

**06.08.06 Coromandel Baptist 10:00 a.m.**  
***The Nations' Anointed King***  
Bible Readings = Psalm 2; Acts 4:23-31

**Introduction:**

- (1) In the series on the nations we have seen that the nations are shown to be in a state of rebellion against God (e.g. in the Tower of Babel), and yet how God has a gracious purpose for them.
- (2) His Old Testament people were placed in the midst of the nations (e.g. Table of Nations) and in the face of their rebellion he chooses Abraham by whom they would be blessed. The theme of the covenant is 'blessed to be a blessing to the nations'.
- (3) But nonetheless, the nations are shown to be under the power of the City, which rides on the shoulders of the beast, who is in the image of the dragon. John's summary is 'the whole world lies in the evil one' (NB, not creation, but the world system). We saw that the serpent brought humanity captive to himself in the temptation of our first parents: promising them the knowledge of good and evil, knowledge they could have according to their own estimate and on their own terms.
- (4) We have also seen something of the exercise of God's sovereign will over the nations (both in the broad sweep of history and in the fine detail), so that all things are being worked together to the accomplishment of the Lord's will.

***Today, we turn to Psalm 2, a passage that is central to the Bible's teaching on God and the nations. For this reason it is a passage we will need to bear in mind all the way through our series.***

**1. Introducing Psalm 2:**

(1) This Psalm stands at the head of the whole psalter, and does so in close relationship with Psalm 1.

- There are close thematic, linguistic and theological links between Psalm 1 and 2, which suggest that the two should be taken together. (For detail, see Jamie Grant's *The King as Exemplar*, pp. 60ff.)
  - Not going into detail today, but the themes of Law, wisdom and kingship are all closely related in the Old Testament. Psalm 1 is a wisdom Psalm, extolling the Law, and contrasting the way of wisdom with the way of folly. The king in Israel was to be a man under the Law, walking in the fear of the Lord (i.e. wisdom), particularly by rejecting folly (idolatry). Underneath all of the plans and schemes of the nations was the 'folly', 'vanity' of idolatry, into which their kings led them.
  - However, in Israel the king was to be God's representative over the nation, and thus God's representative to the other nations which surrounded the nation of Israel.

(2) It is clearly a *royal* Psalm (other royal Psalms include 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 110), dealing with the reign of God's *anointed* king.

- The anointed king (Messiah) is appointed by God. The mention of the anointing, and the ascription of adoption 'this day I have begotten you', indicates the Psalm

is probably not just a royal Psalm in the general sense (e.g. Ps. 45, 72, 110), but a *coronation* Psalm.

- See the place of anointing in David's case (e.g. 1 Sam. 16:12ff.) and the mention of it in Solomon's case (e.g. 1 Kings 1:45). David is thus the holy one, the anointed one (e.g. Ps. 89:20), who stands in a direct covenant relation to the Lord (2 Sam 7 cf. Psalm 89). It is his royal house who is in view in Psalm 2, and ultimately, the great Messiah King David's Greater Son, Jesus.
- The anointing related to the gift of the Spirit (e.g. 1 Sam. 16:13, cf. Ps. 51:11). This is important for our understanding of Jesus as the anointed one through whom the Spirit is poured out on the nations> but this is another sermon for another day!

(3) The context of the royal kingship is that of submission to the Lord i.e. one cannot see the king as a free-standing entity who rules on his own authority. The real King in the Old Testament (indeed, throughout the Bible!) is God the Father, the creator of heaven and earth.

- The king is the *Lord's* anointed. The *Lord* has appointed him and installed in *his* holy hill. Lord says he is '*My king*', '*My Son*'. He stands in a filial relationship to the Lord who has appointed him (see, for example 2 Sam. 7:14 compared with Ps. 89:26)
  - Also see the emphasis on the holy hill i.e. the dwelling place of Yahweh (Ps. 132:13 cf. 48:1; 50:2) also compare with Heb. 12:22; Rev. 14:1
  - Thus, the king's victory is really the victory of God (Ps. 2:9 cf. Ps. 21:8; 89:23; 110:5; etc.)
- King, for his part, only has one thing allotted to him: 'Ask'! Hard to speak of this as a duty! Better to speak of it as an honour!!
  - In other words, the king was to live in submission to the Great King, in all things, asking Him for what he (the earthly king) needed. As all was done in submission to God, the victory of the king goes to the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth are his possession (cf. Ps. 22:7; 72:8), by submission to the rule of the Great King. He is to be made the 'firstborn' of the kings of the earth (Ps. 89:29) i.e. given the position of pre-eminence
  - The theme of *Asking* is important: e.g. the enthronement of Solomon, asking for wisdom (1 Kings 3:5 cf. 3:10ff.). Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 6:9 cf. 7:7, 11) and Jesus' teaching in John's gospel (John 14:13ff.; 15:7; 16:23; cf. 1 John 5:14). Intercession of Christ (John 17:20 cf. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25).

## **2. The Nations in Relation to the Great King and His Anointed**

(1) The nations are shown to be in rebellion: Ps. 2:1-3.

