

Psalm 2

What do we have in Psalm 2? First of all, just a note about the psalm itself. This psalm is mentioned in the New Testament as the second psalm. That is quite interesting. That shows that in the New Testament they already had the psalms arranged in the order in which we have them, with this second psalm being the second psalm. That also shows that God is the one who put the psalms in their order, so that even though Psalm 1 was not the first psalm that was ever written (Psalm 90 might have been the first psalm written), nevertheless, God put Psalm 1 in the place of Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 in the place of Psalm 2. That reminds us what tremendous care God had in putting together the book of psalms for his church. This was not some afterthought on God's part, but it was a matter that he took very seriously, even arranging the exact order of the psalms that we have.

So today we come to the second psalm. As we step back a little bit and try to get a big-picture view of this psalm, what we have is a revelation of the dream of man. We have in this psalm a revelation of the purpose that man always labors for, that he always is working for. That purpose of man that is deep in his heart is that man might be God. That is man's dream: man is God. That is what man labors for: that man be God and that man be God alongside of and even in the place of Jehovah.

That is the way the psalm opens up. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" That paints a picture for us of a huge mob of people, all the heathen, and they're all stirred up. They're in turmoil. They're raging. They're laboring. They're striving for something. They're striving for the thing that they imagine, the thing that they dream. The thing that they imagine and dream is a vain thing. It's an empty thing. It's a foolish thing.

What is that vain thing, that empty thing, that they imagine, that they dream of, that they strive for? Verses 2–3: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." There are all the heathen, all the people of the earth, all of mankind, together raging and imagining that they do not have to be under God; that his cords and bands of sovereignty over their lives and his rule over them—for God is God—can be broken and cast asunder; and that man can replace God, therefore, as the great king and even as the great God.

That is always the dream of man: man is God. Man got that dream from the devil because that is the devil's dream. Lucifer's dream was that he be equal with God. That good angel that God created named Lucifer, who fell and became Satan, looked at God's throne and said, "I will be exalted above the clouds, and I will be equal with the Most High." Lucifer's dream was that Lucifer be God alongside God, with God, and maybe even replacing God. When Satan fell and came to Eve in the garden of Eden, he

gave his dream to mankind, saying to Eve, “Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.” Eve, this is what is available to you: you can be as God. And that has been the dream of mankind ever since. Man sees himself as God. When Adam and Eve fell into sin, the first thing they did with the theology that man is God was to try to save themselves because if man is God, then man is his own savior. They sewed fig leaves to try to hide their nakedness.

And what did men do when there were a certain number of people on the earth? They journeyed eastward and built a great tower, the Tower of Babel, that would reach into heaven—and reach into heaven not merely as a ladder that people could climb up but as a tower that would reach into heaven to besiege God’s throne, a tower that would poke God in the eye and by which man could ascend into the place of God. This has always been the dream of man: man is God.

This is what man is always doing yet today. All his labor and all his work is to establish the kingdom of man; the kingdom that antichrist will finally be the head of; the kingdom whose number is 666, for six is the number of a man; the kingdom that seeks the glory of man and proclaims the honor of man; the kingdom that seeks the blessing of man from man—not the true blessing of salvation but the happiness and peace of the earth, the happiness and peace that is only from below. Man in all his labor and in all his work has this vain imagination: man is God.

The heathen rage in their promotion of that kingdom. That is why the false church always has as its doctrine that man saves man: because if man is God, man saves man. At some point in the doctrine of the false church, wherever that may be, the teaching is that salvation depends on man. Salvation is of man—his obedience—or covenant fellowship with God is of man, by his keeping of the law for his covenant blessing. Wherever it may be, man saves man because man is God. That is how the false church helps the antichrist build his kingdom of man.

That is what we have in Psalm 2: the heathen raging with that vain imagination of man that man is God and therefore man saves man. But man is not God. God is God. God is the one who sitteth in the heavens. When God beholds this vain imagination of man, he laughs, and he has man in derision. All the nations of the earth are as small to God as a little drop that’s hanging on the edge of a water pail that has been emptied of its water, so that no one even notices the drop. That is what the nations are. All of the nations of man together are like the little specks of dust that float through the air and land on the scale and are so light that they don’t even register on the scale. That is what the nations of the earth are to God. God is God. Man is not God. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and the Lord shall have them in derision. God speaks unto man in his wrath and vexes man in his sore displeasure.

We have in Psalm 2 another evidence that the psalms are the songs of Jesus Christ because Jesus says to his church, "I will declare the decree. I am going to tell you something about the eternal decree of God. That decree is this: the Lord said unto me, 'Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'" The Lord God has given to Jesus Christ the power to rule over all the nations, which rule is so firm and strong that the vain imagination of man that man is God can never prevail. Man builds his tower of Babel to poke God in the eye, and it doesn't even tickle his foot. Jehovah God is high in the heavens, and Jesus Christ rules with a rod of iron and breaks in pieces the antichristian kingdom of man.

What about you and me? That too is in the decree of God. For when God decreed with regard to Jesus Christ, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," Romans 8 tells us that in that decree God also predestinated us that we should be conformed to the image of his Son; that we should belong to him and be his and be saved by him; that we should know that God is God and man is not God, that Jesus Christ is the anointed who saves and not man; that we should have a home with God in heaven and be members of his family. All that too is part of that decree. God brings his people to understand that and see that truth for our happiness.

As he gives us to see that truth by faith, he also works in us what is described in the psalm as repentance or as kissing the Son lest he be angry. The idea there is that when God shows to us that we belong to him and are his own, he works in us the sorrow for sin, hatred of that sin, and trust in him. The psalm ends with the beautiful hope of the child of God: "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." That trust is faith, so that the psalm is teaching us that we are delivered from all our sin and death and from all destruction through faith alone, that gift of God, in Jesus Christ alone, the anointed of Jehovah. God is God, and God saves man through Jesus Christ to God's glory.