

# Psalm 2

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] thanks Mitchum for reading and it'd be great if you keep your Bibles open at Psalm 2 we're going to look at that together let's pray let's ask for God's help father as we turn to your word we pray that you'll give us ears ready to listen you'll give us heads that can understand your word and hearts that are willing to change and follow you for the glory of your name amen those questions that we had on the screen that we were discussing are about your worldview I managed to get through most of my life so far without realizing I had a worldview but everyone has a worldview we don't usually think about them because we can't see them rather it's it's through your worldview that you see everything else around you it's a pair of glasses that we all wear and as we look at the world as we spend our time interacting with the world our worldview interprets it refracts everything out there so for example imagine your worldview is that there's nothing beyond this universe the universe is a closed system of cause and effect if you hold that worldview and you see someone definitely die and then they appear again to you apparently risen from the dead no matter how strong the evidence is you won't believe it because you've already committed yourself in your worldview that that's impossible doesn't fit or um if you have that worldview and you watch x-factor or something like that or bake-off or anything on tv where you get this language people sometimes when they interview people on something like bake-off or x-factor they they'll say this is my destiny this is what i've always been born to do well you just laugh at that if you you just you should do if you're being consistent with your worldview because you think what do you mean destiny we're all just you're just an accidental collection of atoms nobody has a destiny there's nothing beyond the universe so you get the idea you don't see your worldview but through it you see everything else and it's how you interpret what's going on it's how you make sense of the world and so if your worldview is wrong then you will never make true sense of the world in psalm 2 god corrects our worldview just a reminder of where we are start the psalms is a collection of songs written before jesus came arranged over hundreds of years many of them written about 3 000 years ago and the first two psalms are like the gate posts that mark your way in to this amazing book of songs 150 songs and the gate post we looked at the first one last week the first one was about the key to happiness it told us if you want to be happy you delight in god's word and meditate on it day and night in the second psalm the other gate post two things happen as we go in the first thing is we zoom out from the individual to the macro scale a view of the whole world and the second thing that happens is we get introduced to the main character of the book of psalms and the main character of the whole bible and it's not you or me it's god's chosen king so psalm 2 was originally written to be a song for the coronations in israel israel were god's chosen people they had a series of kings in the line of david and whenever any of those kings were installed as the new king they could have read psalm 2 at the coronation but like lots of psalms about a king it bursts its banks this psalm we've seen that in scotland haven't we too much recently of rivers that burst their banks you've

got a river going down set banks and kind of people could draw on a map the boundary and they get such a deluge of water that the the river bursts out and the banks become irrelevant to knowing where the river is well it's a bit like that with these psalms when you think they're just about a human king in israel which they would have tried to interpret them as for a long time and then you see hang on a minute this could never be fulfilled by a human king it just speaks beyond the kings of israel in a way that only makes sense when jesus is born and god's forever king comes into the world so you might have noticed in verse 2 of psalm 2 it mentions the lord and his anointed one and the anointed one in hebrew is messiah the psalm is going to correct our worldview and the big idea of the psalm is this it's that god has made a decree about jesus that he will reign forever and if we grasp that decree and we live in light of it it should shape everything that we face in the week ahead everything we face in our lives we should look at the world through the lenses of psalm 2 so let's get

