

## REFOCUS – WORLDVIEW CHECK UP

### Psalm 2

As we head back into the series on Revelation I want to do a Worldview check up as our REFOCUS emphasis for the year. For that purpose I've chosen Psalm 2 because it links the summer Psalm series with the Revelation series and gives us a great worldview check up.

A cursory glance at the daily headlines tells us that something has gone wrong with the world. Things are not the way we want them to be. Most would say they are not the way they're supposed to be. Even as believers who have a high view of scripture and the teaching of total depravity can be surprised by the horrors that happen among the human race.

It is easy to get discouraged or even emotionally or spiritually paralyzed by the events of history and our own day, even if they are happening somewhere else.

A few weeks ago, we passed the anniversary of the use of atomic weapons that brought an end to WWII in the Pacific. The death toll of those bombs was hundreds of thousands. The death toll of WWII is hard to calculate.

Closer to home, next week is the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary the 9/11 attacks that killed around 3000 people.

Weekly, if not daily, people are dying from war somewhere on the planet, and many others are dying from persecution because of their faith in Christ.

As we seek to get a biblical Worldview, it is helpful to consider Psalm 2

#### PSALM 2

##### The Reign of the Lord's Anointed.

1 Why are the nations in an uproar

And the peoples devising a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together

Against Yahweh and against His Anointed, saying,

3 "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!"

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them.

5 Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying,

6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain."

7 "I will surely tell of the decree of Yahweh:

He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.

8 Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,

And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.' "

10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth.

11 Worship the Lord with reverence And rejoice with trembling.

12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way,

For His wrath may soon be kindled.

How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

Numerous commentators note the juxtaposition of Ps. 2 with Ps 1, which is a guide for one's private life of devotion to God and His Word. Psalm 2 makes some rather bold and even shocking public statements.

“The private world of the first psalm opens out into the public world of the second; the personal is followed by the cosmic; in airport terminology, one is ‘domestic’ and the other is ‘international.’ Psalm 1 talks the everyday language of wisdom books like Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, while Psalm 2, raising its eyes to world affairs beyond the control of ordinary people, speaks as the books of the prophets do of a great God in control behind the scenes.” Michael Wilcock

Ralph Davis points out that Psalm 1 deals with the urgent individual matters – we must know where we are going and that we belong to the congregation of the righteous. Psalm 2 tells us that we must know where history is going. We need to get the big picture and see that the world has been promised to the Messiah. (Way of righteousness in the Muck of Life)

Where is this all headed??? Psalm 2 is a gracious gift and is meant to steady our souls whenever and wherever the church is facing trials and persecution.

Psalm 2, like the book of Revelation, raises our eyes to see the one who is on the throne and who is ruling over all things. His purposes cannot be frustrated, so let’s take comfort in His power and reign.

Background of God’s promise (2 Sam 7) to David. A biblical expectation of David’s royal line to fulfill all that is promised. But David and his seed fail. Yet there is still hope for a Davidic king to come.

There are elements of this psalm that warn us against thinking the psalm’s meaning is exhausted in one of the ancient Davidic monarchs...There are several hints in the psalm that suggest something more than an early Davidic king...they do not so much point away from the historic David as point beyond him.” D.A. Carson

The Psalm points to David’s greater son, and the NT has some significant echoes of Psalm 2.

### THE WORLDWIDE REBELLION AGAINST God v. 1-3

The psalm jumps into the deep end of the world’s rebellion against and hatred for the rule of God. It is obvious all around us, but we forget it or we simply don’t want to believe it. We don’t want to “over spiritualize things” or we don’t want to be seen as being too engrossed in the culture wars or politics.

Friends, to the degree that those things clash with the truth of God, or Yahweh, we must be engaged with them. This Psalm shows that we do homage to the Son with worship in truth.

The word “WHY?” is spoken with a sense of amazement and carries from v. 1 to v.2.  
‘WHY would they respond this way against YAHWEH?’

