

Psalm 2 - Study Guide¹

I hope that you have seasoned your heart and mind in the text well before you give attention to this study guide. If not the offense will not be with you putting it down, but if you don't. Now, if you have readied yourself then I would encourage you to warm your soul by the fire of a prayer of a woman whose son would anoint the heads of kings.

“My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD.
My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.
There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God.
Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength.
Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger.
The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn.
The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts.
He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor.
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.
He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail.
The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”²

The Davidic King

If you are looking for Jesus in the Old Testament and specifically looking for him in the Psalms then you need look no further... and if you are looking for King Jesus, congratulations, you have found him. But Psalm 2 demands and expects that you submit first to its immediate context and specifically its original kingly context and that you understand the anointing, and the Davidic line, and the sonship of this line. That you understand this magnificent budding flower in the early chapters of the Scriptures so that you might more properly and fully appreciate it when it is in full blossom. And while it is true that you might be able to appreciate King Jesus by just giving casual attention to the text, you must understand that he would intend for us to give proper attention to his fuller revealed context.

Another matter arises that provokes a measure of tension, namely “king” talk. The United States has obviously made its position regarding monarchies clear – desiring no sovereign but the people. Now we can get past this as Christians as we are first and foremost a people of the Book before we are a people of the Constitution. But do the Scriptures find an uncomfortable tension here? Did not the people reject God as their king and were they not wrong to have established a “natural monarchy” (1 Samuel 10)? I believe that the problem is answered in the very details of the question – the problem was not that Israel would have a king, but that they would be content and even desire a “natural monarchy” desiring to be like the nations rather than have a king that would bring the nations to marvel at the God of Israel. I see this same problem arising again in the Gospel of John chapter six where the people transition from attempting to make Jesus king by force because he filled their bellies only to leave him when he would have their eyes opened to God's King.

Returning again to Old Testament Israel and the establishment of its kingdom we must remember, Saul did not rush to rule over the people, he was sought out by the Prophet Samuel under the guidance of The LORD and anointed as God's choice. Further he even had to be taken out from his hiding among the luggage at his public presentation. Later, David, who was shaped into God's man while tending sheep and engaging beasts is the unlikely of selections...

¹ Prepared by David Crowe for Pray's Mill Baptist Church Adult Sunday School

² 1 Samuel 2:1-10, ALL Scripture Quotations are from the ESV Bible unless the Scripture reference is in a quote from another author – their original translation was kept.

and this too by the Prophet Samuel under the guidance of The LORD and he was duly anointed as God's choice for Israel's king. Now we look back further to Deuteronomy 17 and we see that when Israel would request a king in their promised land that he was not to be just any king, but he was to be God's man serving as king. The expectation was the man leading the nation would be a Psalm 1 King.

Now... if we press the matter further. The king was one anointed by God (a messiah by definition) and if you have no man serving as Israel's King then you do not have Israel's greater Messiah, greater King. You are not simply lacking God's man on the throne, but the God-Man on the throne who will rule and reign over the nations.

The problem is not a king, but what king. So if you would rejoice in the Son of David sitting on the throne of God then rejoice in God's choosing of the sons of David that the Son of David might be magnified among the nations and their submission to him. Psalm 2 tells us that The LORD's problem is not with a King over Israel, but with those who would oppose him. For such a people The LORD has little patience and calls them to kiss the Son in whose hand is a rod of iron and whose sovereign authority demands their submission. So may The LORD give us grace as we walk together in better understanding his kind choosing of the sons of David as his own sons from whom the Son of David would come and to whom David calls Lord.

Context and Authorship

Like Psalm 1, Psalm 2 does not provide a heading that addresses either historical context or authorship. But whereas Psalm 1's content and images transcend historical and cultural context, Psalm 2 demands attention to these matters and is clearly anchored to a limited circle of persons and a clear season of Redemptive History. Further, while Psalm 2 recognizes its immediate context it also demands that you propel your attention to that which is its greater context and application. So what is the Psalm's limited circle of persons and its place(s) in Redemptive History? The circle of persons that it centers on is the Davidic Line of Kings and its place in Redemptive History was the Davidic Dynasty and, I believe, the expectant Millennial Kingdom in which the Son of David sits on the Throne of David and rules the nations in righteousness and justice.

