

God's King

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[0 : 00] 7 and 1 Corinthians 17. In those verses, in that covenant, God came to David and promised him that his throne would stand forever, that all his offspring would be king of Israel. Listen to the words in 2 Samuel 17. When your, meaning David's, days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. So according to God's promise, his covenant, this is an eternal throne. And the psalmist is remembering those words, and he repeats them in verse 7 of our psalm. You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. So the psalmist is recalling the Davidic covenant through the words of a kingly adoption ritual. A kingly adoption ritual. Back in the ancient Middle East, when a king was crowned, or when he came into his birthright, his father, the king, would adopt him in an act of ritual significance. The son was always the son, but now he's the son.

He is the future king. This ritual act of begetting would formalize that the heir to the throne had all the kingly rights of his father. This promise was for David and his heirs. God adopted David and his sons and promised to guard the kingdom forever. Not only would David have a eternal kingdom, he had a universal kingdom. David's son and his heirs would rule over all the nations. Look at verse 8. God says, ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. But here comes the tricky part.

Did God's promises fail? Did God's promises fail? Israel was conquered by the Babylonian Empire in 587 BC, and the kings were removed.

[3 : 03] On the face of it, it would seem that God failed, that he did not keep his promise. Well, Psalm 2 is a promise that is ultimately fulfilled by the true Son of God and the true Son of David.

And this is a promise about Jesus Christ. Over a thousand years after God's original promise to David, Jesus Christ, himself a descendant of David, was baptized.

And this is recorded in Mark chapter 1, verse 11. Mark 1, 11 says this, So just as the Spirit descended on David when he was anointed king, so too did the Spirit descend on Jesus when he was baptized.

And this parallel between David and Jesus is drawn throughout the New Testament. And as we'll see later in our Acts series, the apostles understood that Jesus' crucifixion and his resurrection was the fulfilling of Psalm 2, because it was the ultimate act of the Gentiles plotting against God and his anointed king.

Jesus, in his resurrection, undid the rebellion of the nations. And God, his Father, declared that he was the Son and the King of all the earth.

[4 : 53] So this is the entire story of the book of Acts. And Pastor Stephen, as we go through this series, is going to show how, in that book, Christ's kingdom unfolded to all the nations, first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles.

In Psalm 2, the psalmist looks ahead to that time. The psalmist sees the kings of the earth, these Gentile kings, seeking to overthrow the anointed Messiah.

But it's impossible. The Lord created all things. The Lord gave all of creation to his Son as his birthright, as his inheritance.

So, how is God's king sovereign in Psalm 2? Well, God's king is sovereign over all the nations.

God's king is sovereign over all the nations. Have you ever heard of a micronation? A micronation is a fake nation that's set up within the boundaries of an already existing nation.

[6 : 03] I was watching a documentary about the micronation of the Republic of Malasia. Malasia exists within the U.S. state of Nevada, and it's run by President Kevin.

And President Kevin rules over his house in his neighborhood with an iron throne. Now, President Kevin exists within the United States.

The United States gives his little republic no recognition. His republic is not sovereign. President Kevin is not sovereign. In Psalm 2, God's king is sovereign over all the earth.

The Gentiles want to claim sovereignty for themselves. These pagan nations want to be sovereign. And God says, no. My king is sovereign.

My king is sovereign. So, Jesus rules over a universal empire that encompasses every person, every nation, every people group.

[7 : 14] Christ is king over the United States. Christ is king over South Africa. Christ is king over NATO. Christ is king over the BRICS.

All of it belongs to him. So, what does that mean for you? Well, first, recognize that Christ is king over your nation.

Recognize that Christ is king over your nation. No matter where you came from, no matter when in history you were born, no matter what your cultural background is, Christ is king over it.

Christ is king over the Afrikaans, the English, the Nosa, the Zulu, the Dembele, the Asian diaspora in South Africa.

Christ is king over them all. So, recognize Christ's rule. Recognize Christ's rule by acknowledging the limits of religious pluralism.

[8 : 17] So, I want to be very clear here. Religious pluralism as a government policy is a wonderful thing. It is a good thing.

It is a blessing. It is good that everyone can practice what they believe without interference from anybody. That is a good thing.

However, religious pluralism as a government policy is different from religious pluralism as an ethic or as a lifestyle.