- The habitual stance of the rulers of the nations is *against* the Lord and his anointed.
  - The *settled position* of the rulers as seen in the translations of Ps. 2:2 'take stand/take up position/set themselves, and take counsel/plot/gather together'

- This is so all the way through the Bible, even to the end e.g. the parable of Luke 19:4 cf. Rev. 17:12-14.
  - This is parallel to other passages where the nations are shown to be in rebellion against God (e.g. Ps. 46:6) or Israel (e.g. Ps. 83:4).
    - Israel as the divine son-king (e.g. Ex. 4:22-23): a royal household! They were, in one sense, ‘God’s anointed’; and the nations were enraged at them for so being. But within Israel was another anointed son: the king who was to lead the son-nation in the love of the Lord.
  - The nations see the rule of God as hard and harsh (Ps. 2:3)...but compare this with the life of the Son King, Jesus! His delight and freedom is to do the will of him who sent him! Rest is found here, as in Matt. 11:25ff.! Also see that the Lord reigns; therefore the nations are to rejoice! (Ps. 97:1).
- (2) The Lord’s will is that the nations are to be subdued, and he does so by installing his king.

- There is an emphasis on the absolute sovereignty of the Lord (Ps. 2:4 cf. 37:13; 53:5; 59:8) also compare with Ps. 115:3; Is. 40:22; 46:10; 57:15; 66:1ff.; Prov. 21:30; etc.
  - The rule of the king over the nations, likewise, is seen to be complete (v. 9, 12)
    - § On the meaning of v. 9: ‘Read literally these two lines seem cruel and pointless. They smack of an insane tyranny that possesses only to destroy. Behind them is a ritual, known particularly in the ceremonies of Egypt as part of the procedures of installing a king. The names of the nations over which he claimed sovereignty would be written on clay tablets, and in a symbolical ritual the king would smash those tablets with his sceptre. Translated, this dramatic ritual language means, “You shall claim and rule them with a power they cannot resist”.’ Likewise regarding v. 12...where numerous examples of art from cultures of the time ‘show representatives of subject people at the time of the accession of a king, prostrating themselves before him, touching their foreheads to the royal foot. The ritual is simply an enactment of the confession, “We are your servants”, which is precisely the point of the exhortation.’ (J. L. Mays *The Lord Reigns: A Theological Handbook of the Psalms*, WJK, 1994, p. 111).
- But also see the broader context of the Psalm: the king knows the joy of serving the Lord, and the Lord is covenant God of all grace, whose covenant it to bless the nations. God raises up the king as the bringer of blessing to the nations.
  - This blessing could only come to the nations if the king were totally reliant on the Lord. The theme of trust in Yahweh is one thread tying Psalms 1 & 2 together (e.g. Ps. 1:1 cf. 2:12 where the ‘blessed’ man is one who does not rely on his own wisdom or strength, respectively).
    - § Elsewhere, there is a strong connection between being ‘blessed’ and living by trust in Yahweh (e.g. Ps. 40:4 Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie ; 84:12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the one who

trusts in you!; 146:3 Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation cf. Prov. 16:20; Is. 26:3 you keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you; Jer. 17:7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD, he is like a tree planted by the water etc.)...which leads to many New Testament links.

§ See Jesus' action of trust in his Father, and through this the nations being given to him as his inheritance.

(3) Kiss, worship, honour the son (2:12)

- There is a contrast here with the vain idolatry of the nations, into which Israel fell.
  - Compare with Hos. 13:2 'And now they sin more and more, and make for themselves metal images, idols skilfully made of their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen. It is said of them, "Those who offer human sacrifice kiss calves."'
  - Also, 'kissing' was sign of submission (e.g. 1 Sam. 10:1 Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head and kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you to be prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their surrounding enemies. And this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you to be prince over his heritage; 1 Kings 19:18 Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.)

§ Compare the betrayal of Judas 'with a kiss'!

- The son is not here (in Ps. 2:12) coming in anger! The command is to worship/honour him lest he become i.e. lest in rejecting his gracious rule we are under the wrath of being given over to judgement
  - Compare with Revelation 6:16 regarding the wrath of the Lamb.

### 3. New Testament Connections

(1) Ps 2 and Ps 110 together quoted or alluded to in the New Testament approx 50 times. Not just the number of the allusions, but the context of them, indicates that this is the lens through which everything seen.

- Incarnation, death, cross, resurrection, ascension...all proclamation of Jesus as the Lord.

(2) When was Jesus crowned? See the use of this Psalm or related passages in all contexts: baptism (Matt. 3:17); transfiguration (Matt. 17:5); resurrection (Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:4); ascension Heb. 1:5; 5:5; etc.

- He is always the firstborn (pre-eminent one), but at the time of the coming of the Son into the world the angels are commanded to worship him (Heb. 1:6), for his incarnation took human nature to its rightful place, through redemption and resurrection.

(3) The use of the Psalm in Acts 4:23-31 is significant:

- The fulfillment of the opposition of the nations is seen in the crucifixion
- As Jesus submitted himself to his Father's will in the crucifixion, the nations were thus disarmed
- The Jerusalem church *asked* for the nations: that the word might continue to go out with power.