



Bible Study
Biblical Theology of Psalms
Lesson 2: Psalm 2

INTRODUCTION

Summary Statement:

Psalm 2 teaches God's sovereign supremacy over all creation and his mediated reign over the whole earth in his anointed Son from Jerusalem.

Outline

1. 1-6 Universal Rebellion and God's Response
2. 7-12 The Messiah to Rule the Earth

OBSERVATION

Psalm 2 does not have a superscription, but it is attributed to David in Acts 4:24-26, which quotes verses 1 and 2. It is unknown when this Psalm was written or what the specific occasion was for the writing. Traditionally, the Psalm has been viewed as a coronation Psalm for the kings of Israel and Judah, upholding the ideal king according to the law (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

Psalm 2 is the second part of the introductory Psalm 1-2 pair, which stands at the beginning of the Psalms as an introduction to the whole collection. The first two Psalms have parallels. The focus of the first is God's law, or torah. The second focuses on God's King. Psalm 2 also features a contrast of two ways, as did Psalm 1.

The Psalms were collected in the final form sometime after the exile, which occurred 384 years after David's death. Looking at the entire collection, we can see thematic arrangement that highlights the hope for the coming Messiah. By this time, Judah had gone through the whole cycle of the Davidic line from David to Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, and had lost the kingdom through exile. Their hope is not just another son of David, but their hope was for the true Son of David, the greater David, the greater Son, and the Son of God. Psalms 1 and 2 together introduce the two main themes of God's word and God's Anointed, which is what Messiah means.

Walk Through Psalm 2

Verses 1-3 depict universal rebellion against God and his Anointed Son. The writer is speaking and quotes the nations in verse 3. The word for imagine in verse 1 is the same as the word for meditates in Psalm 1:2. In Psalm 1, the righteous are continually muttering God's word and in Psalm 2, the rebellious wicked are continually muttering against God and

Christ.

The word for set (2) means to present or take a stand. It is used for the proud posture of Goliath when he stood daily against Israel defying the God of Israel in 2 Samuel 17:14. The kings and rulers of the nations take Goliath's posture and arrogantly seek to throw off God's rule (3).

Verses 4-6 show God's response to human rebellion. He sits and laughs (4). God suffers them temporarily. All their rebellion and proud posturing does not affect his power or right to rule the universe. It does not affect his purpose to fulfill his will in his time, and they will come to judgment (5).

God's decree concerning the kingdom of the earth is given in verse 6. This verse gives God's response to the raging and plotting of the nations. What will God do? He will put his King on the throne in Zion. The word for set has also been translated as install. The Hebrew word is synonymous with the word for anoint. The nations rage and plot against his Anointed, but that will not prevent God from installing his Anointed on his holy hill in Zion, which refers to the temple mount in Jerusalem.

Verses 7-9 expounds God's decree for his Son, his Anointed King. The anointed Son speaks in these verses and quotes the decree of Yahweh. The word for decree is most often translated statute and is a common word in the Psalms, and the Old Testament. It exists in a group of words used to refer to God's law, or word. This statement comes at the exact middle of this Psalm and combines both themes where the King speaks God's word.

Verse 7 is quoted in Acts 13:33-34 in reference to the resurrection of Jesus and in Hebrews 1:5 in reference to the incarnation. It is also quoted in Hebrews 5:5 in reference to the priesthood. It is not the beginning of sonship for Jesus. It refers to his incarnated birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension as Son-in-Power.

Verse 8 clearly shows the Messianic kingdom on earth. The word for heathen is most often translated nations. Messiah's kingdom is over physical people and nations and the territory of his possession is the earth. Verse 9 speaks of his judgment on the nations to the destruction of all the wicked rebels at the time of his coming, and this is why the nations are admonished now.

Verses 10-12 admonish the rulers of the nations on earth. The writer is speaking again. These verses show the way of wisdom, using a common word for wisdom in Proverbs (10). "Kiss the Son" means worship the Son, pay homage to the Son, submit to the Son. This is the way of wisdom.

