

The King's Coronation Psalm 2

We have 150 Psalms in the psalter, and they are often categorized by specific themes: historical Psalms, lament, thanksgivings, hymns praise, hymns celebrating God's law, wisdom psalms, prophetic psalms...But one group is called **Royal Psalms**.

- **These Psalms deal with the Davidic monarchy as the channel of blessing for the world, ultimately in David's greatest son, King Jesus.**
- The royal Psalms speak about the historical context of Israel's king, but have aspects that can only be fulfilled in the Messiah.
- Referring to Psalm 2, which we are considering today, Kindner says, **"A greater .. than David or Solomon was needed to justify the full fury of these threats and the glory of these promises."** That's a typical in each royal Psalm.
 - We'll also consider 45, 72, & 110. [**Pray**]

When one of my sons was younger, he asked me one day, "Papa, whose in charge — you and mamma?" (He had several reasons for asking this question, like wanting to stay up later! And he didn't like the first answer he received)

- It's the same question we often ask about the world: "Whose in charge here?"
- We look around and ask, "What in the world is going on?"
- More deeply, some wonder, "Is history going anywhere?"

This Psalm answers these questions showing that everything centers on the King, Jesus.

- **History is moving toward his exaltation, the salvation of his people, and his judgment on those who reject his reign.**
- **In the words of a Hamilton line, "History has its eyes on you"**
- **And so this Psalm shows that true freedom, security, and joy are found only in submission to this Christ who reigns over all.**
- **Psalm 2 reminds us of the sovereignty in which we rest.**
- **Often organizations and events titled "world" are exaggerated: World Series, World Wrestling Federation, "I'm the king of the world" (Ali)...**
- **But to say Jesus is the King of the world is exactly right; it is no exaggeration.**

This an important Psalm for a number of reasons.

A. First, it's quoted often in the NT in reference to Jesus & his universal kingdom. The most cited OT texts in the NT are Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, both about Jesus' resurrection and exaltation and reign.

- **Verses 1-2** are quoted in **Acts 4:25-26**, at the outset of persecution, inspiring confidence in God's sovereign rule.
- **Verse 7** is alluded to several times and is directly quoted three times: **Hebrews 1:5 (Jesus is superior to angels)**; **Heb 5:5 (Jesus' ascent to his priestly role)**; and **Acts 13:33** (in reference to **his resurrection and kingship**). Cf., Rom 1:4

- **Verse 9** is spoken of **3 times in Revelation** (once as a reference to believers' victory in Christ; twice in reference to Jesus' overcoming his enemies in the future): **Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15.**
- **So note that this Psalm 2 speaks of his first and second coming.**

B. In regard to the entire psalter, it serves (along with Psalm 1) as an intro to the Psalms. The two Psalms are connected.

1. The similar use of language – notice the word **“Blessed”** that bookends the two.
2. Neither Psalm has a superscription.
3. The earliest Greek manuscripts when quoting Psalm 2 in the NT called it Psalm 1; and in certain Rabbinical traditions it was viewed as one Psalm. (textual note on Acts 13:33)
4. Most significantly, these two Psalms are **the doorway into the Psalter** showing us that **the path of blessing comes by delighting in the Scriptures and delighting in the Son.**
 - Mediating on Scripture leads one to embrace the Messiah revealed in Scripture.
 - Don't take the wrong path (rebellion, rejection of the Messiah); or you will perish.
 - Take the right path of embracing the Jesus our Messiah and you will experience everlasting joy.

We can outline Psalm 2 in four parts. **Notice 4 different voices:** (1) the nations (1-3); the Father (4-6); the Son (7-9); the Psalmist (or the Spirit, 10-12).

- Foolish Rebellion (1-3)
- Divine Derision (4-6)
- The King's Coronation (7-9)
- Wise Submission (10-12)

Let us now heed the warnings and embrace the promises contained here...

