

# Exposition of Psalm 2

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"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed."

You observe here that their opposition to God is not to God in the abstract, but unto God in that saving, new covenant order of things by which His mercy reaches sinners, and by which they are saved and God is glorified. This is that that the enemy stirs up the minds of men against; hence observe here, they set themselves against the Lord, and against His anointed. The great offence that God has given to Satan is in sending his Son into the world to bruise the serpent's head, and to deliver us from the powers of darkness, and bring us to understand and to love that order of things which by the adversary is so hated, and by the carnal mind so despised.

"Saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision."

What, break their bands asunder? Why they are united to God in His eternal love, and what can break that asunder? They are united to God by the sanctifying power of the Savior's atoning blood, and by the everlasting righteousness of Jesus, and by the immutable oath of the blessed God; and what can break these bands in sunder, or what can cast away these cords that unite our souls to God? But then they reckoned after the appearance of things, they thought, surely a little handful of disciples like this may easily be brought to naught. They thought! Surely a solitary man like this Jesus of Nazareth, whom we have crucified, and that between two thieves, surely we may put an end to it all now. So much for judging after the appearance of things. It is a great mercy to be brought to judge then righteous judgment, to judge of things according to what the Lord is, and according to what the Lord saith. And you observe here that the most powerful persons, kings and rulers, not a few private powerless individuals, but kings and rulers, bring all their regal and legal power against the Lord Jesus Christ, against His people, and against His order of things. But "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision." Well then, if He laugh at these kings, we ought, in the holy sense of the word, to laugh too; for I am sure of it that if we are kept close to Jesus Christ, and are favored to walk in fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and to feel that we are heart and soul on His side in this order of things, whatever, if this be our position, I may stand against us, we may smile at the storm, we may laugh at our mightiest foes. The daughter of Zion of old was led into this secret, and so it is written, "The daughter of Zion hath shaken her head at thee, she hath laughed thee to scorn." Only we must make up our minds to suffer from men, we must make up our mind, to suffer after the flesh; we must make up our minds, to be cast out and to be

hated: make up our minds to that on one side, so as to despise the shame, endure the cross that falls to our lot and look to the joy that is set before us, and then it shall amidst it all be well with us.

"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath."

Which he did to the Jewish nation, to whom this Psalm in the primary sense refers.

"And vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy lull of Zion."

As nothing could hinder the resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of the Savior, so nothing can hinder His reaching the holy hill of Zion. Do not, friends, if you can help it, lose sight of the character of Zion. It is said to be a holy hill, and good men, and some who are questionable as to their being men of God, they speak very emphatically about Zion being a holy place; and so far, so good; but if we look at it in that form only, we lose one part of the excellency. This hill of Zion is called a holy hill, not only because Zion is a holy place, and that Christ is holy, and that the people as they are there in heaven are holy; but there is another reason, it is because by his mediatorial work he has put an end to sin; it is because by the reign of his grace, He reigns until all His enemies be made His footstool. Death, the last enemy to be destroyed, shall also become His footstool. Thus, then, view Zion as a holy place in this way, and then view the Savior as the end of sin, and view grace reigning in us as well as for us, until we are brought into that perfection which ultimately shall be by faith in Christ Jesus. Take this view of it, then we may join with other parts of the Psalms, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness. I make these remarks because men talk of Zion as though we had to take some holiness with us. We can take no holiness with us but Christ Jesus. If you enter into the city it must be by the cleansing blood of Christ Jesus; if you enter into Zion it must be by the righteousness of Christ Jesus, it must be by the Spirit of Christ, and by the truth of Christ. And thus then Jesus hath conquered sin, set upon this holy hill of Zion, which can never be denied, and consequently can never be moved; here it is where sin is ended, that God hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore: a divine life, a happy life, a free life, a satisfying life, an endless life, a glorious life, a life in which all the hidden powers of the soul shall be developed in their perfection, and range in rapture indescribable, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

"I," saith the Savior, "will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto me Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

People tell us that "this day" means eternity, but the apostle Paul says that it means the day of Christ's resurrection. And so they tell us that this is a declaration of Christ's eternal generation from the Father, and so this doctrine of eternal generation must be brought in by men to becloud the Scriptures. Let us be guided by the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost saith that Christ being begotten here means his resurrection from the dead. And this is the decree the Savior means; the Savior is the speaker hero in this part, "I will declare the decree." And how often He did so; how often did He say to His disciples, "The Son of Man must be killed, and rise again the third day." He often said this to His disciples; He declared the decree, and that decree came to pass. Now then, when Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, what was He to do when He got to heaven? Why He was to do that that God willed Him to do in heaven. He had done that on earth that God willed Him to do, and now He goes to heaven, to do that in heaven that God willed Him to do. And hence it goes on to describe here what He is to do in heaven.

