

Psalm 2 • God's Choice for Messiah and King

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Psalm chapter 2, as we move on. Psalm 2 is a royal, or what we call a messianic psalm. It does not identify the author but Acts chapter 4 attributes it to David.

The psalm begins with a question that goes like this in verse 1:

*Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?*

You can tell when you read this that the psalmist is genuinely mystified by this question. I mean, stop and think about it for a minute. What reason do the nations have to rage against God? What has He done that they should be raging against Him? Here's another question. What benefit is there to raging against God? And yet they do it anyway, and they've been doing it since the beginning of time.

I don't know if you—like I said, I haven't, I don't really watch the news all that much anymore, but I actually heard about—and maybe you did too—comments that were made publicly by the Filipino president: very derogatory comments about God. He called God stupid—this is the president of the Philippines—and he challenged the people of his country that he would resign if someone could prove to him that God existed.

And the reason—the way I found out about this—I actually got onto the news and corroborated it, but—the reason I found out is someone from the Philippines wrote me and was really wounded in their heart. This believer wrote and was really hurt by the statements that their president made.

But this is the kind of stuff that's been going on for a long time, and it will continue, I assume, until Jesus returns.

Why do the nations rage? By the way, the nations, that just typically refers to the ungodly nations, but it's also going to talk about the leadership of those nations here as well. In fact, it specifically does in verse 2. Look at that verse in your Bible. It says:

² *The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed...*

Isn't that an interesting statement for the Psalms? By the way, this is why we call this a messianic psalm, and we'll talk about why we know it's messianic. It refers right here to the Lord's Anointed, and you might be interested to know that the word "Anointed" in the Hebrew is "Mashiach" (מָשִׁיחַ), which is "Messiah." Okay? So, the kings of the earth take their stand against the Lord and against His Messiah

And what do they say in verse 3?

³ *"Let us burst (or your Bible may say break) their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us."*

The language here is that of wanting to be free from any constraints of belief in God or the moral restrictions that come with it.

By the way, when you're talking to somebody who doesn't want to believe in God—and you can tell that when you're talking to them; they don't want to believe in God, and that's why they're arguing with you—they'll talk about all the reasons why they don't want to believe in God except the real one. The real reason is because they do not want to be constrained morally by the righteous requirements of a God who might possibly hold them accountable for their actions.

And so, this is that language: Let us burst their bonds, or let us break their bonds. Let us break out from any kind of a God-centered thought process or looking at His Word as if it's something we need to follow, that sort of thing.

Do you remember the lyrics to Imagine by John Lennon? It's a popular song—incredibly popular song still sung today. I hear it sung a lot. One of the lyrics says:

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
(And then this line:) Imagine all the people
Living for today

It's the refrain of the world. Live for today for tomorrow you die. Tomorrow you're dead, and there's no remembrance. There's no consciousness; there's nothingness. So, you might as well live for today.

The Bible tells us to live for eternity and to put our hope in the promises of God. But of course, the refrain that we hear in songs like that and so many others say let's break free from this antiquated idea that there's this God that we somehow are accountable to. Let's break free from that. Let's just imagine for a moment that we're free.

Well, it's been said that when a man is free to believe to not believe in God, he then is open to believe anything. He literally becomes open, subject to believe anything. And we're seeing that today.

What's God's response to man's rebellion here, wanting to be free from God? Verse 4 says:

*⁴ He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.*

Now, when it says God laughs, this is not an arrogant, boastful, prideful kind of laugh. It's God's response to their confused ideas about how far their power stems.

And it goes on saying:

*5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
6 "As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."*

Now, this is great. This is where it really gets good because what God is saying here is— He's saying, just about the time man thinks he's in charge and he says we're going to break free— which, by the way, is a fallacy anyway because there is no freedom apart from God— God comes along and He says, actually, I've chosen My own King and, in fact, I've installed Him to rule over all mankind. And I want you to notice where His throne is. Did you catch that? It's on Zion, My holy hill— and this is a clear reference to Jerusalem.

What's interesting about that statement is: This is a prophecy, which speaks of the return of Christ and the establishing of His throne in Jerusalem on Zion, where He will rule this earth for a period of 1,000 years, which we call the millennium or the millennial kingdom. It'll be a time of unprecedented justice

and righteousness and peace on the earth because Jesus will be ruling and reigning there.

Now, next, in verse 7, the voice or the person speaking in the psalm changes. This is actually the Anointed One now speaking, and He's speaking the words of God the Father.

