

A Life of Blessing in a World of Turmoil

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[0 : 00] Well, good morning, church. Turn with me, if you have a Bible, to Psalm chapter 1. We'll be looking at Psalms 1 and 2 this morning.

We're starting a new sermon series in the book of Psalms, which we've entitled Songs of Hope in Uncertain Times. If you go to our website, there's a page called Current Sermon Series.

You can see there which Psalms we'll be preaching from, from now through the end of the year, as well as a list of resources that can help you to dig deeper into this rich book. One of the resources I'm particularly enjoying is this book called Psalms by the Day.

So it's the book of Psalms. It's Alec Mottier, M-O-T-Y-E-R. I'm not quite sure how to pronounce that, but that's his name. So he's translated the Psalms, and he has a column of sort of notes on particular words or concepts or poetic parts, and then he has sort of devotional reflections after each psalm or two.

So you can sort of use it as a devotional. There's other devotionals on the Psalms. There's other books, scholarly books and just books that can help you dig deeper into the Psalms if you'd like to take this a step further.

[1 : 09] But we'll be preaching through Psalms for the next three months through the end of the year. The Psalms, if you're not familiar with them, they're a collection of songs and prayers that were written by many different authors over several hundred years and gradually gathered together, and they became sort of the song book or prayer book of the ancient Israelites.

So they were used not only privately by individuals but also publicly in corporate worship. And because the Psalms are intended to be used within a worshiping community, I want to read Psalms 1 and 2 responsibly this morning.

So I'm going to read the odd-numbered verses starting with verse 1, and then we all can read together the even-numbered verses starting with verse 2. If you're in the sanctuary, it'll be on the screen. Or if you're on the live stream, it'll be on the screen too.

So let's read Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 together responsibly this morning. Psalm 1. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither, and all that he does he prospers.

[2 : 40] The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. 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.

[3 : 56] 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, and you perish in the way.

For his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. Amen. Amen. So, we're preaching through several of the Psalms this fall for a couple of reasons.

One reason is we haven't preached through Psalms for quite a while at Trinity. The last time we did a series on Psalms was seven or eight years ago, and most of you weren't here then. So, we try to get around different parts of the Bible so we can be well-rounded by the different parts of Scripture that God has given us to shape and refine us.

But another reason that we're looking at Psalms this fall is that we felt like the Psalms speak particularly to our present condition. You know, for many of us, 2020 has been a roller coaster.

[5 : 08] And I don't mean so much the fun, exciting, thrill ride. I mean more the traumatic, stomach-churning, how much longer will this last, why did I ever get on this ride kind of roller coaster.

Right? On the national level, we started with impeachment, then coronavirus, then protests, then hurricanes and wildfires, now the election, and soon it'll be winter. Boy, it's been a year.

And on a personal level, many of us have experienced turmoil in our plans, in our jobs, in our health, in our relationships, in all kinds of things.

And many people, both within and outside the church, are feeling all kinds of strong emotions. Scared, hurting, worried, weary, frustrated, fed up.

And you know, the Psalms speak to that kind of world and those kinds of emotions. You know, there's a wide variety of Psalms that are written out of a wide diversity of life experiences.

[6 : 10] There are Psalms of lament, where people are crying out to God in distress. There are Psalms of confession, where people are turning to God with their sin and failure. There are Psalms of trust, where the writer is resting quietly in God's presence.

There are Psalms of history, reflecting back on both good experiences and hard experiences and what we can learn from them. There are Psalms of praise and thanksgiving that point us toward God's character and God's mercies.

But the Psalms are written out of, the Psalms are written and speak to a world full of turmoil and upheaval.

Even these two Psalms we just read, right? Psalm 2 talks about the nations raging, being in an uproar, in turmoil. People banding together to overthrow the boundaries that God has instituted, thinking that by throwing off all restraint, they will find freedom.

But the result is only more chaos. Right? Psalm 1 begins by talking about the wicked. And in many Psalms, the psalmist sort of looks at the world and says, Man, there are people who are just completely disregarding God's ways and completely not loving their neighbor and they seem to be doing fine.

[7 : 23] And then people who are seeking to love God and love their neighbor seem to have it the worst sometimes in this world. Right? Many of the Psalms are written asking those kind of questions out of those kinds of situations.