Western society celebrates religious pluralism and attempts to make all religions equal. In this understanding of religious pluralism, Islam is the exact same as Christianity.

Christianity is the same as Buddhism, which is the same as Hinduism, which is the same as all traditional religions. All are equal and all are good. However, a basic understanding of each of those religions will show you that they make very different claims.

[9 : 27] They are not the same. Specifically, each religion makes a claim about who or what is sovereign. Krishna cannot be sovereign if Allah is sovereign.

And Christ cannot be sovereign if the spirits are sovereign. Now, the Western understanding of religious pluralism as an ethic is essentially based on atheism.

It assumes that all religions are the same because no religion is true. That is the underlying assumption.

Western understandings of religious pluralism assumes that nothing is sovereign. But that cannot be true alongside the sovereignty claims that every religion makes.

If Christ is the sovereign king over every nation and every people group, what does that mean for you? And what does it mean for me? What does that look like practically?

[10 : 39] Well, to answer that, let's continue to look at Psalm 2 and ask the question, who is sovereign here? Who is sovereign in Psalm 2? Look with me at verses 9 through 12.

The psalmist writes, So here's the psalmist, Here, the psalmist describes God's king as sovereign over every nation.

And as a king, he rules them with a rod of iron or a scepter of iron. This iron scepter is a symbol of his all-power, all-powerful authority over everyone.

And God's king will use this iron scepter to smash apart the assembled nations who are rebelling against his rule. He will use this iron rod just as easily as if someone were to pick up a clay pot and throw it on the ground and smash it into a million pieces.

The New Testament takes this imagery and applies it directly to Jesus Christ as king. The apostle John saw a vision of King Jesus' eventual return in a vision which he relates in Revelation 19, 11 through 16.

[12:19] Listen to what he says in his vision. Then I, being John, saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems. And he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is the Word of God.

Think of the first chapter of the Gospel of John there. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. On his robe and on his thigh has a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. King Jesus is sovereign, and he rules by crushing all the rebels who conspire against his kingdom. In light of this reality, the psalmist has a warning for all would-be kings.

[13:36] Look at verses 10 through 11. The psalmist says, Now therefore, O kings, be wise. Be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. The psalmist warns the kings to be careful, because Christ is on the throne.

He commands the kings to serve the Lord with fear and trembling, and to kiss the Son. That term, kiss, is a ceremonial term.

When a lower noble or a lower government figure comes before a king, they swear allegiance to the king. They will kiss the king's feet.

They will kiss the king's ring. This is the allegiance ceremony to which the psalmist refers. The kings are to kiss the king's feet or his ring to show that they will obey him.

[14:40] Otherwise, the king's wrath will break out against them. These are very stern words to the powerful and to the wealthy, who would use their power and their wealth to oppress any who are beneath them.

And yet, that is not the end of the psalm. Look at the conclusion in verse 12. The psalmist writes, Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

There's that word again that we looked at last week. Blessed. Blessed is the man who delights in the law of the Lord. Blessed here does not necessarily refer to material or physical blessings.

Again, it refers to a state of happiness. Blessed are all those who take refuge in Christ. They are happy. And blessed are all who take refuge in Christ.

Every single man or woman is blessed who takes refuge in the king. In Luke chapter 23, verse 34, we are told of the moment when Jesus was crucified by the gathered Gentiles and by his own people, the Israelites.

[15:56] As Jesus died in agony, Jesus looked at the very people who were rebelling against his rule, who were killing him, and he cried out, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Less than a year later, those who killed Jesus would stand in front of the apostle Peter as he gave his great sermon. And after hearing that sermon, Jesus' killers repented, and they sought refuge in Jesus.

Christ is the type of king who dies for rebels. Christ dies for rebels. Christ unleashes grace on all who seek refuge in him, while unleashing judgment on those who refuse to seek refuge in him.

The original language in Psalm 2 makes this universal call to everyone abundantly clear. The psalmist uses the word son twice in the psalm.

First in verse 7, and then second in verse 12. But the psalmist uses different language both times. In verse 7, he uses the Hebrew word for son.

[17:19] But in verse 12, he uses Aramaic. At the time in which this psalm was written, Aramaic was the common language of the ancient Near East, much that people from different groups could use to communicate.

