

**Take Refuge in Christ
Psalm 2
Sunday, May 25th, 2025
By Ryan Perry**

Scripture

Psalm 2

- [1] Why do the nations rage
and the peoples plot in vain?
- [2] The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,
- [3] “Let us burst their bonds apart
and cast away their cords from us.”
- [4] He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.
- [5] Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
- [6] “As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.”
- [7] I will tell of the decree:
The LORD said to me, “You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.
- [8] Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
- [9] You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”
- [10] Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
- [11] Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
- [12] 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.

Let’s Pray

Introduction

If you were here three weeks ago when I went through Psalm 1, you may remember that I said that it serves as the introduction to the whole Psalter or Hymnbook of Israel.

But one of the things that I didn't mention was the fact that for much of Jewish and early Christian history, Psalm 1 and 2 were actually read together, and they both serve as the introduction to the Psalms.

And what these two Psalms are meant to do is to give us a grand picture of the One True King while at the same time calling us to trust and follow him.

In Psalm 1, we are confronted with an evil pattern of living, and yet told that real blessing comes when we reject those evil ways and put our hope and trust in the Lord. We will receive the unmerited favor of God and we will stand with him in the congregation of the righteous.

Psalm 2 then complements that message by giving us a grand picture of the One through whom that blessing and unmerited favor comes.

Now, according to Acts 4:25 this Psalm is attributed to David. And where Psalm 1 is called a wisdom Psalm, Psalm 2 is considered to be a royal Psalm. **Because in this Psalm, we are going to get a grand picture of the royal kingdom of God.**

We're going to see humanity rebelling against its King, the futility of that rebellion as our sovereign God responds, and how God will subdue their rebellion and bring victory through His Anointed King.

And yet, despite the evil and the rebellion of humanity, our gracious God will, in the end, still hold out hope to them. The hope of eternal life to all who come to him and find their refuge in his Anointed.

My hope for us this morning is that through this Psalm we will encounter the grandeur of our sovereign God. That we will stand in awe of him and his Anointed King and Messiah, who will not only destroy evil and give victory to his people, but gives everlasting life to all who come to him in faith. **So let's start by first looking at foolish rebellion of mankind.**

The foolishness of rebellion

Psalm 2:1-3

[1] Why do the nations rage

and the peoples plot in vain?

[2] The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together,

against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,

[3] "Let us burst their bonds apart

and cast away their cords from us."

Illustration

Think about what is happening globally at this very moment. The Russian/Ukrainian war is still raging on with no end in sight. Israel is threatening to attack Iran over their nuclear weapons program. And in Syria, thousands have been killed over the past couple of months by what many are calling radical Islamic terrorists.

Also, if you go to the website OpenDoor.Org and look at the World Watch list for 2025, you will see that roughly 380 million Christians are experiencing high to extreme levels of persecution worldwide. This means that around 1 in 7 Christians are experiencing some form of hardship for being a Christian.

Finally, here at home, we are living in a country that seems to be marked by political infighting, the widespread acceptance of the LGBTQ rhetoric and lifestyle, and an American spirit that believes the word “freedom” means that we can live however we want, regardless of the consequences or whether it is right or wrong.

Text

When we put these things together, we see in our world a living representation of David’s words in verses 1-3. Nations are raging against nations, various people groups are plotting against each other, the kings of the earth are setting themselves against what is right and good, and rulers are taking counsel together to do evil. **In fact, they are not only doing evil, but in our day, they are calling evil good.**

And for us as Christians, these things can begin to be unnerving and can produce fear in our hearts. We begin to wonder, **“What is happening to our world? Why does it feel like sin and evil are running rampant around us? Why do so many people seem opposed to the things of God? What’s going to happen to the church and to Christians around the globe?”**

But we need to remember that this isn’t a new phenomenon. All the evil, raging, plotting, setting against, and taking counsel together that happens in the world is all a part of the brokenness that was initiated in Genesis 3.

God, in his perfection and goodness, gave Adam and Eve a very simple command that was meant to be for their good and flourishing. As it says in Genesis 2:16-17:

[16] And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, [17] but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

But instead of trusting God and leaning into his goodness, in Genesis 3, the serpent, the devil, convinced Adam and Eve to cast off the bonds and cords of God’s loving leadership in their life, and to go their own way.

And from that day forward, humanity was now bound by the curse of death and enslaved to sin. So, everything we are seeing in our world today is really the continuation of the sin and disobedience of Adam and Eve.

