

Re-thinking the Trinity Project

Hebrews and Orthodox Trinitarianism: Different Interpretative Paradigms for Psalm 8 as Used in Hebrews 2

Appendix #3–A

by

J. A. “Jack” Crabtree

	Interpretation Paradigm #1	Interpretation Paradigm #2	Jack Crabtree’s Interpretation
	Evidence for Trinity can be found in Hebrews 2:5–8	Evidence for Trinity can be found in Hebrews 2:5–8	NO evidence for Trinity can be found in Hebrews 2:5–8
Genesis 1	•Teaches (because it assumes) the exalted status of Jesus (as the archetypal human)	•Teaches the exalted status of mankind	•Teaches the exalted status of mankind
	>Provides basis for the meditation in Psalm 8	>Is irrelevant to the meditation in Psalm 8	>Is irrelevant to the meditation in Psalm 8
Davidic Covenant	•Teaches the exalted status of Jesus	•Teaches the exalted status of Jesus	•Teaches the exalted status of David and his royal descendents
	>Is irrelevant to the meditation in Psalm 8	>Provides one (but not the only) basis for the meditation in Psalm 8	>Provides the one, primary basis for the meditation in Psalm 8
Psalm 8	•Points in wonder at God’s exaltation of humanity by choosing <i>human</i> existence (and not, for example, <i>angelic</i> existence) as the form He himself would assume when he incarnated himself in a creature to rule as King	•Points in wonder at God’s exaltation of the particular man, Jesus , by choosing him (even in his relatively modest state of being a human) to be the one in whom he incarnated himself to rule as King	•Points in wonder at God’s exaltation of the particular man, David , by choosing him (and his descendents) to function as the Son of God, the embodiment of God’s sovereign rule as King

Psalm 8:4a	•“man” = mankind , in general	•“man” = this man = Jesus , in particular	•“man” = this man = me (David), in particular
	>wonders at God’s choice of relatively humble humanity ; responding to Genesis 1 and its assertions that mankind is to rule over creation	>wonders at God’s choice of the human being, Jesus ; responding to the promise of the Davidic Covenant as understood to be making promises with regard to Jesus, and only with regard to him	>wonders at God’s choice of “ me ”, a <i>mere ordinary human being</i> ; responding to the promise of the Davidic Covenant as understood to be making promises with regard to David and his descendents
Psalm 8:4b	•”son of man” = man = a member of mankind	•“son of man” = Son of man = Jesus , in particular	•“son of man” = Son of man = me (David), in particular
	>wonders at God’s choice of relatively humble humanity to occupy a place of dominion over the rest of God’s creation; responding to Genesis 1 and its assertions that mankind is to rule over creation	>wonders at God’s choice of the human being, Jesus ; responding to the promise of the Davidic Covenant as understood to be making promises with regard to Jesus, and only with regard to him	>wonders at God’s choice of “ me ”, a <i>mere ordinary human being</i> for the role as Son of God; responding to the promise of the Davidic Covenant as understood to be making promises with regard to David and his descendents
Psalm 8:5a	•“a little lower than the <i>angeli</i> ” = a little lower than the angels (or, some translations, a little <u>while</u> lower than the angels)	•“a little lower than the <i>angeli</i> ” = a little lower than the angels (or, some translations, a little <u>while</u> lower than the angels)	•“a little lower than the <i>angeli</i> ” = a little lower than God himself (literally, a little lower than God’s visible manifestations of himself)
	>refers to a temporary condescension (to be lower than the angels is a relatively modest state of being) of the second person of the triune godhead when he becomes man in Jesus	>refers to a temporary condescension (to be lower than the angels is a relatively modest state of being) of the second person of the triune godhead when he becomes man in Jesus	>refers to the exaltation (to be a little lower than God is a very exalted status) of the man, David, and his royal descendants by his appointment as Son of God

	>basis for this assertion are the divine purposes to be fulfilled by Jesus , the incarnate God (the Davidic Covenant is one, but not the only, statement of these purposes)	>basis for this assertion are the divine purposes to be fulfilled by Jesus , the incarnate God (the Davidic Covenant is one, but not the only, statement of these purposes)	>basis for this assertion are the promises of the Davidic Covenant
	>this statement is meant to suggest an ironic contrast to 8:5b ff	>this statement is meant to suggest an ironic contrast to 8:5b ff	>this statement parallels and is synonymous with 8:5b ff
Psalm 8:5b-9	•"glory and majesty" = the glory and majesty of the unique Son of God, Jesus, the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity	•"glory and majesty" = the glory and majesty of the unique Son of God, Jesus, the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity	•"glory and majesty" = the glory and majesty that belongs to the one appointed to be the Son of God
	>refers to the statements in Genesis regarding the archetypal man, Jesus , and his dominion over God's creation	>refers to the promise made in the Davidic Covenant that David understands to apply uniquely and exclusively to Jesus	>refers to the promise to David and his descendents in the Davidic Covenant
	>these statements are meant to suggest an ironic contrast to 8:5a	>these statements are meant to suggest an ironic contrast to 8:5a	>these statements parallel and are synonymous with 8:5a