our worldview the first part is the nations conspiring so the psalm starts with a question have a look again at verse 1 why do the nations conspire and the people's plot in vain the kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the lord and against his anointed one let us break their chains they say and throw off their fetters so this is the united nations they are uniting in conspiring against god why well in verse 3 we see what they think of god and apparently that phrase from the hebrew let us break their chains you could translate it let us break their yoke the yoke that you would put on cattle to kind of control them the problem that people have with god isn't that they're in prison it's that they have an owner that somebody controls them the natural heart of every one of us hates god because god has authority over us now with some people you might think that's obvious you might spend time with some people and the way they speak about god you think wow you hate god but with most people you wouldn't get that impression from looking at them and yet god assures us that this is the basic direction of every human heart and so i was going to spend i want to spend a few minutes on this to help us think it through and kind of correct our worldview there was a scottish preacher which is good for me because the first time i've quoted a scotsman since i arrived george mcdonald he said the central conviction of hell is this it's i am my own it's what everybody in hell has in common they are resolute that nobody has the right to tell them what's right and what's wrong and god threatens that idea enormously i am my own it's a conviction that also creates hell in our city in our families the bit of our heart that rails against the idea that we are answerable to anyone it creates hell in your own life if you try and live like that but where god sees it is in how we treat him that our attitude is let's break their chains god and his king let's throw off their fetters now you might be thinking i just don't agree with that verdict not on me and not on the people i know but let's just think about that for a minute i was once um having a coffee with a mate in cafe nero and i said to my mate i said i find it hard some of this stuff because you know the people around us look around us in the cafe you know people are just that people who are not christians they are just going around doing quite decent stuff and doing good and respectable and loving stuff you know the bible's verdict on them seems a bit overly negative so my mate fossey said to me well tell you what we could do to test um the bible's verdict why don't we go around cafe nero now and we'll say to every person one by one hi could we just talk to you for a while about jesus and then we'll see what their heart attitude really is towards god's king but of course we didn't have to do that for me to realize the point but there are a few things that obscure for us that this is what's going on in the world the first is that people are indeed still capable of acts of incredible goodness and love but that's because of what christians sometimes call common grace it's that even while people are rejecting god god in his great mercy and kindness enables them to live lives of love and goodness and do acts of kindness it's common grace god restrains wickedness and evil even in people who are rejecting him it doesn't mean they haven't rejected him another obstacle for us is that people sometimes disguise very well their hatred of god sometimes people hide it through idolatry you see with idolatry you might still talk about god and maybe even say that you believe in god but actually you don't really mean the real god so they might know people who would say um look i'm not an atheist i you know i'm happy with the idea there's a god out there um i just i just don't think it's you know i don't think that he uh wants me to sort of give my life to him well psalm 2 is showing us that people's problem isn't with the idea of a god generally people's problem is with the true god the living god the one who says to us to mankind you shall have no other gods but me be holy because i am holy that god we conspire against to push him out of our lives and people conspire against that god even in churches you can find churches where that god is rejected the god of the bible in favor of a god who agrees with us all of the time another way we disguise our hatred of the true and living god is by skepticism we say well i would accept god if he made himself known but there's just not enough evidence well what the bible tells us is that the biggest problem that we have in the 21st century west that makes us skeptical is that we've already committed ourselves to a worldview that makes it very implausible that the god of the bible is there so actually there is enough evidence out there you can't you can't prove or disprove that there's a god but when you look around the world we should know that he's there he's given us enough evidence but because of our commitment our worldview glasses we don't look at that evidence in a in a true and objective way we're biased as we look at it around us we explain it away now remarkably another way that people hide their hatred of god's king is not by skepticism but by religion see if you live a religious life a very moral life you go to church every week you observe good behavior good moralistic behavior then you can convince yourself you don't need jesus you don't need god's king because you're doing so much better than other people and

