

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 04 Psalm 2

by Keith Simons

Psalm 2 warns the kings of the earth to serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling, lest they perish from the way when his wrath is kindled.

Duration: 23:56

Scripture: Psalm 2:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "God's Sovereignty", "The Authority of Christ"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 2, emphasizing its dual prophetic nature regarding both King David and the future Messiah. He explains how the psalm addresses the rebellion of foreign nations against God's appointed ruler, highlighting God's sovereignty and the futility of opposing His will. Simons illustrates that while David was anointed by God, the ultimate fulfillment of this psalm points to Christ, who will reign over all nations. He encourages listeners to recognize the authority of God's chosen king and to serve Him with reverence, warning against the consequences of rebellion. The sermon concludes with a call to trust in God for true happiness and blessing.

Transcript

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons, I'm a Bible teacher from England and our podcast is all about how to understand the King James Version of the Bible. Today we're looking at one of the great prophetic Psalms of the Bible, a prophecy, and it's Psalm 2. A word or two before we begin about the of these prophetic Psalms. It will be easy to imagine that they are just about the future, that they're describing some future event about the time when Christ or Messiah will reign, and that they have no relevance to the day and age in which they were written.

This particular Psalm speaks about the Lord and his Son or Messiah, and it's important to realise that these Psalms also made sense in the day and age when they were first written. This is therefore a Psalm about how God had chosen David to rule over Israel and how he defended David from his enemies. Acts chapter 2 describes David as a prophet and therefore we don't think it's wrong to think about these Psalms in a prophetic sense about the future, and so we've always got to have these two pictures in our mind.

What does this say about David and about the authority that God gave to David, and what does it say about Messiah and Messiah's rule? So I've given you a moment or two to look up Psalm 2 in your Bible, so let's go through it in our normal way, which is a verse or so at a time, just considering the words and what they actually mean. So it begins Psalm 2 verse 1. Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain

thing? The heathen. The heathen means the people from different nations, in particular the nations that are not Israel.

Why do the foreigners rage? Why do the nations rage? To rage really means in English to become angry, but what they've done in the King James version is they've sort of imitated the Hebrew word that appears there with the same sort of sounds in the English as in the Hebrew. The word that is actually used there has much more meaning of conspiring, planning against the rulers. Why is it, David is asking, that these foreign nations are trying to rebel against him? Why are they trying to oppose what God has appointed to rule? And the people, well that means the foreign people, their nations again, and they're imagining a vain thing.

They're plotting something, something that is utterly worthless. It's utterly worthless to make a plan to oppose what God has done. So David asks why do they do that? And he doesn't actually answer that question immediately.

He now describes what they're doing. The kings of the earth, in other words the foreign kings, set themselves. To set means to take a position and the rulers take counsel together.

To take counsel really means to take advice, but the meaning of the Hebrew is roughly the same as in the first part. They're setting themselves. They're arranging themselves and making plans for war.

That's the real meaning of those phrases. The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together. They make plans for war against the Lord and against his anointed.

Now the anointed means someone who's been separated for the work of God and the way in which a king was separated for the work of God was by pouring oil on him and that's the meaning of anointed. But the Hebrew word is the word that gives us the English Messiah and the Greek translation of that is the word that gives us the English word Christ, against the Lord and against his Christ, against the Lord and against his Messiah. Now in the context of David, the anointed there was David himself, the king whom God had appointed and you can read in 1 Samuel, I think it's chapter 16, of how David received an anointing, how he was set apart for God's work.

So the meaning altogether of verse 2 is that all these foreign kings were making plans and plotting together and preparing for war against God and against his chosen king, David or the Messiah. And of course those kings only thought they were fighting against David, didn't they? Or only against the Messiah, didn't they? But David sees the reality of it, that these plans are really against the rule that God has appointed, that God has appointed David's rule, that God has appointed Messiah's rule. So what do these foreign kings say as they plan their war? Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.