#1: Foolish Rebellion (2:1-3)

1a: The Psalm begins with a question: **“Why do the nations rage?”**

- “Why do they congregate in commotion?”
- **Well, it's elementary Dear Watson. They're raging because they're angry.**
- **The nations (made up of people) are still raging and rebelling against the Lord.**
- **Think about various religious groups in parts of the world that rage against Christians; think about secularism in the West that wants nothing to do with Christ and his word.**
- **This is an old story: the peoples of the earth don't want to submit to Jesus' reign.**
- They hate the rule of God with all their guts.
- We don't know the precise historical time of this Psalm, but the ongoing battles of Israel and surrounding nations show how this **raging against the Lord and his king was repeated time and time again.**
- They want to throw off this rule.
- **The powers that be today tell us that following Christ and his word leads to slavery; but they're wrong.**
- But it doesn't lead to freedom; it leads to slavery and death.
- **“Their foolish hearts were darkened”**

1b: They **“plot”** in vain.

“Why do they murmur murderously” (Cragie) or “growl a vain thing”

- The word “**plot**” is the same Heb word for “**mediate**” in 1:2. [“murmur, speak to oneself”]
- **The blessed person mediates on the Scriptures and submits to the Son.**
- **But the foolish person plots and schemes against the Lord and his people.**
- **But these plots won’t work.**

2: He goes on (read)

- **They conspire against the “Anointed one.”**
- **This points ahead to the greater anointed one, Jesus.**

Samuel anointed Saul (1 Sam. 10:1) and David (1 Sam. 16:13) as King

- **Messiah** comes from transliterating the Hebrew word for “**Anointed**,”
- **To rebel against the Anointed one was to rebel against the one who appointed him; thus cutting yourself off from knowing God.**

3: What they hate: The Lord’s rule. (read)

- **This is as old as the garden. “You can be like God”**
- **What was true there on a micro level, is expanded on the macro level in this Psalm.**
- **1603: the first Queen Elizabeth was dying, almost on her deathbed, but she wouldn’t go to bed nor eat. One of her advisers, Robert Cecil, said to her, “You must go to bed.” She responded, “Little man, the word *must* is not to be used to Queens.”**
 - **That is, you don’t tell Kings and Queens they must do anything. (Davis)**
- **That’s what Gen 3 says that every person has said to God, “I will rule. I will not submit”**
- **And if you blow that up, you have that played out globally.**

The nations wanted to throw off the rule of the ultimate King, Jesus.

- **They view following Jesus as being a burden.**
- **“Bonds” in Hebrew can be translated fetters; ropes that were used to constrain animals (Job 39:5) and the ropes linked to a yoke.**
- **But for believers, following Jesus is freeing; it is delightful. His yoke is easy.**
- **Rebelling against the Lord doesn’t give you freedom; it’s slavery.**

Do you find following Jesus freeing and joyful?

- **If you think Sundays are the gloomiest days ever (many think that), that’s not a good sign about your spiritual life!**

The nations rage.

- **Ben Baxter: Islamic families persecution; moving locations; etc.**
- **Like the early church we pray for boldness and trust in the Lord’s sovereignty.**
- **1 John — Don’t be surprised that the world hates you...**
- **This is the world in which we live — it is a fallen, hostile world.**

In **Acts 4:23ff**, the early church cites this text at the onset of persecution, incorporating it in their prayer meeting.

It gave them confidence in a fearful time, and it should give us confidence as well.

²³ When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, ²⁵ who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

“ ‘Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples plot in vain?

²⁶ The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers were gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed’ —

²⁷ for 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 peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

- They see this persecution as the same kind of foolish rebellion David speaks of, particularly in reference to the raging of Herod and Pilate – but also more generally, “the Gentiles” and “the peoples of Israel.”
- Jesus was opposed from start to finish.
- And the church will always have it’s attackers; those who mock, ridicule, and who even seek to do physical harm to God’s people.
- So we meditate on Psalm 2 to get the big picture. It helps us see the world rightly.
- Fear is replaced with confidence when we remember God’s sovereign rule, and Jesus’ Messiahship.

#2: Divine Derision (2:4-6)

Now we see God’s response to the rebellious peoples of the earth.

- He doesn’t say, “Oh no! I might lose!”
- No, he mocks them; he “holds them in derision.”
- He’s amused by them.

4: He **laughs** at their rebellion! He **does a big LOL!** And he doesn’t even stand up!

- This doesn’t deny God’s love for the world; and his desire for all the peoples of the earth to be saved.
- This is a different focus.
- The Psalmist tells us that our God is **not** panicked.
- **Isaiah 40:23**, “[He] brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.”

