

## Introduction

- Extraordinarily powerful Psalm on the grand scale; helpfully with 3 voices and an application built into the Psalm. Though easily structured, its not an easy psalm to preach. Its a warning. - with a promise

## The Voice of Human Rebellion

- v.1-3
  - Voice of human rebellion - [read v.1-3](#); v3 has the words of the first voice:
    - these kings and rulers speak, and the show us the root of man's rebellion against God
    - God's rule is seen as a prison; his rule is enslaving them
    - to be truly ourselves we must get rid of God - that's what these kings are saying!
  - Its as old as sin itself: remember serpent in Gen 3 to Eve:
    - (4) *"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. (5) "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*
  - The suggestion from the serpent is that God is controlling you
    - he's only telling you what he wants you to know
    - you are not **free** - God is keeping real freedom from you
  - **This is an assault on the true character of God!**
    - God's rule is seen as denying man the very best - **God is not good**
    - and every act of man in trying to be independent of God is an assault on his character
  - When a child disobeys a parent, its not just disobedience
    - when a child disobeys their parent, at times they are saying, **"I don't trust you"**
  - So, these kings and rulers of the earth (v.2), like the serpent in Eden, are putting God in the dock:
    - God is on trial here: is he being fair? Why do we have to obey him? He's not good! He's trapping us.
  - In fact these kings are actually plotting **to get rid of God!**
- BUT!**
- notice from verse 1 how futile it is!!
  - its a question of surprise - **why?** - its so futile, its so silly, its so absurd!
  - then notice how unifying it is - **the kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers of the earth gather together against the Lord - they can't agree on anything else, but they can agree on this!**
  - **get rid of God!**
  - but **NO** - they are blind, for this is a fast track to ruin and destruction...
- The early church saw these verses very clearly as a prophecy about Jesus:
    - **Acts 4:23-29, esp v.25-26**
    - Peter and John have just been told not to preach about Jesus. They'd healed a man - he could walk. Look at v.23ff (read out, quoting the Psalm)
    - see the same extraordinary **unifying** there that the Psalm talks about - Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel... They hated each other! But on this one thing they agreed: and they conspired to get rid of Jesus
  - They were doing their worst, they thought:
    - but look at v.28 - **"They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen"**.
    - there they are, doing their worst, getting rid of Jesus, and yet God incorporates it all into his plan
    - here again is the complete futility of opposing God!
    - at the very moment these rulers are crucifying Jesus, as the nails are hammered into Jesus hands, God is making it possible for rebellious men and women to come to him
    - the nails of crucifixion were the nails of God's love
    - in their plotting, these kings and rulers were running straight into the sovereignty

of God!

- the **worst** that man could do to God, God changed and included in his plan of salvation!
- That is God's sovereign grace at work - that's why it is so **futile** to rebel against him - our very rebellion is incorporated into his plan.
- So, that's the first voice, the voice of human rebellion.

## The Voice of God's Response

- (4) *The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. (5) Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, (6) "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."*
- God's actual words are in v.6, which we'll come to in a moment
- v.4 is **divine contempt**
  - this plotting is absurd!!
  - sometimes the Bible speaks of God's sorrow and his tears about man's rebellion - but not here
  - here it's ridicule and contempt - from heaven it looks totally absurd - from earth, it may look quite powerful: you've got Herod, you've got Pilate, you've got Rome and Israel, religious authorities, secular authorities, all conspiring together, and it **looks** so powerful - looks like the end
  - but from heaven, it looks so silly! **And the Lord scoffs.**
- Then v.5 is **divine anger**
  - he rebukes them and terrifies them
  - God is a God of love **and** a God of justice
  - and if you walk away from his love, if you reject his love, you run into his justice
  - he's **angry** about rebellion against himself, and that's why he speaks.
- What he says (v.6), is that he has installed his king on Zion - and there's nothing anyone can do about it
  - doesn't matter what you call yourself, king, emperor, whatever - there is another king, **the** king of the universe
  - and the rulers and kings on earth can do nothing about it
  - **the** king has been installed
  - this is the unalterable and true reality we all have to live with
  - humanity as a whole, and every member of the human race, in their rebellion, will one day have to come to terms with that
- **God has installed his king - God has spoken in response to man's rebellion.**

