

Our Rebellion, Our Ruler, Our Refuge

Text: Psalm 2:1–12

Theme: The only refuge for the rebellious is in the One who rules all things.

Introduction — Just over the past two weeks, news headlines astound us

- read them, watch them, listen to them, no matter: cause fear, anxiety, worry, near despair
- there's the ongoing situation with Iran that makes us wonder where will this lead or end?
- for nearly two decades, civil war has raged in Lebanon b/t Christians, Orthodox, Muslims
- seems like hope for a cease fire; but just a fragile, volatile place, who knows
- this has nearly made us forget the conflict between Russia & Ukraine still huge problem
- the head of the Roman Catholic Church visited the most strict Islamic country
- blessed them, blessed their high mosque, spoke of them as sharing the same God
- all the while, just to the south, Nigeria faces the most violent persecution of Christians
- since 2009, over 50,000 Christians have been killed by Islamic militant groups
- over 388m Christians suffer high levels of persecution and discrimination for their faith
- in Africa, 1 of every 5 Christians suffer greatly
- in the 10-40 window of Asia, 2 out of every 5 are under persecution
- it is illegal to be a Christian & practice your faith in North Korea, Yemen, Somalia
- add Saudi Arabia, Libya and the Sudan to this list of the worst places to look to Christ
- while it may not seem like Christians suffer in this country, we find out not true either
- just this week, the SPLC was discovered to be involved just this very thing
- raising millions and millions of dollars to supposedly fight racism...
- millions were funneled to the KKK, white extremist groups and other anti-christian groups...
- to stir up hatred, harm or kill people so they could scream "racist Christians did this"

I could go on, but no real need to

- Psalm 2 is true, real, and exceedingly relevant to our day
- my goal this morning, as we look to this portion of God's Word is this:
- that we see this Anointed King of Psalm 2 is the Blessed Man of Psalm 1
- and that He is the only refuge for all who rebel against God

Read Psalm 2

- Pray: Almighty God, in you are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Open our eyes that we may see the wonders of your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and freely choose the way of your wisdom; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

David is believed to be the author of this psalm

- **Acts 4:25-26** 25 who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed"
- NT authors believed the King of Psalm 2 is Jesus the Messiah
- while David may have known the pressure from many different enemies who hated him & God
- he is also a shadow causing us to look to the reality of Jesus, Messiah, Son of God, God's King
- but the world hates this truth as we see here before us

Four stanzas to this song:

- Rage (from all who hate God in their sin)
- Response (from God)
- Rule (by God's Anointed King Jesus)
- Refuge (found in Him alone)

Psalm begins with...

I. RAGE, vv. 1–3

- not a quiet psalm, for it begins with noise
- there is an uproar on earth
- point in time, perhaps for David, but summarizes all human history in seven lines

1. Words of comfort?

- does not seem so: rage, plotting, desire to overthrow God & His people
- but note final words of v. 1: “in vain”
- all this cacophony of fury is pointless in the end
- in vain: empty, bound to fail, no matter how much harm they do
- does not and cannot achieve their purpose
- let these words begin to calm your soul when you hear news today
- God wins and Christ rules
- remember Psalm 1.3: whatever He does prospers
- Christ cannot fail
- yet still frightening to us mortals
- these rulers want freedom—and who doesn't?
- but they want freedom from God & His sovereign rule
- they rage, a restless, ceaseless commotion comes from the hostile crowds
- they plot: fascinatingly enough, same word as “meditate” in 1.2
- so, all they do is think about, over & over, their rebellion

2. Camera zooms in on kings & rulers now, in v. 2

- these are the true influencers
- political leaders, military commanders, heroes of the culture wars of the world
- conspire, counsel together
- yes, they take it out on Christians
- but ultimate, all against God the Lord and His Anointed—the Messiah, Christ
- entire governmental agenda set against God
- they drive media against Christ
- steer entire educational systems to lead children away from God
- set themselves, line 1: they take their stand
- determined to make their own choices: God will tell us nothing!

3. Ultimate goal clearly revealed; do not have to guess or hypothesize

- burst bonds—Freedom! They cry
- cast away their cords: we want complete autonomy, to rule ourselves!
- reminded of words of Luke 19.14
- **Luke 19:14 ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’**

4. Psalm not just about those in power & authority

- about every single person ever born

- sin is rebellion against God & His ways and laws
- each sin is a wish to have control over your own life
- but for every sinner, every natural man in this state: sin comes to nothing in this life
- pleasures? fleeting; material possessions? rust and rot away
- and not just kings & rulers, even you, if not in Christ: God is against you
- note v. 3: sinful rebels say: Let's burst their bonds (Father, Son & Holy Spirit) from us
- let's cast them away (Father, Son & Spirit's)
- but as we move into next stanza
- it is God who holds them (kings, rulers, sinners) in derision
- it is God who will speak to them words of judgment
- it is the Holy One who will terrify them

So, let's move from their rage to hear God's...

