

Dr. Bruce Waltke, Psalms, Liturgical Approach, Coronation Psalms, Psalm 2, Session 21, 6-min. Video Overview

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Welcome to the explainer. You know, today we're jumping into Psalm 2, and this ancient text is really something else. It reads less like a prayer and more like a script for this huge cosmic drama.

You've got rebellion down here on earth and a King being enthroned up in heaven. All right, let's just dive right in. So the Psalm kicks off, not with praise or anything like that, but with this huge, powerful question.

And you've got to understand the author isn't actually looking for an answer here. He's just completely floored. Absolutely astonished at this plan.

That is so obviously going to fail. It just sets this incredible tense mood from the very first line. So how do we even get a handle on this? Well, the scholar, Dr. Bruce Waltke has a great idea.

He says, look, just think of it as a 3000 year old play, and it makes perfect sense, right? It's all structured with different speakers, and the scenes jump from earth to heaven and back again. It gives us this amazing layered look at what power and rebellion are all about. Okay.

So this play unfolds in four really clear acts. And the cool thing is each act has a new speaker. First up, we hear from the rebellious Kings down on earth.

Then bam, we're whisked away to the heavenly court to hear what God has to say. After that, God's chosen King gets his turn on stage, and to wrap it all up, the Psalmist, the writer, steps in and talks directly to us, the audience. All right.

So let's set the scene. Act one opens in the courts of these earthly rulers. I want you to picture it: a secret meeting, you know, world leaders all huddled together, and they're all united by this one single defiant goal.

And this isn't just some small protest. This rebellion is the whole shebang. It's political for sure.

You've got Kings banding together, but deep down it's totally spiritual. They're trying to overthrow God's authority because they don't see it as something that protects them. Nope.

To them, it's just oppressive. And this quote, this is their rallying cry. This is what they're shouting in the streets.

They're basically saying God's law isn't a guide to freedom and order. It's just a bunch of chains and shackles holding us back. I mean, this is a full-on declaration of cosmic independence.

Okay, hold on because the scene is about to change big time. We're pivoting away from those smoky back rooms where all the plotting is happening on earth. And we're shooting straight up to the throne room of heaven.

Why? To see how all this rebellion is being received on the other side. And what you see here is just this incredible contrast. It's night and day down on earth.

You have all this panicked, frantic energy, right? Conspiring, plotting, banding together, but up in heaven, the response is just complete sovereign confidence. God's already on the throne, and his reaction isn't panic. Not at all.

It's something else entirely. And get this: God's first reaction isn't anger. It's not fear.

It's laughter. I mean, think about that. It creates this almost funny picture, doesn't it? It's kind of like Gulliver from Gulliver's Travels, you know, looking down at all the tiny Lilliputians trying to tie him down with their little strings.

The power difference is so huge that the whole rebellion just looks absurd. And so the first thing God does is just laugh at how pointless it all is. Now, I know what you might be thinking.

Laughing at a disaster that's about to happen. That can sound a little jarring. It sort of brings to mind that famous German word, Schadenfreude.

You know, that feeling of taking pleasure in someone else's misfortune. So is that what's happening here? Is God just gloating? Well, Dr. Waltke says, no, absolutely not. This isn't some mean-spirited pleasure in watching people suffer.

Think of it more like the righteous laughter that comes when you know, you just know that justice is going to win, that the good guys are going to come out on top, tyranny will fail, and everything will be set right again. It's the pure joy of seeing good triumph over evil. And then right after the laughter, right after the scoffing, bam, God speaks.

This decisive, powerful decree comes down from on high. So while all the Kings on earth are busy plotting and scheming, God basically just ignores all their noise and moves right ahead with his own plan, which is what a divine coronation. That brings us to act three.

The spotlight shifts. Now the King, who is just installed, takes the stage, and he's about to tell everyone the source, the very foundation of his power. And what's key here is that he's not just making this up.

He's reciting the official decree that God gave him. This line is at the very heart of what's called the Davidic covenant. Now that phrase today, I give you birth.

It's not literal. It's understood to mean his coronation day. The moment he is officially adopted, you know, in a Royal sense as God's son and his representative right here on earth.

So this whole idea of being God's son is really interesting because it works on two levels at the same time. On one hand. Yeah, it's talking about the actual historical King of Israel,

David's successor, but on a much deeper level, it's also pointing forward to a future messianic figure, an ultimate King who will fulfill this relationship with God perfectly.

And listen, the authority that this King gets, it's just staggering. We're not talking about rule over some small nation here. This is a global inheritance.

The decree gives him dominion over all the nations that were just rebelling against him, all the way to the ends of the earth. It's huge. And now we come to our final act: the playwright himself, the Psalmist, steps right onto the stage.

He totally breaks the fourth wall and starts speaking directly to the Kings in the story. And you know, by extension, he's talking to all of us too. And he lays out a choice.

It's an incredibly stark one with no middle ground. On one side, you've got the path of wisdom. What does that look like? Serve the King, be reverent, submit to his authority.

That phrase kiss the sun, by the way, was a common ancient sign of loyalty and worship. Then you've got the other side and the consequences for staying on that path of rebellion. Well, they're dire.

We're talking wrath and total destruction. So here's the kicker. The Psalmist completely reframes the whole conflict.

See the rebellious Kings; they thought they were fighting for freedom, right? Breaking free from bondage. But the Psalmist steps in and says, no, no, no, you've got it all wrong. The real choice isn't between freedom and bondage.

It's between submitting to a good and righteous King or being completely swallowed up by the chaos of your own failed rebellion. And so after all that drama, the rebellion, the divine laughter, the warnings of judgment, the whole play ends on a really surprising note. The very last word isn't perish.

It's blessed. The final invitation isn't to face down wrath, but to find a safe place to find refuge; it just leaves us with this one big question, doesn't it? After seeing how this whole drama plays out, where is the wisest place for any of us to stand?