Now listen to this; verse 7, He says:

⁷ *I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.*

Now, remember, this is Jesus speaking about God the Father, and He's quoting God the Father and the decree that God the Father gave Him. What was the decree? The decree was, *"You are my son; today I have begotten you."*

Now, what's interesting about that statement? Well, this is an important reminder for us that Jesus—listen, and this is very important, you guys—Jesus became the begotten of the Father at a point in history, at a point in time. It says, *today I have begotten you*, right? We know that Jesus wasn't always the begotten of the Father.

The Bible tells us in the Book of John chapter 1 that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. He was with God in the beginning, and so forth, and it goes on to then say in the John chapter 1, the Word became flesh, right? Became flesh and dwelt among us. What happened when He became flesh? He was begotten of the Father. There was a point in time where the Holy Spirit moved upon Mary; she conceived through the Holy Spirit and at that time Jesus was the begotten of the Father; but He wasn't always that way from the beginning.

And this is an important reminder. These are things that we look at, and we understand that here's the Son, even before it took place, saying, *"You are my Son,"* quoting the father, *"today I have begotten you."*

The son goes on to quote the Father in verse 8. This is beautiful. He says:

⁸ *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.*

You'll remember Satan tried to offer Him that same thing. When Jesus was on the earth, it says he took Him to the highest point on the earth, and He could see

all the glorious splendor of the kingdoms of the earth, and Satan said, I'll give these to You for I am able to give them to whoever I wish, because Satan had temporary rulership as the prince of the power of the air, or the prince of this world.

And, of course, Jesus turned him down because these things had already been offered Him. These things had already been offered by the Father. The Father said, just ask, and I will make the nations your inheritance.

Verse 9. Look at this; this is great:

*⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. ”*

Now, if this sounds like familiar language to you, that's because it is. And what's interesting about this is not only do we read this statement elsewhere in the Bible, it's actually—get this—quoted by Jesus in the Book of Revelation where He attributes it to something the Father told Him. It's in His letter to the Church of Thyatira, and let me put it on the screen for you. It goes like this, from Revelation chapter 2:

Revelation 2: 26-27 (NIV84)

To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father.

²⁶ To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations— (Look) ²⁷ ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father.

Right? Here's what's Jesus saying. He says, to the one who overcomes, you're going to rule with Me just as I was given authority to rule by My Father. By this quotation, He's pointing back to Psalm chapter 2 and saying, that's about Me. That's how we know this is a messianic psalm. Jesus confirmed it for us in the Book of Revelation.

We could probably see enough confirmation just by looking at it anyway, but Jesus, it's a slam dunk when He quotes Psalm chapter 2 and what the Father said to Him and says, this I will give also to those who overcome.

Now, in the last few verses of the chapter, the speaker changes once again. Now, we go from the Anointed One to a different voice, and this is the voice of counsel that comes from the Lord, that issues forth in a warning. Listen to this, verse 10.

*10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.*

I wonder if the president of the Philippines is listening. Be warned, he says, be wise. And this is a word to all world rulers.

Verse 11:

*11 Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.*

He's talking there about an attitude of respect and reverence and awe, not the kind of ridiculous comments that come out of many world leaders' mouths.

Verse 12 goes on to say:

*12 Kiss the Son, (and that speaks of a kiss of submission, right?)
lest he be angry (That's why, by the way, what Judas did was such a horrible thing, when he kissed Him in the garden—kissed Jesus in the garden, feigning that idea of just that love and submission and stuff, and it was actually a betrayal. But this is telling you and I, Kiss the Son, lest he be angry,) and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled. (And then this wonderful promise to end the chapter:)
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*

And here, what we're reading in these last few verses is an exhortation to kings, presidents, and prime ministers, and leaders of all kind, and judges, to fear the Lord. Humble yourself and fear God, and again, submit to Him—that kiss of submission.

It's as amazing as it sounds, sometimes we forget that believing in God and trusting in God is the most sane and reasonable thing a person can do. And it's actually unreasonable to believe otherwise. By the same token, for those who go so far as to defy God, and even speak boastfully against Him like some world leaders do, it's about the most foolish thing a person can do.

I mean, God's listening, and I want you to see again, the psalm ends with this simple, wonderful promise: *Blessed are all who take refuge in him.* This is exactly what we're doing when we believe the gospel. When we accept what Jesus did for us on the cross, we are taking refuge in Him. Our refuge is in Him. We are literally sheltering in refuge in Him. Okay? And there is a blessed condition for all of us who do that. That promise is extended to any who would choose to place their trust in Jesus Christ. It's a blessedness to all who put their faith and hope in Him ultimately.

And that's where we stop for tonight in the Psalms. We'll pick it up in chapter 3 next time.