

## God's Great Ballad | The Flow of the Psalms

### The Lord and His Anointed

#### Psalm 2 (Confrontation)

6.14.20

*Why are the nations in an uproar  
And the peoples devising a vain thing?  
2 The kings of the earth take their stand  
And the rulers take counsel together  
Against the LORD and against His Anointed,  
saying,  
3 "Let us tear their fetters apart  
And cast away their cords from us!"  
4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,  
The Lord scoffs at them.  
5 Then He will speak to them in His anger  
And terrify them in His fury, saying,  
6 "But as for Me, I have installed My King  
Upon Zion, My holy mountain."  
7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to Me, 'You are My Son,*

*Today I have begotten You.  
8 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the  
nations as Your inheritance,  
And the very ends of the earth as Your  
possession.  
9 'You shall break them with a rod of iron,  
You shall shatter them like earthenware.'"  
10 Now therefore, O kings, show  
discernment;  
Take warning, O judges of the earth.  
11 Worship the LORD with reverence  
And rejoice with trembling.  
12 Do homage to the Son, that He not  
become angry, and you perish in the way,  
For His wrath may soon be kindled.  
How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!*

Last week we started a series on God's Great Ballad – does the Book of Psalms tell a story? Is the whole collection of songs a great ballad, a narrative poem?

So we're looking at the Five Books in the Psalms; two introductory psalms from the start of each book that epitomize the theme of the whole book and together tell a cohesive story.

And the first theme, Book One, is confrontation. Life is a struggle. There's an ongoing disruption, a conflict provoked by a rebel, a dragon or serpent who opposes God and has seduced humanity to his side.

And God has promised the enemy's defeat by the Seed of the Woman... The Fall came through the woman and the fall will be reversed through a woman (1 Tim 2.13ff). A singular Man, born of a woman, a New Adam will triumph over all His and our enemies. He's promised from the moment of The Fall (Gen 3.15) and He will be Abraham's Seed (Gal 3.16), a descendent of Abraham the believer who will bless the whole world with the knowledge of God (Isa 11.9).

Last week we read the Invitation to Fullness – Psalm One. Today the second door-post holding up the gateway into the Temple of the Psalms. Here we see that the struggle is REAL and that it's more than just an individual or private conflict – it's systemic (a word we've been hearing lately!) – there's a corporate aspect to the conflict and this Second Psalm sees this corporate conflict as central to HUMAN HISTORY.

One writer called Psalm TWO “a Christological interpretation of history” – So, what should we know about it? What should we DO about it? How do you understand this conflict in the Human Story? This one Psalm puts it all right in front of us... a microcosm of world history... the whole Bible compressed into a single short... song!

**Let's look at: 1) The World in Conflict With God  
2) The God Who Is Not Worried**

This is what some call a proleptic prophecy, i.e. it tells of a present situation but IN that situation we're meant to see a future fulfillment. The Boston Tea Party was a prolepsis of the Revolutionary War – it was a paradigm or microcosm – a few under-resourced colonists say no to the Empire and the colonists win!

And this Psalm looks at the Kings of Israel, maybe thinking especially of David. It's a prophecy with more than one fulfillment. David is a messianic figure or symbol of God's Hero. David is God's man. David is surrounded by adversaries... who stand against David's God!

The deeper truth is that the whole world is against David's God. The Nations/Gentiles – the people who are NOT descended from Abraham see the one true and living God as a cosmic prison warden. They/WE see God as the source of restriction and limitation. David the King and the God he represents is cramping our style, is holding us back and preventing us from being all that we can BE!

See how they/WE characterize the Reign or Kingdom of God as repressive and restrictive and stifling: “Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!” Who said anything about fetters and cords? Shackles and handcuffs...? This IS how they/WE think about God. Like His job is to make life a drag and a burden... like a slave-master.

You know our society is thinking a lot about freedom – maybe the pursuit of freedom IS our national religion... our corporate obsession. And whether it's the pursuit of freedom or the pursuit of happiness or the pursuit of beauty or truth or goodness or even the pursuit of pleasure – I'M FOR IT!

My problem is the absurdity... of pursuing anything that's Good, True and Beautiful OUTSIDE OF GOD. To think that we can be free ONLY by overthrowing God is like someone who says, “I can't

be truly free as long as I'm dependent on oxygen – and I'm just NOT going to do it! Not one more breath – I'm not going to be BOUND BY BREATHING! I'm free NOT to breathe!"

It's the Blue Whale who insists on being free to live in the Sahara Desert. Even if he could get there, it would NOT be freedom...it would be a weird, grotesque, slow, agonizing death – NOT freedom.

The Apostle Paul told the Athenians, "In God we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17.28). In other words, to seek freedom OUTSIDE of God and His will is like seeking freedom from oxygen or the whale seeking freedom outside the ocean. Freedom can only be found INSIDE THE REALM FOR WHICH WE WERE CREATED. And that realm is to be IN God...in close and intimate relationship with Him. "In Him we live and move and have our being."

And when the Psalmist reflects on the universal quest... our shared, common, united, mutual, corporate, collective, communal, unanimous pursuit of freedom AWAY from the One who alone can make us free he cries out, "why do we DO that?!"

"Why do the nations rage and the people devise an absurd thing?" It's like watching a toddler in the throes of a temper tantrum who holds his breath. Do you really think that'll get you what you want?

