

# Psalm Ch2v1-12

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'm going to turn in your Bibles to Psalm chapter 2 or Psalm 2. That's where we'll be this morning. And I bring you greetings from Middleton Baptist Church. So they say hello.

Please turn with me to Psalm 2 and follow along with me as I read. Psalm 2.

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed saying, Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

He who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury saying, As for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.

I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, You are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

[ 1 : 28 ] You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now, therefore, O kings, be wise.

Be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son. Lest he be angry with you and you perish in the way.

For his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Let's pray for a moment.

The words of the psalmist. Deal bountifully with your servant that I may live and keep your word.

Father, we pray that by your spirit you would deal bountifully with us from your word this morning.

That we may live according to your word. And that we would keep it, Lord, with our whole hearts.

We pray that you would glorify yourself and help us.

[ 2 : 36 ] In the name of Jesus. Amen. What do you think is wrong with the world today? What's wrong with the world?

Maybe you think there's nothing wrong with the world. Maybe you think that things are more or less as they ought to be. But I think if that's how you view the world, you'd probably be in the minority.

I think most of us would agree that the world is not how it ought to be. The world ought to be different. It ought to be fair. It ought to be safe and good for everyone.

But that's clearly not how it is. Instead, we live in a world with war and injustice and oppression.

Now, it's one thing to notice it, but it's worth asking, why is the world like this?

Why is it not as it ought to be? The way that we all instinctively hope that it should be? The answer to this question, I believe, is in this psalm that we are reading and looking at this morning.

[ 3 : 51 ] Because Psalm 2 presents us with a picture of our world and the fundamental problem of it. It gives us a God's eye perspective on human history, stretching back in time and around the world.

And I want to start by telling you right up front what this psalm is about. Psalm 2 is about the Lord and his anointed king and the rebellion of the world against them both.

So there's the Lord, God himself, and his anointed king on earth, and the nations, the world, who are in rebellion against them both.

This psalm is not just about King David, who is the king that is immediately implied here. It also points forward to Christ himself, who is the anointed king, and who is the king of kings, who came to this world that was so opposed to him.

Never forget that when Jesus came to this world that he created, we killed him. You'll notice that David is not mentioned in this psalm.

[ 5 : 04 ] However, if you turn to Acts 4, you don't have to do that now, but if you look in Acts 4, when the disciples are quoting this psalm, they say, they refer to it as a psalm of David. And so we know from that that this is a psalm that David penned, and it's in relation to him.

Now, in terms of its structure, it falls into four even sections. Verses 1 to 3, the futile rebellion of the nations. Verses 4 to 6, the confident response of the Lord.

Verses 7 to 9, the sure success of the Son. And finally, verses 10 to 12, the right response of the nations. So we'll just look at those sections as they progress one to another.

The futile rebellion of the nations to begin with in verses 1 to 3. The psalm begins by describing a global conflict. On the one side, you have the nations and the peoples of the earth as represented by their kings and their rulers.

And on the other side, you have the Lord himself, Yahweh, the God of the Bible and his anointed one, his anointed king. And we are told that these earthly rulers are plotting and raging against the Lord and against his king.

[ 6 : 16 ] Actively and angrily setting themselves against him. Literally taking their stand against him. And they're even united in this. It says that they take counsel together against the Lord.

You know, you've heard that phrase, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. And so these kings and rulers who might otherwise be warring with themselves are united in their opposition of the Lord and against his king.

And this raises the question, why are the nations so set against the Lord and his anointed one?

Verse 3, they say it in their own words. Look at what it says. Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

And this language of bonds and cords is the language of authority. That is God's authority over them. So the reason the nations are in rebellion against the Lord and his king is because they want to be free from him.

From his authority and from his control. In other words, the picture laid out before us here is of the world, our world, in rebellion against God.

[ 7 : 30 ] They want to be free from him. The clear teaching of the Bible, as uncomfortable as it is for us to face, is that apart from the transforming power of Jesus, each of us live in rebellion against God.

So what we see here in Psalm 2 on a global scale, we find to be true on an individual scale. This is our default setting, to be free from God.

Now you might say, hang on a minute, there's lots of religion in the world. Lots of people want God in their lives. And that's true. There's a lot of religion in the world, isn't there? But that's not what this psalm is speaking about.

The psalm is not speaking about God in a general dictionary definition, vague sense. It's speaking about the Lord. That is Yahweh, the Lord of the Bible, the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

That's what's going on here. It's this Lord, this God that people are in rebellion against. They'd rather be free from him, to get out from under his authority. And his rule. The prophet Isaiah put it up this way.

[ 8 : 42 ] Or sorry, put it this way, or summed it up this way. All we like sheep have gone astray. And each of us has turned to his own way. We'd rather do our own thing.

We're not naturally inclined towards the Lord. In fact, if you look back at Psalm 1, and the first verse of Psalm 1, or Psalm 1 in general, it speaks about the blessed man who meditates on the law of the Lord day and night.

That word meditate just means to think continually upon. And the word meditate, or to think upon, in Psalm 1, is the same word for plot in Psalm 2.