It's similar to English here in South Africa. All different language speakers use English to communicate. By using the Aramaic term for son, the psalmist emphasizes that God's king is king over everyone.

God's king is king over everyone. And every single person who takes refuge in Christ, Hebrew or Gentile, is blessed.

Every rebel is blessed who seeks refuge in Christ, no matter what their background is. Christ is king over you and over me.

Kiss the sun. I practice this at home. Kiss the sun. Blessed are all who take refuge in Christ.

[18 : 41] Christ will afflict terrible judgment on those who refuse to put their faith in him. But for those who put their faith in him, he blesses and he is a refuge.

He protects everyone. So, in what ways is Christ sovereign? Christ is sovereign over you.

In a classic comedy movie, the UK comedy troupe Monty Python made a spoof about the legend of King Arthur.

In it, King Arthur rides up to a man and a woman who are working in a field. And he introduces himself as Arthur, king of the Britons. The woman is puzzled and says, king of the who?

Arthur responds, the Britons. And the woman says, who are the Britons? Arthur says, we all are and I am your king. The woman responds in a classic line, I didn't know we had a king.

[19 : 49] I thought we were an autonomous collective. I didn't vote for you. In Psalm 2, God's king is sovereign over everyone.

He is sovereign over me. He is sovereign over you, whether you acknowledge it or not. So, acknowledge Christ as king. Acknowledge Christ as king by seeking refuge in Christ.

Take refuge in Christ. Now, seek refuge in Christ in three ways. First, place your refuge or seek your refuge by placing your faith in Christ as the only king.

The only son of God. Acknowledging Christ as simply a moral teacher or as a prophet, it simply will not do. Saying that Christ was an inspired religious teacher ignores Psalm 2.

Saying that Christ was an inspired religious teacher ignores all the prophecies made about Christ.

Saying he was an inspired religious teacher ignores Christ's enemies who put him to death because he claimed to be king.

[21 : 02] Saying that he was an inspired religious teacher ignores Christ's students who themselves were executed for claiming that Christ is king. Saying that Christ was only an inspired religious teacher ignores Christ himself who says that he is king.

Christ says he is king over the nations and that he is king over you. So, please ignore the delusions of popular culture that says he was merely an inspired religious teacher.

Put your faith in Christ. Seek him as a refuge. And he will bless you. Second, take refuge in Christ by rejecting other sources of refuge.

Reject other sources of refuge. Other religious gurus will claim that they are the path to God. Or that they will give you enlightenment. Reject this.

Reject that teaching. Because there is only one path to God. And it is King Jesus. All other attempts to claim to be the path of God to God.

[22 : 17] is nothing more than the rebellion talked about in Psalm 2. Also, reject other spirits or spiritual forces that would claim authority over you.

No spirit has power apart from Christ. Christ has power over all the spiritual forces. He is king over you.

If a spiritual force or power would have you do something that would threaten your loyalty to Christ, your obedience to the king of creation, reject it and refuse to participate in it.

As Paul says in Galatians 1.8, If an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preach to you, let him be accursed.

If you're afraid that the spirit or spiritual force might do something to you, seek refuge in Christ. Because he is all powerful and a safe refuge.

[23 : 18] Thirdly and finally, acknowledge Christ as your king by admitting that you are a rebel.

Admit that you are a rebel. Acknowledge that you do not delight in God's law, but you delight in your own law.

Acknowledge that you want to be your own king or your own queen. Acknowledge that you deserve God's wrath and deserve to be broken with a rod of iron for failing to love God with everything that you are.

By acknowledging this, you come under the protection of Christ your king. The rod of iron that he uses for judgment is a rod of iron for protection.

King Jesus stood before the rod of iron for you. He himself bore the sentence of execution that ought to fall on every rebel, that ought to fall on you.

It fell on him on the cross. He died for you, and he is a safe refuge. He bids all rebels to come to him.

[24 : 29] Remember, Jesus is the king who looks at rebels and cries out, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. In the United States and in South Africa, we love being a democracy. We love the power of the ballot box. We love our sovereignty and the voice of the people. And it is good to celebrate that we live in free countries. Nevertheless, these democracies exist within and under a king, King Jesus. In Psalm 2, we asked in what ways God's king is sovereign. We saw that God's king is sovereign over the nations and over you. Therefore, because Christ is the sovereign king, you must submit to him because he is a safe refuge.