

## Jesus Shall Reign

**Text:** Psalm 2:1-12

### **Introduction:**

1. The Psalms: The Psalms are the hymn book of the Bible and they should be the sound track of our Christian lives.
2. Author of Psalm 2: Acts 4:25 reveals that this Psalm was penned by David.
3. Theme of Psalm 2: The coronation of the Son of God in spite of man's violent opposition to His reign and the invitation to be reconciled to Him.
4. Summary: The Psalm divides into four stanzas with three verses in each.
  - Vs. 1-3 – Man in rebellion against the LORD and His anointed.
  - Vs. 4-6 – God the Father's reply to man's sinful rebellion.
  - Vs. 7-9 – Messiah declares the Sovereign decree concerning Him.
  - Vs. 10-12 – Appeal to the rebellious nations to submit to the Messiah.
  - Williams S. Plumer: "The great design of the Psalm is to foretell the hatred of men to the person and reign of Christ, the glories of Messiah, the triumphs of his kingdom, and the dreadful downfall of his foes, thus laying a proper ground for solemn exhortation to all men to yield themselves subjects of the Prince of life."
5. Psalm 2 is quoted at least 7 times in the New Testament which is more than any other Psalm. See Acts 4:24-28; 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15.
6. We will study the Psalm under its four natural stanzas:

### **I. THE OPPOSITION TO GOD'S ANOINTED (VS. 1-3)**

There are three main points presented in these verses concerning man's opposition to the rulership of God:

#### **A. The Foolishness of Man's Rebellion (Vs. 1)**

1. 'why' = means to what purpose? For what reason? It is an expression of amazement and indignation by the Psalmist at the rage of the heathen against God.
2. 'rage' = Webster defines the word as "violent anger accompanied with furious words, gestures or agitation; anger excited to fury." Illustration: Like the raging of the sea.
3. 'imagine' = comes from the same word as 'meditate' in Psalm 1:2. Here it means to plot, plan and devise. (Ross)
4. "vain thing" = an empty thing. It is vain and futile to oppose God.

#### **B. The Form of Man's Rebellion (Vs. 2)**

This verse describes an unholy confederacy, an evil alliance of earth's rulers against God.

1. An Evil Alliance (Vs. 2a)

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- a. "the kings of the earth...the rulers" = those who hold the power of government in the world.
  - b. "set themselves" = means to take a stand. David sees the world in a state of outright rebellion against God. The same word is used of Goliath who "presented himself" forty days (1 Sam. 17:16). The same word is used to describe Eleazar and David's defence of the barley field – "And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it..." (1 Chronicles 11:14)
  - c. "take counsel together" = their deliberations one with another. This is premeditated crime.
2. An Evil Animosity (Vs. 2b)
    - a. "against the LORD" = Jehovah God
    - b. "against his anointed" = the Messiah. To oppose Christ is to oppose God. Man's response to Christ is the ultimate test.

### C. The Focus of Man's Rebellion (Vs. 3)

In particular, they are opposed to the authority and reign of Almighty God.

1. Their perception of God's authority – they view it as bands (fettters, chains) and cords (ropes). They view the authority of God's Son as bondage. What a contrast to the believer who finds His yoke easy and His burden light. The renewed, regenerated heart responds joyfully to God's call to obedience. "The greatest test of character to which men were ever subjected, is Jesus Christ Himself. Nothing so manifests their real disposition towards God." (Plumer)
2. Their plan for God's authority – "break...cast away". Their desire is to throw off God's authority.
3. They are united against:
  - a. The Person of God
  - b. The Precepts of God

### D. The fulfilment of Man's Rebellion

These verses apply...

1. Generally – mankind in his sinful state is opposed to God. We see this anti-authority attitude across the world directed against:
  - a. God – e.g. evil laws, attempts to use the institution of government as an instrument of rebellion against God and His Word.
  - b. God-ordained authority – e.g. parents, pastors, police, sentiments expressed in pop culture (music and movie).
2. Specifically – to the first and second coming of Christ.
  - a. The first coming of Christ – this Psalm was fulfilled when Christ was rejected and crucified according to Acts 4:24-28.
  - b. The second coming of Christ – the nations unite in opposition to Christ at His second advent according to Rev. 19:14-21 (See also 20:8-9 describing the revolt at the end of the Millennium).

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3. Challenge: Beware of this anti-authority bias that resides in our sin nature. Even as believers we can rise up in revolt against the commands of God's Word or to the godly authorities He has placed in our lives.

