

GM // name // online // new

If have Bible turn to Psalm 2. (easy to find ... right in the middle).

// Psalms is the biggest book in the Bible ...

Full of prayers and songs that teach us who God is and who we are.

It gives us language for every life situation we face, but from the framework of being God's people.

The Psalms help us understand the deepest part of who we are.

It's the encyclopedia of your soul.

The soul is that part of us that affects our thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

Everything that happens in the mind and is worked out through our bodies begins in the soul.

If you have a healthy soul than your thoughts, attitudes and actions will be healthy.

If your soul is unhealthy than so will be your thoughts, attitudes, and actions.

And here is the thing about the human soul ...

Nothing affects it more than your belief about God.

Some of the Psalms are very narrowly focused about a particular situation or life circumstance.

They teach us how to navigate them and how to bring them to God and invite Him into it. (gives us soul language for that // helpful!).

Other Psalms hit on bigger themes about who God is and his great plan of redemption.

It lifts our eyes to see a story that is much bigger than us, but one we are caught up in.

And to be honest we need both type of Psalms ...

We need to know that God is immanent ... near to us in the everyday struggles of life ...

But we also need to hold that in balance with the truth that He is transcendent ...

He is the almighty and we are in His great story.

That is the kind of Psalm we are looking at today.

Psalm 2

1 Why do the nations rage

and the peoples plot in vain?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together,

against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,

3 “Let us burst their bonds apart

and cast away their cords from us.”

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;

the Lord holds them in derision.

5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,

6 “As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill.”

7 I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said to me, “You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.

8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.

9 You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”

10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

To an Israelite of the ancient world this song defined them.
They were God’s people, a representation of His kingdom
among the kingdoms of the nations.

And they were never a super-power.

The O.T. history of Israel shows the intent of the surrounding nations to conquer and destroy them.

This Psalm is inviting us to consider what is really behind everything happening in the world.

Psalm 2:1-3

1 Why do the nations rage

and the peoples plot in vain?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves,

and the rulers take counsel together,

against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying,

3 “Let us burst their bonds apart

and cast away their cords from us.”

Why are there always wars and rumors of wars?

Why do the plans and efforts of every leader fail to last?

Why do nations rise and fall?

There Is A War Going On Between Two Kingdoms

The Christian faith says God created the world to be filled with men and women who loved and worshiped him alone.

He made us image bearers.

Which is a phrase God used from a practice in the ancient world to help us understand his intent.

The borders of a king's territory back then was marked with an image of that king.

So when you passed into it you understood whose rule it was under and who it belonged to.

God made Adam and Eve his image bearers and put them in Eden.

Eden gives us a picture of God's kingdom: **God's people in God's place under God's rule.**

But God's intent was to expand Eden to the ends of the earth and for A&E to multiply and fill it all with image bearers.

But A&E got deceived by Satan who got them to believe that it was better not to serve God.

And so began the uproar and rage of the nations.

A&E set themselves against the Lords rule.

We all inherit that same sinful desire from them.

They didn't see God's rule as good ...

Biting the forbidden fruit was their declaration of Psalm 2:3

"Let us God's bonds apart and cast away his cords from us."

Sin is rejecting God's rule and His kingdom b/c it believes the lie that we can do better without him.

But sin doesn't just take us out of God's rule.

We don't really step into freedom.

We trade one Lord for another.

We come under the dominion of Satan's kingdom where sin controls us.

And this means that we are born into a kingdom that stands against God.

Sin Makes God Our Enemy And Makes Us God's Enemy

This is how crazy sin makes us...

Making God your enemy is a bad idea ...

If Captain America was real ... you want him on your side.

If God is real (then He's Almighty ... more than 10K Captain America's) ... you want him on your side!

That's how sin works.

It convinces us that God isn't who He claims to be or denies his existence altogether.

To put it simply sin "de-Gods" God.

It believes we are on the same level or less.

After all Satan promised A&E that if they disobeyed God they would "become like him."

Is there anything more hateful than to disdain a person for what they are?

Or, to want them NOT to exist?

Its an ugly thing.

We see it in ethnic and racial hatred that leads to genocide and slavery.