### V. 3 THE VOICE OF THE REBELS

They want to rule themselves and are passionate in their rejection of Yahweh – they rage and revolt. This is not just the ancient world but also the modern world.

Do you hear this voice in our culture today? If not, then you may not be listening.

This psalm is a call to be awake, not woke. Awake to the underlying attitude of this world towards God; awake to HOW the spirit of the age is devising vain things and seeking to cast off the fetters that bind them.

If we don’t recognize the voices of rage and the craftiness in deceitful scheming, then we’ll miss the opportunity to speak the Biblical message of shalom, human flourishing, and salvation to the very people who need it the most.

EX: We could talk about how this has happened in the past, but it is more important to see how it is happening in our own day. The rulers of this age tell us that the fetters and cords of Yahweh are such things as what is revealed in the early pages of Genesis – humans created in the image of God, male and female; the value of life because of the divine image; marriage between a man and a woman; the Creator – creature distinction.

The Psalmist asks the “why?” question in the same way that many of us might be asking it...  
“Why the rage against God’s design for marriage and gender which is the ONLY WAY THAT PRESERVES THE CONTINUATION OF THE HUMAN RACE? That doesn’t make any sense – (Rom 1 – Tom Hudson last week).

Ironically, while “casting off the cords of God that bind”, the elites of today create new ways to literally bind girls and boys to turn them into something they will never be, and if their vain “re-imaginings” are successful, those caught in their web will be permanently neutered. Seeking freedom from the restrictions of God, men and women find themselves enslaved to the deceptive schemes of the prince of the power of the air.

Friends, we can sympathize with those who rage against God because prior to our conversion we all added our voices to the rage against God’s rule and authority in our lives. Even as believers we still struggle with submitting to His rule. So even as we rightly speak out to protect the unborn and protect children and adults caught in a rage against God, we can and must pray for those held captive to unbelief and rebellion.

This Psalm speaks to the world that rages around us and to the worldly flesh that rages within us.

EX: the early believers faced the question of how to respond to those who rage against God – Act 4:23 ff

In order to understand the big picture, they quoted Psalm 2. They saw that Jesus was David’s greater son and they proclaimed Him boldly.

#### THE RESPONSE FROM THE THRONE v. 4-6

God is unimpressed with their raging and their schemes. He is not shaken. God sits on the throne undisturbed, and He laughs.

This may come as a shock to many of us because our culture has tried to ignore God or view him as a cosmic softie up in the sky...”the man upstairs” who means well but is pretty useless.

This points to Revelation and the throne scenes of ch 4. For us to endure, we too must fix our eyes on Christ on the throne.

“Keep your eyes there. Sometimes that’s all that will keep you sane.” Dale Ralph Davis

God mocks the lunacy of sin and schemes that are senseless. The rebellion is arrogant and is doomed to fail even though many are damaged through the schemes of the raging rulers.

But God has the last word, and it is this, “I have enthroned my own king, my son on the throne.”

“The Lord neither negotiates with rebels, nor adjusts himself to suit their demands, but simply reaffirms his royal plan-His King is installed and that is the end of the matter.” Alec Motyer

#### v. 7-9 The King Speaks

The OT PEOPLE OF God anticipated this great king who would rule, but David and his descendants failed to obey God as they should. So, in the fulness of time, David’s greater Son, Jesus the Christ came to fulfill all righteousness and inaugurate His kingdom.

Matt 1 1The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Ultimately this psalm could only apply to ONE KING – the Lord Jesus Christ. As NT believers we see Ps 2 as a promise made and fulfilled. This is one of the most quoted psalms in the NT, second only to Ps 110

- V 7 referenced in Jesus baptism and transfiguration; Act 13:7 (resurrection context, then ascension); Hebrews 1:1-5; 12:2 “radiance of the glory of God” ff, sat down at right hand of God.
- V. 8 ref in Matt 28- great commission to go to all nations (2:8- worldwide inheritance)
- V. 9 Rev 12:5, 19:15 He rules the nations

The Messiah, v. 7, is to be honored because he is Yahweh's 'son'. He has been installed as the rightful king.

v.8 shows the scope of His rule – a world-wide kingdom.

v. 9 He will rule by force if need be. Christ did not come to a welcoming world the first time, and there will still be hostility when he returns.