The picture here is of an animal which is held with bands, things around its legs or cords like you tie up a horse or a donkey and they are saying let us break their bands asunder, let us break away the things that hold us and cast their cords from us. Let's get freedom from the Lord, from David, from the Messiah. Let's be free people and not have to obey God's rules over us.

We don't want to obey God and because God had appointed David to be the king not just of Israel but also to have rulership over many countries, the kings of these countries are saying we want freedom, we don't want to pay taxes to David, we want to break away from him. But remember it's God who's appointed

David king, it's God who has authority in this. David's army might not be weak enough to oppose them but that does not matter because, verse four, he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in division.

He that sitteth in the heavens is another way to say God, he is in authority, he is ruling, he is sitting on his throne in heaven. He laughs because he's mocking at these foolish rulers who faintly, without hope, are trying to oppose him. The Lord mocks them, the Lord has them in division and so God's first reaction is to mock them, to say that their words are totally empty and useless.

They are trying to oppose him and they have no power to oppose him. Then God's attitude changes to an attitude, verse five, of wrath, in other words anger. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath and vex them in his sore displeasure.

So God is angry, he vexes them, he alarms them, he worries them simply by his displeasure, by his angry words. He alarms them with the declaration in verse six, yet I have set, I have placed my king upon my holy hill of Zion. Zion is another word for Jerusalem where David had his capital, the holy hill because Jerusalem is on a hill and that hill is holy because it's a place that God has chosen to establish his home, his temple which was built by Solomon's son, sorry, by David's son Solomon.

And God says, you kings, you might be rebelling against me and my rule and my king, but it's me, God, who has put my king in Jerusalem to rule. And so the message to the king is their opposition is in vain, they are wasting their energy opposing God. The I in verse six means God, yet have I set my king, yet God has set his king upon the holy hill of Zion.

But now David begins to speak it seems because the next verse says, I will declare the decree, God's judgment, God's law about this matter. It is the decree that the Lord hath said unto me, that God has said to David or to the Messiah. So we better read what this law is then, second half of verse seven.

God says thou, you are to my son, you are my son, this day have I begotten thee. So God says, I've appointed David as my king and with special honor, with the honor that a son gets. He's doing what I want, just as a son, a loyal son obeys what his father wants, as he lives in obedience to his father.

So God declares his king to be his son. In fact, he even adds more to that. He says, this day have I begotten thee.

Begotten or beget means to give birth. Now obviously it's a woman who gives birth to a child, yet in the Bible it's often a man who begets a son. So a father gives birth to his son.

The Lord says, this day have I begotten thee. That's worried many Christian Bible commentators because they see the son as referring to Christ and they say, when did Christ become the son of God? And the answer they have to give from the Bible is John chapter 1, in the beginning was the Word, which means Christ, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. So from the beginning, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, God's Spirit, existed together.

So when was the day when God begat his son? When was the day when the Lord said, this day have I begotten thee? And the answer to that question is that this doesn't mean giving birth at a moment in time. This means that this is the son of whom I'm pleased. Didn't God say that at Jesus' baptism? This is my son in whom I am well pleased.

And God proudly declares that this King, this Messiah, this Christ, is his son and he declares with pride, this day have I begotten thee. In other words, it's just a way to emphasise the fact that the Father recognises that this is his son and he thinks that a wonderful thing. This is his son who is ruling in the way I wish him to rule.

This is his son, the son of God. And that refers in a lighter sense to David and in a more proper sense to the Messiah or Christ who will one day have the rulership over all nations because God says, verse 8, ask of me. So he's telling his son to ask or request from God this, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.

That's a promise to God's son, this King whom God has appointed, that the heathen, these foreign nations will be the son's inheritance. In other words, the son will rule over them, this King whom God has appointed will rule over them in answer to his prayer to God. Now David did rule over many nations and he ruled over some distant places which he might have considered to be the uttermost parts of the earth, the furthest parts of the earth.

But really David's rule was only over what was the local area of that part of the Middle East. But it is God's Messiah and God's Messiah alone who will rule all the earth. The uttermost parts of the earth will be his possession.

