

Psalm 2

Longing For the Coming King

May I share a bit of personal testimony with you? The LORD has been putting me to the test over the past few weeks, maybe even the past few months. Here I am husbanding a wife, parenting two beautiful children, waiting on the arrival of our third in less than 10 weeks, pastoring a church, discipling men and women, pursuing a PhD, all to what end? Why am I doing what I am doing, what is my pursuit? Let me be perfectly clear with you, I want my wife to know that I love her more than anything on this earth, I want to be the best father to my children, I want to do everything I can to prepare for our 3rd child, I want the church that I pastor to be a healthy church, want to be the best student that I can be, but if all of those things mean I am increasing and he is decreasing, then far be it from me that I should pursue vanity and chase after wind. I want the longing of my heart the end of my ambition to be to Christ and to live my life with the reality that any moment of any hour Jesus could come or I could stand before him.

The Apostle Paul, with this ambition said this, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.* (2 Timothy 4:7-8) May it be true of me, may it be true of you, and may this be the one thing that we do - pursuing Christ, longing for the one who is coming.

Do you long for his coming? Today I want us to look at Psalm 2 and hear God's word for us in this Psalm to instill in us a heart that longs for the coming king.

Read Text

Psalm 2 is written longing for a king to come, a king who will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

4 Truths this AM about this king and his reign:

1. Rebellion is Useless

We should interpret Psalms 1 and 2 together. Some suggest that Psalm 1 is the subscription for Psalm 2 and most agree that Psalm 1 and 2 serve as the introduction of the entire Psalter. If Psalm 1 is the standard and hope of the world, then it is of little wonder why the Psalmist is shocked at the rage of the Nations against this Lord whose desire is to bless. This sense of astonishment makes perfect sense in the shadow of Psalm 1. God has said that the way of the wicked is perishing and the way of the righteous is flourishing. God says this as an act of mercy and grace only to find those that he says this to plotting against him.

Hosea 11 tells this story. In Hosea 11 we have the story of the people of God responding spitefully against a God who is full of compassion and grace. He overwhelmingly loves them and they utterly oppose him. Hosea 11:2 says, *The More they were called the more they went away.* Hosea 11:4 says, *I led them with cords of kindness, with the bands of love, and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaw, and I bent down to them and fed them.* Now, if the very people of God scorn His goodness, what are we to expect from the Nations?

But notice the way the Psalm puts the scorn of the nations. The scorn and plotting of the nations is vanity. Look at the language of the text specifically verse 3. *Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.* The problem that the world has with God is they see His presence as a noose about their neck, a chain around their ankle keeping them from delight, keeping them from blessedness. At the root of the kings of the earth's, the powers' to be, problem is the disavowal of absolute truth. Instead they reject the bonds of truth and try to uphold their world with subjectivism and relativism. Don't miss this. Once absolutes are jettisoned by a worldview the new absolute is "there are no absolutes" which of course is an absolute - do you hear the absurdity? They jettison God's rule only to try to fill the eternal void with themselves. They are lovers of self

rather than lovers of God (2 Timothy 3:2). Do you see this anywhere in our world today? I think this is most prevalent in the LGBT movement. Look at the center of these movements, at the center is a redefinition, a reordering of absolutes. We have the redefinition of matrimony and the redefinition of manhood - what it means to be a man, what it means to be a woman. But it is not just there, it is anywhere people set their thoughts against God.

These kings of the earth see the love of God as constraining, constricting, as limiting in some way. But they don't understand the freedom that the bonds of the love of God brings. Think about it for just a moment, there is nothing in this world as constricting as love. Because I love my children there are things that I will never do, because I love my wife there are certain things that I will never do, because I love my Lord there are certain things that I will never do. Does that mean that I am not free?

Look at the end of the Psalm. At the end we have an appeal from the God of love, as if he is anticipating his appeal in our Lord Jesus Christ who holds both arms open and declares come unto me all you who burdened and heavy laden and I will give you rest, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light. God's appeal to us is life, his appeal to us is not duty but delight. God's laws are not meant to keep us *from* something so much as they are to keep us *for* something. Kevin DeYoung, the Presbyterian pastor in Michigan says,

“The only chains God wants us to wear are the chains of righteousness - not the chains of hopeless subjectivism, not the shackles of risk-free living, not the fetters of horoscope decision making - just the chains befitting of a bond servant of Christ Jesus. Die to self. Live for Christ. And then do what you want, go where you want, for God's glory.” (DeYoung in *Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will*)

Lovers of God don't give up freedom they find freedom in loving God (2 Corinthians 5:14). Remember, we confess the truth of God is what makes us free. Our Lord says, *You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free... Whom the Son sets free is free indeed* (John 8:32, 36). C.S. Lewis said, Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance, the only thing it cannot be is moderately important.” Do you see why it must be vain that the nations rage? The nations are raging and setting themselves against the LORD and against His Anointed.

The Apostles interpreted the rage of the nations to find its highpoint in the life of Jesus, the Lord's Anointed, when he was being tried and crucified. The nations rage in this passage was interpreted then to refer to Herod, Pilot, and the Jews and Gentiles who plotted against and tried to silence our Lord Jesus Christ. Theodoret of Cyr says, “The words of the Psalm come from someone deploring and censuring folly...Despite their conspiring together and hatching a tawdry plot for the murder of the Lord, their schemes all came to nothing, as they were unable to consign to oblivion the one crucified by them: On the third day he rose again and took possession of the world.”