- **Indiana Jones in Raiders of the Lost ark, comes face to face with the scary and flamboyant swordsman doing all is impressive tricks... it looks like the beginning of an epic dual, but Indy pulls out his pistol and causally shoots him.**

It's no epic dual. It's over in a second.

The rags of the puny kings of the earth are no match for our Lord.

This language is shocking but that's the point.

The Biblical writers don't simply want to express truth to you; they want to impress the truth upon you. Striking language is a way to do that.

- These puny kings are no threat; no contest.
- When I was little I would try to fight bigger guys; wrestle with older guys in the family, and they would do that thing where they would hold my forehead with their outstretched hand, making it impossible for me to even land a punch... all the while, they're laughing.
- Their rage is like the rage of your three-year-old (not our kids; others' kids!); they think they can overtake the adult, but they're wrong.

12 The wicked plots against the righteous
and gnashes his teeth at him,

13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that his day is coming. (Ps 37:12-13)

The day of judgment for the wicked is coming.

God is not troubled by the rebellion of others, nor we should be afraid of opposition either.

“The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trust the Lord is safe” (Prov 29.25)

Psalm 2 is true and therefore you don't have to be afraid.

In Psalm 59, David is crying out to God in a crisis, as Saul was seeking his life; he says:

But you, O Lord, laugh at them; you hold all the nations in derision.

O my Strength, I will watch for you, for you, O God, are my fortress.

My God in his steadfast love will meet me; God will let me look in triumph on my enemies. (8-10)

The sovereign One who laughs is our strength and fortress.

5: We shift from his comfort/laughter to **his wrath**.

- They're getting away with nothing; it's simply delayed judgment.
- And that delay, as Peter tells us is giving people time to repent.
- Those that are set against the Lord now, can turn to him!
- Like the Apostle Paul: He raged against the church but then became the great apostle!
- But for those who do not, they will face, as politically incorrect as this is today, the wrath of the Lamb. Revelation 6 pictures the mighty of the earth crying out, trying to hide in the mountains from his furious wrath. (Rev 6:16)

6: Now we hear God's majestic voice, “I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

The “**I**” is emphatic denoting his authority.

- This is similar to Psalm 46:6, “The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.”
- With his voice, he can dissolve the raging world just as with a word he created it.

Here in Psalm 2 is the mighty declaration of his installation of his king.

- Again, in its Historical context this refers to the Davidic king.
- God appointed him to rule.
- David won many victories, but it points to Jesus who has been installed in heavenly Zion.
- No one will defeat Jesus!
- Don't let our current times deceive you, there is only one who supremely rules and he rules not from the white house but in heaven.

*A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born*

In this weary world, may the Kingship of Jesus give you a thrill of hope.

#3: The King's Coronation (2:7-9)

Now the "I" changes from God speaking in verse 6, to the Davidic king speaking.
The King recalls what God said at his coronation.

7: "You are my son" ... "today I have given you birth/begotten you."

- "You are my son" is coronation language that goes back to 2 Samuel 7:14.
- God's appointed King was called "his son."
- High-flown language of divine sonship and of a universal inheritance was used at the king's coronation.
- To be the king meant you were God's son.
- It was all part of the same package.

Kidner: "today" suggests, to mark the moment when the new sovereign formally took up his inheritance and his titles"

- The Father declared Christ to be his beloved son about Jesus at his baptism and at the Transfiguration.
- But it is at the resurrection above all that his Kingship is declared.
- That distinguished him from any other king.
- Christmas is good news because Easter is real.
- Jesus is the eternal son, who didn't become the Son, but after his resurrection was enthroned and declared as the Son/King.
- Paul ties this announcement to Jesus' resurrection in Acts 13:

³⁰ But God raised him from the dead, ³¹ and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

³² And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, ³³ this he 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 begotten you.'

The cross and resurrection were the great turning points in redemptive history.

- It's true Jesus was born a king, and that his kingdom was breaking forth in his public ministry, but the great turning point, the time in which He was declared King, according to Paul, was after his glorious resurrection.

