

The End-Time Conflict against Jesus' Leadership (Ps. 2)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In Psalm 2, King David prophesied of the kings of the earth being in fierce opposition against the leadership of Jesus, the ultimate son of David. This conflict reaches its pinnacle in the end times.
- B. Psalm 2 has four parts:
 - 1. *The kings' opposition*—warring against the influence of the Word in culture (Ps. 2:1-3)
 - 2. *The Father's response*—to openly exalt Jesus as His King (Ps. 2:4-6)
 - 3. *Jesus' response*—intercession in agreement with the Father's decrees (Ps. 2:7-9)
 - 4. *David's exhortation*—the leaders of culture are called to serve the Lord (Ps. 2:10-12)
- C. Forerunner ministry includes *proclaiming* the Father's message (Ps. 2:4-6) and *praying* in unity with Jesus (Ps. 2:7-9). Proclamation and prayer are parts of preparing the way of the Lord.

II. PART 1: THE KINGS' FIERCE OPPOSITION TO JESUS' LEADERSHIP (PS. 2:1-3)

- A. David prophesied that the nations would rise up in anger against Jesus' leadership (v. 2), especially against His standards of morality (v. 3), God's purpose related Jesus and Jerusalem (v. 2, 6), and His right to hold every individual and nation accountable to His ways.
¹Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? ²The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ³"Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us." (Ps. 2:1-3)
- B. *Rage*: The nations will rage in anger against Jesus' leadership (Ps. 2:1).
- C. *People plot together*: People in every level of society will plot deceptive strategies to mobilize the masses to resist God's leadership (Ps. 2:2).
- D. *Rulers take counsel together*: The rulers speak of the leaders of society—political, economic, educational, military, entertainment, media, arts, etc. The rulers counsel together to come up with "clever strategies" to twist the truth about social issues, using distortion, and manipulation.
- E. *Kings set themselves together*: Kings will set their hearts to support the plots of people and the counsel of rulers under them. *Kings* includes the heads of state, e.g., presidents, prime ministers.
- F. *Against the LORD and His Christ*: The kings, rulers, and people will specifically plot against the LORD (the God of Israel) and His anointed One (Jesus), to cast off God's ways and morality and to stand against His decree that Jesus, as the son of David, rule all the nations from Jerusalem.

- G. ***Break Their bonds and cast away Their cords***: Their hostility against God will be focused on seeking to remove the influence of God's Word (v. 3) from the culture. These people will see God's Word in a negative light, as if it were "bonds" that enslave them and "cords" that bind them to His morality and ways.
- H. Before the Lord returns, sin will reach the greatest heights in history (Dan. 8:23; 1 Tim. 4:1-3). There is an unholy momentum building as many attack God's commands, seeking to remove all moral boundaries from the culture, including the sanctity of life, marriage, and sexuality.

²³In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king [Antichrist] shall arise...who understands sinister schemes. (Dan. 8:23)

¹Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ²speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, ³forbidding to marry... (1 Tim. 4:1-3)

III. PART 2: THE FATHER'S RESPONSE—A MESSAGE OF TO THE KINGS (PS. 2:4-6)

- A. David makes known the Father's message to the hostile kings of the earth—He will distress the rebellious leaders with His judgments (v. 5) and will magnify Jesus' leadership as His King over all nations from Jerusalem (v. 6, 8). The Father's response includes laughing to mock the kings (v. 4a), holding them in derision (v. 4b), speaking to them (v. 5a), distressing them (v. 5b), and declaring His victorious purposes in magnifying Jesus as King in Jerusalem (v. 6).
- ⁴He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision. ⁵Then He shall speak to them in His wrath and distress them in His deep displeasure: ⁶"Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion [Jerusalem]." (Ps. 2:4-6)***
- B. The Lord *sits* on His throne in sovereign power and laughs with confidence at the plans of the kings of the earth to stop His purposes. The Father will hold these rebellious leaders in derision, that is, view them with scorn and contempt.
- C. The Father will not tolerate the deeds of those leaders who will be *permanently settled in their rage and rebellion against Jesus*. He wants them to know about His anger toward them.
- D. The Lord will speak to them in His wrath through His messengers.
- E. The Father's actions are made known to give boldness to His people and to encourage faith instead of fear. God's people are not to draw back in intimidation before the kings of the earth.
- F. The Father's primary message is, "*I have set My king on My hill*" (v. 6). He proclaimed His delight in Jesus' enthronement as king over all. He set Jesus on His throne in two installments.

1. He was enthroned in heaven at the Father's right hand at the resurrection (Eph. 1:20-22). At present, the Father is determined to reveal and magnify Jesus' kingship in the nations by the Holy Spirit.
 2. He will be enthroned on earth in Jerusalem at the second coming (Jer. 3:17).
- G. With fierce anti-Semitism, the nations will attack God's purpose for Jesus to rule all the nations as the son of David from Jerusalem (Zion) in Israel, the land of His covenant people, the Jews.

