

WHAT IS MAN? Mel Futrell

Psalm 8 is one of one hundred and fifty Psalms that comprise *The Book of Psalms*. It is also one of seventy-three Psalms that is attributed to David by the superscriptions. Likewise, it is worth noting that of the fifty or so Psalms which are not ascribed to anyone, some of these were also penned by David because the New Testament tells us so [e.g. Psalm 2 (Acts 4:25) and Psalm 95 (Hebrews 4:7)]. Now let us turn to the Psalm itself.

The eighth Psalm, containing but nine verses, begins and ends on the same exact note by magnifying God's name — "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" What a wonderful and needed lesson is there for us. Whether in song, prayer, or everyday speech; God should be praised and His name magnified. When considering this, one can't help but think of our Lord's instructive words about prayer, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9). But as you well know this is not always the case. Many people today crudely and

flippantly throw about the name of God and His only-begotten Son.

Obviously the focus of the Psalm is on what God has done, what He has created (vss. 3-8). With man being the undeniable crown of His creation (vss. 4-5); whom God has given responsibility toward and dominion over the rest of creation (vss. 6-8). The moon and stars are set beautifully in the heavens and are ordained by God. Yet man alone shines above them all as the crown jewel of God's creative handiwork. God did indeed make all sheep, oxen, beasts of the field, fowl of the air, and fish of the sea. But only man was crowned "with glory and honor" and given dominion over the works of God's hands. David here echoes the words first written by Moses in Genesis 1:28 and 9:2. In a day when growing numbers of people are wrongly equating animal life with human life, we would do well to remember this teaching from God through David and Moses. It is man who was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and tasked with superintending God's glorious and marvelous creation.

Psalm 8:4 asks two deep and sobering questions, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him." I want to note here that of all God's creatures, only man is capable of even asking such a question. And David "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1), did just that. Only man with his God given self-awareness is able to reflect upon such matters. So what is man? David moved by the Spirit of God (2 Samuel 23:2) proclaims he is:

- Made by God
- A little lower than the angels
- Crowned with glory and honor
- Over the works of God's hands

Continued on page 40

EDITORIAL

CAN MAN SAVE HIS SELF? Ronnie Hayes

The Psalmist asked the question, “What is man” (Psalm 8:4)? Have you ever wondered why God would spend so much time on man? Tom Wacaster writes,

“When we consider the enormous expanse of this universe, it has an humbling effect upon us. The mere size of this galaxy, not to mention the entire universe, overwhelms our mortal minds. All of these things considered, and man is a mere speck in the whole of things; insignificant indeed when compared to the whole. And yet our God is **STILL MINDFUL** of us” (*The Songs and Devotions of David*, 101).

Man is God’s creation (Psalm 8:4) and we are made in His very image (Genesis 1:26). Man is unique from every other creature in that He “...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and he became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). God desires for man to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). But man has chosen to separate himself from God through sin (Genesis 3:1-24; Isaiah 59:1,2). Once man sinned and destroyed his relationship with God how is man to get back his relationship with God? Can man save himself? Jeremiah wrote, “O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jeremiah 10:23). Jeremiah recognizes man’s inability to save his self, no matter how hard man may try. Why you ask? Let’s look at a few reasons:

Man cannot pay the price. There is a price that has to be paid. The Hebrew writer said, “And almost all things are by the law purged with

blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). It was Christ and only Christ that could pay this price. “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Hebrews 9:28). We deserve to die because of the sin in our lives. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Everyday, we should be grateful that God allowed Christ to pay that price for us; to stand in our stead.

Man cannot offer the perfect sacrifice. It was prophesied that Christ would be our sacrifice. Isaiah wrote, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:4,5). It had to be a sinless sacrifice. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). It had to be the spotless Lamb of God. “But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19). The Old Testament sacrifices would not do. “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats

should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:1-4). It had to be the Son of God for our

God desires for man to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).
--

sacrifice. “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29).

Man is not part of God’s eternal plan of salvation. It was God’s eternal plan for Christ to pay the price and be the perfect sacrifice for man. Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:9-11). On the day of Pentecost Peter proclaimed, “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:22,23). It isn’t an accident by which Christ died on the cross. It was God’s plan!

