

The opening words of this psalm are filled with power and fury. You get a sense of the tension and opposition and conflict from these words. It's a sharp departure from the words of trees being watered found in the first psalm. You may recall from last week how we noticed the contrast between blessing and perishing in Psalm 1. Psalm 1 has shown us the rich blessing one has in following the way of the Lord, and now in Psalm 2 we find the folly of a world that has turned on its Creator.

We may think of the blessing and riches and life that man can have with the Lord God, the one who created all things and upholds all things, and then look around and see how man is acting. We see restlessness. We see turmoil. We see rage and anger and frustration. So as we look about in this world filled with turmoil: heightened tensions in the WHO, in international relations with China and the Middle East, the coronavirus pandemic, the financial crisis its response has brought, protests, injustices, and the question immediately rises to our tongues, "Why?" Some may ask, "Why do people act so cruelly?" Still others, "Why is society so systematically corrupt?" Some Christians may ask, "Why, oh LORD, do you allow these things to happen?"

This is also how the psalm begins, "Why?" But it does not ask the why most might ask. No, it goes deeper. Built upon the foundation that the man who follows the LORD is blessed, and the wicked will come to nothing, the question is asked, "Why do they rage?" "Why do they plot?" "Why do they set themselves against the LORD?" What does it profit the nations, the people, the sons of Adam, to turn against the LORD, to conspire against him? Do they not know who he is?

But that makes no difference to the world. They still take their stand, and refuse to acknowledge the LORD. It explains the chaos of the world. It highlights for us how these things have come about. The world froths and heaves and rages because it has rejected the Creator, the God of life and peace. Brothers and sisters, when you look at the world around you, do not ask God why he allows such things. Wonder instead at the brokenness and depravity of the heart of man! Why do they rage in vain? Do they not know who is truly in control? Do they not know the power of he who sits in the heavens? They do not.

The world is in rebellion against the LORD. It considers the authority of the divine as bondage. The burden of serving God is considered a heavy yoke, something that ties them down. And this should not come as a surprise to us. This is a story as old as the fall. This is the state of a world that has turned its back on the LORD, and does not recognize his authority. Everything the world does is through that lens: a world at war with its Creator.

And there's a certain solace for us in that. We do not have to worry like our neighbours do about what tomorrow brings. We do not need to fret about what disaster could come next. We do not wonder at whether life will be better or worse for the next generation. We may know that the world will continue to rage and plot in vain against the LORD. Satan will continue his attacks upon the church. Other calamities will beset this earth in the months and years to come. But for all the plans and methods of the governments of the world, we know with certainty what the result is: God has set his King on his holy hill.

Now such an outlook may seem a little too dismissive of the world. After all, the kings and rulers and presidents and generals and prime ministers and chancellors of the world are powerful people. The calamities and disasters that face the civilizations across the globe are not small matters. Can they be so easily dismissed? Surely we must contend with such weighty matters?

The psalm we sing has a far wider and higher perspective than we do. After considering the powers that be here below, we are lifted up to consider the one above. He who sits in the heavens is also active, and what is his reaction to the frenzied opposition below? The enthroned one looks from his position of authority and power, and he is amused. He laughs. Even mocks. For as powerful as the rulers of the world seem to us, they are less than nothing compared to the LORD Almighty, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

And it's that perspective that we ourselves need to have when we feel overwhelmed. Our concerns and anxieties about the future can rest in knowing that the opposition our faith will face is less than nothing compared to our Lord. For he is strong and mighty. He will have the last say. He has already guaranteed the victory!

We began by reflecting upon everything going on in the world around us. A world that does not

recognize the power and authority of God. Many do not even acknowledge the existence of the divine anymore, refusing to even recognize a spiritual element to reality. If God is not acknowledged, and nothing seems to come of it, is our Lord making good on his word of verses 8 and 9?

Regardless of the perspective of the rulers of the world, the warning still goes out. All Creation testifies to the glory and power of the Creator, the conscience of man accuses him of wrongdoing. Everyone knows there is injustice and needless suffering in this life, and that life on this earth could be better, blessed even. There is no excuse for denying God.

But the warning still goes out. Be wise, be warned, be aware. And there's a lot of comfort in these words. That the God of the universe, who created all life and upholds this earth and is the rightful ruler of all things who deserves all honour and glory, is willing to warn the rulers of rebellion, is a gracious thing. Think again of how the psalm began! Nations rage, people plot, rulers taking counsel and setting themselves against the LORD. They compare his authority to bondage, his governance to chains. Wanting nothing to do with the King of Kings, they seek rebellion.

What sort of ruler is so gracious and compassionate and slow to anger that he would grant forgiveness for such blatant acts of rebellion? What sort of God do we have that is able to restore those who abuse the authority derived from his authority? Our God is good and gracious and is willing to be reconciled even to such an affront to his holy name. This is especially comforting for us when we reflect upon our own state. After all, when looking at the sinful rebellion of the world around us, we cannot forget our own rebellious nature. That we too, apart from Christ, are children of wrath, conceived and born in sin, and would eagerly go astray and refuse to serve God Almighty. Yet the warning against sin has come. The call to repent and to cling to the Son and to live a new life for him has earnestly gone out. Look at how David concludes the psalm, "Blessed are all who take refuge in him." A psalm that highlights that despite the tumult of the nations, the Lord has set his King with power and authority. And because of that? When we take refuge in him, rather than worrying about the authorities of the land, we find rest and peace. We may be blessed. We may know that he uses his power and authority to govern us properly for our well-being. May we live in the gospel of our Saviour Christ Jesus the King, "Repent and believe, for the kingdom of God is at hand."