you start to think well maybe god will accept me because i'm doing so well with my rules it's only when we realize our unworthiness before this god that we know we need his king and so these ways are ways that the world's conspiracy is disguised and god shows us how he sees the world so that we can see it in the same way as well the united nations uniting in their attitude towards the true and living god that they say he wants to enslave you you stay away from him so how does god react when he sees a world reject and kill his king that's where the new testament assures us this psalm was ultimately fulfilled in acts when the early church gather they confirm for us in acts 4 that and this psalm was ultimately fulfilled in the conspiracy to kill jesus how does god react to that well he doesn't react in the way that i respond to people rejecting god our second point is the lord laughing verse 4 the one enthroned in heaven laughs he scoffs at them then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath saying i've installed my king on zion my holy hill zion is another word for jerusalem it was the original hill that there was this settlement on when david first conquered jerusalem just a small mound in the middle east but that's what god is like he plants his kingdom in weakness he sends his true long-awaited promised always and forever king to be born in a stable and yet that should never ever ever make us underestimate god's king god isn't just god isn't troubled by the global conspiracy to reject him and just think about it it's crazy isn't it to think he would be troubled if you think it came imagine it came down to a fight and god sent some angels to the world to defend himself and the nations really did unite russia and china and india and nato you know they all got their missiles and their nuclear weapons and they gathered in one place to try and wipe god out we are utterly puny it makes me think a bit of um of in the film toy story you might remember there are these little toy soldiers that the uh the little boy has in toy story and um they're alive in because all the toys are kind of alive in the film but imagine if the toy soldiers decided to try and turn on their owner and destroy their owner it would just be completely absurd well the bible says the one enthroned in heaven laughs and that should be a great comfort to us if we look around at the world around us and it really troubles us it should trouble us the world and that's why we've prayed tonight but not too much see sometimes when you meet with one strong emotion it vanquishes another emotion can be good for us apparently that's true about anger but if you're very angry about something it can help take away some of the symptoms of depression for example so there was a doctor in london in victorian times who um patients would go and see if they had mild depression and he would sometimes refer them to a top consultant in scotland and um he would say you know he's much more experienced at cases like yours so they would set out traveling by coach because it was victorian times to scotland it would take several days to get here and they get here and find out the doctor didn't exist he didn't exist they completely wasted their time so they'd head back to london absolutely fuming that they'd been sent up there but they weren't depressed anymore because they were so angry that they'd been sent to scotland well verse four should make us feel a bit like that about our fears for our world you know you go to god with them you're concerned your anxieties we tell god about them and he laughs what do you want to tell god about i want to tell god god look at the islamic state they hate you and they take it out on your children in unspeakable cruelty and even in this very city we hear that people are being radicalized into thinking that behavior is the right thing and i'm in despair god i want to say to him god look at what they've done to education in scotland this nation where once it was christians who opened schools because their love for god showed them they wanted to educate people and show them that jesus is on the throne and that your world makes sense and now the schools are secular so that they don't teach that jesus is lord anymore and they think that's a neutral position but it's not and so the children grow up kind of indoctrinated into this way of thinking that denies you and i'm in despair god and what does god say to me well lots of things lots of things of course he's angered by injustice of course he's grieved by sin and by oppression of course he's deeply concerned by persecution but he also says to me in psalm 2 are you worried martin that they will win the one enthroned in heaven laughs he scoffs at them take heart let me tell you how this is going to end jesus wins i've installed my king on my holy hill that moves us to our third point so we've had the nations conspiring then the lord laughing thirdly let's see the sun raining now it's the messiah who speaks did you notice that he tells us about a conversation between god the father and himself i will proclaim the decree of the lord he said to me you are my son today i have begotten you son here is the title of the king it's not just that god god the son is the eternal son he's being crowned as king of the world it's the affirmation that however bad things look today jesus is truly reigning in the world and then we learn about the extent of his rule god the father says to the son ask of me and i will make the nations your inheritance the ends

of the earth your possession you see he is the psalm bursting its banks here is a king for the whole world but would he be weak sometimes when you get empires they get too big they kind of have trouble controlling the empire now look at the next verse you will rule them with an iron scepter and dash them to pieces like pottery well it's sobering isn't it when jesus comes back to bring justice the justice we long for in the world he will not be welcomed by everyone because our hearts are naturally bent against god there are many people who will fight for their autonomy from him so these are sobering words aren't they just like jesus will dash his enemies to pieces a bit like you know these you get these greek restaurants where every night they kind of smash the plates because it's just crockery and they'll just replace it in the morning well jesus is that powerful when people stand against him and he grieves that that would be the outcome he weeps over it he wept over jerusalem rejecting him because he loves us but ultimately he says to us if you are against me i will be against you and it would be awful if anyone else was yielding that kind of power but this is the perfect man

