

## Psalm 2

Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 deal with the most important subjects in the world. Psalm 1 deals with the most urgent individual matter: you must know where you are going in life and how you are going to live. Will you follow the counsel of the ungodly and perish. Or will you delight yourself in the law of the Lord and on the Day of Judgment stand in the congregation of the righteous?

Psalm 2 deals with where history is going. Our world is full of war and political chaos, tears and injustice. Why is this? Psalm 2 gives us the answer. Our world is the way it is because the counsel of the ungodly and the path of sinners and the seat of the scornful have gone international. Just as individual sinners are in rebellion against God our world is in rebellion against Him. But just as God in love saves sinners through Jesus Christ, so he will save the world and restore it to paradise through Jesus Christ. The Paradise that Adam lost through his sin, Christ will restore because he was obedient to God.<sup>1</sup>

This is what psalm 2 is all about; Christ ruling and restoring our world. The Psalm is a Messianic Psalm. It is a Psalm about God's Anointed Servant King, the Christ. There are about fifteen such Psalms.<sup>2</sup> Some of them foretell Christ's obedience to God, others his sacrificial death, resurrection and ascension. And others predict his second coming to give everlasting life to God's people and establish God's kingdom over the whole world.

When Christ came the first time it was to offer salvation from the power and penalty of sin. John 3:16 and 17 declares,

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

The second time Jesus Christ comes into the world it won't be just to save sinners. He will inflict great destruction on the wicked.<sup>3</sup> When Jesus Christ comes into our world again Revelation 19 says that he will come as the King of kings and the Lord of lords over the whole world. The prophet Isaiah declared that

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 5:12-21; 8:18-21; Acts 4:19, 20

<sup>2</sup> Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 24, 40, 41, 45, 68, 69, 72, 89, 91, 110, 118

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

“the government will be upon His shoulder” and “of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.”<sup>4</sup>

Peace! What a wonderful word! Through Jesus Christ you can have peace with God right now.<sup>5</sup> And one day there will be peace, true and lasting peace on the earth. The goal of salvation is everlasting life on a renewed earth in the kingdom of God.<sup>6</sup> Let's read Psalm 2.

Why do the nations rage,  
And the people plot a vain thing?  
<sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers take counsel together,  
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*,  
<sup>3</sup> “Let us break Their bonds in pieces  
And cast away Their cords from us.”  
(Psalm 2:1-3)

In Psalm 1 the blessed man meditates on God's Word day and night. But here, in Psalm 2, the ungodly meditate or “plot” how to cast off the rule of God. The word “plot” in verse 1 is the same Hebrew word translated “meditate” in Psalm 1. In Psalm 1 we have the thought life of the supremely happy person. His or her delight is in the law of the Lord. Here in Psalm 2 we have the contrasting thinking of the ungodly nations. These people meditate or think about how they can circumvent God's revealed will.

Just think about the United States for a minute. What are we meditating on as a society? What fills our thoughts and attention as a nation? What are the best selling books? What are the top of the chart songs? What are the block buster movies? Are we focused on things that are good, noble and virtuous? Now think about the rest of the world. And we wonder why our world is in such chaos!

What we have in these first three verses is a description of the hatred of our fallen, sinful world against God and Christ. Ever since Adam's sin in the Garden of Eden people have been in rebellion against God. They want to throw off His supposed restraints to their freedom. But why, the Psalmist asks, why do they want to rebel against God?

The word “Why” is asked over and over again in our country. Why is there so much hatred? Why is there so much divorce? Why is there so much war? Why

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<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 9:6, 7

<sup>5</sup> Romans 5:1

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 21:1-5

is there so much crime? Why so much fear? Why do we cheat and lie? Why is there so much pain and sorrow? The answer is sin and our rebellion against God.

This rebellion begun by Adam took its first organized form at the Tower of Babel where people came together to build a tower into heaven to make a name for themselves. But God scattered them and confused their languages. That was the beginning of the nations. And the Bible declares that in the end times the nations will come together under a single world ruler, the Anti-Christ, to defy God again.<sup>7</sup> But the nations plot in vain against God and His Anointed, Jesus Christ. God has a calm assurance in the face of mankind's rebellion.