Sin doesn't just want to be like God ... it makes God an enemy.

If we could ... we would eliminate God's existence.

Now in Israel's day the nations around them tried to do this.

Every nation in those days worshiped their own special god.

These demon-gods were believed to govern their territory.

And their gods power was limited to the borders of the nation that worshiped them.

These gods controlled the fertility of their fields, livestock, the wombs that bore children ...

And more relative to this Psalm they determined the outcome of battles.

War back then was more than two nations fighting ... it was a clash of gods.

The outcome determined whose god was superior.

The victorious nation would take down the loser's gods and setup their own.

And so a god's territory would expand.

Antioch Epiphanes IV did this by setting up Zeus in the temple in Jerusalem and sacrificing pigs.

Again in A.D. 70, another Roman emperor named Titus would desecrate the temple and then destroy it.

He boasted that he had conquered and killed Israel's God.

Persecution is a reality God's people have faced and will face.

Still today, in many places around the globe the church is physically persecuted.

And that is one of the harsh realities of being God's people...

We are hated B/C they hate our God.

Jesus said this would be true. "If the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you."

The church is Jesus' proxy people.

Just like Israel of the O.T. was God's proxy nation.

Before they hated us they hated Jesus ... enough to kill him.

Sin can take us to that hardline of hatred.

But the most rampant version of sin is softer and more subtle.

It wouldn't raise a hand against a person.

But it will hold them in contempt.

It considers Christian beliefs backward, archaic, out of touch ... perhaps even bigote and hateful, unfit for modern times.

This is the "civilized assault" on the church today.

It isn't a physical fight ... it goes to the very heart of our faith and what we believe.

The assault is to get us to compromise ... to come to a false table of peace and make concessions.

- You can be a Christian and ignore matters of injustice.
- You can enjoy sex as you see fit.
- It's okay to believe that all roads lead to heaven.

This assault also gets us to hope in the wrong things ...

We begin to think that power is the way to recover and renew God's kingdom.

We put our hope in politicians and politics to save the nation and bring us back into "the good old days."

What's deceptive about the modern civilized assault is that they are not demanding we recan't our faith in Jesus.

But every concession we make, every false hope we adopt is an assault on God ...

B/C it is trying to make peace with the world on its terms.

But God's people can't make peace with the world and stay at peace with God.

Every concession we make is a step into sin ...

Sin makes God an enemy.

The apostle James left us zero wiggle room.

James 4:4

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

This doesn't mean you can't be nice.

It's not implying we have to fight back with bullets, guns or swords.

He's saying don't compromise ... hold fast to God & don't give into sin.

And the life of the Christian is fighting this fight and enduring.

That sounds exhausting, right. → It is sometimes!

But that is the Christian life ... it is stepping into spiritual warfare.

That's why the Bible tells us again and again to persevere.

**You don't need perseverance when you're on vacation.
(maybe at disney world)**

Perseverance/endurance is what athletes need to finish the race, and what soldiers need to keep fighting.

But that endurance is fueled by hope.

Hope is like spiritual gatorade.

A soldier will continue to fight when there is hope of victory.

And for the Christian our hope is built on the best promise.

Jesus and His Kingdom Will Prevail

It doesn't matter what the headlines are saying any given day ...

Here is the headline that dominates all other headlines.

Psalm 2:4-9

**4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.**

**5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,**

**6 "As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."**

7 I will tell of the decree:

**The Lord said to me, “You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.**

**8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.**

**9 You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.”**

Jesus isn't scared of all the saber-rattling of the nations.

They can stand against him ... but he will never be defeated.

This is the good news of God's people.

For the Jew in the ancient world this Psalm was a comfort and a hope regardless of their circumstance.

If they were besieged by an enemy ... defeated ... exiled ... whatever ...

They had this ultimate hope ...

God's Anointed (lit. Messiah/Christ) would come one day and save God's people.

The Messiah would be an unstoppable force b/c God was with him.

The full power of God's might and will would be upon this King.

And so he would save God's people and bring about peace and prosperity to the nations.

Every faithful saint B.C. or A.D. has held onto that hope.

B/C they believed it was true ...

Nobody could withstand the power of their King on His great day of victory.