IV. PART 3: JESUS' RESPONSE—INTERCESSION (PS. 2:7-9)

- A. Jesus responds with intercession that is in agreement with the Father's decrees (Ps. 2:7-9). Jesus responds to the global rebellion (v. 1-3) and to the Father's message and decrees (v. 5-8). He will rule the nations by functioning as the "*Great Intercessor*." David overheard a Trinitarian dialogue in which the Father exhorted Jesus to pray for the nations as His inheritance (v. 8).
- ⁷"I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸Ask of Me [the Father], and I will give You [Jesus] the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron..." (Ps. 2:7-9)***
- B. Jesus declares the Father's decrees in intercession (v. 7a). Jesus prays for the full release of His kingly authority (v. 6) and for the promised dominion over all nations (v. 8) to be manifested openly. As the "Great Intercessor," He leads His people to partner with Him in prayer.
- C. David identified five decrees that Jesus uses in intercession before the Father (Ps. 2:7-9). They give insight into how Jesus responds to the Father's commitment to establish Him as King on His holy hill in Jerusalem and how the body of Christ is to participate with Him in prayer.
- D. Each decree has two applications: those unique to Jesus and those declared by His people.
- E. ***You are My Son***: Jesus proclaims His sonship before the Father. Twice, the Father decreed the truth of Jesus' sonship at significant moments—before He entered the wilderness temptation (Mt. 3:17) and before going to the cross (Mt. 17:5). The truth of our sonship emphasizes our family relationship with the Father. We have confidence before God knowing His affection for us and the privileges, authority, and destiny that He has ordained for His children. Declaring our spiritual identity in sonship strengthens us and silences Satan's accusing voice in our lives.
- ¹⁷"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mt. 3:17)***
- F. ***Begotten of the Father***: Jesus proclaims His position of power as demonstrated by His resurrection and enthronement. Jesus' resurrection fulfilled what David said in Psalm 2:7. "Today" speaks of the time the Father set Jesus in place as King at the resurrection (Acts 13:33).

³²*We declare...that promise which was made to the fathers.* ³³*God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You.” (Acts 13:32-33)*

1. Believers participate in Jesus' resurrection by walking the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Begotten means “to cause to bring forth.” It expresses the *idea of distinctiveness* or “one of a kind.”
3. Paul taught that Jesus was *openly declared* Jesus to be God's Son *with power* by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). Paul did not say Jesus was *only then* “made” the Son of God, but that he was “publicly declared to be the Son of God with power.” The resurrection *made public* what was *always* true of Jesus.

- G. ***The nations are Jesus' inheritance:*** Jesus' inheritance is to be king over all of the nations. All will openly acknowledge Jesus' leadership. The body of Christ is to rule and reign with Christ. This happens in part in this age and in fullness in the Millennium. Jesus receiving His inheritance is of highest priority. We are to find our inheritance in context to Jesus' inheritance.
- H. ***Jesus will possess the ends of the earth:*** Jesus exercises dominion over, or takes possession of, every sphere of society and life (Gen. 1:28). This speaks of possessing the hearts of all the people as well as all the lands and the social and political infrastructures over the peoples.
- I. ***Jesus will dash and break the nations:*** Jesus will remove all that hinders love and all that resists His Father's will. Believers participate in this now by asking the Lord to release justice and remove injustice and by resisting anything that hinders God's will in their lives.

V. **PART 4: DAVID EXHORTATION —TO SERVE GOD (PS. 2:10-12)**

- A. King David exhorted the leaders of culture to serve and obey the Lord (Ps. 2:10-12). He called them to be wise and to receive God's instruction to serve the Lord in the spirit of the fear of God. The Lord is orchestrating a threefold response in His Church—of serving with fear, rejoicing with trembling, and kissing the Son—as His people become Jesus' promised inheritance (Ps. 2:8).

¹⁰*Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth.* ¹¹*Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.* ¹²*Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.* (Ps. 2:10–12)

- B. The Church is to partner with Jesus in praying for the release of His dominion in the nations. The apostles followed the model of Psalm 2:7-8 by joining Christ in His ministry of intercession in asking God to manifest His power before the hostile leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 4:27-29).

²⁴*...they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: “Lord, You are God...”* ²⁵*who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: ‘Why did the nations rage, and the people plot*

vain things? ²⁶The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the LORD and against His Christ'... ²⁹Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, ³⁰by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of...Jesus." (Acts 4:24-30)

C. The Son praying in agreement with the Father's decrees is a most powerful weapon against His enemies. Prayer is part of the work of the kingdom of God. *Oswald Chambers said, "Prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work."*

D. God answered Cornelius' weak prayer, releasing a great breakthrough of the Holy Spirit and a new season in God's purpose of bringing Gentiles to salvation through Jesus (Acts 15:13-17).

¹There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion...²a devout man and one who feared God...who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ³...he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God...saying to him, "Cornelius! ⁴...Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God." (Acts 10:1-4)