But in the midst of turmoil and uncertainty, the Psalms invite us into a life under God's blessing. That's the main theme we'll be looking at is what does a life under God's blessing look like in the midst of a world of turmoil and uncertainty?

Did you notice that Psalm 1 begins with that word, blessed? Blessed is the man who abides in God's word. And then Psalm 2 ends with that same word, blessed are all who take refuge in him.

What does that word blessed mean? Well, it means to be a recipient of God's favor and God's goodness. It means to be in line with God's purposes.

And as a result, it means to have a kind of happiness and contentment that flows out of that. So this morning we'll see two main themes in these two Psalms.

[8 : 30] First, Psalm 1 teaches us to be rooted in God's word. That's a characteristic of a life under God's blessing is to be rooted in God's word.

And in Psalm 2 we'll see that a life under God's blessing means to take refuge in God's son. To be rooted in God's word, to take refuge in God's son. Those are the two major themes we'll be looking at this morning.

Now you might wonder, why am I putting these two Psalms together? Is it just because I couldn't decide which one to preach on so I decided to take both? And the answer is no. These Psalms are meant to be a package deal.

Again, beginning and ending with that key word, blessed. And even in at least seven ancient Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament, these Psalms are not separated from one another at all.

Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 are seen together. And so ancient Jewish writers often considered these two Psalms together as sort of framing the entrance to the rest of the book.

[9 : 32] Sort of like the arches over a doorway that is inviting us in to the rest of the book of Psalms. In fact, if you might notice that there's not a heading at the beginning of either Psalm.

If you look at Psalm, starting at Psalm 3, there's a heading at the beginning of almost every Psalm that talks about who wrote it or the situation it was written in. But these two Psalms don't have a heading, right? Because they're placed here at the entrance to the book, introducing us and leading us into the rest of the book.

So as we look at these two Psalms as a doorway into life under God's blessing in the midst of a world of turmoil and uncertainty. But let's delve into Psalm 1 first and look at the theme of being rooted in God's Word.

Psalm 1 gives us a picture of the righteous person. Verse 1, we see some things that he avoids. He doesn't walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of scoffers.

In the Bible, the wicked are people who do bad stuff. That is, who violate God's laws. The idea of sin in the Bible or a sinner is sort of an internal idea.

[10 : 52] It's sort of someone who's internally bent or inclined toward evil. But the third group, scoffers, are actually in some ways sort of the most spiritually dangerous.

Because scoffers aren't just people who have done bad stuff. They're not just people who are inclined to do bad stuff, but scoffers are people who completely disregard the idea of right and wrong.

Scoffers are people when somebody tries to challenge or correct them, they just don't even take it seriously. Brush it off, laugh it off, mock the idea.

Now, verse 1 doesn't say that a righteous person will never have any normal human interactions with people like that. But it does say that a righteous person won't adopt their ways of thinking, their counsel, or their patterns of behavior, their way, or their sense of belonging, the seat.

In fact, verse 1 is sort of a progression from bad to worse, right? From thinking to behavior to belonging. It sort of gets even more deeply rooted as you go along. But then in verse 2, we see, by contrast, what the righteous person engages in.

[12 : 03] Not just what he avoids, but what he engages in. What does shape his thinking and his behavior and his belonging, and that is the law of the Lord. Now, when we hear the word law, most of us think rules and regulations.

There's a lot of rules and regulations these days, right? Some of us like them. Some of us don't like them. Some of us think they're justified. Some of us, you know, right? But when we think of law, we tend to think of a very narrow set of things.

But this word, it's the Hebrew word Torah, is a much broader word. It can also be translated teaching or instruction. Sometimes Torah referred specifically to the first five books of the Bible, which are called the books of Moses.

Sometimes it referred more generally to God's instruction in all of the Old Testament. But here in this verse, in this psalm, we're especially meant to see that God's teaching, God's Torah, God's law includes the book of Psalms.

In fact, you might notice that the book of Psalms is divided into five books, five sub-books. The beginning of Psalms says book one. And then if you go to Psalm 42, it'll say book two. These are sort of five collections of Psalms that were gradually collected together over time.

[13 : 22] And you might think, why are there five books? Well, I think it's because there were five books of Moses, right? That was a complete collection of God's revelation, God's teaching, given to the people through Moses.

In Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. And the Psalms are a complete collection of God's teaching, given in the form of songs and prayers, associated primarily with the person of David, but written by many people over time and gathered together over time.

So the idea is this is a complete collection in this book of Psalms of God's wisdom, God's teaching for us in the form of poetry and prayer.

So the Psalms are meant to be our companion along the way of life. And as we pray them, as we read them, as we internalize them, they're meant to shape our thinking and guide our behavior and give us a sense of who we belong to at the deepest level.

So, verse 2 says that this, the righteous person delights in and meditates on the law of the Lord.

[14 : 33] So before we go further, let me just ask, have you experienced the Psalms in this way? Are the Psalms something that you delight in and meditate on?

Think about what it means to delight in something. It means to savor it, right? Like a good meal. The other night, I was sitting around a bonfire with a few guys, and we were talking about all kinds of food that we like.

Mexican food, Italian food, southern food, seafood. Somebody was talking about Hawaiian food, trying to explain to the rest of us what it was and how awesome it was. We probably talked for half an hour, you know?

Nobody had to, about all kinds of food. Who cooked it, where we ate it, why it was so good, when we can get it again. God has given us the Bible in general, and the Psalms in particular, to be our spiritual food.

To nourish us, to energize us, to satisfy our spiritual hunger and quench our spiritual thirst and leave us wanting more. Wanting to come back as soon as we can. And wanting to tell others why it's so good.

[15 : 40] And you know, the way we come to delight in God's word is by meditating on it. That is, chewing on it. Savoring it. Pondering it in our hearts. Thinking about it.

Letting it, sort of, turning it over in our minds. Even repeating the words out loud in prayer. Letting them wash over us like a river.

One of the resources you can find through the church website on that Psalms page is a letter by the early church father, Athanasius.

He was an Egyptian church leader about 1,500 years ago, and he wrote this letter to his friend about the Psalms. And if you read this letter, you can see that he spent years, decades, delighting in and meditating on these Psalms.

He wrote this, Within the book of Psalms are represented and portrayed in all their great variety the movements of the human soul. It is like a mirror in which you see yourself portrayed.

[16 : 39] Moreover, whatever your particular need or trouble, from this same book you can select a form of words to fit it. In other words, he's saying if you're angry, there are Psalms that can help you bring your anger to God.

If you're troubled, there are Psalms that can help you cry out to God in trouble. If you've messed up, the Psalms can help you confess your sin and be assured of God's forgiveness. If you've experienced God's goodness, the Psalms can help you to praise and thank the Lord.

You know, Athanasius had spent decades in the Psalms and so he could recommend particular Psalms for people in particular situations with particular needs. Now, let me say a word to you if you've never read the Psalms or if the Psalms are largely unfamiliar to you.

It may take some time to appreciate the variety of the Psalms. It's sort of like if you've never eaten Korean food. Now, good Korean food, in my humble opinion, is one of the best things on the planet.

But if you weren't raised with it, you may find that some of the flavors are initially unfamiliar. All right, some foods are really spicy. Others are strongly pickled.

[17 : 52] Others are sweet. They may not all immediately appeal to you the first time you eat them. And in the same way, when you start reading the Psalms, you might find that some of them hit the spot right away.

And others feel like an unfamiliar taste, harder to relate to. And you know what? That's normal because the Psalms are written out of a great diversity of life experiences and situations.

And maybe you haven't been through what the Psalmist was going through when he wrote that Psalm. You know, or maybe some of the ancient poetry is a little hard, you know, it takes time to sort of translate that into today and understand what it was meaning.

You know, many people come to appreciate the Psalms more and more the older they get. I think that's partly because people go through a greater variety of life experiences as they get older.

In fact, some Psalms talk about the experience of getting older and actually address that particularly. Psalm 71 is a good example. And also, the more you spend time in them, right, the more you appreciate them.

[18 : 57] It's a little bit like drinking coffee, right? The first time I drank a cup of coffee, I was like, why do people drink this? It's bitter. It's gross, right? Now I'm sort of a coffee snob a little bit.

I mean, I can tell you what good coffee is, right? I appreciate it. I know how I like it. I know how I don't like it, right? Right? And so, you know, it's an acquired taste, as they say, right?