And like Adam and Eve, the sin and evil that are being committed in the world are at their core an assault on God and his Anointed King. Now, in the original context of this Psalm, **the Anointed** would have been the King of Israel at the time, which would have been David. **So David, in writing these words, would have applied them to himself.**

But as we continue to move through this royal psalm, it will become clear that the Anointed of Psalm 2 is clearly pointing to a greater King, the Messiah, Christ.

So the kings, rulers, and people of this world, who don't know Christ, are doing all that they can to free themselves from the supreme rule, reign, and authority of Christ. Which is why persecution even exists. Because they hate Christ in us. As Jesus said in Matthew 24:9:

[9] Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake.

So we need to realize that evil around us isn't new, but is man's continual attempt to, like Adam and Eve, run away from and be free of God.

They are trying to be like Jonah, who thought he could go to Tarshish and somehow get away from the presence of the LORD.

But it's a fool's errand that David says is "vain" and "empty," and will come to nothing.

Therefore, we don't need to live in fear or be unnerved by what's happening around us, because there is a sovereign God sitting in heaven at this moment who sees all of these evils, will respond to them, and will fulfill his promises to us as his people.

The response of our Sovereign God

Psalm 2:4-6

***[4] He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.***

***[5] Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,***

***[6] "As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."***

Illustration

How many of you have ever seen the movie "Avengers: Infinity War?" Now, I have to admit that I haven't seen the whole movie, but I have seen parts, including the end.

Now, if you haven't seen it and don't know anything about it, it's basically a movie where all of these superheroes, **The Avengers**, are trying to stop and destroy this immortal being, **Thanos**, from getting all of these infinity stones and destroying half of all life in the universe.

And in the final scene of the movie, one of those heroes, Thor, thinks he has actually destroyed Thanos. **But he's wrong.** Thanos then uses his Infinity Glove, which contains all of these Infinity Stones, snaps his fingers, and half of the universe is destroyed while he returns safely to his home planet.

So unfortunately, if you like picture-perfect movie endings, this movie isn't for you. Because after all of that destruction, the movie ends, and Thanos, the bad guy, wins.

Text

Thankfully, I don't have to stand up here this morning and tell you that the bad guy wins. That somehow fallen humanity and the devil will in the end defeat God. **Rather, it will be quite the opposite.**

Like Thor, humanity is beginning to believe that they have destroyed the immortal God and have truly cast off his authority from their lives. But the psalmist David tells us another story.

That the Sovereign God of the universe is in heaven, laughing at their attempts to escape from him. He holds them in contempt for their evil, and he is mocking the absurd notion that anyone can somehow cast off his authority in their lives.

It would be like rearranging deck chairs on a cruise ship, thinking that somehow your actions can change its course. **They can't, and it clearly won't work.**

And for us, as the people of God, this should produce a great joy and hope within us. Because no human power or coalition, from the beginning of time to the end of time, will ever be a serious threat to the rule of our Great God. **He is infinitely powerful, and in the end, he will defeat every earthly and spiritual power that sets itself up against him.**

In fact, David tells us that God has already set his victory in motion. As it says in verse 6:

***“As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.”***

Now, like verse 2, where it mentions God's Anointed, the King that is set on Zion, it would have originally referred to David and his descendants who sat on his throne. This is made even more clear by God's covenant with David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16.

[12] 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. [13] He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. [14] 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, [15] but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. [16] And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.

In David's day, this was partially fulfilled by Solomon who came after him. He was loved and disciplined by God, and he built the temple where God's presence dwelt in Jerusalem, which is also called Zion. So he is the earthly fulfillment of this covenant.

But this covenant was and is a forever covenant. And yet, many of David's descendants after Solomon didn't follow God. In fact, this eventually led to the exile and the physical end of the Davidic rule in Israel.

This should be a warning to us to never place our full trust or hope in a physical ruler or leader. Even the greatest president is only a pale reflection of our God and Savior, and there is no lasting peace or salvation found in them.

However, the beauty of this Psalm and of 2 Samuel 7 is that God can make these definitive pronouncements about his King and eternal covenant with David because he's not talking about an earthly king or even an earthly dwelling place called Zion.

Rather, he is pointing the Israelites and us toward a future Heavenly King to come who will rule in an eternal place called Zion. As it says in Revelation 14:1:

[1] Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

Christ, the Lamb of God, is the mighty and forever King, who fulfills God's promise of an eternal kingdom to David and to us his people.

For he not only went to the cross on our behalf so that we could be his people, but he is the one, and the only one, who will one day subdue and rule all of creation.