Rom 1:4 also ties the **resurrection** with this idea:

“and was declared [appointed] to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness *by his resurrection from the dead*, Jesus Christ our Lord”

- No king of Israel had risen from the dead — but this one did!
- And he is the King of Kings. The King to end all kings.
- After his resurrection, Jesus declares “all authority has been given to me, go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”

Hebrews 1:5 makes clear that this verse could not be referring to an angel, but to Christ, the one who is superior to all heavenly beings.

Hebrews 5:5 shows how this exaltation lead to his now priestly mediatorial work.

NT writers thought of Psalm 2 when they thought of these things: Christ's resurrection and exaltation, his superiority over all of heaven, and his intercessory work.

Church: **Christ, our risen and ascended King rules over all, is exalted above all of heaven, and now intercedes for us.** Let the weary saint rejoice!

8: This was never fulfilled in David, and it hasn't been fully fulfilled in Christ yet.

- He will rule to the ends of the ends of the earth
- Psalm 72 speaks of the global dominion of the King.
- Jesus is not a little village King, but the King of the nations.
- It was promised back in **Gen 49:10**.

¹⁰ The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;

and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (cf., Rom 1:5)

- Jesus took up this promise in the giving of the The Great Commission.
- We go to the nations under his authority with his presence.
- **Luke 13:29–30**: “And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.”

9: This hasn't been fulfilled either: the total destruction of his enemies.

- Jesus will crush his enemies like a person crushes a clay pot with a rod of iron.
- This verse is referenced three times in Revelation.
 - once concerning the victorious Christian (2:27)
 - Twice concerning his Lord (12:5; 19:15)

The nations are still raging against the Messiah, but the day of judgment is coming.

Our Lord is the victorious warrior. He is the mighty Son of God.
He's gentle but he's not soft!

#4: Wise Submission (2:10-12)

10: Now the Psalmist gives the important word to the world.

You would expect God to condemn all the rebellious, but that's not what he does!
He instead comes with grace as he appeals to them to turn from their sin to him.

The audience: "the earth." "The nations"

- Be wise; be warned... understand who this King is and...

11: "Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling"

- That's an interesting blend of emotions.
- But it's true for those who know the Lord.
 - "'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears the relieved."
Reverence and rejoicing.
- Service to King Jesus brings holy joy!

12: "Kiss the Son" - speaks of worship and affection.

- 1 Kings 19:18, "7000 have not bowed... nor kissed Baal"
- Bow to Jesus. Worship Jesus.
- Pay homage to Jesus. Love Jesus.
- The idea of being kissed by someone not your family is uncomfortable to some people
- If I asked you to name the number of people you've kissed, you may grow red in the face!
- Have you ever kissed the Son? Have you ever kissed Christ?
- Two ways: Like Judas (a kiss of betrayal and rebellion) or a near eastern Kiss of love and loyalty.
- A near Eastern kiss are often very energetic and affection and commitment.
- Have you energetically and affectionately and trustingly kissed Christ?
- He's the King, pay homage to him.
- This was the second to last sermon ever preached by Martyn Lloyd-Jones (an imminent physical who then went into ministry); he was Welshman who preached at Westminster in London for 30 years during the 20th Century. He would die in two months of cancer after preaching Psalm 2. And those in attendance spoke of how with sweat coming down his face, he appealed to people to "kiss the Son."
- The Psalmist is passionately telling us to do this: Kiss the Son, lest you perish.

12b: Why? So you don't perish!

*Ye sinners seek his grace,
Whose wrath ye cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of his cross,
And find salvation there.*

“Psalm 2 really structures an evangelistic invitation. It defines the problem: our revolt. It offers the solution: God’s Son. It then warns of judgment to come and calls us to surrender to Him in worship. The road back to the Father’s house is already marked and the door is open. It is Christ who stands at the door. We must come and greet Him ... “kiss the Son.”” (Donald Williams)

12c: “Blessed are all who take refuge in him”

- **There is no safety outside of Jesus.**
- **There is no refuge from him, only in him (Kidner).**
- **But you are safe if you embrace him as your king!**
- **You are “blessed”!**
- **“Whoever is not satisfied with Christ alone strives after something beyond absolute perfection.” Calvin**

So embrace the Messiah.

Be satisfied in him.

Love him.

Serve him.

Speak of him.

Anticipate him!

Whose in charge here? Our King, Jesus Christ.