And so, many of the Psalms are sort of like that. It's an acquired taste that you come to appreciate and savor and more and more over time. The invitation in the words of Psalm 34 is, taste and see that the Lord is good.

Or in the words of Psalm 81, God says, open your mouth wide and I will fill it. So, that's the invitation to take in God's word, to delight in it and meditate on it.

And verse 3 of Psalm 1 tells us that as we do that, it'll have an enduring effect on us. Just like streams of water make a tree to flourish and bear fruit, God's word will help us to be nourished and strengthened and energized and stabilized.

[20 : 08] There's a very similar verse to verse 3 in Jeremiah chapter 17, verses 7 and 8, and where it says, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord.

He is like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the stream and it doesn't fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green. And it's not anxious in the year of drought, for it doesn't cease to bear fruit.

In other words, even when we find ourselves in spiritually or physically oppressive circumstances or in spiritually or physically dry places, God's word is still a source of ongoing nourishment and sustenance for us.

Now, verse 4 gives a contrasting image. It says, the wicked are like chaff that the wind blows away. Chaff was sort of like the dust, the worthless grass that was mixed in with the actual wheat.

And when they'd sort of toss it up, the wheat would fall down, the chaff would blow away in the wind because it was weightless, it was rootless, it had no substance to it. You know, just this year, there are a lot of things that have dried up and blown away in the world.

[21 : 27] Businesses have closed, some of them are not coming back, many people's savings of economic prospects have dried up, relationships have come under stress, sometimes painful fractures have been exposed and brought to the surface.

But brothers and sisters, whatever else in this world may decay or wither or change, God has promised that if we're planted in his word and drawing upon the nourishment of his word, our lives will become enduring and fruitful and stable and stable even through years and seasons of drought or hardship.

And verse 6 reminds us that this isn't just our own doing. You know, verse 3 indicates the Lord has planted us in his garden.

He's the master gardener and he knows our way. Verse 6, the Lord knows the way of the righteous. And that doesn't just mean God sees us from far away and knows about us from a distance, but it means he's committed to us.

He knows us from the inside out and he's promised himself to us and he's going to walk with us every step along the way and continue to sustain and nourish us through his word and by his grace.

[22 : 40] So, brothers and sisters, let's keep our roots firmly planted in God's word. That's the first point from Psalm 1.

But the second point from Psalm 2 is not just to be rooted in God's word, it's to take refuge in God's Son. You know, if you think about the Old Testament as a whole, there are sort of two great gifts that God gives to his people Israel.

The first gift is his word through Moses. on Mount Sinai. And the second gift is a king in the person of David on Mount Zion.

And again, these two Psalms are highlighting these two great gifts that God gave to his people Israel, his word and his king. And when you turn to the New Testament, if you go to the book of Hebrews, Hebrews begins by saying, in the past God spoke to our forefathers in many times and in various ways, but now in these last days, he has spoken to us through the person of his son.

God's word, God's son. We see these two great gifts in the Old and New Testaments encapsulated in these two Psalms. Now, if Psalm 1 begins by talking about wicked individuals, Psalm 2 begins by talking about wicked rulers.

[23 : 54] The nation's rage, the people's plot, and interestingly, that word plot is the same word that was translated meditate in chapter 1. Lots of connections between these two Psalms.

But the wicked rulers aren't meditating on the word of the Lord. They're plotting emptiness, vanity, foolishness. Their vain hope is to get rid of the Lord and get rid of his anointed king.

In verse 3, they say, serving God is slavery. Serving ourselves is freedom. Now, many rulers throughout history have said things like that. They've said things like, let's throw off the shackles of religion and usher in a new age of freedom and enlightenment.

The French Revolution began that way with cries for liberty, equality, and brotherhood. But it ended in a bloody dictatorship. You know, the results have not always been liberating or life-giving when human beings set themselves up as an authority over others and then claim ourselves as the ultimate standard.

You could look at Stalin's Russia, Mao's China, North Korea, or many other examples. You know, the United States has perhaps survived so long in part because we have a system of checks and balances that limits the power of any one individual or branch of government.

[25 : 25] And many of the American founders set up the system that way because they were keenly conscious of the fallibility, even the depravity of human beings. How easily power corrupts us.

