

Hope Among the Heathens

Psalm 2: 1-12

We have read a Psalm that bears no reference to its author, but [Acts 4:25](#) presents David as the writer. This is a Psalm that is very diverse in its application. In it we sense a **personal** aspect from David. No doubt, as he surveyed the world around him, he was troubled and perplexed at what he saw. He was well aware that the Lord was responsible for the blessings of all men, and yet most rejected Him and even sought to remove themselves from any relationship with Him or His people. (I'm sure that many of us are troubled by what we see and experience in this life).

Also this Psalm is **prophetic**, in that it speaks of the coming of Messiah in the first and second advent. The world may deny it, but Jesus came as the Savior of the world and He is coming again.

We can also see this Psalm is **practical** in its application. It is relevant for every age and all people. The only thing that will matter when this life is through is what we have done concerning Jesus. However, there are benefits and consequences to the life we live in this body. God knows our hearts and the lives we live, [Jer.17:9-10](#). It is easy to become discouraged and doubtful in the day in which we live. It seems as if the world grows more wicked and prosperous while the righteous seem to suffer increasing persecution. We are not the first to face difficulty, and we must remain faithful to the Lord and look to Him for strength in these trying times.

As we look at this Psalm I want to preach on the thought: [Hope Among the Heathens](#). There are some [truths](#) that David realized concerning his day that we need to consider concerning our day. It is:

I. A Day of Universal Iniquity (1-3) – I don't need to tell you that we live in a day filled with iniquity; sin abounds on every hand. The world has thrown all standards aside and has embraced every sort of wickedness. So let's take a moment to consider this day of universal iniquity. Notice:

A. The Mystery (1) – [Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?](#) David was perplexed and pondered a troubling question. Now I'm sure he knew sin was the root of the problem. Men's hearts were filled with sin and the lusts of the flesh, but he was overwhelmed with what he saw. He lived in a day when anything that could be imagined in the mind was carried out in the flesh. David was astonished at the disregard for the Lord and the depths to which man would sink. Why would they do such a thing? Why doesn't man realize God is the source from which all blessings flow? Apart from Him there is no real peace or joy.

- We live in a day of mystery. There is little that surprises me anymore. Society continues on a downward spiral. Any abomination imaginable is carried out and even encouraged. The home and family are under constant attack. The conservative Christian is viewed as a hindrance to progress and despised by the world. Men fail to seek the Lord or turn to Him. Why do the heathen rage in our day? What will it take for America to turn from their wicked ways and seek the Lord? I know what He did for me! I have no doubt that Jesus is what the world needs, but they can't see it.

B. The Mockery (2) – [The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed.](#) The kings of the earth set themselves upon a pedestal of arrogance and open defiance against the Lord and His people. They publicly proclaimed they wanted nothing to do with the Lord or His ways. The God who had given them life was rejected and despised.

- Does that not sound much like our day? A nation founded upon the Word of God and faith in Christ has rejected Him and turned its back upon His precepts. There was a campaign that removed prayer and Bible reading from our schools. People are discouraged from praying in Jesus' name publicly. A debate raged over the Ten Commandments being displayed in government buildings. There is a push to silence the preaching of the Gospel and the message of repentance. America has rejected and mocks the God who made this great nation what she is. Every religion on earth is embraced and diligently protected except Christianity. It is a dark day, but we will prevail!

C. The Motive (3) – [Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.](#) The motive of the heathen is revealed in this verse. They sought to defeat the influence of God's people and destroy them. They wanted to separate themselves from the message of God and His righteous demands. Apparently they felt, if the voice was silenced, their sin would go unnoticed and the consequences would disappear.

- The world wants to silence the voice of the Christian today. They don't want to hear about bloody Calvary or the torments of hell. They want to be left alone to indulge in their sin without anyone standing in the way. I fear America will see the day when men of God are arrested and imprisoned for preaching the truth! A nation that once sought counsel from God's Word and sought to live and govern by it is seeking desperately to distance itself and break all ties to the Savior and His blessed Word! America wants to be viewed as a diverse people with no ties to organized religion or the true and living God. [2 Chron.36:16 – But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.](#)

II. A Day of Indivisible Authority (4-9) – David had looked upon the condition of the world with despair, but he was confident in the God he served. We live in a difficult day, but the Lord is still in control. The world in which we live isn't beyond the reach and authority of God. Consider:

A. God's Deity (4a) – [He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh](#). God is seated upon His throne. He is sovereign and He still reigns. God is not dismayed at the sinful indulgence of humanity. He is not worried about evil overcoming righteousness. The world may sink deeper in sin, but He remains in control. The world may reject Him, but He is not limited in power. We belong to One who created the universe by the word of His power. His authority is not given or rivaled by men. He is still God!

