

**Psalm 138: 4-8; “All the Kings of the Earth”, A sermon preached during the time of the Coronavirus restrictions, sent out as a video sermonic message, Online, on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

In thinking together about this Psalm this morning, I showed you how David praised God with his whole heart, how he praised God that He has magnified His word above all His name, and how he praised God for making him bold with strength in his soul. Now, this afternoon, I want to deal with the subject of your expectations. What is your hope for the future of the Church? According to the Scriptures, what do you expect that God will do for Christ's kingdom in the future, and what do you expect that He will do for you personally? Do you have the holy expectation that God will He revive you in the times when you walk in the midst of trouble? Do you believe that God will perfect that which concerns you? Do you believe that He will perfect what concerns His whole church?

It is my prayer that each person listening to me will have exceeding great expectations of the wonderful and powerful work which God will do, in revealing Himself savingly, to all the kings of the earth in a coming day. This is something that is clearly stated in our text, and if we have this expectation, we will be those who will go about to evangelize others with the hope that we will be a part of the fulfillment of the Great Commission. In this message, therefore, I want to show you how these expectations should be yours as a part of what it will mean to experience revival on the level that our Lord will bring it, in our days, and in the future.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – The Lord can overcome the problem of pride in all the rulers of the earth, and save them if it is His purpose.**

Verse 4 says – “All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, when they hear the words of Your mouth.” “Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.” “For though the Lord is on high, yet He regards the lowly; but the proud He knows from afar.” Now, we should understand that the kingdom of Christ is a kingdom which is not composed of proud people, but of humble people. Even though He is on high, yet He regards the lowly. Proud people, it says here in our text, God knows from afar. In other words, He doesn't have much to do with them while they glory in this sin of pride. He doesn't have much to do with them unless it is His purpose to save them. Pride is saying that you think more highly of yourself than you ought. Pride is saying that you are something when you are nothing.

People in their pride magnify themselves and not the Lord. Even though the Lord is on high, yet the Lord does regard the lowly. He considers them; that is, those who are little in their own eyes, how He might do them good, how He might help them, to spiritually understand His ways. And we should understand that He does all of these good and great things through their believing in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. If God is going to have anything to do with a proud person in a saving way, He must first humble that person greatly, so that they will come to regard God, and themselves, in a completely different light from the light of nature which they have. A person may have great natural light, great natural gifts and common grace, and still not understand the ways of the Lord.

The way of the Lord is humility. God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Since we going to talk about all the kings of the earth coming to know the Lord someday, I want to give you an example of a king did come to know the Lord. I want you to think with me about king Nebuchadnezzar. This man was a man was a very proud man, but he did not realize how proud he was, until God came and dealt with him over it. Such is the case with many people in this world, even some who are Christians. A Christian has to learn the way of the Lord, the way of humility. But let's talk about conversion to Christ, in relation to this. Let's think about how the Lord brought this proud man, Nebuchadnezzar, to true saving faith in Himself.

In chapter 2 of Daniel, Daniel had given to Nebuchadnezzar the correct interpretation of a profound dream that he had, of a great image of a man. The body of this man represented all the great world monarchies in the history of the world. And it represented what these 4 world monarchies attempt to do, to the Jews first, and then to Christ's kingdom in New Testament times. And so this image represents the history pagan nations in relation to Christ the King of kings, and His kingdom the Church. In this dream Christ and His kingdom were pictured as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands. In regard to the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, he was the head of gold. The 3 other parts of the body of this image were the world monarchies would follow his, were the Greek, the Medo-Persian, and the Roman empire. Verse 44 says that in the days of those kings, that is the kings of Rome, that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed, and that that kingdom would not be left to other people, but that it would break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it would stand forever. And inasmuch as Nebuchadnezzar saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces all the other kingdoms, God was making known to Nebuchadnezzar what would come to pass after this. What a dream! And what an interpretation!

Well what did Nebuchadnezzar do? How did he react? Verse 46 of chapter 2 says – Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. And the king answered Daniel, and said – Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” And then he promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon. You would think, wouldn't you, that this would have brought an end to Nebuchadnezzar's pride and His worship of false gods? But it did not, and so in chapter 3 we find Nebuchadnezzar making a literal physical image of gold, and setting it up in the plain of Dura.