Now, while it is recognized that the historical context places the Psalm in the Davidic Dynasty it is disputed whether or not one can attribute Davidic authorship to it. Good men disagree and for good reasons. John Calvin sees the Psalm as being of Davidic authorship and in this regard he understands it to be autobiographical with the greater emphasis on Christ. Therefore Calvin's exposition of the Psalm is heavily directed to Christ and his Church. Joining the affirmation of Davidic authorship John MacArthur states, "This psalm is normally termed 'royal' and has had a long history of messianic interpretation. Although it has no title, it seems to bear the imprint of David's hand. As such, it fluidly moves from the lesser David through the Davidic dynasty to the Greater David--Jesus Christ."³ I too am persuaded toward Davidic authorship as it appears consistent with the historical and theological context of David, but more importantly when Acts 4 quotes from the Psalm directly it prefaces the quote with, "...through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit..."⁴

However, in their commentary on the Psalms Keil and Delitzsch are not as firm in this conclusion and they go on to state that while there could be historical merit for it to be associated with David as on at least one occasion he dealt with a like uprising (2 Samuel 10:6) they see stronger possibilities for historic association with other kings such as Uzziah or Hezekiah who experienced these realities more severely. However, with this understanding they are not attempting to establish an alternative authorship or immediate historical context, but instead are choosing to emphasize their position that an anonymous Psalm is just that, anonymous to us.⁵ Still Keil and Delitzsch do come down in immediate support that the Psalm's object of focus is on the Davidic King, stating, "The Old Testament knows no kingship to which is promised the dominion of the world and to which sonship is ascribed (2 Sam. 7:14, Ps. 89:28),

³ The MacArthur Study Bible, NKJV. Word Bibles, 1997. Pg.744

⁴ Acts 4:25 ESV

⁵ C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch; Keil & Delitzsch: Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 5 – Psalms. Hendrickson Publishers, 2001. (Hereafter: Keil & Delitzsch), Pg.53

but the Davidic. The events of his own time, which influenced the mind of the poet, are no longer clear to us. But from these he is carried away into those tumults of the peoples which shall end in all kingdoms becoming the kingdom of God and of his Christ (Apoc. 11:15; 12:10)."⁶ So while there appears to be merit toward a Davidic authorship the maintaining of tension that silence produces has its merits too. Further, not being wholly confident on Davidic authorship is not an attempt to disregard the reference I made to David being cited as the author of the Psalm in Acts 4. Arnold Rhodes addresses this in his commentary on Psalms when he explains that the attribution of the Psalm to David in Acts is not necessarily a direct endorsement of Davidic authorship as the Psalms as a whole were in general regarded as the Psalms of David.⁷ In fairness this is not unlike what we often state too. A most obvious example might be Spurgeon's commentary series on the Psalms which is titled "The Treasury of David" and yet it covers all 150 Psalms – several of which have known authorship outside of David.

Structure Aids

I hope that you are taking the time to discipline yourself to work through the pieces and try and see how they fit together, relate to one another, and craft a picture/message. This is not a definitive work on my part, but an attempt to see these things.

- 2:1 - question (Psalmist)
 - 2:2 - the context of the question - setting up direct quote (Nations)
 - 2:3 - a direct quote reflecting the object of the question (Nations)
 - 2:4 - a response to the object of the question (The LORD)
 - 2:5 - a response to the object of the question - setting up direct quote (The LORD)
 - 2:6 - a direct quote reflecting the response to the object of the question (The LORD)
 - 2:7 - a development of the previous quote and opening of new quote unpacking a more complete response to the object of the question (The Son/King)
 - 2:8 - a direct quote and opening of new quote unpacking a more complete response to the object of the question (The Son/King)
 - 2:9 - a direct quote and opening of new quote unpacking a more complete response to the object of the question (The Son/King)
 - 2:10 - the conclusion based off of the responses developed from 2:4-2:9 (Psalmist)
 - 2:11 - the conclusion based off of the responses developed from 2:4-2:9 (Psalmist)
- 2:12 - the conclusion based off of the responses developed from 2:4-2:9 and a final resolution (Psalmist)

It appears to me that the opening question sets the context, the Psalm develops the content of the question, 2:7-9 are the heart of the Psalm as they bring the answer to the whole of the content (they are built up and built off of), and then the Psalm concludes with a final response/resolution to the question.

⁶ Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.53 - Note "Apoc." is an alternative form of citation for the book of Revelation.