They weren't all Christians, but many of them understood some implications of the biblical teaching about human sinfulness and even built that into a system of government.

You see, the paradox is it's only by accepting our creaturely limitations that we can truly enjoy the freedom that God has intended for us to enjoy. But in verses 4 to 6, we see that God is not threatened by these wicked rulers who are rising up against him and wanting to throw off all restraint.

It says he who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. You know, imagine how you would respond if you saw an ant crawling around on the floor and the ant spoke to you and said, I am declaring a revolt against you and the entire human race.

You would look at the ant and say, I can stomp on you anytime I want. Right?

[26 : 43] I don't even, I can't, I don't even, you are no obstacle to me. How ridiculous. And in a similar way, God says to these wicked rulers who are rising up against him, as for me, I've set my king on my holy hill, on Zion.

In other words, God is saying, I don't need you to be on my side. I can accomplish my plans perfectly well with or without you. I'll do exactly what I want to do and you can't stop me.

I mean, look at what God did for the people of Israel in the Old Testament. The people of Israel are enslaved in Egypt. They're threatened, right, that one of the most powerful rulers in the ancient world wants to exterminate them.

And God says, I'm going to rescue you. I'm going to bring you out from under Pharaoh's nose. I'm going to take you under my wing, under my protection, and you'll be mine.

And nothing Pharaoh says or does is going to get in the way of me rescuing you. So he brings them into their own land and plants them there and gives them a king to rule in Zion.

[27 : 56] Zion's just another name for Jerusalem. To rule over them with justice and defeat anyone who came against them. All right, God says, wicked rulers who rise up against me and band together against me, they're no threat to my ultimate purposes.

They don't make me feel insecure. Some scholars have suggested that Psalm 2 was originally written as a coronation psalm.

to celebrate the installation of King David or one of his descendants. And there's a reference to that in verse 7. Likely, we hear God's word to the king.

The Lord said to me, you are my son. Today I have begotten you. Now, that in the ancient context, that is adoption language. So, you know, in the book of Exodus, one of the first things God says to Pharaoh about the people of Israel is he says, Israel is my firstborn son.

Let my son go that he may serve me. In other words, God's saying, I am adopting the nation of Israel as my own child. And I will protect them and I will care for them just as any good parent is utterly committed to caring for their own son or daughter.

[29 : 15] And then when God installs the king in Israel, he says to the king, in fact, you can read this in 2 Samuel 7.14, God promises to David, I will be a father to him and he will be my son.

In other words, the king is sort of embodying, like all the fortunes of the people of Israel are wrapped up in the king. Right? The king is sort of the representative of the whole people as God's adopted son.

But if you read Psalm 2 as a whole, it doesn't actually sound like it was written simply for a coronation ceremony.

It sounds more like it was written remembering a coronation ceremony but facing a crisis. Right? Why do the first three verses start with nations rising up?

It's probably because it was written at a time when the nation of Israel is being attacked and threatened by some big superpowers of the day. But Psalm 2 reminded the king and reminded God's people of God's power and of God's promise.

[30 : 22] And even pointed ahead in verses 8 and 9 to what God would do in the future when all the nations of the world to the ends of the earth would come under the rule of the king, of the Lord's appointed king.

So the point is is Psalm 2 is written facing a crisis but remembering God's power and God's promise. Now, here is the fascinating thing about this.

When you go to the New Testament, the early church reads Psalm 2 and turns to Psalm 2 when they are in the middle of crises and facing opposition and turmoil.

So if you look at Acts chapter 4, the apostles Peter and John have been preaching about Jesus. They get arrested, thrown in jail, released the next day. They go back to the believers.

They all say, we need to pray. And they begin their prayer by quoting verses 1 and 2 of this psalm. Why did the Gentiles rage and the people's plot in vain?

[31 : 26] The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers are gathered together against the Lord and against his anointed. And then they go on to explain, then listen to what they say next. For truly in this city, there in Jerusalem, they're speaking right there in Jerusalem, truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel.

Now, what are they saying? Here's the point. In verses 1 to 3 of Psalm 2, the early church saw a picture of Jesus' crucifixion. You see, the early Christians were reading Psalm 2 and they were Jewish Christians so they would have known this psalm very well already.

And they said, you know what? That's describing something that happened way back in ancient Israel, but it's not only that, that's also describing exactly what we just saw happen to Jesus.