He then commanded everyone to fall down and worship this image which represented himself and his own greatness. If they didn't fall down and worship him, they would be cast immediately in the midst of a burning fiery furnace. The three Hebrew children, friends of Daniel's, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, did not fall down, and so they were thrown into the fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar was amazed when he looked into the furnace and they were walking around in it unharmed. And he was even more amazed when he saw a fourth Man in there with them, and His appearance was like the Son of God! So he bid them come out of the fire, and not one part of their bodies was singed by the fire or their garments affected. And Nebuchadnezzar blessed God for sending His angel, the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, to preserve them.

He extols God and says his servants were trusting in God, and that they frustrated his own word as king. They yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God. Well, all of this confession was good, but it's evident that king Nebuchadnezzar was still a very proud man. He did outwardly repent of his perverse actions, but he continued on in his pride, which was his reigning sin. In chapter 4 of Daniel, verse 2, we find him declaring to all peoples, nations, and languages that dwelt on the earth, the signs and wonders that the Most High God had worked for him. He says – How great are His signs, and how mighty His wonders!” “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation.” And even though he understood this, we find that he was still a proud man. Well,

Chapter 4 goes on to tell us that he had visions in his head while lying on his bed, and he saw a tree in the midst of the earth, and its height was great. The tree grew and became strong and it reached to the heavens, and it could be seen to the ends of all of the earth. But then he saw an angel come down from heaven and say – Chop down the tree and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the beasts get out from under it, and the birds from its branches.

Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. Let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts on the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from that of a man, Let him be given the heart of a beast, and let seven times pass over him. All this referred to Nebuchadnezzar himself.

Daniel was called in to interpret the dream, and show him that he would be driven from men and his dwelling would be with the beasts of the field and that he would eat grass like an ox, until he realized that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and He gives it to whomever He chooses. Then Daniel preached the gospel to the king in verse 27. “Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity, he said to him. Well, all this came about, about a year later when the king was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. He spoke saying – Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty? And immediately a voice fell from heaven: King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And that indeed happened to him for the seven periods of time. This time, however, he did learn his lesson, which was taught to him by God.

For in verse 34 says – And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him – What have you done? At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor was returned to me. My counselors resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. (or, to humble) This, my friends, is the sovereignty of God in salvation. The Lord can take kings, walking in their pride and deal with that pride by His humbling them if that is His purpose. And then they will praise Him as the words of our text say. Nebuchadnezzar is an Old Testament type and example of what is yet to take place in our New Testament times. For –

**2<sup>nd</sup> – At some time in the future, during this present church age, the Lord will save all the kings of the earth.**

“All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, when they hear the words of Your mouth. Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord, for though the Lord is on high, yet He regards the lowly...” Though I walk in the midst of trouble you will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and Your right hand will save me.” “The Lord will perfect that which concerns me; Your mercy, O Lord, endures forever; do not forsake the works of Your hands. So, as we think about these verses I hope that you can see that a plain reading of them does not lend itself to our being able to conclude that they have their first reference to David, for even though it is true that God stretched out His hand against the wrath of David’s enemies, and saved him and Israel from their enemies dominating Israel, yet all the kings of the earth were not spiritually converted to the Lord so that they would sing and praise the Lord when they heard the words of His mouth.

No, these verses must have their primary reference to Christ and His spiritual kingdom triumphing over the kingdoms of this earth, by and through the conversion of kings. Let me show you this by giving you a few more relevant Scriptures. Psalm 22, verses 25-28. This is a Psalm about Christ and His crucifixion and resurrection, and all the spiritual results that will

flow from it in terms of certain and definite conversions of families among the nations. David, the king of Israel, and a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks prophetically of Christ's resurrection in verse 25 when he says – "My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him." He then goes on to explain in verse 26 – "The poor (that is, needy sinners everywhere), shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek Him will praise the Lord." "Let your heart live forever!" (In other words, rejoice and have this great expectation) "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You." "For the kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations."

So, here we see that not only all the kings of the earth shall praise God and worship Him, but also all the families of the nations shall worship before Christ as well. In this regard, think with me about Psalm 72, verse 8-11 – "He (that is Christ, who is the antitype of Solomon) shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth." "Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, and His enemies will lick the dust." "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts." "Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." This certainly has not taken place in Church history yet, but we can assert that it will take place in the future. But when?

