



Psalm 2:1-12

The Song of the Messiah

Across the pillared courtyard, the chant rises in pulsating rhythm. "Time to pick up the guns. Off the pigs! Off the pigs! Time to pick up the guns. Off the pigs! Off the pigs!" A crowd of perhaps 200, clenched fists raised, cries, "Power! Power! Power!"

In the shade of the elms at the other end of the beautiful green grassy knoll, four pairs of elderly town folk play checkers, undisturbed and seemingly as unconcerned as the fat pigeons at their feet.

Two thousands miles away in another part of the world a similar crowd marches down the street shouting, "Fuera de aqui! Fuera de aqui! Fuera de aqui!" The distinct onion smell of tear gas becomes more ominous with the chanting as the crowd gets closer and closer.

Down through the silent passing of time you can hear the faint chant growing louder and louder, "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!"

Psalm 2 opens with the enemies of the Lord God in open rebellion against Him and His Anointed One. It also describes the ultimate victory of the Lord's anointed over His rebellious enemies. It reaches beyond king David to the glorious reign of the one who can fulfill every aspect of the eternal kingdom as promised to David in II Samuel 7:13, 16. "He will build a house for my name, and I will make his dynasty permanent. . . Your house and your kingdom will stand before me permanently; your dynasty will be permanent (NET).

It is only when the Davidic family is viewed as centering in Christ, that the words can acquire their full truth. In this Psalm the Lord's Anointed comes forward with the divine power and glory that is attributed only to the Messiah in the writings of the prophets. It reaches its climax in verse 11, "Worship the LORD with reverence, and rejoice with trembling" (NASB). The NET Bible reads, "Serve the Lord in fear! Repent in terror!"

There is no internal evidence in the Psalm itself to tell us who the author is. However, Acts 4:25 tells us that King David under the power of the Holy Spirit was the author of the Psalm.

Psalm 2 has four speakers. The first voices we hear are the enemies

Psalm 2 has four speakers. The first voices we hear are the enemies speaking against the Lord God and His Anointed One. The second strophe records the calm words of assurance of *Adonai*, the Sovereign Lord of all in the midst of the opposition. The Anointed King speaks. Finally the Psalmist speaks with exultation because the Lord's anointed comes forth with divine power and glory.

Our Psalm opens with Gentiles in an uproar. Perhaps II Samuel 8 or 10 would fit the local situation under the reign of King David. The hostility of neighboring nations had displayed itself. First, we hear . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SCOFFERS (2:1-3)

Man's rebellion against God

The rebellion is not just against David. "Nations" and "peoples" refers to Gentile nations who are in an "uproar" against the Lord God and His Anointed One (v. 1). The Psalmist says, I hear a "noisy riot that seethes in antagonism" against God. People of various nationalities are in rebellion. They have a common bond of hatred against the Lord. They meditate on how they can overthrow God.

The Psalmist expresses his outrage that the gentile nations would rebel against the Lord God. "Why do the nations rebel? Why are the countries devising plots that will fail? The kings of the earth form a united front; the rulers collaborate against the Lord and his anointed king" (Psalm 2:1-2 NET).

The gentile nations are in an uproar, but it amounts to nothing more than devising a useless, worthless plan. The political leaders take their stand against the LORD God and his Anointed One, the Messiah.

Political leaders, representing their rebellious nations, act as a group taking their stand in opposition to God in verse two. They are devoid of all reason as they take up their defiant position. Their rebellion is already underway. They have already devised their plan. You can hear them in the distance raising their fists in defiance as they shout, "Let s tear off the shackles they vè put on us! Let s free ourselves from their ropes!" (v. 3 NET).

History is full of men's opposition to God. However, they devise a "vain thing." Their plot to overthrow God will be empty. It will come to nothing. They are "devising emptiness." Their rebellion will fail.

How odd that men conspire together against God.

Adam was the first to rebel against God in the Garden of Eden. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," declared the prophet Jeremiah (17:9).