II. RESPONSE, VV. 4–6

- scene shifts from earth into heaven's throne room
- there, God sits enthroned, above and over even these rebellious human beings made in His image

1. and He laughs, a laugh of derision: disdain, disparagement, and disrespect

- **Psalm 37:13** but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming.
- **Psalm 59:8** But you, O Lord, laugh at them; you hold all the nations in derision.
- while the rebellious scoff, they do not realize the last laugh will be upon them

2. God's heart & holiness lead Him to action

- His speech will terrify them; why? Because it is His righteous wrath that comes
- when it comes to evil and the wicked who commit it, God is not passive
- **Psalm 18:8** Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him.
- to see, even hear such a sight, God's burning anger, fills wicked with fear
- we see here that all who refuse to submit to Christ, God's Anointed: they will know God

3. God's righteous indignation at its peak in v. 6

- "As for Me"—strong emphasis being made here
- I have set My King"—this is settled; no time for negotiation and pleading; it is ordained, done!

4. Critics of the faith say that bad governments simply get replaced with harsh religion

- not so, we see in God's Word
- the Blessed Man, the Messiah, from Psalm 1 is the rightful power & authority in Psalm 2
- His rule alone is faultless, truly good, gracious and merciful
- but it brings terror to the unrepentant
- if you who hear this today are not in Christ, why do you delay coming to Him?
- you think, "Oh, I have plenty of time; I'll wait until I'm older"
- God laughs at you in your sinful presumption
- Christ is ready, even now, to come in judgment upon you, should the Father say "Go, now!"

And lest we think this is only a some day coming judgment, we see the King's...

III. RULE, VV. 7–9

- God the Father has spoken; now we hear from the Son, the Anointed King
- just as the Blessed Man—Jesus—in Psalm 1 prospers in all He does

- so too the Anointed King will also in conquering all the rebellious who are against Him
- first Adam in Eden failed to rule well and perfectly over God's dominion
- so now, the Second Adam, has come and reigns from the right hand of the Majesty on high
- King David brought some enemies to subjection
- Christ, the Greater David, will bring them all

1. The Decree

- glory of God's covenant revealed here
- God made covenant with David: an heir will come, sit on your throne... forever!
- this root of Jesse is Christ Jesus the only begotten Son of the Father from all eternity
- without beginning, without end, always Three in One, always over all things Trinity created
- all that David received, fulfilled in Christ: obedience, death, resurrection, ascension
- **Acts 13:32-33 And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm "You are my Son, today I have begotten you."**
- God is saying here something like this: Today, in Your resurrection and ascension to My right hand, I declare and constitute You, who have been Son of God from all eternity, now to be Son of God in power, might, and rule

2. David & those godly successors of his, few though they were, prayed for this

- Father invites the Son: "Ask of Me"
- Son of God on earth asks, "Father, glorify Me" & response is: "I have glorified & will"
- so Jesus, as perfect High Priest, asks & is granted the nations
- His heritage, inheritance to come
- all who are in Christ are heirs
- **Galatians 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.**
- and we who are in Him this morning have been commissioned by this great King
- make disciples by going, baptizing, and teaching them to obey

3. If rebels will not bend the knee, He will break them

- as Sovereign King over all, He will rule over these rulers
- they will be dashed in judgment, into pieces; utterly destroyed in eternal torment
- Jesus & His gospel puts all things in order
- He reshapes, disciplines, humbles the proud & gives grace to the humble

It's not too late to avoid this terrible judgment, however, for in the Blessed Man Anointed King we find...

IV. REFUGE, vv. 10-12

- "Now therefore..." is a call to exercise wisdom
- pay attention; take notice; listen to this King

1. O kings...be wise!

- imperative carries great weight here
- before Christ carries out judgment, He speaks here like a parent speaking to child
- **Proverbs 1:8 Hear, my son, your father's instruction,**
- **Proverbs 2:1 My son, if you receive my words...**
- **Proverbs 2:5 then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.**
- these earthly governments have no true power

- no authority that has not been granted to them by God
- rebellion in vv. 1–3 is true foolishness
- so, be wise, sensible, enjoy blessing and rightful success
- this is a call of warning as well
- **Leviticus 26:23 “And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me,**
- turn to Him while you can comes to each today

2. To all who hear: summons to serve with fear

- **Proverbs 9:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.**
- hold this reverential awe of the Almighty & His Son
- rejoice with trembling—oxymoron, is it not?
- but this is what true worship is
- shallow praise without awed reverence is not true worship
- trembling unmixed without joy shows conviction but no refuge
- rejoice with trembling is a deep joy because God rules thru His Messiah

3. Is this you, revealed here?

- Kiss the Son: give homage; like kissing ring of a monarch
- yet if you persist in your rebellion: the anger will burn against you
- there is limit to His patience: remember, Psalm 1.6—the wicked will perish
- like fire blazing fiercely will be His wrath upon you forever
- yes, the Lord is slow to anger, Ex. 34.6
- He is very patient, not slow like some think, 2 Peter 3.9
- but He will come: to bring you home or to throw you into lake of fire

Conclusion – The Blessed Man of Psalm 1 is the only Ruler & Refuge for rebel sinners in Psalm 2

- Psalm 1.1 begins with this Blessed Man
- Psalm 2.12 ends with this Blessed King
- Psalm 1’s Blessed Man surrounded by congregation of righteous who praise Him forever
- Psalm 2’s Anointed King rules with blessing to righteous ones

How can you know, have, experience this blessing?

- you must take refuge in Him
- 35x times in Psalms; 25x of those in Books I & II
- cannot find refuge apart from Him
- if you try to hide from Him, that will fail
- so what are you waiting for? Come, come today; today is the day of your salvation!

World is a dark, frightening place

- is there anywhere that is safe?
- yes; only in One