The Son who rules and reigns

Psalm 2:7-9

[7] I will tell of the decree:

***The LORD said to me, "You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.***

***[8] Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.***

***[9] You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."***

Text

So now the Son of God comes into full view. He is the one who is begotten and born of God, and he is the one who will rule the nations as the fulfillment of God's covenant to David. As it is written in Isaiah 9:6-7:

***[6] For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
[7] Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.***

Jesus, the Son of God, was sent to earth by the Father to reestablish what was broken and undone in the Garden of Eden. He came to bring the kingdom of God to earth by establishing, through his life, death, and resurrection, a forever relationship and a forever kingdom with his people that will know no end.

It's a kingdom that will be established and upheld by his perfect justice and righteousness. And as the Psalm says in verse 8, it will extend to the ends of the earth.

Because everything, all nations, all peoples, and every single thing in all of the universe will belong to him and will submit to him.

As Paul says of Christ in Philippians 2:9-11:

[9] Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, [10] so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, [11] and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This includes the enemies of God, who may not want to worship him, but they will know and confess him as Lord. Because he is going to come back with a rod of iron and with it will subdue and destroy his enemies. As it says in Verse 9 of Psalm 2:

***[9] You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.***

Look, as evangelicals, it's really easy to get excited about Jesus the Messiah who is loving, gracious, forgiving, and who died to give us eternal life.

And we should get excited about that. In fact, we will see that side of our Savior in just a minute.

But we should be just as excited that we serve a God and a Savior who rules and reigns as a Sovereign and Conquering King. One who will execute justice and subdue his enemies.

Because he is a God who can't be defeated. He is a King who will never be overthrown. He is our Lord who, at this moment, holds everything in his hands and nothing is outside of his control.

So even when we feel like evil is winning around us, we know that Jesus, the Messiah, the Anointed Son of God, the King, has already secured the victory. **Which means that the world and the devil are fighting a battle that they've already lost.**

Because Jesus will eventually conquer them for good, he will rule and reign over all creation, **and for us, as his people, we will rule with him.**

As it says in Revelation 2:26-27:

[26] The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, [27] and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father.

So be encouraged this morning. Evil not only won't win in our world, but it has already been defeated by Christ.

So instead of living in fear over what we see happening around us, we should respond to our Conquering King by running to him, trusting him, and taking refuge in his loving and powerful care.

Take refuge in Christ

Psalm 2:10-12

***[10] Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.***

***[11] Serve the LORD with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.***

***[12] 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.

Illustration

I'm not exactly sure how each person in this room handles conflict. But one thing that is probably true of all of us is that there have been times when we have been wronged and hurt by another person.

And for most of us, our natural reaction in those moments is retaliation. We want that person to understand the evil they have committed and to experience on some level, the same pain that they have brought upon us.

Text

But the Anointed King Jesus doesn't respond that way. Instead, he responds, through David, the psalmist, with a warning and a call to faith. **To come and take refuge in him.**

So these final three verses then serve as a double invitation. On the one hand, it is a call for us, as his people, to remember that we were once enemies of God. But now, through his life, death, and resurrection, Christ, the Conquering King, has graciously defeated evil, sin, and death on our behalf.

Therefore, we can cast our cares, our doubts, and our worries about this world upon him. Because in Christ we find real and lasting life and security.

As Jesus said in John 10:28-29:

[28] I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. [29] My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

But on the other hand, this is also a blood earnest call, from a gracious and merciful God, for his enemies to come to him in faith.

To be warned and to be wise. That they would come to him with reverent fear and joyful trembling because what they deserve is wrath. But what God has on offer for them, through Christ, is the same life and security that belongs to anyone who comes to him for refuge.

But if the enemies of God don't turn to Jesus in faith, there is real anger and eternal wrath that will eventually come upon them.

So if you are here this morning, and you have been living as an enemy of God, come to Jesus before it is too late. See your need for him. Believe that he is the only one who can conquer sin in your life. And believe that what he has in store for you is a forever relationship with the almighty and eternal God.

For our God and Savior, Jesus Christ is the promised King and Savior of Psalm 2 and of all of scripture. And no matter what happens in our world and no matter what evil sets itself up against God and his people, **Christ has already secured the victory.**

So I want to call you to cast aside your fear and worries this morning and come to Jesus as your King and refuge. Because he has conquered evil, he will fight for his people and win, and his promise to us is that nothing in all creation can separate us from his power or his love.

As it says in Romans 8:37–39:

***[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
[38] For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present
nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all
creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Amen.

Let's Pray.