

The king is enthroned

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[0:00] Well, let's get into God's word. Are you a king's man?

or a woman? Brothers and sisters, when we say man, I mean male and female.! We were singing it in Psalm 1, blessed is the man.

We are not sexist as Christians. Men and women are equal and made in God's image. So when we say man, I mean female and male. Are you a king's man or a woman's man?

If you... King's, sorry. King's woman. Sorry, I'm getting old. If you were living in England during the mid-17th century, you would most probably have heard this question being asked.

Are you a king's man? You see, you were either in two camps. One, loyal to Charles I, believing he was the absolute monarch, chosen by God to make decisions for you and your countrymen.

[1:15] Or you were a parliamentarian, believing in the rights of the individual. That every man should have their own opinion and freedom.

One need be ruled by a king who could be a bad leader. You would have sided with Oliver Cromwell. John Bunyan, the famous metal worker, preacher and writer, was once put on the spot when only a lad and asked this question by his schoolmaster, a royalist, who was said to be an intolerant, bullying bigot.

Are you a king's man, John? Tonight, this psalm asks us the same question.

Are you a king's man or are you a king's woman? Let's look at God's word. So please have it to hand. Psalm 2.

My first point is a futile remark. A futile remark. Verses 1 to 3.

[2:32] Here we see a picture of conflict. The nations, kings, rulers and peoples are seen plotting, murmuring, gathering, premeditating together to attack the Lord and his king, the anointed one.

Today, a brother remarked that one preacher likened it to a crowd in a football stadium before the game starts. An agitated crowd, ready to shout threats at their opponents, attack them.

You see, in verse 3, they resolve to break their chains and fetters. Fetters are chains around the ankles. They think the Lord and the king's ways are burdensome, restrictive.

Perhaps the psalmist perceives the thinking of the Gentile nations surrounding Israel, taunting them. The other nations think the Lord's people are trapped by the duties of the law, the commandments, the constant sacrifices, poor, suffering Israel, bound, they need to be freed. However, the psalmist exclaims, why do they think this? Why do the nations plot in vain? Why do they rage?

[4:10] It's pure folly. In verse 1. The Lord and the Messiah are not bound and they do not bind people.

It's completely the opposite. The king comes to release captives. He breaks the chains that burden people. He sets his people free.

Hallelujah. Hosea 11, verse 4, says this. I, Yahweh, led them with cords of human kindness.

Probably Chesedfil. Speaking of Israel. With ties of love, I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to free them.

What a lovely picture. The yoke is a thing that goes around cattle, their heads, to put them in one direction. It's broken. They're free.

[5:20] Friends, God is a kind, loving, and compassionate God to his people. He's not restrictive. Now, these verses in Psalm 2 are quoted in Acts of the Apostles when Peter and John are released from prison.

They quote Psalm 2, which we've just read. And in Acts 2, 27, they say this. Indeed, Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city, Jerusalem, to

conspire against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed.

Do you see? They link Psalm 2 to Christ, the anointed one in Greek. Herod, the king, Pilate, the ruler, who plots against him, as well as the Jews and the Gentiles at that time.

Friends, what we're reading tonight is prophetic literature. The king which this psalm points us to is the suffering king.

Since his coming into the earth, which we think about now every Advent, people, rulers, kings, have rejected his kingship and have allied themselves against him in every generation.

[7:10] Have you heard the Russian president state that Christ is the king of the universe? Have you heard the European Union explain that Christ is Lord? Have you heard Boris Johnson declare that Christ is the king of the cosmos?

Have you heard Brighton and Hove Council say that Christ is the king of our city? You see, most people resent his authority and want to be the king of their own lives.

They think being a follower of Jesus is vexatious, burdensome, repressive, oppressive, too demanding, going to church, praying, reading the Bible, meetings, how boring, why bother, do's and don'ts, ugh.

Brothers and sisters, their thinking is utterly wrong. It's futile.

futile. A futile remark. If you're a Christian tonight, a true Christian, you are in the best position in the world.

[8:39] This anointed one, this king, has come to cleanse you of all your guilt, your rebellion against God, all your shame, the wrong you have said, thought, and done against God and against others.

He has taken that by suffering on a cruel, merciless cross, dying for you. Friends, this king has come and has set you free.

Free indeed. You are no longer in bondage, a slave in chains. Christ has given you a clean heart, a clear conscience, you are no longer condemned.

He has restored you. He knows you intimately. He will not let your foot slip.

He keeps you. He loves you. He gives you the hope of eternity, of being with him.

[9:48] brothers, sisters, friends, you don't have to pretend to be someone else. He doesn't put onerous demands on us.

He comforts us. in your trials, in your suffering.

Sorry, I mixed up my notes. life and death, he is close beside you.

The king has set you free. We can rejoice. Yes, this is great news this Christmas, brothers and sisters. sisters. Ironically, John Bunyan, who spent years in jail for his preaching convictions, some of them in a grotty cell in Bedford, and even some spent in a dark dungeon that he shared with rats, was a king's man.

Despite his awful suffering, being separated from his wife and young family, he was free. If you don't know Christ personally tonight, look down.

[11:41] Notice the chains around your hands and your feet. you are enslaved into the world's thinking, conformed to the pattern of this world, Satan's way.

Perhaps you're trying to look a certain way to fit in. Perhaps you're addicted to substances which bind you, maybe looking for things to make you happy, but they can never satisfy.