Well think with me about Psalm 102: verses 12-22. "But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and the remembrance of Your name to all generations." "You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yes, the set time has come." "For Your servants take pleasure in her stones, and show favor to her dust." "So the nations shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the ends of the earth Your glory." "For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory." "He shall regard the prayer of the destitute, and shall not despise their prayer." "This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord." "For He looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven the Lord viewed the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those appointed to death, to declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord."

Now, it is no doubt true that I could preach to you whole sermons on the verses that I have just given you, but I cannot take the time to do so now. I would simply like to talk to you about your hope and your expectations. From what these verses are saying, every Christian should have the expectation that all the kings of the earth will someday be converted to Christ, because that is what these verses are plainly teaching. We should not think that Christ's kingdom is spiritually reigning at this point in Church history, or that Satan is presently bound, when so many nations of people are deceived by the Devil's work in promoting false worship, even among the kings of the earth, like he did with Nebuchadnezzar. Christ Himself is presently reigning and ruling among the nations of the earth, but the Church is not yet spiritually reigning among the nations of the world. But these verses that we are studying now, show us clearly that some day the Church shall spiritually reign.

There is a set time which is coming, Psalm 102, verse 13 tells us, when God will arise and have mercy on Zion; Zion, the Old Testament city of God's people, typically representing the New Testament City of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, composed of Jews and Gentiles, and in the context of these verses, the nations. What is the Millennium of Revelation 20? It is the conversion of nations. It is the Church coming to rule and reign spiritually upon the earth, as is prophesied in Revelation chapter 5, verse 10. In Revelation 20, verse 1, John says that he saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand year; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.

Certainly this is not speaking of the whole Church age, but rather of a period of time within this Church age, when the nations should no more be deceived, and which has a definite beginning, and during which, all the kings of the earth are converted to Christ. And so, I am asking, is your expectation? What is your hope for the future of the Church? Biblically and as a Christian you should not be Pan-Millennial. You should be Historic Postmillennial. You should have this great expectation. Because there are many things in prophecy that are not yet fulfilled, and specifically the conversion of nations to Christ. This great series of events which we should think of as the latter-day glory of Christ's kingdom, the Church's greatest advance, is yet to come before Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. Yes, it is true that we should all long for and look forward to, and forward to, that great Day of Christ's Coming. But beloved, it will not happen at any moment as some think.

As 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6, verse 15 says, the apostle Paul says, that God will “manifest Christ's appearing in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. You should believe in, and be looking forward to, and laboring toward the spiritual triumph of Christ's kingdom upon the earth, even if you never see it in your lifetime. I am speaking of the complete and total fulfillment of the Great Commission. It is after this that Christ shall return. No one will know the hour, nor the day, but it will not be secret or immanent in the sense that the Premillennial dispensationalists would have you to think. The New Testament letters of Paul only speak of one 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming, one Day of Christ, one great resurrection from the dead; and following it, the judgment of the living and the dead. But I am asking – Do you have the expectation of the conversion of nations, and all the kings of the earth?

The principle of our text in verse 7 is true, for all Christians everywhere, in all generations – Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand against the wrath of my enemies and Your right hand will save me. The Lord will perfect that which concerns me. But I leave you with this thought: that prophecy is more than the spiritual principle. It is the historic fulfillment at a specific time in regard to the nations and kings of this world. These verses of Psalm 138 will have a special and wonderfully extensive fulfillment in a coming day. Many nations will come to the light of Christ. They will be spiritually impacted and themselves respond to the brightness of the nation of Israel's conversion to Christ, as it is prophesied in many places in the Scripture, and confirmed by the apostle Paul in Romans chapter 11; their rising from the dead spiritually, and becoming a part of Christ's Church.

Isaiah 60, verse 4 says – “Lift up your eyes all around, and see: they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side.” “Then you shall see and become radiant, and your heart shall swell with joy; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you.” The abundance of the sea is referring to the peoples and nations of the world coming to Christ. And in verse 12 it says – “For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you (that is, will not serve Christ, and the Church's righteous interest to promote salvation through Christ, and the glory of Christ) *those nations* shall perish, and those nations shall be utterly ruined. So, in closing, I pray that you as a Christian will see today, how great is the glory of Christ, and that you would also see the latter-day glory of the Church. I pray that you will see this and have great expectations for what is coming, and that you will labor accordingly, to promote that glory. That is why we should pray for the leaders of nations even in our own day, that they might be saved.