"Ask of me."

After His resurrection, you see, after His ascension, when He reaches the right hand of God; ah, look at it, friends; if we understand it, it will draw out our affections to His dear name. He ascends to heaven, comforted on every side; He ascends to heaven, fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. Would you not naturally think that on entering into this glory He would forget poor, despicable sinners; He would forget heathen, lost sinners; He would say, "I have had enough to do with them; I have suffered enough from them." But no, no, no, exaltation of position does not alter the love of His heart, that love is as great after He has left the earth as it was when He was on earth. Having done the will of God on earth, He ascended to heaven to do the same will there.

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Which God did. Yes, in the apostolic age, east, West, north, and south, thousands and thousands of heathen, to the very uttermost part of the earth, were gathered in to know the Lord Jesus Christ. And bless the Lord that work still goes on. And you observe here, the Savior is not led to ask God for some of the best of the people: doesn't say that. Ask of me some whose case is not too bad, ask of me those who are entitled to a little favor; ask of me those who are not quite so vile as the rest. No, bless the Lord, no, they are viewed in that state that God knew they were all in; and so the Savior asked the heathen for his inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

So He did, so He- did. He served everyone just as He did Saul of Tarsus, only not in such a conspicuous way. He met Saul of Tarsus, ruled him with a rod of iron, broke him down, and dashed him all to pieces. Why, there was the religion now of Saul of Tarsus dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel. Why, I didn't think my religion such a brittle thing; I didn't think my hope was so easily destroyed as that. Well, Saul, where are you now? Why, I am broken all to pieces; why, I am a sinner, nothing but a sinner, haven't a particle of holiness nor a particle of righteousness. Well, but haven't you a good heart? Heart! in my heart there is all manner of concupiscence; I am broken all to pieces. So the Lord doth thus break down, overturn, root up, and destroy; after He has done that, then He plants and then He builds.

"Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings."

But they are fallen kings. Some think this an exhortation to all men. It is not an exhortation to all men. These after verses speak only to those who are broken down; only there are some that the word lays hold of and breaks them down, morally but not spiritually; breaks them down mentally, and brings about a reformation, but does not so break them down as to make them know their need of that order of things in which Christ appears. They are called here kings. "When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and wentest whither thou wouldst."

"Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth."

And so we were, we were all kings and judges; we were reigning, having our own way, as far as we could, and judging for ourselves; but now we have given up both. Saul of Tarsus reigned like a king, but it was like one of the devil's kings; and Saul of Tarsus assumed the judgment seat, and did as all carnal men do that mount the judgment seat, he assigned the saints of God to hell, and the devil's children to heaven; that's what he did. But now he is a dethroned king, gives it up; now he is a dethroned judge; now he no

longer judges others, he himself feels that he is judged, and appeals to the Judge of all. "Serve the Lord with fear."

Here is the instruction unto such, what they are to do:

"And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,"

You are a professedly converted man? Yes. You profess to hope in Jesus Christ? Yes. You profess to expect to get to heaven by Jesus Christ? Yes. You expect to see God's face by Jesus Christ? Yes. Very well; it says here, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry." That's a token of entire submission. But, saith such a one, though I expect to get to heaven by Jesus Christ, I will never believe in election, I will never believe in predestination, I will never believe that He laid down His life for the sheep and the sheep only. Then He will be angry with you; He will not be pleased with you: He will be angry with you. What for? Why, for making a profession of His name, while at the same time in your soul there is no real submission to Him. But if, on the other hand, thou art brought really down to His feet, and to feel it is all of grace from first to last, then He will not be angry with thee, He will then be pleased with thee, and caress thee, and bless thee, pity thee, take care of thee, gather thee with His arms, carry thee in His bosom, never, never, no never part with thee.

"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

Thus, then, here's the Savior, here's the opposition, here's the ingathering of sinners, here is the instruction given to such, and here is the ultimate blessedness of all who are brought to rest their present hope and everlasting all upon the foundation God hath laid in Zion.

Note: Take from the Earthen Vessel 1864 Page 236ff