What happened to Jesus? The rulers of the world all turned against him. Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Roman government, the Jewish authorities, they banded together to get rid of him.

They condemned him to death and they hung him on a tree and nailed him there to die. Even though he was the anointed one of God. That word in verse 2, the anointed, is the word that's also translated Messiah.

[32 : 52] That's what Messiah means, anointed one of God. But it doesn't stop there. The early church kept on reading the psalm and they said, look at verses 4 through 7.

That's what happened in the resurrection. God didn't leave Jesus dead in the grave. God raised him up. Right? God wasn't threatened by the rulers of the world and everybody who banded together and put Jesus to death.

No, God was going to work out his plan despite and even through that. So in Acts 13, 33, Paul quotes verse 7 of Psalm 2 and he specifically refers it to Jesus' resurrection.

He says, what God promised to our fathers, this he has fulfilled to us, their children, by raising Jesus. Resurrecting Jesus. As it is written in the second psalm, you are my son.

Today I have begotten you. And in Romans chapter 1, verse 4, Paul wrote that Jesus was declared to be the son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead.

[33 : 57] In other words, when God raised Jesus from the dead, it was his public statement to the whole world that this is my son.

He is and ever will be the true anointed one of God, the rightful king of glory. So the early church read this psalm and they saw Jesus' crucifixion, Jesus' resurrection, and it doesn't even stop there.

They read verses 8 and 9 and saw a prophecy of Jesus' return in glory. If you read the book of Revelation, three times Revelation quotes or alludes to verses 8 and 9 of Psalm 2.

And Revelation is written to Christians who are in the midst of crisis, facing all kinds of opposition and all kinds of turmoil in the world. And those verses, verses 8 and 9, they understand them as looking forward to the day when Jesus will return in glory and judge the world and all the nations will be gathered before him.

So what's the point of all this? When the kings of ancient Israel were threatened by enemies, they turned to this psalm to remember God's power and to remember the promise that he had made to King David.

[35 : 21] When the early church faced opposition and turmoil, they turned to this psalm to remember God's power and remember God's promise and how it had been fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah.

And so we too, in times of national turmoil and upheaval, in times of personal turmoil and upheaval, can turn to this psalm and remember God's power and remember God's promise.

You know, God is not fazed by all the turmoil in the world today. He is not wringing his hands and anxiously wondering, can I bring my plan to pass or not?

No, he is still on his throne and he is working out his purposes and he promises that for those who love him, they will be for our ultimate good and for his ultimate glory.

And you know, his promise to us still holds true. Just like God promised in the Old Testament, I, you are my son, I've taken you under my wing as my own.

[36 : 33] In the New Testament, we see that same promise that we are included as sons and daughters of God in Jesus, in the true son.

We are now included in that promise. We are children of God through faith in Jesus and his promises to us as well. The psalm concludes, verse 10 to 12, with a warning and a promise, a warning to the wicked rulers.

Wise up. Serve the Lord with fear. Rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son. Now that last phrase is a little awkward and hard to translate, but the meaning is very clear in the ancient world.

You would kiss the feet of a king as a way of surrendering, expressing loyalty. The idea is very clear no matter how you translate it.

Surrender to the rightful king. If you haven't yet surrendered to Jesus, let me ask you, what is holding you back from doing so?

[37 : 35] Consider that. What is holding you back from surrendering completely to him as your king? But the last word of the psalm is a promise. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Have you found your refuge in him? Derek Kidner wrote, there is no refuge from him, but there is refuge in him. Jesus invites us to come to him and take refuge in him and hold to him.

Brothers and sisters, plant your roots in God's word, find your refuge in God's son. That is what it means to live under God's blessing in a world of turmoil.

Let's pray. Father God, we thank you for these psalms that were written so long ago. We thank you, Lord, for how they testify to your great gifts, the gift of your word, the gift of your word and the scriptures.

We pray that we would be rooted in the scriptures and draw upon their truth and wisdom for our lives. And in the person of your son, our King Jesus, we pray, Lord, that we might take refuge in him, that we might know the blessing it is to belong to you.

[39 : 04] and that our thinking and our lives might be increasingly shaped by that reality, by our belonging to you. Pray this all in Jesus' name.

Amen.