

## Summer in the Psalms: Exploring the “with God” Life

### Psalm 2

As was mentioned in the sermon on Sunday, this Psalm outlines nicely into a 4-scene drama.

- I. The global/international conspiracy (verses 1-3)
- II. God’s response (verses 4-6)
- III. The Son’s relaying of what He heard from the Father (verses 7-9)
- IV. Warning (and invitation) to the nations (verses 10-12)

Let’s walk through this outline. A good and blatant/extreme example of a king of the earth taking a stand against God would be Pharaoh in Exodus 5:2 when Moses went to Pharaoh to deliver the message from God to let His people go. Pharaoh’s reply was, “*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go.*” (The next 10 chapters or so of Exodus show God’s response to such arrogance; a systematic dismantling and defeat of the Egyptian deities through a series of 10 plagues...the point being, it’s not a good idea to challenge God like that.)

Throughout history there have been numerous people (usually people in power) who have taken similar postures and attitudes...meaning they thought they were unanswerable to anybody. But let’s be careful here. It’s easy to look at the Pharaoh-types and note such arrogance, but common folks like you and me can “*conspire and plot in vain*” as well. And, we can also have the perspective that having God over us is like “*chains*” and “*fetters*” that we want to be free of. It really is not an exaggeration to say that the fundamental problem with humanity is our issue with authority. We don’t like someone over us, and we don’t like being accountable to anybody. We don’t trust that God is good. We think we know better than Him. In the book of Judges there’s a brief commentary regarding the tribes of Israel mentioned a couple of times that is actually a fitting description for humanity as a whole, “*In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.*” (Judges 17:6, 21:25)

- Q. List the examples/evidence you observe that this world is in rebellion to its Creator.**
- Q. Describe your own issues with authority. In what ways do you find it challenging to submit to God? In what ways to you find it hard to trust His goodness?**
- Q. Do you find life with God restraining or freeing? Explain. (Or, perhaps, share how your perspective on this has changed over the years.)**

At such human arrogance God “*laughs*”, “*scoffs*”, and “*rebukes*”. But it’s also interesting and noteworthy that God “*installs a King...*” While in original context this was David (and his successors) but ultimately pointed to Jesus (David’s definitive and supreme successor). God mediates His authority through yet another authority figure. The point being, there’s no getting out from under authority. Or to say it another way, God answer to corrupt authority is to install better authority, not do away with authority. Perhaps we need to think of authority like

gravity...it's simply a reality we live with, if we don't respect us we'll get hurt, and if would be really bad if it wasn't present.

In the next section we learn that this King is His Son. While that was figurative/metaphorical in reference to David, it was quite literal in reference to Jesus. (Incidentally, Psalm 2 is an often quoted Scripture in the New Testament, always in reference to Jesus—see Acts 4:25-27, Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5, Hebrews 5:5). Here the Son is recalling/relaying what the Father said to Him: that nations are His inheritance; the ends of the earth His possession...all He has to do is ask. It is an interesting contrast to consider: the arrogant want to take, take, take, in a demanding and entitled sort of way; while to the humble Son, God desires to simply give because He asks.

God has always desired to give great things to His children...but like any good parent, only when they are ready for it; only when they have demonstrated character, responsibility, and maturity. Follow this train of thought: God reigns and rules. We were made to live the “with God” life. So, we were made to reign and rule with God. In case you think that's a stretch, we only need to look at the first and last books of the Bible to see this thread runs straight through Scripture. Genesis 1:28 reads, “*God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and **subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.***’” Likewise, in Revelation chapter 2 Jesus states to the church in Thyatira, “*To him who overcomes and does My will to the end, **I will give authority over the nations—‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery—just as I have received authority from My Father.***” (Revelation 2:26-27...which quotes from Psalm 2).

We (humanity) were created for a high, lofty, dignified calling and purpose. But we can only live into that by first and foremost recognizing God's ultimate authority and by following his plan and desire for us, respecting His rules and boundaries—which are for our benefit.

- Q. What do you think about the idea that the purpose of humans is to live in union with God, ruling and reigning with God? How do we go about becoming the type of people (people of character and responsibility) to handle such a lofty vocation?**
- Q. What are character qualities you'd like to see in someone who governs? As you consider the idea that we were made to rule/govern with God, what character qualities do you think you need to beef up in order to handle such a job/task?**

The final three verses serve as both a warning and an invitation. It basically boils down to this: ally yourself with the Lord, respect Him and cooperate with Him; or resist, rebel, and reject the Lord. As with every other choice in life, there are consequences. But there is no more important decision we could make (and thus no greater consequences to be faced) than this one. May we be a people who take refuge in Him and rejoice in Him.

- Q. How do you/we reconcile the idea that God is love and at the same time He can be wrathful? How do you feel about that?**
  
- Q. What word, line, phrase or stanza stands out to you from Psalm 2 (or for that matter, any Psalm from this week in the devotional guide?) Is there any part of this psalm that you particularly like, or that particularly disturbs you?**
  
- Q. (Possible Icebreaker) If you were King/Queen for a day, what laws would you enact, change, or dispose of?**