Before the Deluge of the Earth man's heart was only continuously full of rebellion and wickedness (Genesis 6:5). It was so bad God had to destroy mankind from off the face of the earth. Out of His grace He saved Noah and his family.

Even after the flood mankind was still in rebellion toward God (Genesis 11:4). Men plotted together saying, "Come, let's build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens so that we may make a name for ourselves. Otherwise we will be scattered across the face of the entire earth (NET). Consequently, God confused their language.

Pharaoh tried to defeat God's purpose with the people Israel. Genocide and infanticide didn't work. God delivered His people with the death angel the night of the first Passover.

Jesus "came to His own and His own received Him not." He gave an excellent illustration in Matthew 21:33-42. He concluded his parable by quoting Psalm 118:22-23, "The stone which the builders discarded has become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's work. We consider it amazing!" (NET)

I can hear the pulsating chant rising in the distant past. It gets louder and louder. "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" Their vain thing was the crucifixion of Christ (Matthew 26:3-5; 27:1, 2).

What will be outcome of this rebellion? (V. 1b)

Their goal will come to nothing. Acts 2:22-24 explains that God raised Christ up from the dead.

Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man clearly attested to you by God with powerful deeds, wonders, and miraculous signs that God performed among you through him, just as you yourselves know this man, who was handed over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you executed by nailing him to a cross at the hands of Gentiles. But God raised him up, having released him from the pains of death, because it was not possible for him to be held in its power" (NET).

Men are still in rebellion against God.

Second Peter 3:3-4 tells us man is still in his rebellion. "Above all, understand this: In the last days blatant scoffers will come, being propelled by their own evil urges and saying, 'Where is his promised return? For ever since our ancestors died, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation'" (NET). He still toots the same horn, and sings the same song, "Let's tear off the shackles they've put on us! Let's free ourselves from their ropes! Read for yourself Isaiah 1:18; Romans 3:23; 6:23 and you discover the same tragic story.

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What is God's reaction to all this? Is He asleep? Why does He remain silent? Is He defeated? Is He helpless?

THE VOICE OF THE SOVEREIGN (12:4-6)

The Lord God is sovereign and He is in complete control.

The Lord "laughs" (v. 4) in unbelief at their powerless threats. He "scoffs" at them. The NET Bible reads, "laughs in disgust." It is "derisive laughter." He is not even moved to rise from His throne. "He who sits" is "the Sitter in the heavens." He is "sitting enthroned" in the heavens. He is characterized with calm and serene dignity. All attitudes of rebellion against *Adonai*, the Sovereign God, are absurd and ridiculous.

"The Lord taunts them" has the idea of "scoffs at," "derides," "mocks." You're messing around with the wrong person.

God will not always be patient. He may be laughing now, but when the time is right his anger will blaze forth like lightning. "Anger" (vv. 5, 12) describes God's righteous indignation. It will be unspeakable terror. The word is used of God's displeasure against rebellion. He will "terrify them in his rage" or "fury." You will never know when His anger will flash forth. He will overthrow them in a word.

God's plan will not be defeated.

Listen to the emphatic firm voice of God. "I myself have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill" (v. 6 NET). The anointed King is set firmly in place. He is God's Anointed One, the Messiah. Hebrews 1:3 speaks of that day.

"The Son is the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, and he sustains all things by his powerful word, and so when he had accomplished cleansing for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Thus he became so far better than the angels as he has inherited a name superior to theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, 'You are my son! Today I have fathered you'? And in another place he says, 'I will be his father and he will be my son' (NET).

"Zion" is God's "holy hill." It is literally "hill of My holiness." God has firmly set in place his King. It fulfills 2 Samuel 7:13, 16. He holds office by direct appointment of God (cf. Psalm 89:26-28). It is interesting that history makes no mention of a king of Israel being anointed on Zion. Zion is mentioned as the royal seat of the Anointed One. He will be installed on Mt. Zion and will reign over the kingdoms of the earth from there.