It's like saying, "I AM tired of being restricted by the Laws of Physics! I will NO LONGER submit to gravity or inertia (a body at rest meets a body in motion) – I'm gong to stand in front of moving cars and step off tall buildings and be free." We don't break the Laws of Physics – THEY break us!

Why do we DO that? Why do we seek freedom away from the One True Source of Freedom HIMSELF? Why do the nations rage and the people seek an empty thing? Why do WE DO that? Why does our society DO that?

It's a question we should seriously ASK ourselves and then (only after we've faced it OURSELVES!) then we should ask our society. Do we/YOU think you can be free outside of who God made you to be and IN THE REALM or sphere or...relationship for which we were created?

But the problem IS – we don't THINK like God made us to think. Our powers of moral, spiritual reasoning are askew, crooked and absurd. "The day you eat of it – you shall surely die." And DIE we did – our minds and our thinking toward truth and reality and God, our thinking died. So in the next chapter (after The Fall in Genesis CH 4) a brother kills a brother. And then sin and absurd thinking fills the world with violence.

And finally we get together – we unify. Our personal sins against God and our brothers becomes organized and systemic, “The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel TOGETHER!”

When we get to Genesis CH 11 – our corporate rebellion and the absurdity of our thinking and the brokenness of our moral and spiritual perception and discernment is such that we try to use technology to kill God and take his place. “Let us build a tower into heaven and overthrow the Big Ogre who is keeping us down!”

And that Tower of Babel pattern/paradigm is exactly what the poet is replaying HERE! This is like a poetic reflection on Babel. The whole world UNITED against the Ground of All Being – the very source of Truth Beauty and Goodness Himself is seen as the Problem.

Why?

But my second point is – God is NOT worried.

He’s got plans of his own to set UP His throne! “He who sits in the heavens laughs...the Lord scoffs at them”. He’s angry that we’re spiritually/morally suicidal – we’re defiling His glorious image – US!

And to this very day – we’re using the most sophisticated technology (which to Him is about as sophisticated as the Babel account in Genesis 11 – “They said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.’ And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.”) And God is about as impressed with our particle accelerators and gene-splicing and Artificial Intelligence and “trans humanism” (look it up) – our technology gives us the false sense of transcendence and control but God is not threatened or impressed or worried...

He has a Plan and the Plan is a Person. “As for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion My holy mountain”

His King is the Seed of the Woman who come to bruise the serpent’s head. He comes to slay the dragon who enticed us and sold us this deadly crooked thinking...who promised us freedom but delivered only death and fear and shame...emptiness.

And in the Great Decree, the infinite mystery, the deeper magic, what theologians call “the Eternal Covenant” – God the Son, agrees to cross the Great Divide... to intervene. He steps into our MESS.

He Himself is the Target of the Babel Plot – they want to overthrow God and HERE He agrees to be overthrown. “Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords.” Now, He Himself, the

Lord's Anointed is Himself fettered and bound by cords – Freedom becomes enslaved and bound.

This is the only way to defeat death – He has to submit to it... He must be bound if WE will go free... and He agrees...in eternity past...He agreed and in the fullness of time He carries out the Great Exchange: His life for ours, His obedience is credited to me and my guilt and crimes are charged to Him.

And rising from the grave – He remembers the promise of the Father, “Ask of Me and I will give the nations as Your inheritance and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.”

And so He, Jesus Christ, the Dragon-Slayer, who BY death, KILLED death, He prays this great missionary prayer: “Father, give to Me the inheritance that is Mine... I have come for My Bride.”

And this is what's taking place. This is the direction of Human History. All things are moving in the direction of the Beautiful Softly Falling Reign of Jesus Christ. Christians have differing views on how it will play out (sequence of events) but all Christians KNOW it's eventually moving in that direction.

Dr. King famously said, “Let us realize the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” Yes! Because justice was satisfied in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ... our moral, spiritual insanity will one day lift like a cloud and justice will roll down like water and righteousness like an ever flowing stream (Amos 5.24). A Good Man will sit on the Throne and Truth, Beauty and Goodness will be the norm.

He will shatter all that saps the life out of life. All the smiling faces lying to the races will SHUT UP and be ever silenced. And His Kingdom will be the Kingdom of love where the lion will lie down with the Lamb.

So... “now therefore...O Kings...show discernment. Take warning, O judges of the earth...” There is a window... it's quickly closing. Your life is fleeting and soon will be past. This is a very precious opportunity to think (“but T.J. – you just said we can't think straight” – Yes, I did, but if you simply appeal to Him, the Anointed King who was 'throned upon the awful Tree – He will give you eyes to see!) So, humble yourself and show discernment.

Wow! What a word... for this time in our tumultuous history... to be able to discern. To recognize the very precious opportunity you have... the opportunity WE have (those who have NOT yet believed and those who are living by faith) what an opportunity to get this clear view of history.

To believe it and then to lovingly share it with others. “Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled.”

He was rejected FOR all who believe. Don't reject Him again – it will be to your own eternal peril... You can meet Him as Savior or as Judge.

Do you really want to be free? Turn to Him and simply trust Him to be the Prophet, Priest and King over your life.

He is Freedom Himself. "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8.36) "How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!"