan, to cause him to *cease*, or to be quieted, to be stilled. To shut him up, so his accusing stops. Humans are like *nursing babes* in the universe compared to heavenly beings in at least two ways. First, humans are newly arrived on the scene compared to the heavenly beings, who have apparently been around for eons of time. One thing we know when we see a nursing baby: they are newly arrived. Similarly, humans are new arrivals in Creation compared to the angelic beings. Second, nursing babies are quite fragile and dependent compared to adults. But God *established strength* in humans, *strength* so powerful that it can silence Satan. What is that *strength*? At least a part of the *strength* is the strength of Christ working through believers by faith (Philippians 4:13). Faith is a key distinction, because humans can live by faith, in this life, while those in the angelic realm live by sight. Faith is believing what cannot be seen (Hebrews 11:1).

God gave humans the power to choose who or what to trust. We have the power to choose, and live in an environment that, while clearly displaying evidence of God, has His glory sufficiently veiled such that we are not compelled to trust Him. Therefore, humans have the ability to choose to trust God, to know and believe in Him and to know Him by faith. Further, humans can know and interact with other humans by faith, including believers, those whom God calls His Body (1 Corinthians 12:27). By contrast, angelic beings know God by sight. Satan, and some of his followers, apparently have free access to heaven, so long as they follow the rules (Job 1:6-7; 1 Kings 21:21-22). Revelation tells us there will come a point in time when Satan is thrown down to earth, and will lose his access to heaven (Revelation 12:7-9). Some of the fallen angels apparently broke the rules and were thrown into the abyss, and lost their access to both heaven as well as earth (2 Peter 2:4).

It is amazing, that fragile and newly arrived humans would be chosen over angels to rule the earth, since humans are lower than angels. Humans were created to *make the enemy and the revengeful cease*. We humans are the newly arrived *nursing babes*. Compared to the angels, we are newborns in creation. The angels have been around for eons. They have been in the presence of God. They have been taught by God. But where are these angelic beings looking to understand the manifold wisdom of God? They are looking at the church, which is the collection of humans on earth who have believed in Jesus. Paul points to this in his letter to the Ephesians:

“So that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 3:10).

So it seems clear that one way God ordains strength to silence Satan, and display His glory, is through humans knowing God by faith and walking by faith. The angelic beings are watching carefully, and learning about God as they do so.

This aspect of coming to know about God through watching the Body of Christ appears to apply to the good angels as well. The faithful angels who serve God wish to understand and observe the gospel (1 Peter 1:12). They are learning of God by watching Him engage with humans who live by faith. But clearly a part of it is to “shut up” *the enemy and the revengeful*, which is Satan and his followers.

Jesus quoted Psalm 8:2, and validated this interpretation. After Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the chief priests and scribes were outraged at children saying of Jesus “Hosanna to the Son of David” which was a proclamation that Jesus is the Messiah. When these Jewish leaders confronted Jesus, they asked “Do You hear what these children are saying?” They clearly expected Jesus to repudiate the idea that He is the Messiah, the Son of David. But of course Jesus was and is the Messiah, the Son of David. Jesus refuted them by quoting Psalm 8: “Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for Yourself?’” (Matthew 21:16). Jesus’ application of Psalm 8 points to children giving praise to God’s glory through recognizing Jesus as God come to earth as a human. God’s plan will not be thwarted. Upon His entry, Jesus made clear that God will use rocks to declare His glory if humans do not. But the purpose for which God made humans is fulfilled when we glorify God.

God could make the inanimate creation, such as stones, praise Him, but He desires humans to choose freely to follow His ways, and in doing so glorify Him. God desires relationship with His children, He gives new birth to those who have believed in Him (John 3:14-16). God desires His people to freely know Him and walk with Him. He prepared praise from humans—created beings who were newer and weaker than the angelic beings. This goes back to David’s wonderment: God has created the beauty of the planets, the stars, the angels, and so on, yet He cares for us especially and has given us a job with high honor, crowning us with the glory and majesty of ruling over the earth (verse 5).

Of course, when the enemy of God—Satan—led humans into sin, humankind fell short of fulfilling our role as rulers of the earth. God’s design was for humans to rule the earth in perfect harmony with Him, with one another, and with nature. As noted in Romans 8:22, the creation cries out for restoration. The presence of sin, death, and decay shows the corruption that has

taken place on the physical earth as well as in the spiritual realm. Which is part of why Jesus became a man, to redeem the earth. The author of Hebrews expounds on Psalm 8 to show in detail how Jesus fulfilled the purpose God gave humans by obeying Him perfectly, thereby receiving rulership of creation, and restoring its original design.

In Hebrews 2, the author quotes a good portion of Psalm 8, then makes an immense understatement:

“But now we do not yet see all things subjected to [humans].” (Hebrews 2:8b).

This is true many times over. The original design, where humans are “crowned with glory and majesty” of ruling over nature in service with one another and in harmony with God—that’s a dream, not a reality.

However, Hebrews 2 goes on to provide a great hope for restoration, stating that while we do NOT see all things as they ought to be, there is something wonderful we DO see:

“But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.”
(Hebrews 2:9).

This verse tells us that Jesus became human, by being made “a little lower than the angels” for a time. But Jesus has now been “crowned with glory and honor” of having the authority to rule the earth because of “the suffering of death” (Hebrews 2:9b). Jesus stated this plainly to the disciples after He rose from the dead, telling them “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18b). By stating He had “all authority” Jesus was claiming that He had been granted the right to rule, as a human.

Jesus asserted His right to rule as the first part of His command to believers often referred to as the “Great Commission.” The entire earth was granted to Jesus as a reward for His faithful service, and obedience to the Father, as stated in Philippians 2:

“Being found in appearance as a man, [Jesus] humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth.”
(Philippians 2:8-10)

This is also stated by Jesus Himself in Revelation:

“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”
(Revelation 3:21)

The phrase “sat down with My Father on His throne” paints a picture of sharing authority to reign. Jesus always had the authority of being God, as He was One with the Father. But He was granted authority to reign as a human, fulfilling Psalm 8, because He learned obedience, even unto death.

In all these passages, it is clear that Jesus has restored what was fallen through His obedience. He became servant of all, and therefore has become the greatest of all (Mark 9:35). And Jesus has paved the way for any to follow. Any who suffer His sufferings will share in His rewards (Romans 8:17b). This is what shuts up Satan. It is through the power of service and suffering, the faithful obedience with the faith of a child that is the great strength God has ordained.

As Hebrews 2 states, it was fitting for Jesus to bring “many sons to glory” and “to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.” When believers suffer as Jesus suffered, we follow His path to restoration of our purpose to rule the earth, and share Jesus’ throne. This is the greatest of rewards, and is available to every believer. Gaining this reward will lead to our own fulfillment as well as a fulfillment of God’s design, and we will silence His enemies. All believers are God’s children, and will have God as an inheritance (Romans 8:17a). But the reward of sharing Jesus’ throne is only granted to those who choose the same suffering of obedience that Jesus chose (Romans 8:17b; Revelation 3:21).

[Please see our commentary on Hebrews 2:5-8 for more detail on this topic.](#)

Biblical Text

2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength

Because of Your adversaries,

To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.