What is the reaction of the anointed one to the Sovereign? Listen to

THE VOICE OF THE SON OF THE SOVEREIGN (2:7-9)

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The declaration of the Son of God (v. 7)

This sonship implies the dominion over the entire world. These words find their full truth only when the Davidic family is viewed as centering in Christ. The Lord's Anointed comes forward with the divine power and glory, as the Messiah is described in the prophets. The Old Testament knows of no other kingship to which is promised the dominion of the world. History looks in vain to find one who fulfills this lofty position. However, Revelation 19:15 describes Christ when He returns.

"And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS'" (NASB).

Only with the words of Revelation 11:15-18 does it find resolution.

"Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven saying: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.' Then the twenty-four elders who are seated on their thrones before God threw themselves down with their faces to the ground and worshiped God with these words: 'We give you thanks, Lord God, the All-Powerful, the one who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations were enraged, but your wrath has come, and the time has come for the dead to be judged, and the time has come to give to your servants, the prophets, their reward, as well as to the saints and to those who revere your name, both small and great, and the time has come to destroy those who destroy the earth.' "

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (*Messiah*); and He will reign forever and ever."

Where is the evidence that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of this passage?

On three different occasions, the Gospel writers recorded the words from heaven, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." It is not "one of my sons, but "My Son, My only one."

The proof of that declaration is the resurrection of Christ from the dead:

"that this promise God has fulfilled to us, their children, by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second psalm, You are my Son; today I have fathered you. But regarding the fact that he has raised Jesus from the dead, never again to be in a state of decay, God has spoken in this way: I will give you the holy and trustworthy promises made to David. Therefore he also says in another psalm, You will not permit your Holy One to experience decay. For David, after he had served God's purpose in his own generation, died, was buried with his ancestors, and experienced decay, but the one whom God raised up did not experience decay" (Acts 13:33-37 NET).

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The Apostle Paul, himself a Jewish scholar, said concerning Jesus in Romans 1:3-4:

"concerning his Son who was a descendant of David with reference to the flesh, who was appointed the Son-of-God-in-power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (NET).

The writer to the Hebrews interpreted this great song of the Messiah with these words:

For to which of the angels did He ever say, "THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE"? And again, "I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME"? (Hebrews 1:5 NET)

This Psalm is cited more frequently in the New Testament than any other. The Apostles saw it as fulfilled in Jesus Christ and no other person. Jesus appears exactly as this Psalm presents Him.

The Lord God reigns (vv. 8, 9)

The LORD God has appointed the dominion of the world to His Son. "Ask me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the earth as your personal property" (v8 NET). He needs only to appropriate to Himself that which is allocated to Him. The omnipotent rod of iron He holds in His hand will utterly smash all opposition of the rebels. "You will break them with an iron scepter; you will smash them like a potter's jar!" (v. 9). It is the Hebrew instrument of punitive power.

The Old Testament knows no king to which is promised the dominion of the world but the Davidic, and it is fulfilled only in the coming of Jesus Christ. This universal dominion can only be fulfilled by the Messiah King. The royal scepter represents this sovereignty.

At the Second Coming, Christ will manifest His sovereignty. At a time in the future, He will demonstrate His sovereign control. It will be demonstrated for the entire world to see. He will return in judgment and will establish righteousness in the earth. Revelation 11:15-17; 19:11-16 describe for us these events. Moreover, He will return and reign as King of Kings. Calvin wrote: "The meaning is that the Father denies the Son nothing that bears upon the extension of His kingdom even unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

He came the first time as the suffering servant of God, He will return as the sovereign God to reign in triumph on His enemies. Philippians 2:10, 11. "At the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (NET).

Shall we sing with the sweet singer of old? "Strap your sword to your thigh, O warrior! Appear in your majestic splendor! Appear in your majesty and be victorious! Ride forth for the sake of what is right, on behalf of justice! Then your right hand will accomplish mighty acts!" (Psalm 45: 3, 4 NET).