⁷ The Layman's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Volume 9. Arnold B. Rhodes. John Knox Press, 1966. Pg.29

Help from David Dorsey. While Dorsey does not provide a structural analysis of every Psalm, Psalm 2 is another example he does provide and like Psalm 1 he identifies it as a "Four Part Symmetry" depicting a reversal of fortunes for the pagan kings and Israel's king.⁸

A **frightening counsel of mighty kings of the earth** who plot against Yahweh and his anointed (2:1-3)

- Kings of the earth

B **declaration of Yahweh** about his appointment of his king in Zion (2:4-6)

B' **declaration of Yahweh's king** about his appointment by Yahweh: all the nations of the earth are to be his inheritance! (2:7-9)

A' **joyful counsel for the now helpless kings of the earth**: serve Yahweh in joy and fear (2:10-12)

- Kings, rulers of the earth

Insight from Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon refers to the structure of the Psalm as a four-fold picture consisting of four stanzas and each with three verses:⁹

- The nations are raging (1-3)
- The Lord in heaven derides them (4-6)
- The Son proclaims the decree (7-9)
- Advice is given to the kings to yield obedience to the Lord's anointed (10-12)

Persons in this Psalm

The nations and peoples (referenced in general) - 2:1, 2:8-9

The peoples (referenced in general) - 2:1

The kings of the earth (referenced in general, quoted, addressed directly) - 2:2-6, 2:10-12

The rulers of the earth (referenced in general, quoted, addressed directly) - 2:2-6, 2:10-12

The LORD (referenced in general, quoted) - 2:2-3, 2:4-6, 2:7-9, 2:11

The LORD's Anointed/Son/King (referenced in general) - 2:2-3, 2:6, 2:7-9, 2:12

I understand The LORD's Anointed, The LORD's King, and The LORD's Son all as one person.

It appears to me that the Psalmist is in a lesser way referenced as the Son, but he clearly could not be the greater Son directly addressed: the inheritor of the nations and the greater Son. *One's conclusion here will be in some measure dependent on your conclusion on the Psalm's author.*

Regarding the quotations throughout the Psalm, Keil and Delitzsch address the fact that while the Psalmist is framing this Psalm, he allows the rebellious kings/rulers, The LORD, and The LORD's Anointed to speak for themselves. The Psalmist does not assume their dialogue, but allows them to have it for themselves.¹⁰

⁸ David A. Dorsey; The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi. Baker Books, 1999. (Hereafter: Dorsey), Pg.176 - the provided structural analysis is Dorsey's work

⁹ Charles Spurgeon; The Treasury of David, Volume 1 – Psalms 1-57. Hendrickson Publishers. (Hereafter: Spurgeon),Pg.10

¹⁰ Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.52

Contextual Key: 2 Samuel 7

As the Psalmist is understood to be writing in the context of the Davidic Monarchy there would be the presumption of familiarity with a most important and precious passage. I cannot urge you strongly enough to give this passage due attention by way of reading, prayer, and meditation.

- 7:1 The king here is the beloved King David and it was at the time that The LORD had given him rest from his enemies.
- 7:2 The precious affection that King David had for God is immediately apparent by his displeasure that he has abundance and The LORD does not appear to have received his due recognition/honoring in the presence of his covenant people.
- 7:3 David receives an initial affirmation from Nathan the Prophet to build The LORD a house.
- 7:4-16 The LORD corrects this presumption and makes it clear that David will not build him a house, but his son would build him a house.
- Now within this dialogue some most magnificent statements are made by The LORD to David regarding his lineage:
- He will make David a house – not of cedar, but an established name. 7:11
- He will establish the throne of the Kingdom of the House of David forever. 7:13
- He will be a father to the sons of David who will be as his sons... 7:14
- The LORD concludes, "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." 7:16
- 7:29 David concludes with, "Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

Individual Verse Aids

2:1

Terms

Rage: *This is the only use of this word in the OT*

Peoples, Nations, Peoples, Nations

Plot: The same word that can be translated as "meditate" such as in Joshua 1:8 and Psalm 1:2, also translated ponder and devise... here the context is clear that they nations/peoples are giving deliberate contemplation to their rebelling against The LORD and his Anointed - they are conspiring a mutiny.

A Reasonable Question

The Psalmist starts off with a question - first verse/sentence.

Note that the Psalmist asks a substantially better question than the one's we tend to ask... immediately one that comes to mind are people questioning God in the midst of tragedy as though they should personally be immune from all hardship/tragedy and if they are not then God is void. Actually the only god that has failed in that context is themselves. Their view of God is so skewed that they are functionally saying God failed to esteem them properly. In contrast here the Psalmist is exercising a right view of God and seeing him for who he is, he knows that the entirety of this plotting is nothing short of vanity, which reasonably leads him to ask "why" are these fools conducting themselves this way? A right view of God influences the questions you ask.