[ 20 : 17 ] of justice who will judge our world impartially and who loves perfectly and knows the truth completely and so this shocking picture is good news for our world we need this victory we need this justice now you might be just visiting here and thinking well i don't really think i need a king why are we saying that psalm 2 is good news that there's a king well let me just say this just to help us think about this it's interesting isn't it that we have so many stories about good kings even good kings that have gone away i am when i was a boy robin hood prince of thieves was the film to watch at one stage robin hood good king richard is away fighting in the crusades and the nation longs for him to come back and end the corruption of others while he's away including prince john or more recently lord of the rings middle earth is in the grip of evil and it longs for king aragon to return our experience in the world is that when you give a lot of power to someone they can't cope with it it spoils them so many kings around us have been tyrannical and probably one of the only reasons that our queen in scotland today is so popular is that um she doesn't really have much power so we can just sort of like her without her controlling us that's why we have democracy because of the tyranny of kings and queens and yet there seems ingrained in us this longing for a good king maybe an awareness even that we need a good king maybe even a memory trace within the human race but there was an ancient king who really did rule with power and wisdom and compassion and glory and god says in psalm 2 i have set my king on zion my holy hill and let me say well if you reject this king you will choose a different king for your life we're all hardwired in our hearts to follow someone or something and set our hopes on it to give us happiness you will find a savior to love and serve and adore and the bible says god's messiah is the only savior that you should bow down to so that brings us to our fourth point having heard the objective reality of our universe the sun is raining we get the psalmist warning i've said warning but really he's kind of inviting as well if you have a look at verse 10 again therefore you kings be wise be warned you rulers of the earth serve the law with fear and rejoice with trembling kiss the sun lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way now kissing a king was a way in ancient times that another king would demonstrate that they were recognizing this king was more important more powerful so it's about pledging allegiance recognizing authority and reign and then this amazing end to psalm 2 did you notice have a look at how it ends for his wrath can flare up in a moment blessed are all who take refuge in him that word blessed is just another way of saying happy it's a bible word for happiness psalm 1 started by telling us how to be happy it started with that same word and now psalm 2 ends by telling us how to be happy it's a great way to think about our sin whenever we make a choice in life that goes against the will of this reigning king then we are living in a way that goes against the very fabric of our universe and if ultimately we continue in that way of life there's no escape and yet look at

that invitation take refuge in him there's no refuge from this king but there is refuge in this king no refuge from him but take refuge in him he invites us lovingly to turn back to him and what does that involve well the words are there aren't they at the end of the psalm we serve we serve him with fear that is with reverence we live our lives wholeheartedly for the honor and fame of this king we live our lives asking ourselves what's the best thing that i can do to bring honor not to me but to my king we serve and we rejoice we delight in this king filling our minds every day with the truth about this king and we trust that's what it is to take refuge we remind ourselves every day that on our own our biggest problem is that we've offended the true king of the world and yet he has died on the cross to pay for it all so that we can trust him and take refuge in him and even offers that that is the place of true happiness in his world so let me ask is there a place where as you read psalm 2 maybe you

need to change your glasses let's view the world tonight tomorrow this week this year according to psalm 2 the world stands against god but god has made a decree that jesus christ is reigning that he will inherit the nations and that the key to happiness and joy is to take refuge in and serve this king let's have a moment of quiet maybe to look back over the psalm and then i'll lead us in a prayer father we are troubled when we look at our world and we see how many people reject you and especially when we see the ways that that is reflected in the world's treatment of your people we cry out to you that your kingdom will come but we thank you for the assurance that you scoff at those who would bring you down that you laugh and we thank you that you have installed your king on your holy hill and that one day you will make the nations his inheritance and he will possess the ends of the earth thank you that we can serve you with fear we can rejoice with trembling by taking refuge in him amen you