So instead of thinking about what God says, and thinking it over and meditating upon that, the people are in fact meditating and thinking over how they can be free from God. And that's no coincidence that those words contrast in that way.

Maybe you're here this morning, you're not a Christian, and you're looking around and thinking, these people are very religious. This must just do something for them.

[ 9 : 47 ] It's kind of like a religious hobby. They must be wired this way naturally. Well, I can tell you, none of us are wired this way laterally. Because look at what this is telling us.

That we don't naturally seek God. In fact, we naturally want to be free from Him. Because of sin.

We're not wired towards God, but rather against Him and against His anointed.

What about you this morning? Where do you stand in relation to the Lord? Do you meditate on His word, or would you rather cast it aside and be free from it?

You see, this psalm draws a big, thick line right down the middle. And says there's the Lord on the one side, and His anointed King.

And on the other, there is those who are in rebellion against them. And did you notice that this is a doomed rebellion, ultimately? Because it starts off, this psalm, with a rhetorical question.

[10:51] Look at verse 1 again. Why do the nations rage? It doesn't just say, the nations rage. It acts. Why? Why do the nations rage? This rebellion is a lost cause.

It's a dead end. It's a doomed enterprise. And verses 4 to 6 tell us, when we look at the Lord's confident response to them. Look again at what He says, verse 4.

He who sits in the heavens laughs. He holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying, as for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.

God's response to the rebellion of the world is laughter. And this is not a warm-hearted chuckling. This is mocking laughter.

It's not something you'd expect to read about God, is it? But when God looks at those who are in rebellion against Him, He is not afraid. He's not in a state of panic.

[11:53] His response is to laugh with confidence. Why can the Lord laugh like this? Well, look at where He is. Verse 4, look at where He is.

He sits in the heavens on His throne, the position of ultimate authority. Psalm 109, 103, verse 19, says the Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all.

Psalm 29, 10, the Lord sits enthroned as King forever. The Lord God is the King of the universe. And look at what He says in verse 5.

He says, Then I will speak to them, He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury. As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill. So not only is God the King of the universe, but He has seated in this heavenly throne, but He has set His King, His earthly King, in Zion, that is, in Jerusalem, which is a city on a hill.

This is how God terrifies the nations, is by appointing a King, who will not be conquered. And this King, as we noted earlier, is King David, but it's also the Kings that came after David, and from David's line.

[13:11] You see, God didn't just make David the King, He also made a covenant with him, a promise, a binding agreement, to establish His kingdom forever. And we find that, and read about that, in 2 Samuel chapter 7.

I'd actually like you to turn back, to 2 Samuel chapter 7, and read that with me. So 2 Samuel chapter 7. I will begin in verses 12 to 16.

This is God's covenant with David. The Lord said to David, 2 Samuel 7 verses 12 onwards, 3 Samuel 8, When your days are fulfilled, and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish His kingdom.

He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever. I will be to Him a father, and He shall be to me a son.

When He commits iniquity, I will discipline Him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from Him. And as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you, and your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me, your throne shall be established forever.

[14:43] So the Lord promised David that His son, that is, not just the first son He had, but all those who came after Him, there would always be a line of David that would sit upon the throne, that His house, His kingdom, would be established forever.

So when we flip back to Psalm 2 now, with this in mind, we see that this psalm goes beyond just David himself into the future. We see in verses 7 to 9 the sure success of this son, this son that was mentioned in that covenant with David.

Again, this is David speaking directly now. He says, I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, You are my son. Today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. David's confidence, excuse me, is rooted in what the Lord told him.

You are my son. Today I have begotten you. This is a reference, I think, back to that covenant that the Lord made with David. I will be to him a father.

[16:02] He shall be to me a son. That's what David has in mind here in verse 7. He knows that even though the nations of the world are set against him, that the Lord will be faithful to his covenant.

This is David's confidence, what the Lord said. Now, our circumstances this morning are not at all like David's. You're not the king of Israel.

You don't have nations coming to try and destroy you. But the cause for our confidence is still fundamentally the same. That the Lord is true to his word.

He is faithful to his covenant with us in Jesus and he will never leave us nor forsake us. Maybe you came to church this morning feeling very weak and at a very low ebb.

Let me encourage you from this psalm this morning to let your confidence be in what the Lord has said. As Christians, our confidence, our strength is not found in ourselves, is it?

[17:09] It's found in who God is and what he has said. The idea that the word or the phrase a strong Christian is in one sense almost like a paradox. We become strong through the strength of who God is.

It's not that we find in ourselves some sort of like extra set of batteries for life but rather that we depend on who God is and what he says and bank on his promises coming to fulfillment.

In verse 8, ask of me, the Lord says, and I will make the nations your heritage, the end of the earth, the ends of the earth your possession. the total expansion of this kingdom that he has given to David.

So in the end, the kingdom that God promised to David will not just be in Jerusalem, in Zion, in the Holy Hill, but it will spread from there to the ends of the earth. Finally, in verses 10 to 12, the focus turns back to the right response of the nations.

Now therefore, O kings, be wise, be warned, O rulers of the earth, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son, lest he be angry with you and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled.