NET).

Here is perfect security for the believer. Listen now as . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT SPEAKS THROUGH THE PSALMIST (2:10-12)

"So now, you kings, do what is wise; you rulers of the earth, submit to correction! Serve the Lord in fear! Repent in terror! Give sincere homage! Otherwise he will be angry, and you will die because of your behavior, when his anger quickly ignites. How blessed are all who take shelter in him!" (vv. 10-12 NET).

There is urgency in these words of the Psalmist.

Applications in this Psalm go beyond David or possibly Solomon. Verses 7, 8 and 12 can not possibly be fulfilled by an earthly king and must refer to the Messiah King, Jesus Christ. King David looks to one who is greater than himself.

"Now." "Today is the day of salvation." He does not want anyone to suffer and would have everyone come to the King is obedient faith.

"Show discernment" (v. 10). "Take warning" the highest form of wisdom. Turn from your self will and put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Repent in terror!" (NET) The word translated "terror" consistently means "to utter terror and fear" on other passages (NET translations notes).

"Rejoice with trembling" (v. 11 KJV, NASB) is the exulting shouts of jubilation in worship. It is the idea of rapturous manifestation of joy at the happiness and honor of being permitted to be the servants of God. What is the response of your heart when you think of His coming? Do you begin to tremble with joy? Do you get excited about the prospect of His coming? Oh, Lord Jesus will I see you today? Come, Lord Jesus come!

Be reconciled to the Sovereign by believing on the Son.

"Do homage to the Son" is literally "kiss." (cf. Hebrews 10:12, 13; I Corinthians 15:25)

"Blessed are they that put their trust in Him." That is the true kiss. It is the kiss of reconciliation. We were all by nature rebels against God. The message of the Gospel is the message of reconciliation. Cast down your weapons of rebellion. Trust Him, rely upon Him, depend upon Him; leave off depending upon yourself, and rely upon Jesus. Throw yourself flat down upon the finished work of Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." Put your trust in Him. "Kiss the Son," and do it now.

It is the kiss of allegiance and worship.

There is also a warning of coming judgment in verse 12. The office of the Messiah is not only

There is also a warning of coming judgment in verse 12. The office of the Messiah is not only that of a Savior but also of divine Judge. Our God is also "a consuming fire." A quote from Revelation 6:16-17 helps us here.

"They said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one who is seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, because the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to withstand it?'" (NET)

History has recorded that emperors, governors and high officials in the Roman Empire distinguished themselves in their zeal and bitterness in persecuting the early Christians. Historians have observed that of thirty of these rulers in the Empire, one became blind. One became speedily deranged after some atrocious cruelty. One was slain by his own son, and one was drowned. The eyes of one started out of his head, one was strangled, one died in a miserable captivity, one fell dead in a manner that will not bear recital. Another died of a disease that several of his physicians were put to death because they could not abide the stench that filled his room. Two committed suicides, a third attempted it, but had to call for help to finish the task. Five were assassinated by their own people or servants, five others died the most miserable and excruciating deaths; several of them having an untold complication of diseases, eight were killed in battle, or after being taken prisoners.

The infamous Julian the Apostate was said to have pointed the dagger to Heaven defying the Son of God whom he constantly called the Galilean. However, when he was wounded in battle, Julian saw that all was over with him. He gathered up his clotted blood, threw it in the air, exclaiming, "Thou hast conquered, Thou Galilean!"

However, there is a marvelous picture of people gathered from all over the world worshipping the Son of God in Revelation 7:9-12. Oh I want to be a part of this group who worship in submission to the King of glory. And you can, too.

"After these things I looked, and here was an enormous crowd that no one could count, made up of persons from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb dressed in long white robes, and with palm branches in their hands. They were shouting out in a loud voice, 'Salvation belongs to our God, to the one seated on the throne, and to the Lamb! And all the angels stood there in a circle around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground before the throne and worshiped God, saying, 'Amen! Praise and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!' (NET)

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