

Jesus Reigns! (Psalm 2)

By Pastor Jeff Alexander (7/3/2022)

Introduction

This weekend, the nation will observe the 246th anniversary of its birth as a constitutional republic founded to recognize and protect the God-given rights of all people to live in freedom. Sadly, one hardly recognizes this nation today. What the nation has become in 2022 is hardly the dream that the founding fathers envisioned.

Watching the world falling apart around us can be quite disconcerting. We may be tempted to live in fear because of the uncertainties in our future due to inflation, disasters, shortages, famines, upheavals, hatred, disruptions and divisions, wars and rumors of wars dominating the news cycles. We long for a return to the old days and normality. As believers, we yearn for Jesus to return and fix things. However, it is very clear in Scripture that we are not just to sit on our hands and wait for Jesus to come again. Indeed, Psalm 2 instructs us, “*Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling*” (Psalm 2:11). Even now, Jesus reigns! How does Psalm 2 prove this fact?

I. Psalm 2 Applied

1. Psalm 2 opens with a question: “*Why do the nations [Gentiles] rage and the peoples [Jews] plot?*”
 - a. The rebellious world has always railed against God and His Christ, desperate to be released from divine restraints—His laws and rules. This is clear as we observe the rage against the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. God’s response is to laugh, mock, and deride. Those who rage against Him will meet Him in His wrath and fury. Indeed, they plot in vain.
 - b. God has established King Jesus on Zion, His holy hill. This is not a future hope. It is a present reality. Jesus reigns because God decreed, “*You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.*” Indeed, the kingdom of God has come (Mark 1:15; Matthew 12:28). To bring the kingdom of light into this sin-darkened world, Jesus must destroy the kingdom of darkness.
 - c. This rage against God and Christ includes His servants. Psalm 2 is referenced in Acts 4:24, 25 as the basis of the disciples’ prayer as they submitted themselves to their sovereign Lord. Jesus suffered at the hands of Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, and the elders of Israel in God’s sovereign plan predestined to take place. Now it was their turn.
2. Jesus, King of the Ages, is now judging the world (John 3:19–21).
 - a. Just before His crucifixion, Jesus revealed, “*Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out*” (John 12:31). Revelation 12 affirms this truth. We are in a spiritual war that is often very intense (Revelation 13:10). The victory is already assured (Revelation 12:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 15:24–27).
 - b. In view of this, we are instructed to “*be wise*” and “*be warned.*” Every person has a choice: we either “*kiss the Son*”—submit to Him for mercy and salvation, or “*perish in the way*” where “*his wrath is quickly kindled*” (Psalm 2:12). If we are wise and warned, we will “*serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling*” (Psalm 2:11).
3. This psalm offers great encouragement: “*Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*” (Psalm 2:12; 5:11, 12; Matthew 6:31 and 33). Are you seeking the kingdom? Christians are to be obedient and loyal servants of the King, Jesus.

II. Jesus Is *Lord*—the Absolute, Supreme, and Sovereign Ruler of All.

1. The gospel age dawned with the resurrected Christ seated at the right hand of Majesty (Acts 2:36). God made Him both Lord and Christ: *“I will make the nations [Gentiles] your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession”* (Psalm 2:8; Luke 22:67–69).

Jesus is *Lord*—the absolute and supreme and sovereign Ruler, King of the ages. To be established in the place, Jesus humbled Himself, became a slave, and submitted to God’s purpose to redeem a people for His name. Jesus obediently died as a sacrifice to atone for the sins His people. As a reward for that obedience, God raised Him from the death and exalted Him (Philippians 2:9–11). If you do not bow the knee to Jesus now, you will do so later, but it will be only to acknowledge the condemnation deserved.

2. That Jesus reigns now is confirmed by the Revelation (Revelation 11:15–18).
3. His reign means that He is now judging His enemies and subduing them under His feet until His revealing at the day of judgment (1 Corinthians 1:7, 8). In the meantime, believers live in a world that is hostile to God and them (2 Timothy 3:12–13). Our times are described in Psalm 2: the kingdoms rage, God laughs, *“I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill,”* therefore, *“serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and you perish in the way.”*
4. Who are the citizens of the kingdom that are to be the heritage of the Lord (Ephesians 3:9–11)? What was the mystery plan hidden for ages? *“This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel”* (Ephesians 3:6). Thus, *“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”* (Romans 10:9).

Believers who confess that Christ is Lord are saved or delivered from the wrath to come, just as Paul encouraged the saints at Thessalonica, who *“turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come”* (1 Thessalonians 1:9–10). This confession of Christ as Lord is not just a one-time act but an ongoing submission to His Lordship (Colossians 2:6–10).

5. Believers live out their lives, then, in kingdom obedience to King Jesus, their Lord (Colossians 3:17). Sadly, we still have this sin-contaminated flesh. We fail often, and, sadly, many have resigned to the flesh, finding the fight hard and hopeless. This fight with the flesh reveals the true saving power of Christ. But *“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above”* (Colossians 3:1–3).

In closing, note Jesus’ warnings to His disciples that they not to be led astray by false prophets, rumors of wars, but understand that international upheaval, famines, natural disasters, persecutions, apostasy, and betrayal would mark the age. These days would be marked by increase lawlessness while love would grow cold. Nevertheless, the gospel of the kingdom would be proclaimed throughout the whole world before the end (Matthew 24: 4–14). The mark of true believers surviving these times would be their endurance: *“The one who endures to the end will be saved [delivered]”* (v. 13).