"The Psalm begins abruptly with an angry interrogation; and well it may: it is surely but little to be wondered at, that the sight of creatures in arms against their God should amaze the psalmist's mind."¹¹

¹¹ Spurgeon, Pg.10

An Exercise In Vanity

Immediately the plotting is identified as in vain.

Without even developing the full breadth of the Psalm we have a substantial summary here. The nations/peoples conspire to rebel and the whole reality of it is that it cannot escape that such a thing under any circumstance or context is nothing but a vain thought or exercise. They had best kiss the Son.

Is this not like all sin and its associated rebellion - all in vain and either not believing or caring this to be true?

The Conduct Of The Nations/Peoples

Present Conduct – Perishing

2:1 - The nations rage.

2:1 - The peoples plot in vain.

2:2 - The kings of the earth set themselves against The LORD and his Anointed.

2:2 - The rulers take counsel together against The LORD and his Anointed.

2:3 - They speak of rebelling "Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us."

Proposed Conduct – Restoration

2:10 - Kings, be wise.

2:10 - Rulers, be warned.

2:11 - Serve The LORD with fear.

2:11 - Rejoice with trembling.

2:12 - Kings and rulers, kiss the Son.

Are you exercising a right view of God in your thoughts and conduct?

What vanity have you clung to out of rebellion to the Lordship of Jesus in your life?

2:2

Terms

Earth: Frequently translated "land" when there are defined places/boundaries in the context of its usage (land of Midian, land of Egypt, land of Gad, etc.) - earth appears to be used for broader applications such as in this Psalm.

Set, Present, Stand

Rulers: Also referred to as princes. A person who is distinguished. Note that this term is consistently used in proximity with the word for king - a person of consequential authority.

Counsel: Foundation/Establish together.

Anointed: The Hebrew term for Messiah (Greek counterpart: Christ): One who is uniquely consecrated/set apart for service to The LORD (priest, prophets, and kings). The term is not exclusively for the person of Jesus, but is rightfully associated with Jesus as he is the chief, greatest, complete, or perfect Messiah/Christ.

Kings/Rulers In Submission

While the Psalm will have its complete application in the greater King/Messiah who surpasses the Psalmist and/or seated Davidic King the principle is still immediately established that the nations (be it regional or worldwide are nations under submission). Regarding this note that rulers/leaders/kings cannot rebel against that which they are not first subservient to from the beginning. These "Kings of the Earth" are resisting the sovereignty of the King who has been set apart not simply by his people or through natural birthright, but by The LORD himself who has divinely consecrated him to this end and who has declared him his son – establishing an unparalleled relationship between God and any other king. It is for this reason that rebellion against this King is rebellion against The LORD, this relationship cannot be parsed rebellion is a mutual offense against both the Anointed and The LORD.

It is these same persons who are in a fit of rebellion here that the Psalmist will shortly call to a place of repentant submission to the Son in verse ten (they had best be wise and be warned).

God's Anointed King

The first coupling of The LORD and his anointed appears to be immediately after Saul is anointed King of Israel (1 Samuel 12). The divinely anointed king's standing with God was a relationship that is unlike others and this was not lost on David whose conduct was both restrained and compelled because of this understanding. Note his conduct toward the anointed King Saul.

- 1 Samuel 24 David is wrongfully having to run for his life from Saul and when he has his enemy in a place of complete compromise he preserves Saul's life as he recognizes that Saul is The LORD's anointed. Saul was not just another man, he was God's man.
- 1 Samuel 26 David is still having to run for his life from Saul and when he has his enemy in a place of complete compromise he preserves Saul's life as he recognizes that Saul is The LORD's anointed. Saul was not just another man, he was God's man. Here David also rebukes Abner who was to protect Saul as he allowed The LORD's anointed to be in danger of his life while he slept.
- 2 Samuel 1 David had the man who claimed to mercifully kill Saul put to death as he raised his hand against The LORD's anointed.

A problem with authority is ultimately a problem with God as he establishes kings and rulers. He also sovereignly places other forms of leadership over you. How have you honored the role of submission to those the Lord has placed over you?

How does David's response to Saul inform you regarding the value of The LORD's anointed – even when it is a man such as Saul?

How might you understand your world in its rebellious disposition to the Lord?