Is it to any wonder why the Apostles Paul says what he says in Romans 9:19, *For who can resist his will?* Thankfully God's sovereignty is not determined by us. He is the all wise God. 1 Corinthians 1:25 says, *For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.* If the rulers understood this they would have never have plotted against Him. Instead, they would fear Him, and even in their plotting they have a word from God, a word calling them to recognize how foolish resisting the Lord is!

Number two this morning, we can rest assured:

2. The Lord's Word is Sure

And it is the Word of the Lord that establishes the kingship of the Son.

The LORD answers their scheming with laughter and then with wrath. It is one thing to have the nations speak, quite another to have the Lord of the nations speak. Look at the way the text is laid out. All of the text is

responding to the rage of the nations, the nations have one word to say as they set themselves against the LORD and His Anointed, but look who speaks most and last. The mighty nations who dare through a coup against the Lord of the heavens terrifies them in his fury.

Look at verse 6. The *I* of verse 6 is in the emphatic position to show how direct God's response is. God in essence says, "You may have your plans, but I have already fixed a time by which to judge the world (Acts 17:30-31). His word is the final word, no human rebellion can stop it.

May we never forget this. There is one word that is above all words, one word that will outlast all words, one word that will have implications for all of eternity. You and I may say, may think, may do all that we desire, but one day we will see what God thinks of all that we have done. On the final day, when we stand before him (for all must appear before him) he will say Here is the one with whom I delight, or depart from me, I never knew you. The difference between the two is either conspiring or kissing (v.1, 12 conspiring means bringing apart while kiss means to bring together))

The LORD speaks and his speech is not couched in rebellion, his speech is wrath. This is to signify that he is the final authority of the earth. When he speaks the earth listens. The Psalms will go on to say that *The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.* (Psalm 46:6) We should also take note of the glorious scene in Revelation, in the end with the new Jerusalem, the everlasting kingdom. Speaking of the New Jerusalem the text says, *By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it....* (Revelation 21:24). There is an inevitability and an assurance that comes when the LORD speaks.

Scripture has always longed for and pointed towards the forever reign of the one whose kingdom would be established by the Word of the LORD - the LORD's Anointed. It is to the establishment of this reign that the Psalm now turns.

3. King Jesus is Coming

It isn't until verse 7 that we hear the Anointed One speak. We have heard from everyone else and now we hear from the One who will rule them all. The language is reminiscent of 2 Samuel 7 where God makes a covenant with David and tells David that he will build a house for him. God will raise up an offspring from David and establish his kingdom forever. 2 Samuel 7:14 says, *I will be to him a Father and he shall be to me a son.*

Throughout the ages Israel experienced many kings. Some better than others, some worse, some the worst of the worse. All, even the best, fell short of the expectation of Psalm 2. It is important for us to remember when the hymnbook was being put together. The Psalms are a collection of hymns that make up a single hymn book. When the Psalter is being edited, under the direction of the Spirit, it is likely the post-exilic period. The monarch ended with Zedekiah and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 BC. Can you image how such a Psalm with such a great hope would have been received? Would the words of the LORD prove true? We have this dusty Psalm, this royal coronation Psalm, Psalm 2; should we put it in the hymnbook? It was kept under the inspiration of the Spirit with assurance that one day God would bring this Son who would rule the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 2:9, 27)

We open the pages of the first book of the New Testament, 1,000 years after David, 1,000 years of many heartaches and longings, and we get a picture of Jesus, Son of David, Son of Abraham, Son of God - the eternal Word made flesh. The Apostles say that *The Word became flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we have seen his glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* Then this Jesus who is born is baptized and who he is, is made more clear with a majestic voice from heaven declaring, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.* (Matthew 3:17) Finally the longing of Psalm 2 is being realized! The longing of our hearts, the longing of the earth is met with Jesus - Son of Man, Son of God. This is the one who when he speaks the seas obey, the sick are healed, demons flee, and the dead are raised back to life. All he has to do is ask and the earth will belong to him.

I think that this Psalm fits well with another royal Psalm, Psalm 110. In Psalm 110, the most quoted Psalm in the New Testament, we see the day where the whole earth will experience the rule of God. Psalm 110 opens with, *The LORD says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.* This King who Psalm 2 prepares us for is the King that Psalm 110 further establishes is the one who will one day rule the world!

The warning of verses 11 and 12 could not be more clear. The way of salvation could not be more clear:

4. Repent and Trust in King Jesus

Even in the midst of a just God ready to deliver wrath, repentance will sheath his sword. The Psalm ends in grace, ends with a warning and an opportunity to make a wise choice. Do not forget how quick the Bible is to get to grace. Remember the words of the LORD's anointed when he traversed the earth:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.” (John 3:16-21 ESV)

Indeed, he is more ready to forgive than we are ready to ask. He does not force, does not coerce, but he does bind with a love that will never let us go. His desire is not our allegiance out of duty, his desire is our allegiance out of delight, and so he stands with warning inviting us to come to him and find salvation for our souls. The kindness of the LORD is meant to lead us to repentance.

As the Scripture says,

But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (2 Peter 3:8-10 ESV)

This same Jesus who offers salvation today, if refused, will be the same Jesus who says, depart from me, I never know you.

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.
(Psalm 2:12)

Are you ready to declare your allegiance to King Jesus? Some of you may need to recommit your allegiance to him through repentance. Whatever decision you need to make, wont you come?