So to answer our beginning question can man save himself? Absolutely not! It took God giving His Son, to be our propitiation (cf. 1 John 2:2). Christ is now the Author and finisher of our faith (cf. Hebrews 5:8,9). He paid the price, was the perfect sacrifice from God’s eternal plan...He has the authority to tell us what we must do for salvation! I pray we have the wisdom to listen.

CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Tom Larkin

From its earliest pages the Bible declares that man was created in the image of God and after his likeness. During the creation week, God pronounced this intention concerning man. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26-27). Following the flood God revealed that he intends for murderer to be executed, because “in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6).

To this agrees the New Testament record. Paul declared to those at Mars’ Hill “we are the offspring of God” (Acts 17:29). He also taught that a man should not cover his head when he prays “forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God” (1 Corinthians 11:7). And James warned that we should not curse man since he is “made after the similitude of God” (James 3:9).

From the first two chapters of Genesis it is evident that man is the crown of God’s creative work. Man is set apart from the rest of God’s creation precisely because he was created in the image and likeness of God. Furthermore, in all of God’s creation only man is so created. Even the most cursory examination of the animal kingdom reveals a vast difference between man and animals. In many physical comparisons, man may at times be inferior – he cannot run like the cheetah, carry heavy loads like the elephant, or fly like a bird. Yet, God gave man dominion over all of creation because he was made in the image of God. This

implies that in some vital way man is superior to the world around him.

Unlike the claims of Charles Darwin that man is the most highly developed animal to have evolved, the Bible indicates that man was made “a little lower than the angels” (Psalm 8:5). The difference between the two views is significant, for if man is nothing more than the most highly developed animal, he cannot bear God’s image. But the distinction between man and the animal world demonstrates beyond doubt that man indeed is created in the image of God.

When God created the animal world he said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature” (Genesis 1:24), but when he made man after his image and likeness, “he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). Like the animals that came forth from the earth so man’s body was formed from the dust of the ground. But only into man did God breathe “the breath of life.” Solomon therefore was right in saying at a person’s death “the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Man is not just a physical being; he is also a spiritual being. It is his mind and not his body that is made in the image of God. This also is in harmony with the New Testament passages that teach that God is a spirit and is not flesh and bones (John 4:24; Luke 24:39).

As a spiritual being man thinks conceptually and communicates in words. Man writes, gathers knowledge and can improve his intellect. A dog can go to obedience school, and fish swim in a “school,” but in the created order man alone has the ability to gain knowledge and pass it on to future generations. In his

ability to relate rationally to others and the world around him, he is like God who has communicated with man through his word.

Because man is created in the image and likeness of God, he is a volitional being; God created man with freedom of will. Unlike the animal world that is driven largely by instinct, man can make choices and determine the course of his life. In the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had the freedom to choose whether to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This fact is evident in God’s warning that eating of the tree had certain and dire consequences (Genesis 2:17). Man understands a moral oughtness – we recognize that a difference exists between right and wrong. Of all that he created, only in man did God place a conscience. The house cat feels no remorse when she kills a mouse, neither does she believe that she is doing a good deed – she simply is acting instinctively. But when man’s conscience accuses or excuses him (cf. Romans 2:15), it should remind him that he is made in the image of God.

Unlike anything else that God created, man is a religious being. The desire to worship has been demonstrated throughout history and in every part of the earth. This ingrained tendency, again unseen in the animal world, points man to the fact that he is created in the image and likeness of God. This aspect of his makeup should also remind man of the ultimate purpose of his creation – “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

76 Antioch Rd.
Somerville, AL 3567

IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?

Chance Hicks

There are a number of great questions throughout the pages of Scripture. Peter asked, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" (John 6:68). Numerous individuals on the day of Pentecost asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). David asked, "Is there not a cause?" (1 Samuel 17:29). The Psalmist penned, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8:4).

Job was a great patriarch who asked a question of enormous significance in his day and in our day. God described Job as "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil" (Job 1:1). In fact, God said concerning Job "there is none like him in the earth" (Job 1:8). Job suffered greatly in this life at the hands of Satan, but he was unwilling to deny God or to turn from following after Him. Job realized the brevity of this life when he said, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:1-2). In this same speech Job asked the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14).