Note how the early church answered this question in a context in which there was an attempt to suppress the believer's gospel testimony (Acts 4). They responded by directly reciting God's word back to him in prayer. Affirming and joining God's magnificent truth. They did not just recite and affirm that God works out all things for good to those who love him and are called according to his purpose. This is true. Wonderfully true. But it is truths from Psalm 2 and like Scriptures that anchor other truths. All things work for good because the idea that men, peoples, and kings can truly resist the Lord is preposterous and they had best sober their minds and submit to the Son.

"And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed.'" Acts 4:24-26

Finally, while David was God's anointed king and his line was promised an everlasting kingdom. The chief and greater application of this Psalm is in Jesus, the Son of David, who is the everlasting King of the everlasting Kingdom.

2:3

Faux Freedom

Here we recognize that while there is a literal Lordship and expectation of submission as established in the preceding sections, the Psalmist also employs natural elements of poetry to express the rebellious disposition of the kings and rulers. The expressive and clear picture of a man who is breaking his bonds and throwing aside the cords that had restrained him capture the heart of a people who are refusing submission and who would flaunt their self-liberating freedom. And from what or who would they be free... The LORD of glory and his established man.

"It is a battle for freedom, upon which they are entering, but a freedom that is opposed to God."¹²

This is the reality experienced/expressed in the prayer addressed in Acts 4 (sighted in part above). What is so grievous is that this prayer is in a context of the Jewish leadership's continued spurning of the Christ - he came to his own and

¹² Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.55

his own did not receive him. They were as blind as the nations who did not have the rich heritage and advantages of the Scriptures, they were functionally joining the rebellion of the nations... as though foreigners to their own King.

This is a frightening reality. This is a company that craves to be free to walk in the apparent delight of its on sin and if it is the company you find yourself "walking, standing, or sitting in" then you had best examine your heart - you had best... kiss the Son, repent and submit in faith.

Joining me a call for self-examination, Spurgeon states, "To a graceless neck the yoke of Christ is intolerable, but the saved sinner it is easy and light. We may judge ourselves by this, do we love that yoke, or do we wish to cast it from us?"¹³

Have you examined your own heart's propensity toward rebellion when submitting to the flesh?

Is submitting to the flesh or to the Father the pattern that marks your life?

2:4

Terms

Sits, Dwells, Settles, Inhabits, Remain, Enthroned

Derision, Mock, Jeered

More Than Accommodation

There is a debate among friends on the subject of "theological accommodation" which basically addresses the question of: Does God having emotion and responses in a literal sense or is it just language employed to help us understand what is intended to be communicated because it is beyond our natural understanding? I have taken issue with men such as John Calvin who do not believe that language of emotion when associated with God is anything more than accommodation. The concern on the part of men such as Calvin is that to state that such a dynamic feature as emotions being applied to God may be a threat to his never changing character or otherwise diminish his absolute distinction from us and our understanding.

The subject of "theological accommodation" matters because we have an interesting overlap of language in this verse – some anthropomorphic language which would not be taken literal (The Lord "sitting" in the heavens) and what I believe is a literal display of emotional response (a deep and spontaneous like emotion expressed in laughter). We know that The LORD is spirit and that language such as sitting in the heavens communicates to us not so much his physical/spatial reality so much as his authority, character, and majesty – this is the One enthroned in the heavens (utterly separate and awesome). Now, seeing the Lord for the majestic and wonderful God that he is, we get a striking image of what I believe is a fair picture of reality – a deeply felt reaction of befuddlement and mockery: the great God of glory laughing at the rebelliousness of men. The idea of men opposing The LORD or his Anointed is absurd and the Psalmist is providing a picture as graphic as the breaking of bonds and casting off of cords. So... here I am conceding that this is likely poetic language and not a record of a precise event and I want that to be clear for purposes of context. However, I think the picture of this reaction stands with its greatest strength when you understand that the image of the Lord laughing is as real of a possibility as men physically breaking free. I am persuaded that our Lord does feel deeply and that he is communicating this clearly here.

Psalms 2 is not the only place in the Psalms where we see our great God responding in laughter at the nations/peoples as they conspire their mutinies. Such conduct is not only foolish, it is laughable. See *Psalms 37:12-13 and Psalm 59:7-8*.

Does one's conclusion on such matters as The LORD actually expressing emotion or not really matter in our understanding of the text? Why or why not?