He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;  
The Lord shall hold them in derision.  
<sup>5</sup> Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,  
And distress them in His deep displeasure:  
<sup>6</sup> "Yet I have set My King  
On My holy hill of Zion."  
(Psalm 2:4-6)

The very idea that man, even as a united group, can defy God is supremely ridiculous. And so God laughs and He will have the last laugh. God's unalterable purpose to save those who have hope in Him and to place His King in Zion to rule over the world will not be stopped. Let the devil and the world plot and plan. God says their plotting is in vain, Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, My Anointed One. He is my King who will rule the world in righteousness.<sup>8</sup> Verse 6 tells us that God's answer to the chaos of world history is the Lord Jesus Christ. And he is the answer to the chaos of our hearts. Jesus said,

I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.  
(John 6:35)

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.  
(John 8:12)

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.  
(John 11:25)

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<sup>7</sup> Revelation 19:19

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 11:23-6

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.  
(John 14:6)

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly  
(John 10:10)

God is not pleading with the world saying "Please, make My Son the King." He is the King! God Almighty says, plot all you want "Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion." When this Psalm was written the Lord Jesus Christ hadn't even been born. But God is so sure of His victory, so certain that what he says will come to pass that he speaks of it as having already happened.

This is a figure of speech called the prophetic perfect. This is where a future event is spoken of as having already occurred. Another example of this is in the book of Daniel. The prophet sees the future event of Jesus Christ receiving rulership of the world as an accomplished fact.

I was watching in the night visions,  
And behold, *One* like the Son of Man,  
Coming with the clouds of heaven!  
He came to the Ancient of Days,  
And they brought Him near before Him.  
14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,  
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.  
His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion,  
Which shall not pass away,  
And His kingdom *the one*  
Which shall not be destroyed.  
(Daniel 7:13, 14)

What God says will be, will be. In Isaiah 46:9, 10 God said,

Remember the former things of old,  
For *I am* God, and *there is* no other;  
*I am* God, and *there is* none like Me,  
10 Declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times *things* that are not yet done,  
Saying, 'My counsel shall stand,  
And I will do all My pleasure

If psalm 2 were a theatrical play, scene 1 would be verses 1 to 3 where we have the world in rebellion. Scene 2 would be God's response in verses 4- to 6. And now beginning in verse 7 the curtain goes up on scene 3 and the King, the Son of God, Jesus Christ speaks.

"I will declare the decree:  
The LORD has said to Me,  
'You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You.  
<sup>8</sup> Ask of Me, and I will give You  
The nations *for* Your inheritance,  
And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.  
<sup>9</sup> You shall break them with a rod of iron;  
You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'" (Psalm 2:7-9)

In the New Testament the book of Acts<sup>9</sup> quotes verse 7 as being fulfilled in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the Son of God from his birth. But Romans 1:4 states that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." This answers the great question of which religion should we follow. Follow the one whose founder rose up from the dead.

Verse 8 reveals a promise that God made to His Son; he will inherit the world. The world conspired against God and Christ. They crucified Jesus, but God raised him up from the dead to be Lord of all. And Jesus Christ will physically return to this earth in power and glory<sup>10</sup>. And he will grant everlasting life to God's people.<sup>11</sup> And he will crush all opposition and bring peace and righteousness to our world.<sup>12</sup>

So what shall we do? What should the nations do? The answer is: be wise, be instructed, believe and serve the Lord.

Now therefore, be wise, O kings;  
Be instructed, you judges of the earth.  
<sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear,  
And rejoice with trembling.  
<sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,  
And you perish *in* the way,

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<sup>9</sup> Acts 13:32, 33

<sup>10</sup> Acts 1:10, 11; Matthew 24:30

<sup>11</sup> John 5:28, 29, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

<sup>12</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Isaiah 9:7

When His wrath is kindled but a little.  
Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.  
(Psalm 2: 10-12)

Our Psalm began by showing us a mad, mad, lost world. We saw an arrogant and sinful world plotting against God. But our Psalm ends with a gracious and merciful word from God. God says "be wise" and "Be instructed." "Kiss the Son" or bend in homage to the Son before you perish.

He has ever reason and every right to simply judge and condemn defiant mankind. But tender loving kindness compels God to invite sinners to be saved. Ezekiel 18 tells us that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He would rather they would repent, be saved and live.

God's answer to a world in chaos is Jesus Christ. God's answer to our deepest needs is Jesus Christ. The unbelieving world says, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us."<sup>13</sup> But Jesus Christ says to us,

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden,  
and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and  
learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and  
you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy  
and My burden is light.  
(Matthew 11: 28-30)

Psalm 1 begins, "Blessed [supremely happy] is the man [whose] delight is in the law of the LORD." Psalm 2 ends "Blessed [supremely happy] are all those who put their trust in" God's anointed, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are people who need to hear this message. There are people who want to hear this message. Let us be bold and loving as we make it known.

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<sup>13</sup> Psalm 2:3