The Question Asked

The asking of the question affects every individual that has ever and will ever live upon the earth. The question begins, "If a man die." There is no question about this fact; every individual upon the face of the earth will one day face death if Christ does not return in our lifetime. The Hebrews writer penned, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). Death is a fact of life that cannot be avoided.

The question is one that is looking for something more. If this life is all that there is, then what is

the purpose of life? What brings life meaning if there is no hope beyond the grave? To ask the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" is to look forward with hope of something greater, of something better! Is there hope for something better? Will there be a resurrection when man will live again?

The Question Answered

The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that there will be a resurrection of all who have walked upon the face of the earth. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul declares plainly that there will be a resurrection of the dead. Christ died and was raised up from the dead; He has "become the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15:20). I can have confidence that on the final day there will be a resurrection of the dead.

Death is simply a separation of my spirit from my physical body. James wrote, "For as the body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26). When my spirit departs my physical body, it does not cease to exist. Rather it passes into the Hadean, or unseen, realm where it remains in either paradise or torments until the final day when Christ returns to judge the world in righteousness. Luke 16 describes the Hadean realm where the soul of the rich man remains in torments and the soul of Lazarus remains comforted in Abraham's bosom. When man dies, he does not cease to exist. His soul enters this unseen realm, but one day it will be reunited with his physical body and changed into a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 52-53). The question, "If a man die,

shall he live again?" simply is answered, yes.

The Question Applied

How does this question and its answer affect this life? Where we are for eternity is dependent upon the choices we make in this life. No one will be able to escape the resurrection and the day of judgment (Psalms 139:7-8; 2 Corinthians 5:10). There is nowhere that we can run to hide from the all-seeing eye of Almighty God. Man is going to live again, either in Heaven to enjoy everlasting life or in Hell to endure everlasting destruction forever separated from the presence of the Lord.

How are we living this life? Are we living this life in view of eternity? If we want to enjoy the beauty of Heaven and enjoy living again, then we must live a life upon the earth that is according to the will of God! Jesus stated, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). Those who refuse to obey will be cast into the bottomless pit where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:30).

Job asked a great question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The question is answered, yes! We must constantly remember this great truth and make preparation for eternity!

4207 Veterans Memorial Dr.
Adamsville, AL 35005

WHAT IS MAN'S ROLE IN THE HOME?

Sam Willcut

As we address the question, "What is man?" (cf. Psalm 8:4), we look to his home life. Over the past few decades and several generations, we are seeing a dearth of manhood. Much of the problems in the church regarding the roles of men and women are a direct result of the problems of manhood in the home. Thus, let us notice this important topic.

First, the role of man in the home is simply to be a godly man. The kind of man that God wants and the kind of man that the world may want are not always the same. In his book, "Missing from Action: Vanishing Manhood in America," Weldon Hardenbrook introduces four false images of men: Macho Maniac (men who deny feelings, ignore rules, never complain, just sweat a lot), Great Pretender (men who build up their own self-esteem by belittling everyone else, imagines he is ruling while everyone ridicules him behind his back), World Class Wimp (men who are inept, constantly outwitted by their wives and children, passive in nature) and Gender Blenders (men who do not even try to be masculine). Therefore, taking Biblical examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus, the godly man is compassionate: "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state" (Philippians 2:20). The godly man is consistent: "But ye know the proof of him, that...he hath served with me in the gospel" (Philippians 2:22). The godly man is cooperative: "...Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants" (Philippians 2:25). The godly man has commitment: "For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death..." (Philippians 2:26-27). The godly

man is courageous: "...hold such in reputation: because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me" (Philippians 2:29-30).