¹³ Spurgeon, Pg.11

2:5

Terms

Wrath: This is the same Hebrew word that can be translated nose, nostrils, and face thereby giving us a clear picture of wrath's dynamic influence on one's external disposition (heavy breathing through the nose and perhaps a crinkled up face...) - intensive anger.

Terrify, Dismay, Troubled

Fury, Fierce Anger/Wrath, Burning Anger/Wrath, Wrath, Anger

An Angry God

The LORD is not only responding in laughter, but this deeply felt reaction is accompanied by wrath which as addressed above is a word that communicates its own severity by the picture built into its root (nostrils and crinkled face). He is not amused by the rebelliousness of the nations, he is furious. The rebels have spoken in their foolishness and now the Lord will speak to these kings and rulers in his wrath and terrify them in his fury. And how with the Lord respond? He will respond with his Anointed Son (The Davidic King).

How do we worshipfully and prayerfully respond to an angry God?

2:6

Terms

Mount Zion: The City of King David, consistently referenced in conjunction with Jerusalem and when addressing the welfare of The LORD's people.

Jerusalem's most prominent hill.¹⁴

The LORD's King – Established

The LORD responded with laughter and wrath, and his wrath was articulated in the affirmation of his having established his King, on his hill, and in his beloved city. The kings have spoken and now The LORD has spoken with his King – their response was what they intended to do and his response is what he has done. He has established his superior King to whom the other kings must submit and pay homage.

Those rebelling are kings of the earth – described by sweeping generic terms. The LORD's King was his man that he set apart to reign from his precise and holy abode.

The response to the rebellious mutiny was that The LORD's King has been seated.

Does all this "King" talk really matter to the New Testament believer or is this just archaic elements of Redemptive History to base other truths on later? Please explain.

2:7

Term

Begotten, Fathered, Born

The Anointed Son

This is an area where authorship of the Psalm can influence one's understanding of the immediate context as a plain reading could indicate that the Psalmist is speaking about his own coronation as king or it could be that the Psalmist is writing so as to allow the Son to speak for himself. What we can establish is that the King is of the Davidic Line/House and has the unique standing as a son because of The LORD's promise to David to be a father to his sons who would in turn would be sons to him (2 Samuel 7). This was not the privilege of other kings of dynastic lines and it was not simply because this king had not rebelled, but because of God's favor and the surety of his promise. Further, while we may not be able to say with confidence which king is speaking or being spoken for we do know that it is not the Lord Jesus as there is first an immediate/historical context and we must be careful not to be too aggressive to simply read the Bible from its ending backwards, but rather to read it from its beginning to its end. This king can be declared to be

¹⁴ MacArthur, Pg.744

a son because of the promise to David and we see in this the Lord's faithfulness to establish and maintain this unique and privileged relationship with this king over all other kings thereby preparing him and his sons to be the unique blessing to the nations that was promised to another of their fathers, Abraham.

Born Today?

The Son being begotten this date is not a precursor to the spiritual rebirth that Jesus discussed in John 3, but a change of relationship and status that he would have been afforded when seated as king,¹⁵ this son of David would now in a sense also be a son of God and ultimately as such would be pointing to the greater Son of David, Son of God. Further, this language of being begotten would be a reference to the privilege of his relationship with the Lord¹⁶ - a unique privilege for the Davidic line.

So in the immediate context the Psalm is expecting you to reflect back on The LORD building David's house (2 Samuel 7) and in the larger picture it is expected that you look back onto this Psalm from the New Testament vantage point and see that Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of these truths, himself being begotten through his resurrection (Romans 1:3-4) – his coronation as it were to the eternal kingship of the Son of David who needs no further lineage, but who will forever occupy his throne.

The Development Of The Son In Psalm 2

Introduced as The LORD's Anointed. 2:2

Established as The LORD's King on Zion. 2:6

Decreed to be The LORD's Son, begotten of him. 2:7

Offered the nations, the entirety of the earth. 2:8

Given sovereign authority/power over the nations. 2:9

Called to be Honored. 2:12

How does 2 Samuel 7 inform your understanding of this verse and then the Psalm as a whole?

2:8

Terms

Nations: The same term used in 2:1 (the peoples that are raging and conspiring).

Heritage: Property and Possession Secured by Birthright.

Earth: The same term used in 2:2 and 2:10 (associated with the peoples that are raging and conspiring).

Possession: That which is owned or under the control of someone (property, items, etc.).