God is not going to allow evil rulers forever to rule over the world. He's going to put an end to their power. He's going to destroy their power and God's Messiah is going to rule all nations.

In a sense, of course, he already does because God's Messiah from heaven, he carries out the rule of God and God's power never ended. But at the moment we see nations raging against God, nations turning against God and opposing God. But the time will come when that power will end.

And just as David was successful in war against those foreign kings near him, so Messiah is even more successful. Verse 8. Thou, the Messiah, the King, shalt break them with a rod of iron. So rulers would carry a staff or a stick which was the badge of their authority.

And policemen or guards would carry a stick which was a very physical show of their authority. We refer to police carrying a truncheon today, a stick with which they can beat a criminal. But if a stick is made out of iron, it's strong, it's firm, it doesn't break.

And so if it hits someone or something, it's going to break that person. So it's saying Messiah's rule, the rule of God's King is so strong that anyone who opposes him, it's as if he hits them with an iron rod, an iron stick. Or worse than that, thou, the Messiah, the King, shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

You will scatter them, shatter them like a pot. As I do this talk, I'm sipping occasionally from a clay mug. And of course, if I throw the mug to the ground, it will smash.

It's only clay. It will smash into no end of pieces and I'll have to get a sweeping brush to brush them up. So it is with these kings who oppose the rule of God's King, God's Messiah.

They consider themselves so powerful, but when God's Messiah, when God's King acts against them, they lose all their power, their hopes, their plans are utterly destroyed. So now some advice to these kings who want to oppose God and want to oppose the rule of the King whom he has appointed. Verse 10, be wise now, therefore, O ye kings.

You kings have some wisdom. Think about what you're doing. Remember who it is who you are opposing and change your minds.

Be instructed, ye judges of the earth. You have power in this world. You have power now.

You rule now because in ancient times people didn't distinguish between the power of a king or the power of a judge. You have power now. So take some advice.

Learn what you must do. Respect God. Verse 11, serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

In other words, you rulers who stand against God, show some respect for God and for the King who he has chosen to rule. Serve the Lord with fear, with respect. That's the meaning of fear there.

And rejoice with trembling. Our King James translators have understood this word rejoice literally. Rejoice, be glad in this son, this King whom God has appointed.

But in your rejoicing, in your happiness, in your joy at his rule, have fear. Fear that is deep enough to show trembling. But modern translators would point out that that word rejoice can refer to any strong emotion.

So perhaps that end of the verse rejoice with trembling, with shaking, means the strong emotion of fear. Feel such strong emotion of fear that you tremble, that you shake with fear because God has such power. And so his son, the King, the Messiah has great power and you must respect him.

Verse 12, kiss the son, show him love, show him reverence, show him respect, give honour to the King whom God has appointed, the Messiah whom he has chosen. Because otherwise, lest he be angry. If you don't show love and respect to him, he will be angry with you.

You shouldn't be opposing him, raging against him, plotting against him, trying to oppose his rule. You'll only bring his anger against you and you perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. You're going to face a terrible punishment.

You're going to perish from the way if his anger is even starting to be against you. Kindled is like you kindle a fire and you start a fire and his anger is like a fire which will burn against you if you even start to oppose him. So don't oppose him.

Blessed, happy. It's the same word that began someone. Happy are all they that put their trust in him.

It's not those who oppose him who will get freedom and do well. It's those who put their trust in him and they are the truly happy people because they are supporting God's rule and therefore the rule of the King, the Messiah whom God has appointed. If you've listened to today's podcast, I'd love to hear from you.

My email address is 333kjb at gmail.com. If you write to me, let me know that you've heard the talk on Psalm 2. Let me have any comments or thoughts you might have on this podcast. Tell me where in the world you are. Be most interesting.

My email address again 333kjb at gmail.com. You won't go on any mailing lists or anything like that. It's just for my information. So let me read you in conclusion now the entire psalm.

Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed saying, let us break their bands

asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. The Lord shall have them in derision.

Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Sion. I will declare the decree the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son.

This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.

Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

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