Psalm 2 ends with a blessing that closes the blessing from Psalm 1:1. This Psalm completes the picture from Psalm 1 that the way of wisdom and the blessing and life is the way of meditating on God's word, leading to his anointed Son.

INTERPRETATION

Human Depravity

Psalm 2 teaches about the sinful depravity of man. Verses 1-3 show what the counsel of the ungodly, way of sinners, and seat of the scornful (Psalm 1:1) looks like. It is high-handed rebellion against God and his Son. Just as the blessed man continually meditates in God's word (Psalm 1:2), the wicked continually mutter their rebellion against God and plot ways to end his universal rule.

This Psalm gives a simple explanation of the evil of the world. It can be traced to this root of rebellion against God. The church in Jerusalem, led by the Apostles, declared the prime example of this rebellion was killing God's Son (Acts 4:24-28).

Ultimately, the warning comes to all who rebel and will not bend their knee to the coming King, Jesus Christ. They will perish (12). Their plots and counsels and stands will be worthless like the chaff that is blown away (Psalm 1:4) when he comes in judgment (9).

God's Sovereign Supremacy

Psalm 2 teaches the sovereign supremacy and/or universal reign of Yahweh over this universe of his creation. Verse 4 considers God as sitting in the heavens, or enthroned from everlasting in the heavens in complete rule over the universe. All the counsels, plots, and raging of human rebels cannot affect his reign, or prevent his rule or will being accomplished.

Verse 5 shows God speaking from his wrath and warns them of the judgment of his coming Son. He has decreed that his Anointed King will sit enthroned on the temple mount in Jerusalem and rule over the earth. They will either bow to his King or be broken to pieces and perish (9, 12). The sovereign God has already determined what will happen and none can question, thwart, or hinder the execution of his will.

The Messianic Hope

The entire second Psalm is a meditation on God bringing forth his Anointed King. The ideal king is depicted in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 and promised through David in 2 Samuel 7:8-16. He is referred to variously in this Psalm: Anointed (2), King (6), Son (7), and Son (12).

Verse 6 locates his reign from the holy hill of Zion, which is the temple mount in Jerusalem. This is the throne of David. Verse 8 describes his kingdom as including all nations and extending over all the earth. Verse 9 looks forward to his coming, which means judgment on the rebels. This refers to the second coming of Jesus in the Day of the Lord to execute vengeance on his enemies (Revelation 19:11-20:6).

Psalm 2 ends with the assurance of his coming wrath. The rebels must turn from their ungodly ways and worship Christ. Those who put their trust in him are blessed. They are delivered from his wrath unto life in his kingdom.

APPLICATION

What does Psalm 2 say to modern readers?

1. Understanding Psalm 2 helps us understand the evil world we live in. So much we see around us every day defies plain reason, or even good sense. Consider the worship of death through abortion, or the inevitable punishments on anyone who suggests there are only male and female. This world is in rebellion against God, but that rebellion is only temporary.
2. Understanding Psalm 2 helps us understand that the sovereign God is still in control and nothing will stop him from accomplishing his will in his time. The world around us is in tumult and turmoil and the only safety is in God as a refuge.
3. Understanding Psalm 2 helps us understand what will happen in the future. God's Son will return to this earth with judgment upon his enemies. He will be enthroned on David's throne in Jerusalem and rule all the kingdoms of the earth from David's kingdom of Israel.
4. Understanding Psalm 2 helps us understand that we are not only, or merely, to wait for him to come, but we are to be wise and worship him and live like him in faithfulness while we wait for his coming. This is what Jesus taught in the model prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This series is a study in biblical theology of the book of Psalms. Each lesson typically covers one Psalm. This PDF is provided for personal study, small group study, or use in a church class. Unless otherwise noted, all lessons have been prepared by Jeff Short, the pastor of Harmony Baptist Church.

Harmony Baptist Church

3012 W Delmar Ave
Godfrey, IL 62035

618-466-2631

Harmonybaptist3014@gmail.com

www.hbcgodfrey.com

www.facebook.com/HarmonyBaptistGodfrey