

## When You Think Wickedness Is Winning

**Intro:** Every day we see what seems to be an ever increasingly wicked world.

*We see the threat of war as evil men vie for power.*

*We see promotion of sinful lifestyles (fornication, homosexuality, pornography).*

*We see the religious world in the grip of a carnal gospel that caters more to human convenience than to spiritual conviction.*

*We see threat of terrorist attack as religious fanatics live out their conceptions of Mohammed's teaching. Today over a hundred people either killed or injured by man who shouted as he fired on the crowds, "Allah is great!"*

*We've been speaking recently on the many cultural challenges that remind us of the pervasive wickedness in different aspects of the culture.*

It may be enough to cause us conclude that wickedness is winning the battle in this world. In such times it may be helpful to consider the words of Psalm 2 to balance out our concerns and assure us that God is still in control and that goodness will triumph.

**A quick survey of Psalm 2. We see:**

***The world plotting, v. 1-3***

*"WHY are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed: "Let us tear their fetters apart, And cast away their cords from us!" (Psalm 2:1-3, NASB)*

The nations are pictured as seeking to throw off the rule of God and His anointed one. They imagine that together they can plot and with their joint power overcome the rule of God.

The prophet already hints that such is "futile" or "vain".

***The Father laughing, v. 3-6***

*"He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury: "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain." (Psalm 2:4-6, NASB)*

God's responds to those who plot against him.

First he laughs. It is not that God is amused; but that it is absurd to think that those that God created can overpower their Creator! God laughs them to scorn.

His laughter turns to anger as he sees those that He created rebellion against Him.

He acknowledges that He has a ruler on earth too! He has installed His king on Mt. Zion. It is through this king that He will terrify and defeat those who oppose Him!

***God's anointed speaking, v. 7-9***

“*“I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘Thou art My Son, Today I have begotten Thee. ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Thy possession. ‘Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.’”*” (Psalm 2:7–9, NASB)

He tells of what God has said to Him!

First that God has acknowledged Him as His Son, his only begotten.

Second that God has promised Him victory over all His enemies. That through Him they will be thoroughly destroyed.

***God’s prophet warning and comforting, v. 10-12***

“*Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. Worship the LORD with reverence, And rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, lest He become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!*” (Psalm 2:10–12, NASB)

The prophet urges all who rule on earth to understand that God and His anointed rules!

Instead of rebelling against God, they should reverence Him and rejoice before Him!

Instead of rejecting His Son, they should do homage to Him and obey Him!

And a word of comfort to those who believe in God’s anointed ruler!

**But what is the meaning of this psalm?**

*Sometimes Ps. 2 is referred to as a “royal psalm.” Perhaps some might imagine some OT fulfillment in the kings of Judah, maybe someone like David. For in a sense they were anointed of God; and the psalm could be in some way suggesting the success of their rule. Some have even imagined that the psalm accompanied the coronation ceremony of the king and when the crown was placed upon his head, the words were spoken, “Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee”.*

*However, if any Israelite king should have fulfilled this psalm, it could only be seen as a foreshadowing of fuller fulfillment by another king to come, the Son of David, our Lord Jesus Christ. And so in the NT the apostles pointed to this text as being fulfilled in Jesus as the anointed one of God—the Messiah!*

Paul in his synagogue sermon in Acts 13 told the Jews that Psalm 2 was fulfilled in Jesus and His resurrection from the dead.

“*And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, ‘THOU ART MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE.’*” (Acts 13:32–33, NASB)

The Hebrew writer in showing that Jesus was superior to angels reminds His fellow-Jews of the declaration the Lord had made to Jesus as the Messiah:

*“For to which of the angels did He ever say, “THOU ART MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE” ? And again, “I WILL BE A FATHER TO HIM AND HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME” ?” (Hebrews 1:5, NASB)*

The Revelation describes a special child:

*“And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.” (Revelation 12:5, NASB)*

Is there any doubt that the child caught up to the throne of God is none other than Jesus Christ?

In all these passages then, we see that Jesus is the king reigning on God’s holy mountain

***Moreover they clearly reveal that it is futile for men to imagine that they can defeat His purposes! This was a source of great encouragement to the NT Christians in the face of adversity and powerful enemies!***

The early Christians saw the prophecy of Psalm 2 being fulfilled before their very eyes. When the apostles returned from their encounter with the Jerusalem authorities, those with them rejoiced in the message of Psalm 2.

*“And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, “O Lord, it is Thou who DIDST MAKE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM, who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, ‘WHY DID THE GENTILES RAGE, AND THE PEOPLES DEVISE FUTILE THINGS? ‘THE KINGS OF THE EARTH TOOK THEIR STAND, AND THE RULERS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER AGAINST THE LORD, AND AGAINST HIS CHRIST.’*

And then they expressed what they believed was the fulfillment of the psalm. The heathen had joined together against the Lord and His Anointed one; but the Lord’s purpose had prevailed:

*“For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur. “*

They found it a great source strength and comfort; and they prayed: *And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence, while Thou dost extend Thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Thy holy servant Jesus.” And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:24–31, NASB)*

It was the truth of psalm 2 that brought Peter and John and their fellow-apostles in prayer to God to ask for His help against the enemies of truth. And God answered in a powerful way. Through the miracle of that day He gave His consent to their understanding and granted them boldness to teach the truth even when it appeared that all the world was against them.

***In the same way this passage became the hope of the Christians as they faced the later persecutions of Jerusalem and Rome. John gave these Christian hope by telling them that their Lord Jesus Christ would come in judgment against His enemies. The wickedness under which they suffered so much would not win!***

*“And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”” (Revelation 19:11–16, NASB)*

***And Jesus assured the suffering seven churches of Asia that they would participate in the Jesus’ victory over His enemies. His victories will be their victories.***

*“‘And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father;” (Revelation 2:26–27, NASB)*

#### **What Psalm 2 means to us!**

***First it means that God is still in control—no matter what Satan does; no matter how many earthly rulers plot together.***

***Jesus His Son rules at His right hand; and it is his purposes that will prevail.***

***When the rulers of this world practice and promote evil, they are engaged in a futile task, one they cannot ultimately win.***

***Those who oppose the purposes of God will suffer God’s wrath and punishment.***

***Those who take refuge in the rule of Jesus Christ will ultimately be blessed and victorious.***

**Conclusion:** when it looks like wickedness is winning remember psalm 2. No matter how powerful evil may seem, God is in control and His cause will be victorious!