Second, the role of man in the home may be of husband. For Adam, God made him a suitable companion with a woman to be his wife (Genesis 2:18-25). In reflecting back on the creation of marriage, Paul addresses this in Ephesians 5:25-33. Among other important things, Paul stresses that husbands are to love their wives. Far too many marriages are falling apart because husbands fail to understand and perform this important quality. So that no one may misunderstand him, he describes the manner in which husbands are to love their wives—husbands are to love their wives in the same way that Christ loved the church. By teaching this important lesson through an analogy (cf. Ephesians 5:32), he places them respectively side-by-side. Christ loved his bride, the church, enough to give himself for it—he voluntarily died for her (cf. John 10:11; 15:13; II Corinthians 8:9; Galatians 1:3-4; Ephesians 5:2; Titus 2:11-24; Hebrews 9:26-28; I Peter 2:21-24; 3:18; I John 3:16; Revelation 1:5-6). By such sacrifice, he purified her through his blood (Ephesians 5:26-27). Thus, husbands are to love their wives to the degree that they would lay down their lives for her. If they elevate her to such heights, then why will some husbands not arise from their recliners to help their wives do the dishes? Any number of other examples could suffice. In addition, husbands are to love their wives as they love themselves (Ephesians 5:28-30). To illustrate this, Paul reminds us from Genesis 2 that God made the first wife from the very flesh of Adam. When he stated, "This is now bone of my bones, and

flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2:23), he was speaking of his literal body. How do you think Adam treated Eve when he knew that she came from his own body? No doubt, he was gentle and loved her tenderly, giving all the care for her as he would to his own flesh. Per the instructions from Paul, this is how husbands are to love their wives.

Third, the role of man in the home may be that of father. Certainly, the will of God is that a man be a husband first and a father second. Unfortunately, such does not always occur. When fornication occurs, some young men become fathers before they become husbands (cf. Hebrews 13:4), but such is still the result of the law of sowing and reaping. Paul continued in Ephesians by addressing this role of man in the home: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). By so doing, fathers must be diligent teachers for their children (cf. Deuteronomy 6:6-9). Several times, God knew that children would be asking their parents important questions, and he commanded them to teach (cf. Exodus 12:25-27; Deuteronomy 6:20-25; Joshua 4:5-7, 21-24; Psalm 44:1). In addition, fathers must be disciplinarians. We are to learn the nature of authority from our parents (cf. Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3), and fathers may ensure such when they practice proper discipline in the home.

Therefore, the role of man in the home includes being a godly man, a godly husband and a godly father!

PO Box 127
Munford, TN 38058

WHAT IS MAN'S (CHRISTIAN) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LOST?

James E. Rogers

It is the responsibility of the church to preach the Gospel to the world (Matthew 28:18-20). The work of evangelism consists of the faithful Christian finding the lost and bringing them to the Christ. Everything done by the church is to contribute toward the salvation of the souls of men. We have great opportunities before us to teach the Gospel to the world. We must have Christians who will busy themselves as faithful finders of the lost. I am unable to give proper credit for the following but it illustrates the point as to the concern a Christian must have for the lost.

The late **Foy Smith** used to tell the following story, and added a few thoughts to drive the point home.

A preacher was sitting in his study one Sunday morning. It was time for him to go into the pulpit and a person tapped on the door to see what was causing the delay. There the preacher sat in his chair looking out the window. He could see for miles down into the valley below. When asked why he was weeping, the preacher replied: "I was sitting here looking out over the valley. I see thousands of houses. People are going about their business and most of them are lost, and I can't do anything about it." The friend replied, "Quit crying, you will get over it." The preacher responded, "I know it. That's why I'm crying."

Have we forgotten how to cry over lost souls? We are so used to seeing millions around us who are all but impossible to reach with the gospel and, with a shrug, we learn to let them go on with a "so what?" dismissive attitude.

Our Lord wept as He looked over the city of Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). His agony is also evident in the reading of Matthew 23:37-38. If

Jesus wept over lost souls, so should we. May we never try to comfort the soul winner by saying, "Dry your eyes; quit crying. You'll get over it." Benjamin Franklin once said: "Nothing dries sooner than a tear." But it was the apostle Paul, who by inspiration, said, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (I Corinthians 9:16). Is it not time we started shedding these kinds of tears?

Perhaps a reading of Luke 15 will provoke some ideas for carrying out our responsibility to the lost. Here Jesus talks about lost things and lost people. May we suggest the following thoughts!

My responsibility is to recognize when people are lost and go to find them (Luke 15:4). John 1 tells about the activities of faithful finders of the lost. John the Immerser, Andrew and Phillip were finders of the lost (John 1:35-37; 3:1-6; 1:40-42; 1:43-51).