Sovereignty Gifted To The Son

While there is a consistent emphasis on the dual roles of the immediate context and its greater fulfillment here it appears that the emphasis is on the anticipated greater Son/King and the scope of his ruling. Whereas the kings of Israel enjoyed consequential expansion under the reigns of David and Solomon this general sweeping offer is more than could be *naturally* expected. Here The LORD of all is providing the nations as an inheritance to his Son and the very ends of the earth to him for a possession.

Notice too, as addressed in the above "Terms" section, that *nations* and *earth* are the same terms used to describe those attempting to mutiny against The LORD and his Anointed earlier in the Psalm. Here these nations are reminded and warned that they are not their own, but the sovereign possession of the begotten Son.

Further, looking to the greater Son of David, Son of God, who indeed does receive the nations and ends of the earth as his inheritance – notice how the *god of this world* sought to tempt him into his own submission in Matthew 4:8-10 and Luke 4:5-8. In these references we see that Jesus was being tempted with that which is already a guaranteed possession to him. So while the nations and ends of the earth might at this time lie in the power of the evil one... it must be remembered that the nations have already been offered to the Son by their true Sovereign and they had best kiss the Son lest The LORD be angry with them.

¹⁵ Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.56

¹⁶ MacArthur, Pg.744

Are we expected to take Jesus' ruling and reigning of the nations literally? Why or why not and what are the implications of this?

2:9

Submission To The Son

"The office of the Messiah is not only that of Saviour but also of Judge. Redemption is the beginning and judgment the end of his work."¹⁷

Where as the kings and rulers speak of breaking their bonds The LORD here speaks of the Son, with a rod of iron, breaking the nations and ends of the earth as easily as a potter's vessel is shattered.

Note that, "Rod of Iron", this formidable tool of submission is only referenced here in the Old Testament and three times in the times in the New Testament and all are quite telling of the anticipated/greater Son.

Psalm 2:9	The begotten Son who is given the nations and ends of the earth as his own breaks them with a <i>rod of iron</i> (they are brought into full submission to the Son).
Revelation 2:27	The glorified Jesus tells his church in Thyatira to stay faithful and to hold fast until he comes. He then states that he will give them authority over the nations and they will, "...rule [the nations] with a <i>rod of iron</i>, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as [he himself has] received authority from [his] Father." Those victorious in Christ will rule and reign with him over the nations. <i>Sounds strikingly similar to Psalm 2... as it was intended to do just that.</i> I believe that this is an explicit reference to the Millennial Kingdom and that a natural reading of the texts would require an explanation to conclude otherwise. Note that Psalm 2 states that this sovereign ruler of all the nations and earth is seated on Zion... this is Israel's King and he will literally rule the nations of the world from Jerusalem.
Revelation 12:5	In a most dramatic prophetic picture we again see this Son of Psalm 2, a reference again to Jesus, "...one who is to rule all the nations with a <i>rod of iron</i>"
Revelation 19:15	The majestic description of the Battle of Armageddon where King Jesus lays his enemies to waste, ending the Tribulation, and I believe ushering in the Millennial Kingdom. Here it states that this King, "...will rule [the nations] with a <i>rod of iron</i> ."

How do we reconcile the Jesus of the New Testament with the Son of David ruling with a rod of iron in his hand and applying its power to the crushing of his opposition?

2:10

Terms

Wise, Prudent, Understand

Warned, Disciplined

Ruler, Judge: Another office or position of authority to weigh out justice/right.

Earth: Also frequently translated "land" when there are defined places/boundaries in the context of its usage (land of Midian, land of Egypt, land of Gad, etc.). Here the term appears to be used for broader applications.

Be Wise, Be Warned

It appears in light of the aforementioned severity of the Son that the kings and rulers are warned. The kings are called to be wise. The rulers are called to be warned.

Be wise and be warned... where as in vanity they were conspiring to rebel against The LORD and his Anointed, be it the son of David, son of God or the Son of David, Son of God – they have had the folly of their "laugh in your face

¹⁷ Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.54

foolishness" spelled out for them and they had best heed this wisdom and warning. The LORD's patience will quickly be exasperated and this would be to their great demise.

What should be our response to the authority of the Son?

2:11

The Father And Son

It is in view of the relationship of The LORD and his Son that the kings and rulers of the earth are called to forsake their rebelling and to serve with fear. Note here the dynamic interaction between the Son and The LORD:

2:2-3 - The kings/rulers are opposing/rebelling against both The LORD and his Anointed.

2:4-9 - The LORD responds to the offense against himself and his Anointed.

