

Conflict Among the Nations [Psalm 2]
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INTRODUCTION

1. Unfortunately, we're in a time of global tension.
 - a. The recent tension with Iran has put many Americans in a state of unease.
 - b. For awhile, there was a hashtag trending about World War 3
2. As we grapple with what can be a trying time, we see that we're not the first . . .
 - a. The ancients lived in an ever-greater time of tension
 - b. There's a biblical perspective when there is conflict among the nations.

VERSES 1-3

¹ *Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?*

² *The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,*

³ *"Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles."*

1. This text speaks of a time when Israel held domain over many kingdoms.
 - a. Biblically, this era never existed. Although the kingdom existed, it did not conquest more.
 - b. And perhaps this is an important distinction as we look at the situation of Israel in the O.T.
 - 1) Despite earlier thoughts, archaeology proved the existence of a kingdom then.
 - 2) Even though the most kingdoms sought to increase territory, not true with Israel.
 - 3) This psalm, then, speaks to a future point when ALL kingdoms submit to God.
2. So here, in the first three verses, the kings of the earth make their move
 - a. Throughout the O.T., psalms & prophecy focus on Israel being oppressed.
 - 1) Here's it's about the sovereignty of God in this rebellion.
 - b. This is an uprising against both God himself and HIS ANOINTED
 - 1) God's anointed is the King, but there is a Messianic foreshadowing at work here.
 - c. So in Verse 1, the kings were plotting a **RIQ** [Hebrew word]
 - 1) They plot while in the Emptiness/worthlessness/Nothingness/abyss
 - 2) This is an apt description of one trying to develop ammunition against the Lord.
3. In verse 3: The kings of the earth are actually chained up.
 - a. In the actual Hebrew word here, there is the imagery is of a **yoke**
 - 1) Often times, the animals were chained in order to do the work.
 - b. While this could have been perceived as slavery by the kings, it wasn't that bad.
 - 1) Farmers take good care of their work animals.
 - 2) Kings, though, want total autonomy from God and want to be released.
 - c. Even though this has to do with kings, it hits us today as well.
 - 1) Do you view God as a beastmaster who yokes you? Or is it all about your control?

VERSES 4-6

⁴ *The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.*

⁵ *He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,*

⁶ *"I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain."*

1. In the next three verses, it's the Lord's turn to make his move
 - a. But he doesn't really move or speak toward the princes
 - b. There's laughter and scoffing. **His rebuke is his anger**, and they are afraid of him
 - c. In these verses, the Lord is actually is addressing his own people.
2. Verses 4-6 are a **point-by-point** response by God to the first three verses
 - a. V1&4: While the kings conspire, the Lord laughs
 - b. V2&5: While they actively rise up, the Lord rebukes in anger
 - c. V3&6: While they proclaim uprising, the Lord proclaims his chosen King
3. There in verse 6, we see the Lord responded to Kings by installing his own King.

- a. He did this on his Holy Mountain.
 - 1) There were many holy mountains throughout the Ancient Near East
 - 2) The belief was that deities dwelled on the mountain.
 - a) **Mount Aqraa** was Baal Hadad and others lived.
 - b) **Mount Gerizim**, where the Samaritans later worshipped
 - c) **Mount Moriah** was the place of Zion, where Jerusalem was established.
- b. The city of Jerusalem, 3,000 years later, is still the center of the religious world.
 - 1) There's something significant about that mountain, ordained by God.
 - 2) All the kingdoms of the earth were forced to fix their eyes upon it.

VERSES 7-9

⁷I will proclaim the LORD's decree:

He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father.

⁸ Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

⁹ You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

1. In these three verses, the Anointed One (King/Messiah), makes his move
 - a. And all he does is to repeat the words that the Lord spoke to him.
 - b. In verse seven, we read that there's a familial relationship formed between King&God
 - 1) In the ancient world, sonship of gods was ordained through many ways.
 - 2) Many times, this was accomplished through deity copulation.
 - a) In Egypt, Pharaoh was conceived by a god and queen mother
 - 3) In this text, it happens through adoption. It's actually a biblical theme
- a) **Ephesians 1:5** "[The Lord] predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."
2. There's also some fascinating imagery here too.
 - a. In verses 8&9, The King/Messiah would eradicate tyrannical regimes
 - 1) He grabs an iron rod and goes medieval on the nations.
 - b. This is a picture that we aren't usually accustomed to: **an avenging Jesus**
 - 1) There are some Christian sects that abhor this view of Jesus because it's scary
 - 2) The reality is that Jesus embraced justice and fought against oppression.
 - c. If the kings of the earth wanted to rebel, the anointed one would do what's necessary.

VERSES 10-12

¹⁰ Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.

¹¹ Serve the LORD with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

¹² Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

1. In though it looked like there was going to be some fighting, that's not the message.
 - a. It's been **an interesting interplay** in the messaging here (kings/Lord/anointed).
 - 1) In the end, it's the anointed speaking words to the kings of the earth.
 - 2) They are not words of violence, but words of concern and empathy.
 - b. They provided a route to avoid the iron rod: SERVE THE LORD WITH FEAR
 - 1) Not slavery, mind you, but still fear
 - 2) In wisdom literature, the fear of the Lord is a response to his forgiving compassion
2. The threat of retribution is not from the Lord, but from the Anointed.

CONCLUSION

1. Instead of acting himself, God uses people to act.
2. THE LORD TRUSTS US, FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE
3. When conflict arises among the nations, we should remember VS12: "Blessed are all who take refuge in Him."