## II. THE DETERMINATION FOR GOD'S ANOINTED (VS. 4-6)

These verses outline God's response to sinful man's rebellion described in Vs. 1-3. They anticipate God's future judgment. God's response is threefold:

### A. Contempt (Vs. 4)

1. "He that sitteth in the heavens" = a striking contrast to the rebels on earth. God is pictured as seated in might and power far above earth's rebels.
2. "shall laugh" = this is a form of expression borrowed from human emotions and actions. Man's attempts to overthrow God's reign are met with His holy disdain. It reveals how utterly foolish and ridiculous it is for man to think he can dethrone God. It is like a fly attacking an elephant.
3. John Phillips writes, "God simply sits back on His throne and fills the universe with peal after peal of terrible, spine tingling laughter...As though man, who has successfully orbited some hardware in space, using material God has supplied, and who has put a feeble footprint on the moon – as though man can compete with a God who has orbited a hundred million galaxies! As though man, who has solved some of the subtleties of the atom, and managed to scare himself half to death in the process, can compete with a God who stokes the nuclear fires of a billion starts! No wonder He that sits in the heavens simply laughs. Man – for all his technology and talents, for all his science and skill, for all his inventions – is still man – mere mortal man. And God is God – eternal, uncreated, self-existent, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, infinite, infallible, holy, high, and lifted up, worshipped by countless angel throngs."
4. 'derision' = means to ridicule, scorn, "the act of laughing in contempt" (Webster) God views mankind's plot to overthrow His rule as utterly contemptible, ridiculous and foolish.

### B. Condemnation (Vs. 5)

1. 'Then' = God will terminate man's rebellion at His appointed time. He will not endure forever their attempts to cast off His Sovereign Rule.
2. "vex them" = to frighten, trouble

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3. "wrath...sore displeasure" = God's wrath will be unleashed against a wicked world. "Both words have to do with heat, i.e., a burning anger and a heated rage."
  - a. 'wrath' = from the Hebrew word for nose or nostrils. It therefore has the idea of the flaring of nostrils (Ross), the rapid breathing in passion (Strongs).
  - b. "sore displeasure" = burning rage
  - c. Note: The rage of sinful men is evil and ungodly but God's wrath is absolutely pure, just, righteous and holy. This is God's wrath, not man's wrath.

### C. Coronation (Vs. 6)

1. "yet have I set my king" = in spite of the world's attempt to dethrone God and prevent Christ from taking the throne, Jesus will reign in accordance with the Divine will. The word 'set' means "to install".
2. "holy hill of Zion" = a reference for Jerusalem used 38 times in the Psalms. It looks forward to the Millennial reign of Christ.
3. God's plan will prevail no matter how strong and united the world's opposition may be.

## III. THE DECLARATION FROM GOD'S ANOINTED (VS. 7-9)

The Son speaks in these verses, revealing the eternal decree of the Father concerning Him. "He will allow men to hear the holy converse between Jehovah and Messiah, between Father and Son." (Flanigan) The decree is concerning...

### A. The Sonship of Christ (Vs. 7)

1. "I will declare the decree" = the eternal decree of God concerning the Son is made known. The King's right to rule is based on the decree from the LORD.
2. "the LORD hath said unto me" = the Father's words to the Son.
3. "Thou art my Son" = This declaration was made in eternity past before the world was. The Father also declared this truth at Christ's baptism (Matt. 3:17; Mk. 1:11; Lk. 3:22) and on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7; Lk. 9:35). Christ is the Eternal Son of the Father. "Christ is God's Son by an essential and eternal Sonship. Christ has the same nature and attributes with the Father, and his relation to him is rightly expressed by the name Son. In this sense he is the only begotten of the Father." (Plumer)

### B. The Rulership of Christ (Vs. 8-9)

1. The Sinners under Messiah's Reign (Vs. 8a)
  - a. "ask of me" = Christ in his office as intercessor (See Heb. 7:25).
  - b. "give thee the heathen for thine inheritance" = we see a partial fulfillment in the salvation of sinners in this dispensation. John