You're weighed down, never being content with what you have, searching for the next spiritual experience, which comes and goes, separated from God.

Such demands the world puts on us. You're not free. You need a kind king to release you from this futility.

Tonight is your opportunity of freedom. a futile remark. Let's move on.

[12:45] A firm rebuke. After all the muttering, verses 4 to 9, and ranting against the Lord, his response is derision.

He laughs at them. How foolish, to plot against me. What pride. This is not cruel laughter, though. Not schadenfreunde, taking pleasure from someone's misfortune.

It's like Reaper Cheap, the mouse, wanting to fight a dragon in the chronicles of Narnia. I've just read that recently with my son. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.

Great book. I do recommend it. How ludicrous, Reaper Cheap. Caspian rebukes the mouse.

You can't fight a dragon. Get away. Get away. in verse five.

[14:04] The Lord rebukes his enemies. His anger is then kindled, and he alarms them. Having been silent in his answer, now he is emphatic in verse six.

But as for me, I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill. The king is enthroned.

There is no messing around with God. No arguing. No. I have installed my king to reign. when Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dream about an enormous statue being broken and smashed by a rock, he says to the king in chapter two verse four, looking to the future, in the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom, set up, that will never be destroyed.

Nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end. But it will itself endure forever.

To Samuel seven, the prophet Nathan tells King David the word of the Lord. He says, when you die, David, I will raise someone up to succeed you and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

[15:50] Do you see? The Lord promises a kingdom established which is everlasting where the king never dies.

One which is far better is the kingdom The kingdom! The king's dominion was limited to the king's kingdom.

king's kingdom and king's kingdom and the kingdom of Israel. It even broke into two parts. The king's dominion was limited geographically, perhaps only the size of Wales or thereabouts.

Look at verse eight. this king will rule the whole earth. The question this psalm shouts out to us is who is the king?

People God's people in times past would have been wondering and looking forward to such a king. Who is this son of the father in verse seven?

[17:23] When is he coming? We get hints of it, don't we? As someone comes into this world and is baptized in the Jordan River and then is transformed into light like the sun and a voice comes from above and says this is my son whom I love with him I am well pleased listen to him what is his rule like?

Look at verse nine this king rules or shepherds with an iron rod scepter this has two functions one being a shepherd's crook to sort out the sheep discipline and another as a weapon against raiders to protect the sheep who is the shepherd king well he came into a world as a baby in Bethlehem lived a perfect life for all to see was then rejected nailed to a Roman cross died for humanity then rose from the dead on the third day victorious the Lord enthroned him this is the king this is the decree Jesus said all authority on in heaven and on earth has been given to me

Jesus astonishes the so called wise man of this age where is the wise man where is the scholar where is the philosopher of this age has God not made foolish the wisdom of this world Colossians 2:15 and having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross Kidna says but it becomes very plain that the only laughing matter is the arrogance itself not the suffering it will cost before it ends this is true wisdom brothers and sisters Jesus Christ crucified risen and reigning over the world who would want to fight a king like this he is invincible as a church we have gone through the mill recently let's be honest in many ways life has been tough lockdown not meeting together zoomed out frustrated lonely members leaving members leaving bereavement shock dismay losing leaders we feel weak but take heart brothers and sisters we have an invincible king on our side who fights for us we are a part of his kingdom listen to this the church of Jesus Christ is the most deeply wonderful project the world can ever see there is no higher cause to which we can devote our love and energies I'll say that again the church of Jesus Christ is the most deeply wonderful project the world can ever see there's no higher cause to which we can devote our love and our energies I read that it's not amazing we're in a great position tonight brothers and sisters meeting together lastly a fitting response please look at verses 10 to 12 you see the conclusion of this matter there are two stark choices which we are called to make you see just like Master Bunyan you can't sit on the fence are you really a king's man the psalmist categorically warns us here in these verses these kings and rulers they need to worship the true king on Zion's hill kiss the son verse 12 means worship the king serve him lest he destroy you like pieces of smashed pottery the wise response tonight brothers and sisters and for all of us is to

accept this king in our lives in every aspect king of my marriage king of my friendships king of my family king of my church community king of my finances king of my plans my decisions king of my student life king of my retirement king of my work king of everything friends kissing the son worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ is the most fitting response to one that rules and reigns over every fiber of the cosmos did you notice the Lord's wonderful grace in this passage here there is an invitation at the end of this psalm which links with psalm one blessedness complete happiness 12b blessed are all who take refuge in him you see he doesn't punish his enemies straight away he gives them the chance to come to him and to put their trust in him to find shelter there is true security and bliss found in this king friends as we come to the end of our year and we look to the next we see turmoil in the world uncertainty is all around us one can become scared will I catch covid will it have disappeared by next year will I have a job next year perhaps you've lost your job how can I feed my family how can I pay the rent brexit what will happen without a deal can boris save us no we become insecure mortal man lets us down governments fail there is no real security in our rulers of this world ultimately everyone there are two ways to live we either live for ourselves where the kings crown ourselves and futilely live for our own wants and desires rejecting christ and so face an eternity separated from the king or if you take christ as your captain as your king live under his rule and serve him you are blessed like a tree by the stream whose leaf does not wither despite the ups and downs of life you will bear fruit and find true satisfaction so brothers sisters friends there's only one question again are you a king's man a