My responsibility is to see clearly, sweep thoroughly and search diligently for the lost (Luke 15:8). I must have my life in order that I might help others (Matthew 7:1-5). I will leave no lawful method unused in bringing the gospel to the lost. Each individual may favor a certain method of teaching and he should use it to his best ability. Others may approach the task differently. All must approach the task.

My responsibility is to live in such a way as to be attractive to the lost (Luke 15:17). It was the memory of the conduct of his father toward the hired servants that helped bring this lost boy home. Peter recommended a lifestyle as an evangelistic tool to be used to "gain" a lost one (1 Peter 3:1-6). We teach more than we know by what we do.

My responsibility is to go to the lost and entreat them (Luke 15:28). Sometimes this means I will leave pleasant activities to fulfill my task

(15:22-24). Seeing the importance of a lost soul and understanding my responsibility to that soul will motivate me to move when the time is right. I do not know the outcome of this effort by the father with his elder son, but I do know the father did everything in his power to convince this boy. When I have done all I can to teach the lost, I have delivered my soul (Ezekiel 33:7-16).

A study of the book of Acts shows the activities of first century Christians as they carried out their responsibility to the lost. As one examines these Scriptures, he will observe three things:

1. Their message was The Christ (Peter, Acts 2,3,4,10; Phillip, Acts 8:5,12,35; Paul, Acts 13:1-14:28; 15:36-18:22; 18:23-21:16).

2. Their message was preached with constancy. The early chapters of Acts tell of the activities of the apostles in the early 30's of the first century, the middle chapters of their activity in the 40's and the later chapters of their activity in the 50's. In each decade the emphasis was on Christ.

3. Their lives characterized their teaching. Peter and John were pillars of the church (Galatians 2:9); men of prayer (Acts 3:1) and benevolence (Acts 3:6) and people could tell they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). The apostles were men of prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). Barnabas was generous in giving (Acts 4:36,37), judgment (Acts 9:26,27) and heart (Acts 15:36-41).

This is the Christian's responsibility to the lost. May each Christian take his responsibility seriously. No, May **I take my responsibility seriously!**

PO Box 2895
Cookville, TN 38502

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Ben Wright

Our Lord was the Master Teacher. One of the teaching tools He used was that of the parable. The parable has been defined as an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus would use a parable when attempting to get some spiritual truth across to His audience or in answer to a question. Recorded for us in Luke chapter ten is the parable of the good Samaritan. Jesus was asked by a man who his neighbor was that he was to love as himself. The man did this in order to try and show that he was righteous, which is the idea of the word justify found in verse 29 (The Complete Word Study New Testament, pg. 905). Jesus, using this parable, laid out very plainly who was the neighbor of this man and all men, including us.

From this parable we first see that our neighbor is not one that has to look or talk like us. The Samaritans and Jews did not get along with one another at all. There were great religious differences between the two groups. There were also racial differences between the two. Jews would walk around the area of Samaria in order not to have to be near the Samaritans. This Samaritan saw someone who was not like him and still helped the Jew despite these differences.

Racism, classism, sexism and any other discriminatory actions are sinful according to this parable. If we hold an idea that keeps us from being a neighbor, it is an idea that needs to be discarded immediately. Every individual we come into contact with has a soul, regardless of his or her race, social position or economic status. This is something our young people need to learn while in school with a diverse group of students. This is something Christians need to learn in all walks of life. Man is made in the image of God, having an

eternal soul (Genesis 1:27). We must never be guilty of being unneighborly to anyone because we sin when we do so.

From this parable we also see that my neighbor is one in need of compassion. The Samaritan found this man lying on the side of the road. He was wounded and in need of medical attention. He was unable to care for himself and needed compassion shown to him by someone. The Samaritan gave this man care and aid because he did not see someone unlike him, he simply saw someone in need of compassion, which is the idea of showing pity or sympathy (Strong's Concordance).

Several times in the gospel accounts, we read of Jesus having compassion on someone or a group of people. He had compassion on the multitudes that followed him, which caused Him to feed them (Mark 8:2ff). He had compassion on the man who had been possessed by the demons known as "Legion" (Mark 5:1-19). What is extremely interesting is that every time our Lord showed compassion, it was more than being emotional. It was shown in His actions. He fed the multitude and healed the man possessed. In the parable under consideration, the Samaritan had compassion and showed it by taking care of the one who had been beaten. Compassion is an action, biblically speaking, not an emotion.