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- 6:37 "All that the Father **giveth me** shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."
- c. Its ultimate fulfillment will be in the future when the Son reigns over the inhabitants of the earth in the Millennium.
2. The Scope of Messiah's Reign (Vs. 8b)
    - a. "uttermost parts of the earth" = this has not been literally fulfilled yet but it will be during the Millennial reign when the whole earth will be under His dominion, even to the most remote regions.
    - b. Hab. 2:14 "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (See also Isaiah 2:1-4)
  3. The Sceptre of Messiahs Reign (Vs. 9)
    - a. "break them...dash them in pieces" = graphic portrayal of the swift and total crushing of the confederacy of evil. The united forces of evil will be quickly dashed to pieces before the Mighty Son of God at His return. The "potters vessel" depicts the frail nature of the opposers of Christ. (Plumer)
    - b. "rod of iron" = the sceptre of the King, representing His authority. The iron speaks of "the strength of His dominion and the inflexibility of His rulership." The rod of iron speaks of the unalterable nature of God's standard of truth. In this wicked world, truth is often entirely forsaken or bent and manipulated in an attempt to accommodate man's depraved desires but when Christ reigns, His truth will be upheld in all its glorious entirety.
    - c. Flanigan: "The hand that held the mocking reed and then was pierced by men at Calvary will hold the sceptre, a rod of iron to break the oppressors, and rule the Kingdom of God with equity."

## IV. THE EXHORTATION CONCERNING GOD'S ANOINTED (VS. 10-12)

### A. Serve the Son (Vs. 10-11)

1. "Be wise" = the appeal is for the kings to make correct choices (Ross).
2. "kings...judges" = the appeal goes to the same group described in Vs. 2-3. The appeal goes forth to the whole earth. All are invited to be reconciled to the Son.
3. 'therefore' = the exhortation is in light of the coming judgment and reign of God's anointed.
4. "serve the LORD" = to worship God and obey His commands. "For these pagan leaders, to serve Him would mean changing loyalties from their gods to the one true God, but it would also mean accepting God's king and serving him."

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5. "fear...trembling" = they are to have a godly fear and reverence for the LORD. This would be in direct contrast to their rebellious attitude described in Vs. 2-3. "The balance between rejoicing and fearing captures the true sense of proportion for worship of the Holy God." (Ross)

### B. Submit to the Son (Vs. 12)

This is the key verse of the Psalm. The entire Psalm builds up to this point.

1. "Kiss the Son" = "A symbolic act. Conquered kings would bow before the victor and give him homage in this way." (Ross) A kiss was an act of worship in Bible times. For example: 1 Kings 19:18 "Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not **kissed** him." Hosea 13:2 "And now they sin more and more, and have made them molten images of their silver, *and* idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen: they say of them, Let the men that sacrifice **kiss the calves.**"
  - a. "So God says, cease to kiss the calves and images of Baal and other false gods, and kiss my Son, serve idols no longer; serve the Son of God." (Plumer)
  - b. "lest he be angry" = a warning is attached to the exhortation. The message is clear, repent or experience the righteous wrath of the Son. The "potential wrath of the Son adds a sense of urgency to the command." (Ross)
  - c. "kindled but a little" = the power of Christ's wrath emphasized. For sinners to perish, all it takes is the kindling of just a little of the Son's wrath.
2. "Trust" the Son = an exhortation to place faith in the Son of God.
  - a. The phrase "put their trust" means "to flee for protection", "to take refuge."
  - b. A blessing is pronounced upon them who do. What a blessed thing it is to be in a right relationship with Christ the Son of God. Psalm 1 starts with a blessing and Psalm 2 ends with a blessing.
3. We see that God's call to repentance and faith is the same in every dispensation. This is man's required response to the Gospel.

### Conclusion:

1. Anthropological lessons (what we learn about man)
  - Man, in his natural, sinful state is a child of wrath, at enmity with God.
  - Man, in his sinful state is opposed to God's reign.
  - Man, in his sinful state will go to great efforts to try and loose Himself from God and His laws.
2. Theological lessons (what we learn about God)

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- God's reign will ultimately prevail.
- God is totally unmoved by man's rebellion and views it as a foolish thing.
- 3. Christological lessons (what we learn about Christ)
  - Christ is the eternal Son of the Father.
  - Christ will reign on the earth during the Millennium and will put down evil.
  - Christ's wrath will be kindled in judgment against the unrepentant.
- 4. Soteriological lessons (what we learn about salvation)
  - Salvation involves a turning from sin and idols.
  - Salvation involves placing faith in God's Son.
- 5. Practical lessons (what we learn about the Christian life)
  - An anti-authority attitude is a mark of the unregenerate life and has no place in the believer's life.
  - The self-life can rise up in rebellion against God's requirements if we do not walk in the Spirit, appropriating our co-crucifixion with Christ.