[18:29] Blessed are all who take refuge in him. This is David's advice to his enemies, to the nations who rebel. They ought to serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

In other words, they ought to turn from their rebellion and submit to God and to his king. Otherwise, they will perish. But the psalm ends with a promise to the nations.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him, that is, in the Son. The Lord is merciful towards his enemies. He holds out this promise to them, a promise to bless.

You notice that Psalm 1, I think Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 come together sort of as a pair to introduce the whole of the Psalms. The very beginning of Psalm 1 says what? Blessed is the man who does not live in the way of sinners, essentially, but who meditates on the law of the Lord.

And then Psalm 2 ends with that same phrase. Blessed is the one who takes refuge in the Son. So from reading Psalm 2 and Psalm 1, we see we are blessed to take refuge in the Son and to abide in God's Word.

[19:47] See, Psalm 2 is ultimately about Jesus. It finds its fullest expression in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Just think of everything the Lord promised to David.

I will raise up a son after you. You will always have someone on the throne, someone who will rule. I will be to him a father. He shall be to me a son. And he will reign forever, a kingdom that will never end to the ends of the earth.

And that sounds amazing. What happened after David died? Solomon. And that started off very well and then went downhill very fast. Because Solomon, after all the blessings the Lord had given him, wandered away from the Lord into worshipping false gods.

And then after Solomon, his son, Rehoboam, who provoked the people and was harsh towards them and was such a bad leader that he actually instigated a civil rebellion that most of the people just said, if that's who you are, we want nothing to do with you.

And there was a split in the kingdom. So far it doesn't look very good, does it. It's supposed to be a kingdom forever, a king in the line of David, and things are just falling apart with each consecutive generation.

[21:08] And things after Rehoboam go downwards year after year, generation after generation. And things are so bad that in the end the Lord sends the enemies of God's people, these nations that are spoken of in Psalm 2, to invade the people and take them off into exile.

And so you think, this is the exact opposite of Psalm 2 happening. It's all devolving. The nations are conquering us. Can you imagine being a Jew in exile and reading Psalm 2?

You'd be thinking like, where is this going to happen? We're supposed to have a conquering king, a kingdom that will never end. The nations are warned. And here we are, in the middle of nowhere, ripped out of our land with no king and no kingdom to speak of.

Eventually, they were allowed to go back to the promised land. And when they went back, they rebuilt the temple and the people who remembered the original temple cried because it was such a poor shadow of what it was before.

In other words, they were back home, but they weren't back to the glory days. Until you turn to the first page of the New Testament and Matthew writes in his first sentence of his Gospel, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David.

[ 22 : 39 ] In other words, this is him. This is the one spoken of in the Davidic covenant. And then Matthew spells out his genealogy to show that Jesus literally descended from David.

When Jesus began his public ministry, Matthew chapter 4, he said, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Unmistakable kingship language.

And where is he when he started? He was in the land of David. When people saw Jesus healed, they were amazed and said, Can this be the son of David? And when Jesus entered into Jerusalem and ascended to Mount Zion, when he entered into the gates, the crowds that went before him and followed him were shouting, Hosanna to the son of David.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. You see, they were expecting a conquering king on their terms.

One who would destroy the Romans and just bring them back to the glory days. But their expectations were skewed. When Jesus conquered by suffering, above him they hung this inscription, This is the king of the Jews.

[ 24 : 04 ] Jesus, God's anointed king, died on the cross at the hands of the nations for the nations.

And when he rose from the grave, he commanded his disciples to go out into the nations so that the message of forgiveness would go and spread from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

We see that Psalm 2 is ultimately about Jesus. And that just as sure as God kept his promise to keep that line of David going until Christ, the king of kings, arrived, so too will he keep his promise that the kingdom of God will spread to the ends of the earth.

So when we send, when you as a church and we also send out Amy to Sheffield and support missionaries and send money and pray, we are participating in God's fulfilling of his own word that he will give to his anointed king the ends of the earth.

You know, I was thinking, if you're David and you have the whole of the world stacked against you, numerically, you are outgunned. And at times as Christians we look out and go, there's just so much rebellion, so few people who follow the Lord and you feel outgunned.

[ 25 : 36 ] You ever feel like that? Outgunned as a Christian? Outnumbered? But look at the confidence in this psalm that David has in God's word that he will bring his word to pass.

He is the son of David who will inherit the nations as his rightful possession. Where do you stand with the Lord and his anointed king this morning?

Are you in rebellion against him? Are we to receive him warmly and take refuge in him? Remember these words of promise as we end.

Blessed are all those who take refuge in him. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for Christ the King and Lord that you will fulfill all your promises that you made to your servant David.

that you will extend the kingdom to the ends of the earth, Lord and that you will put an end to the rebellion of this world against you. Lord, we thank you that instead of only holding out judgment to a rebellious world, Lord, that you hold out this offer of rebellion or this offer of peace and of forgiveness and blessedness through your son Jesus.

[ 26 : 58 ] We thank you for Jesus our Savior and as we sing now of his kingship, we pray that you would receive worship from our hearts and we praise you in his name.

Amen. We're going to close by standing or we're going to stand now and sing King of Kings.