2:6-9 - The LORD responds in his wrath and his answer is his Son who is made a sovereign and just ruler of the nations.

2:11 - The kings/rulers are called to respond by serving The LORD and to submit to/appease the Son.

Submission To The Son

In contrast to their rebelling, the nations/peoples are called to serve and this call to serve The LORD puts the nations, peoples, kings, rulers, and judges back into a place of submission where they belong in relation to the Son. Further, what would otherwise appear to be contradictory elements (serving with fear and rejoicing with trembling) are seen as dynamics in unique tension because of their object of attention, namely The LORD.

Terms:

Rejoice, Exult, Be Glad

Fear: Abraham's critique of Abimelech's kingdom (fair or otherwise) was that he thought there was no *fear* of God among them and they would kill him for his wife. Genesis 20:11

The *fear* of God is a safeguard from sin. Exodus 20:20

Jehoshaphat charged the appointed judges in Israel to conduct themselves in the *fear* of The LORD, in faithfulness, and in with their whole heart. 2 Chronicles 19:9

Nehemiah rebuked the leaders for their failure to conduct themselves in the *fear* of God and do right. Nehemiah 5:9

Nehemiah conducted himself in the *fear* of God. Nehemiah 5:15

Job affirms that "the *fear* of the Lord, that is wisdom..." Job 28:28

It is the hardened heart that does not *fear* The LORD. Isaiah 63:17

Trembling: "Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; *trembling* seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away." Exodus 15:15

"...dread came upon me, and *trembling*, which made all my bones shake." Job 4:14

"*Trembling* took hold of them there, anguish as of a woman in labor." Psalm 48:6

"Fear and *trembling* come upon me, and horror overwhelms me." Psalm 55:5

"The sinners in Zion are afraid; *trembling* has seized the godless: 'Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?'" Isaiah 33:14

Does the New Testament believer fear The LORD? How are these apparent tensions resolved here?

Terms:

- Kiss: Consistently used as an affectionate/personal greeting.
Also used to express submission and allegiance¹⁸ and to pay homage (to pay respect or revere).¹⁹
- Son: The term used for Son in verse seven, where there is a direct dialogue between the Lord and his Anointed, is the common, expected term (used over 3,500 times in the Hebrew OT), but here the term is different.

The term "son" here (Aramaic in form/sound) is said to be well-suited for the gentile kings that are being addressed.²⁰ You can see with a clear potency the change of direction regarding who is being spoken to in these respective contexts as though to be poignantly clear that the Gentiles/Nations had best understand this and submit to this Son.
- Perish, Destroyed, Undone
- Wrath: This is the same Hebrew word that can be translated nose, nostrils, and face thereby giving us a clear picture of wrath's dynamic influence on one's external disposition (heavy breathing through the nose and perhaps a crinkled up face...) - intensive anger.
- Kindle, Burning, Flamed
- Refuge: Place of solace and protection.

Anger And Associates

- 2:1 - The nations *rage*.
- 2:4 - The LORD holds them in *derision*.
- 2:5 - The LORD speaking in his *wrath*.
- 2:5 - The LORD terrifying them in his *fury*.
- 2:9 - The Son *breaks* the nations/ends of the earth.
- 2:9 - The Son *dashes in pieces* the nations/ends of the earth.
- 2:12 - The Son's *anger* will cause the kings/rules to perish.
- 2:12 - The Son's *wrath* is quickly kindled.

Kiss The Son

The kings and rulers of the earth who had set themselves out in a vain exercise are here called to appease or placate the Son who has the authority and ability to destroy them, but the more immediate threat here is The LORD's wrath that had best be avoided. By contrast there is the reminder that while The LORD's wrath is quickly kindled there is also blessing for those who take refuge in him. We see here the core elements of Psalm 1 being applied in one's submission to The LORD and his Anointed.

A Little Help On Pronouns

Note the temptation here is to see verse twelve in isolation when examining its contents and the danger with this is that you can get the antecedent to the pronouns wrong (who the "he" is referring back to in the text). While the Son is authoritative in judgment, it is The LORD, as established earlier in the Psalm, who is angry on the Son's behalf and who will deal with those do not submit in homage to the Son.

How do you understand the call to "Kiss the Son"?

How would you summarize this Psalm and of what value is it to the New Testament believer?

¹⁸ MacArthur, Pg.744

¹⁹ Keil & Delitzsch, Pg.58

²⁰ English Standard Version Study Bible. Crossway Bibles, 2008. Pg.944