

The Church of the Servant King

Prophecy Series (Proph13B_Prophecy in Job and the Psalms)

In our previous lesson, we examined the Messianic and eschatological prophecies in the book of Job. In this lesson, we will begin a study of selected Messianic and eschatological prophecies in the Psalms. Many of the Psalms are built in whole or in part upon prophetic aspects. Many of the Psalms were written by David and some are written by those whom David had placed in charge of worship in Jerusalem: Ethan, Heman, and Asaph. Psalms were written throughout Israel's history with some of the earliest psalms being written by Moses (Ex 15). Others who wrote psalms recorded in Scripture included Solomon, a priestly family known as the sons of Korah, Deborah (Judg 5) and Hannah (1 Sam 2). Some Psalms are even anonymous. The writing of the Psalms spanned a period from Moses through the return from the Babylonian captivity since the book of Psalms was compiled during Ezra's day. Some of the Psalms were evidently written during Ezra's day since they are post-exilic in nature.

Within the book of Psalms, there are several categories of Psalms. There are penitential psalms which are poems in which the poet confesses sin to the Lord and praises the Lord for His forgiveness. There are wisdom psalms, lament psalms, imprecatory psalms, praise psalms, and messianic psalms to name a few of the categories. The selected Psalms we will examine will be those which have definite messianic or eschatological overtones.¹

Psalm 2 – A Royal Psalm

This Psalm, as well as others of the same category (18, 20-21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 132, 144), is indirectly messianic. It was written for a contemporary king; however, it finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ. In Psalm 2, the writer, David (per Acts 4:24-26), describes a celebration at the coronation of the king despite opposition by rebellious people in the surrounding territories. David exhorts the pagan nations to abandon their rebellious plans against the Lord and to submit to the authority of the Son whom God had ordained to rule the nations. Psalm 2 follows the following pattern or outline:

- ❑ The plans of the wicked are described (vv. 1-3)
- ❑ God's response (vv. 4-6)
- ❑ The Son's declaration of the Father's decree (vv. 7-9)
- ❑ Instructions to obey the Son (vv. 10-12)

Psalm 2 has been described as a "war chant as forces are mustered together for the impending battle of Armageddon."² The background for this Psalm is the Davidic covenant in 2 Samuel 7. At the time God made His covenant with David, David had been given rest from all of His enemies and David was living at ease even while the Ark of the Covenant was still in a tent. David desired to build a temple for the Ark and was initially given permission by the prophet Nathan. However, Nathan later received a revelation from God that David was not to build the temple, but the Lord was going to build a "house" for David – a house of posterity and not of stone (2 Sam 7:14-16). In Psalm 89, David's friend, Ethan, alludes to this covenant with the following words:

¹ Summarized from Earl D. Radmacher, *The Nelson Study Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), 873-874 and John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1985), 779-790.

² Ron Allen, *Rediscovering Prophecy, A New Song for a New Kingdom* (Multnomah Press: Portland, Oregon, 1983), 156.

I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn to My servant David:
'Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.'
(Psa 89:3-4)

Throughout the remainder of Israel's history, "each descendant of David would be adopted by God according to the words of the covenant: 'I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.'"³ "We may presume that these words were used by the priests as each new king was crowned as the successor of David. As an adoptive 'son' of God, the king was God's regent on earth, marked out to mediate the divine will among his subjects."⁴ Each successor king to David would be ushered into office with the words of Psalm 2:7 included in his anointing – "you are my son, today I have begotten you." This would serve as a reminder to each king of his divinely appointed responsibility. However, it is in our Lord Jesus Christ, David's ultimate descendant, that the words of Psalm 2 find their ultimate fulfillment. A thousand years after David's promise, a line that was never lacking in a male descendant, David's greatest son arrives on the scene. This descendant does not marry and has no descendant, but He succeeds Himself. By His resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ succeeds Himself and becomes the eternal King Who will inherit all of the promises of God. Paul quotes Psalm 2:7 in this light:

And we declare to you glad tidings – that promise which was made to the fathers. 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)