From this parable we also see that my neighbor is one I can go out of my way to help. No doubt it took time away from other business the Samaritan had to help this man. It took money out of his pocket to pay for the man's care. Most certainly, he had to go out of his way to help this man.

Being a neighbor is not always easy. When someone is in need of compassion, it takes effort to meet

that need. When someone is not like me, but in need of help, it takes effort to give that help. Being a neighbor takes effort and is difficult, but God expects us to do it, therefore it is possible, else God would not ask us to do such.

We also see from this parable that my neighbor is one who is in need of mercy. As the parable closes, Jesus asked the man who was attempting to justify himself, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?" (Luke 10:36). The man answered correctly when he replied, "He that showed mercy on him" (Luke 10:37). According to Strong's, mercy is helping one who is afflicted or seeking aid.

There are those around us who are afflicted and seeking aid every day. According to Zodhiates, mercy specifically carries the idea of "special and immediate regard to the misery which is the consequence of sins" (The Complete Word Study Of The New Testament, pg. 911). Those who are lost are definitely afflicted. They have a sin problem and need to seek aid, whether they no it or not. We show mercy when we teach someone the gospel. We show mercy when we help alleviate the burdens of life with which people may be dealing.

Who is our neighbor? He is one who does not have to be like me socially, racially, religiously or economically. He is one who is in need of compassion. He is one for whom I can go out of my way to help. He is one who is in need of mercy. It does not take a Solomon to see that everyone, at some point, fits one of these descriptions. Thus, all men are our neighbors. May we as God's people realize this and act accordingly.

26036 Hwy 78
Carbon Hill, AL 35549

ADAMSVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST
4207 Veterans Memorial Drive
Adamsville, AL 35005
(205) 674-5659 or 674-8273
Web: www.acoc.org
E-mail: acofc@bellsouth.net

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

WHAT IS MAN? by Mel Futrell ----- Continued from page 33

Now if that were the end of it, that alone would be impressive. But there is much more. Derek Kidner is right in saying, “The New Testament opens up fresh aspects of this passage.”¹ Portions of Psalm 8 are quoted elsewhere, in whole or part, and applied to Jesus the Christ. Now we will see the completion of this passage in application to the Son of God Himself. Parts of Psalm 8 are alluded to or quoted from in Matthew 21:26; 1 Corinthians 15:27; and Ephesians 1:22. But the New Testament passage that draws the most from Psalm 8 is Hebrews 2:6-9 which reads from the King James Version as follows:

“But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in

subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

Here the inspired Hebrew writer is quoting from the Septuagint of Psalm 8:5-7 [vss. 4-6 in the Hebrew text] with specific application and reference to Jesus. To miss this obvious point of application is to miss the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 8 itself—and what a loss to us that would be.

Does Psalm 8 have reference to man with his privileged place in God’s creation? Yes indeed—there is no dispute here. But “the meaning was not exhausted in a description of man; the psalm was seen as pointing ultimately to Christ.”² So it surely behooves us as students of the word

to recognize the place of honor God has given us in His creation and to fulfill our role. But first and foremost let us remember that Jesus: Was made a little lower than the angels, was crowned with glory and honor, was set over the works of God’s hands, and tasted death for every man.

What we could not do for ourselves, the Word made flesh did (John 1:14). “O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”

ENDNOTES

¹ Kidner, Derek, *Psalms 1-72, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*, Intersociety Press, 1973, p. 67.

² Thompson, James, *Living Word Commentary, The Letter to the Hebrews*, Sweet Publishing, p. 39.

959 Alford Ave.
Birmingham, AL 35222

VIGIL is published under the oversight of the elders of the Adamsville Church of Christ, Ronnie Hayes, Editor, and Chance Hicks, Associate Editor. You may go to our website www.acoc.org to read and download archived issues of Vigil.

There are several books and CD’s available by **Franklin Camp** and **Bobby Duncan**. For more information, see our website, www.acoc.org, or call Brother’s Inc. at 205-674-5659 or our email address is: acofc@bellsouth.net.