This headline will be true one day ... and that gives us strength for today and every tomorrow.

Consider the difference in the US soldiers vs. the Iraqi soldiers in Operation Desert Storm of the 90's.

Our guys fought with ferocity and the others surrendered quick.

What made the difference?

They knew who was more powerful and the victory was already determined before they began.

An American soldier in Desert Storm had zero thought that his side would lose.

They could see the headline of victory though it hadn't happened yet ...

That confidence gave them strength to the end.

Consider Isaiah 6: (saw Lord ... seated on the throne ... train of his robe filled the whole earth) [explain train of kings robe]

Isaiah saw Jesus as he truly is ... before he came to earth.

Victorious king ... undefeated ... unmatched!

No matter what God's church may face ...

We don't shrink back ... we don't compromise.

We hold fast to our faith with endurance B/C Jesus will win!

If this is true ... and it is ...

This changes how we live today.

Psalm 2:10-12

**10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.**

**11 Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.**

**12 Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled.**

Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

There are few take-aways here.

But the main idea is ...

Live In Surrender To Jesus As Your King

Kissing the Son is an act of allegiance and submission to the King's authority.

Faith begins with recognizing Jesus as Savior AND Lord (King).

And so the Christian lives in surrender to Jesus.

[this is a growing surrender]

As Christians there is a temptation to misunderstand the freedom we have through Jesus.

Jesus said "Who the son sets free is free indeed!"

We love that ... we love freedom.

But Freedom in Jesus isn't Freedom From Jesus.

Our freedom as Christians is from the penalty of sin and its power over us.

It's not to live for ourselves, but to live for him.

Our lives are meant to show that we fear our King.

V11 "Serve the Lord with fear"

That might sound odd to some of us.

B/C we can't figure out how love and fear can co-exist.

Why would a loving God want us to be afraid of him?

I would argue that not all fear is the same.

People in abusive relationships *fear their abuser.*

But that is different to how one might *fear the ocean.*

Both possess power, but they are not the same.

The abuser is a power we hate; but the ocean is a power we can enjoy.

The ocean is fun for fishing and surfing and boating.

But still have a healthy reverence for the ocean b/c we know its power.

See the difference ...

The ocean has an undeniable power but one you can delight in ... the abuser doesn't.

Jesus is more powerful and more beautiful than the ocean.

We fear him b/c we know he is Almighty ...

His power humbles us ... it produces a reverence.

But his grace and love invite us to delight in him.

We come and Kiss the Son b/c that is the appropriate response.

We humble ourselves and serve him.

And B/C he is good we run to him.

His power is our refuge and strength.

That is how the Psalm ends...

Psalm 2:12b

“Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

BAND COME UP

We are going to examine ourselves in a second.

First I want to give you a few questions to use to examine your own heart.

1. Is Jesus your king?

Jesus is coming one day to judge the earth, and it says every knee will bow before him.

You may not recognize Jesus as King right now ... one day you will.

And that day we will see him as he really is ... not as you would wish him to be.

You and I will stand before his awesome power and might.

There is no escape ...

What is your hope for that day?

Your only hope is that Jesus died for your sin.

He is offering you his peace today.

You can take his peace offering by believing his death on the cross was your peace offering.

The terms are simple ... Believe Jesus is Savior and King and repent of your sins against him.

2. Are you living like Jesus is the undefeatable King?

Are you swept up in the headlines?

Are you dismayed by the nations raging and plotting?

Are you living toward the reality of King Jesus who will win!

The nations are his inheritance ... God the Father gave it to him.

That inheritance is his salvation spreading to the nations.

His Kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy.

His people, in his place, under his rule.

The church is the Jesus' kingdom expanding until he returns.

We fight with the truth and love of the Gospel to see God's enemies become His saints.

PRAY

Examine your heart ...

“Jesus ... give us the faith we lack ... “ “You are the almighty King.”

COMMUNION

By faith we believe that this meal means something.

Jesus, the king over all kings, God’s only son ... suffered in our place to satisfy God’s wrath for our sin.

Through His death and resurrection we are brought into His kingdom.

And we eat and drink his sacrifice to remember what he did, but also to remember the most important headline...

He is coming again!

[Body broken // Blood shed]