Psalm 2 is an extraordinary passage of Scripture. It was likely used in ancient Israel in a number of different worship services as believers renewed their allegiance to the rule of God as expressed through their God-given king. It contains the ideal that was set before each of these kings – live as the Son of God and His regent upon this earth. Even more importantly, it contains the specific prophecy of the coming rule of the King Jesus.⁵

The Plans of the Wicked (vv. 1-3) – In the career of each of the descendants of David, there were the ever-present enemies of Israel that posed the potential for assault upon Israel. These verses certainly relate to that situation. Such an attack was indeed foolish provided that the king and Israel were living according to the conditional Mosaic covenant as a manifestation of their spiritual relationship with Yahweh. However, subsequent history proved Israel to be negligent and she suffered the effects of the five cycles of discipline (Lev 26) on more than one occasion. The Babylonian captivity (586 B.C.) could also be seen as a chastening in accordance with the provisions of the Davidic covenant.

I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. (2 Sam 7:14)

The raging or persecution of the nations against the kings of Judah was sporadic and limited in scope and duration; however, the persecution of David's ultimate descendant was most severe, even to the point of His death. Ironically, the persecutors of David's ultimate Son were Jews, not Gentiles. At Jesus' 2nd Advent, the nations will be aligned to oppose and confront the return of our Lord (Re 19:19 – "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army"). "For the first time since the building of the tower of Babel, rulers of the world and their subjects will be united in defying the Almighty. In both instances, their chances for success are nil."⁶ No doubt,

³ Ibid., 157.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 168.

⁶ Ibid., 164.

when Israel is ruled by the Son of David in the future messianic kingdom and men are enticed to revolt against that reign at the end of 1000 years in the battle known as Gog and Magog (Re 20:7-10), those who revolt will utter similar words to those found in verse 3 of our Psalm.

God's Response (vv. 4-6) – God laughs at such folly. It is sheer folly for man to think that he can defy God and His will and plan without consequence. The first section of this Psalm ended in a prophetic quotation of the wicked world rulers, stating their purposes. The second section of this Psalm ends in a prophetic quotation of God regarding His King. The verb here translated “am determined” appears to be a perfect of resolve, which indicates the strong determination of Yahweh to install His King in Zion or Jerusalem. This rare verb is used only here and in Proverbs 8:23 and when combined with the strong personal pronoun “I” or “as for Me,” the wording emphasizes the determination of the Lord.⁷

The Son's declaration of the Father's decree (vv. 7-9) – We witness a change of speakers in this section. The Son Himself is speaking and He quotes the words of the Father respecting Himself. In other words, we are witnessing communication between the members of the Triune Godhead. The decree in Psalm 2:7 is the covenant that God made with David in 2 Samuel 7. As the nations are gathering their armies together and the nation's leaders are conducting war counsel, there have been some plans made in heaven also. All that the Son needs to do is ask the Father and He will receive the nations as His inheritance. God the Father's purpose is to establish His Son as King over the earth from Jerusalem (Zion). The words of verse 9 may seem harsh to some, especially those who have only been presented an image of Jesus in a serene setting with lambs and children all around. However, the reality is that there is a payday someday and God's justice and righteousness must be met. The reality of life is sometimes shocking to those who live in a world of unreality – the cosmos and all of its distractions – without ever coming to grips with the objective truth of God's plan as revealed in His word.

Instructions to obey the Son (vv. 10-12) – Like the kings who aligned themselves against God and His anointed, we should heed the words of vv. 10-12. We too can be precluded from participating in the reign of Jesus on this earth as co-heirs. Peter instructs us along the same lines:

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? (2 Pe 3:11-12)

There are really only two options available to us as well as the kings of the earth during the rule and reign of David's Son – submit and pay homage through our lives and attitudes or oppose Him and face judgment. The phrase “kiss the son” makes use of an Aramaic word which can be interpreted to worship in purity. Regardless, it is clear that the psalmist is telling the earth's kings to submit to the Lord and to His anointed Son, Israel's king.⁸

⁷ Ibid., 165.

⁸ Walvoord and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 792.