

August 30, 2020

Pastor Steve Hardy

“Why Do the Nations Rage?”

Psalm 2

Series: “Psalms”

Psalm 2 begins by asking why the nations “rage.” There was a specific historical event that particularly fulfilled the words of Psalm 2, as noted by the apostles in Acts 4. The nations raged against God’s anointed Son and king, Jesus. But the daily news demonstrates they still rage, and the answer to “why?” lies within the truth of this Psalm which offers us hope, encouragement, and confidence in the place of fear, as they rage on.

I. The nations rage because they are in **REBELLION** against God, Psalm 2:1-3.

- A. The rage of the nations is a matter of **WONDER** (1).
- B. All manner of earthly authorities conspire against **GOD** (2).
- C. They are in rebellion against God’s **AUTHORITY** (3).

II. The nations rage but their rebellion is **VAIN**, Psalm 2:1, 4-9.

- A. God’s laugh reveals his knowledge of their **END**, (1, 4).
- B. He will judge the rebels in his **WRATH**, (5).
- C. His answer is his **SOVEREIGN KING**, (6-9).

III. The nations rage but the wise will **SUBMIT**, Psalm 2:10-12.

- A. Now is the time to be **WARNED**, (10).
- B. The wise will **SERVE** and **HONOR** God’s Son and King (11-12).
- C. Those who take refuge in him are **BLESSED** (12).

While we may be troubled by the raging that goes on around us, God is not. He knows who reigns in the end. We have the opportunity to take refuge and experience his blessing even while still in “exile” in a land of rebels, when we trust him and take refuge in him.

Family Time:

Children of any age are aware there is trouble in this world, to some extent. As appropriate according to their age and awareness, talk about things going on (riots, divisive politics, the pandemic, injustice). Offer assurance from Scriptures (Psalm 2, John 14:1-6; Colossians 2:13-15, etc.) that God is in charge, and those who are in him may know peace and blessing. Review Philippians 4:4-9, and practice prayer, thanksgiving, and dwell on things true, honorable, just, pure (etc.) together.

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion:

1. Contemplate and discuss the difference between “rage” and “outrage”. When one encounters injustice (such as racial discrimination) that might lead to “outrage”, what are some positive responses that could be constructive rather than destructive? What are some examples of positive responses you have pursued in a situation that was literally “outrageous”?

2. Why do people “rage” or rebel against the Lord? Note how Isaiah describes those who bow to idols, images they have created of wood or metal, in Isaiah 44:18-20. Given the inability of the unbeliever to understand, and knowing the end rebels will face, what should be our prayer, and what should be our attitude toward those who continue to rebel?

3. Writing in the book Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy, Mark Vroegop suggests that perhaps many American Christians embrace the idea that life will always get better (“cultural optimism”) as an idol. He writes:

“I fear that too many of us, including myself, are so emotionally and spiritually tied to this optimism that we don’t know how to live in a culture reaping what it has sown. Throughout the centuries, Christians have found a way forward while their culture was hostile or falling apart.”

In a culture that is hostile and falling apart, what is that “way forward”? What practical help is offered in Psalm 2 (especially vv. 10-12), and what other Scriptures come to mind?

NEXT WEEK: Psalm 19, Walking In Truth

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