## The Voice of God's Chosen King

- (7) *I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father. (8) Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. (9) You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."*
- The final voice is of God's anointed, of God's chosen king himself
  - this is the Lord's anointed, relaying his Father's commission to him
  - see v.7; if you know your Bible you'll realise that this is quoted **many times** in the New Testament, including twice by God himself - at Jesus' baptism, and at his transfiguration - **"You are my Son"** - a direct quote from this Psalm
  - God is saying, if you want to know what my son's mission is, read Psalm 2!! That's the clue - go and read it, that's what the commission is.
- So what is the commission? Look at v.8: All nations will one day belong to Jesus
  - remember, at the end of Jesus' ministry, he said the same thing about himself! Matthew 28:18ff:
  - (18) *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*
  - there Jesus is telling the apostles to go out with the gospel, the good news of salvation about Jesus - that's what the gospel is, its about Jesus. That's what he was telling the disciples to do - to preach salvation to all nations - to preach to people, to let Jesus **rule** in their lives

- But this Psalm doesn't do that, it points right past to the end of time, when Jesus will finally return
  - see v.9: quoted 3x in Revelation!
  - look at Rev 19:13-16 - Jesus - see esp.v.15
  - this pictures is the defeat of all the forces of evil against God, all who will not accept his love and rule
  - Jesus himself, God's King, God's Messiah, will defeat all who remain God's enemies - it is certain, it is unavoidable
  - all evil **will** be destroyed - and that is the commission of God's king
  - makes sense - can't be any rebellion against God in Jesus' Kingdom!
- With all the evil that has taken place in this world, its a relief to know that there will finally, one day, be justice
  - for that's what God's judgement brings - justice
  - lots of people don't like idea of God's judgement
  - think its just an outdated, mediaeval concept
- But where there has been an atrocity (eg the Caroline Dickinson rape/murder retrial this week), we all want justice
  - our world cries out for justice.... there is a sense of relief when people are, rightly, held to account
- What can be more serious than trying to de-throne God? Trying to set up our own kingdom and ruin his perfect one?
  - of course there will be justice in the end - man **will** be held to account
  - and it is Jesus who will bring it about
- Those are the three voices of the Psalm

## Application

- Finally the application:
  - (10) *Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. (11) Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. (12) Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*
- Be wise, respond to the warning - and if you are not going to be wise, at least be scared! **Be warned - its going to happen!**
- Key phrase in the warning is right at the end: **Blessed are all who take refuge in him**
  - there is the coming judgement, the coming anger of God against evil
  - is there anywhere, anywhere we can go to escape, to hide, to have refuge from that judgement?
- **YES!!!** And the refuge is God's anointed himself, Jesus!
- The whole point of a refuge is that it protects you
  - some kinds of refuge actually take the brunt of what is supposed to hit you - like a bomb shelter
  - the refuge that Jesus provides is that he has taken the full force of God's anger instead of us
  - on the Cross it was God's anger that killed him, instead of us
  - so in him, we are protected - if we are in Jesus the coming anger of God hits Jesus, it killed him, and it doesn't hit you
- The big question is, are we in him?
  - in him, we fly from his anger and we fly to his mercy!
- For these earthly kings and rulers there is a very clear choice:
  - either take the warning and turn and serve God, or face the judgement: look at v.11: serve, rejoice in the good news; or in v.12, kiss the Son - that's about devotion, love the Son
- The gospel is about warning and promise: this is a warning, with a promise - there is a refuge... what about you? Have you taken refuge in Jesus, or are you still a rebel? Are you in Jesus? Possible to be certain.
  - why we do Holiday Club...