The decree of Ps 2:6ff is the ARC OF HISTORY; this is where all of history is headed.

**“Yahweh’s decree controls history. This is the word that determines what will take place in the history of this world. The certainty of this decree needs to infect your world and life view. It should color the way you look at politics and world conditions. You may not know what to make of them always-but you know where history is headed; you know what the decree is and how it will control and shape everything.” Dale Ralph Davis**

We may not know what to make of, or how to response to, the social and ethical confusion of our world today but Ps 2 does tell us the final trajectory of things. THE SON has a rod of iron, and his wrath may soon be kindled, so it is a kindness to warn to those who inhabit the earth. If we believe this Psalm and the Bible as a whole, we must not be silent.

When we look at the world scene and are tempted to despair, the words of Ps 2 come to us and remind us that all the kings, rulers, and elites of this world who take counsel together against the Lord will not ultimately prevail. For a time, it may look like they will prevail. For a time, they may think that they will prevail, but those who persist in opposition to Yahweh will be shattered like pots of clay. Jesus reigns over all and He will prevail.

**The declaration of Rev 11 which is so familiar from Handel’s Messiah will come to pass...**

**“The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”**

**v. 10-12 the PSALMIST SPEAKS**

A gracious admonition and invitation to the kings and elites of the world to worship Yahweh with reverence. There is mercy for those who are warned and reverent.

Rejoice with trembling –. Our joy, trembling, and amazement at God’s love and grace is magnified when we remember that God sent his Son while we were yet sinners who were hostile toward him. This topic of how the gospel combine rejoicing and trembling is so vast that Michael Reeves has an entire book on it, in which he writes, **“I want you to rejoice in this strange paradox that the gospel both frees us from fear and gives us fear. It frees us from our crippling fears, giving us instead a most delightful, happy, and wonderful fear.”** Reeves, Michael. Rejoice and Tremble (Union) (p. 16). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

Acts 4 showed how this Psalm was fulfilled in the death of Christ and the persecution against the church. The same hostility continued and continues today.

**“Kiss the Son; pay homage to Him” – that is the path of salvation for those who have opposed God.**

That is not the normal path of those in positions in power. Our political climate is such that those who seek office make pronouncements of their own powers and abilities to solve all of the world’s problems. This goes for kings and dictators as well as elected officials.

HAMILTON: KING GEORGE They say, “George Washington's yielding his power and stepping away Is That true?

I wasn't aware that was something a person could do.”

v.12 Isn't God 'slow to anger'? Yes, but His wrath can be quickly kindled if we stubbornly resist and remain hostile.

EX: "Catch Phrase" buzzer - the pressure of the increased accelerating beep and final buzzer that "you lose."

Since the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the beeps are closer together as warnings to those who are hostile. Psalm 2 is a warning for us as it was for the people around 3000 years ago. No one can say that God has not been slow to anger. He has been abundantly patient, but the timer is beeping and when the Great Day of the Lord comes, it will appear to those who have raged against Him that His wrath was quickly kindled.

Only those aware of wrath are amazed by mercy.

When the final day comes, the mercy AND wrath of God are both irreversible. CHOOSE WISELY

Hear the appeal of God Himself in this Psalm - be prudent and be instructed. You can't win this fight.

#### v. 12 A WORD OF BLESSING

What the kings and rulers call bondage is actually a blessing.

"Amazingly, the Lord Himself is offered as the sinners refuge, to end the psalm not with the derisive laughter that we deserve, but-of all things-with a beatitude. That beatitude is ours for the asking. There is no refuge from him: only in him." Derek Kidner

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