B. God's Discipline (4b-5) – [the Lord shall have them in derision](#).^[5] [Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure](#). Man may feel as if he has gained the upper hand. He may feel as if he can mock God's holiness and get away with sin, but God will have the final say. The word [derision](#) literally means "to mock." Those who denied and mocked God will face His judgment and His wrath. Those who claim they are accountable to no one will stand before a holy God and give account of their lives.

- Sin does not go unnoticed and it will not go unpunished. God is a God of mercy, but He is also a God of judgment and wrath. He was merciful unto His own people, but when they refused to repent, judgment was all that remained. I firmly believe God will judge those who reject Him and His righteousness. [Rom.1:18 – For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness](#); [Heb.10:31 – It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God](#).

C. God's Declaration (6-7) – [Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion](#).^[7] [I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee](#). Things were bad in David's day. As he looked around he saw sin and despair, but God offered assurance of the coming Messiah. Ever since Adam's fall in the garden, sin had reigned upon the earth. All of creation suffered under the burden of sin, but the Promised King would come.

- He came, just as God had promised, born of a virgin, and begotten of the Father. Jesus was God veiled in flesh. He lived a triumphant life over sin. They crucified Him as He became the substitutionary atonement for our sin. He was buried in a cold, dark grave, but He rose victorious over sin and death. The penalty of eternal death was pardoned by the offering of the Son. He returned to the Father where He is seated in power.

- The world may deny Him, but He is Sovereign and He is the Savior! We can rejoice because Jesus atoned for our sin. Life may be hard, but the redeemed belong unto the Lord.

D. God's Dispensation (8-9) – Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. ^[9] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. These verses make reference to the second coming of our Lord. This world today is ruled by the prince of the power of the air, but Jesus is coming again to set up His kingdom on earth to judge the wicked and establish righteousness. There are those who doubt and even deny His coming, but He will come again. Rev.19:15 – And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. The world is ruled by sin and despair in this dispensation of time, but the Lord will come again and set things right, defeating Satan and the influence of sin! Rev.22:12 – And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

III. A Day of Available Mercy (10-12) – Even in a day filled with iniquity, God offered mercy. He desired that men would repent and turn unto Him. We live in a sinful day, but the mercy of God is still extended to those who will receive it. There is hope in this difficult day. The Lord is calling for all to come unto Him. This involves:

A. An Honest Heart (10) – Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. The call was sent for men to examine their hearts, to see where they stood with the Lord. God called for them to turn from the pleasures of the flesh and seek His wisdom. He expected them to live according to His righteous plan.

- If you have never been saved, you have an urgent need. God wants to save you, but you must meet Him on His terms. Seek the wisdom and ways of God rather than the desires of the flesh. Admit that you are lost and in need of His saving grace. Christian, if you are troubled and in despair examine your heart and make sure you are right with God. We must see ourselves in light of the holiness of God. He demands that we be made righteous and live according to His ways.

B. A Humble Heart (11) – Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Men of the earth are determined to make their own way. They don't see the need to submit to the Lord's demands. They have no reverence for the Lord or respect for His ways. They live as if there is no God. Mercy is available to those who seek it, but we must come before the Lord in an attitude of fear and trembling.

- Apart from God we have no hope. He alone is our source of rejoicing. Were it not for the sacrifice and provision of Christ, we would all be hopelessly lost. We must see Him as Lord and Redeemer of our souls. A life that isn't submitted in holy reverence will not be accepted of God. If you desire His blessing in your life, humble yourself before Him!

C. A Holy Heart (12) – *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* The answer to life's problems is Jesus. He is the only One who can deliver you from the burden of sin and the cares of this life. We are to come before Him in an attitude of worship and praise. Were it not for His mercy we would all be condemned and rejected of God. *Lam.3:22 – It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

- We have nothing to boast of in ourselves. It is the righteousness of Christ that has made us acceptable unto the Lord. We could never stand in the face of His wrath. We are obligated to offer praise unto the Lord for all that He has done and for who He is. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.
- Let us come before Him with a holy heart that is mindful of His grace unto us. Jesus gave His best upon the cross and He deserves our best in praise. Those who have trusted the Lord in salvation and strive to live a godly life are promised His blessing. We need the touch of God on our lives in such difficult days.

Conclusion: The world in which we live can be seen in this Psalm. Many live as if there is no God and seek to remove Him from every aspect of life. God is sovereign and in control. He is coming again, just as He said. Are you ready for that day? We all need the grace and presence of God to endure in these hard times. If you have never been saved, come to Jesus and He will supply your need. If you are troubled, consider your heart, and turn to Him.