

## PSALM 2

### MESSIAH THE SON OF GOD

AUTHOR: Anonymous (attributed to David by Act4:25)

INTRODUCTION: Though no inscription denotes the human author of this psalm, Acts 4:25 attributes it to David. Furthermore, Acts 13:33 quotes Ps2:7 and refers to it as the "second psalm", indicating that the Book of the Psalms was organized and ordered very early (in contrast to the chapter divisions of the other books of Scripture, which came much later).

Psalm 2 is one of the most important of all the Messianic psalms, as it clearly identifies Jehovah's coming Messiah as being the Son of God. Thus, when the title "the Son of God" was used of the Lord Jesus (27 times in the gospels, 45 times in the NT) it was a decidedly Messianic identification (note Jn20:31); the Jewish leadership, especially the scribes and Pharisees who knew the Scriptures well, understood the title "the Son of God" to be an allusion to Psalm 2. Furthermore, it was acknowledged to be a title ascribing deity to Christ (Jn10:30-33).

Psalm 2 is also important in that it records, prophetically, the formal rejection of the Messiah (the Lord Jesus Christ) by the Gentile nations, even as the Jewish nation formally rejected Him twice (cf., Matt12:24-13:15; 22:2-10; Act28:25-28). Whereas the formal Jewish rejection of Messiah brought God's judgment on the Jewish nation in the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt22:7; Lk19:41-44) and the Diaspora (Deut28:63-64), the formal Gentile rejection prophesied in this psalm will bring God's world-wide judgment of the 7-year Tribulation (2Thess1:6-10; 2Pet3:7).

(SCENE ON EARTH; SPEAKER-DAVID)

AN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ASSEMBLY OF GENTILE NATIONS  
CONSPIRING TO REBEL AGAINST JEHOVAH AND HIS MESSIAH

[1] The term 'heathen' (Heb., *goyim*) refers in this context to the Gentile nations collectively. The KJV 'rage' is an hapax legomenon in the Hebrew, but seems to carry the meaning of "assemble together tumultuously", with the implied purpose for the assembly being to "conspire" or "plot".

The term 'imagine' is most often translated 'meditate' (e.g., Ps1:2), indicating a well-considered and intentional plan. However, that which the Gentile nations 'imagine' they might conspire to accomplish is called a 'vain thing', indicating it is an "empty" or "useless" or "purposeless" attempt which has no possibility for success.

[2] The conspiracy of the Gentile nations is led by their 'kings' and 'rulers' (i.e., this is an official government-led action). The "tumultuous assembly" of these Gentile governments for the purpose of reaching an international consensus could well be something like the debates and resolutions in the United Nations of today.

Note that the Gentile conspiracy is not against some generic concept of "god", but specifically against 'the LORD' (i.e., His personal name, Jehovah, the God of the Bible) and against 'his anointed' (Heb., *mashiach*; that is, Messiah or Christ).

- [3] The rebellion is against 'their bands' and 'their cords', denoting the rule of Jehovah and His Messiah over the Gentile nations. This appears to be a formal resolution adopted by an international Gentile assembly. Note the similarity with the world-wide rebellion at Babel (Gen11:4) that brought God's judgment in the form of the confusion of languages.

Here we have prophesied the official Gentile rejection of the Messiah (i.e., Jesus Christ), just as the Jewish national leadership formally rejected the Messiah at His first coming (Mt12; Lk19:14). Whereas Israel's national rejection of Messiah led to God's judgment in the form of the destruction of Jerusalem (Lk19:44), this future Gentile international rejection will result in God's worldwide judgment during the Tribulation (Rev6:15-17).

(SCENE IN HEAVEN; SPEAKER—GOD THE FATHER)  
GOD'S RESPONSE TO THE GENTILE RESOLUTION

- [4] From heaven God laughs at the futility of such an effort on the part of His creatures (cf., Ps33:10-12). Note that the same two Persons of v2 are in view here: 'He that sitteth in the heavens' (i.e., Jehovah) and 'the Lord' (Heb., *adonai*, that is Christ; cf., Ps110:1). Here, God mocks those who mock Him (2Pet3:3ff; Jude18).
- [5] The rebellion of the creature will eventually bring God's judgment. This judgment will be an outpouring of God's 'wrath' on rebellious creatures, which will take place during "the Day of the LORD" (Zeph1:14ff), or the 7-year Tribulation period that immediately precedes the 2nd Coming. That the Lord will 'speak' during the day of His wrath may well be literal (Joel3:16).
- [6] God has decreed that His Messiah, the seed of David, will reign as King of kings over all the nations from Jerusalem (2Sam7:11-16; Ps89:34-37; Isa9:6-7; Dan2:44-45; Zech9:9-10; Lk1:31-33; Rev12:5,19:15-16). This is a reference to the coming millennial reign of Christ, unconditionally promised to David by Jehovah's covenant with him (2Sam7:11-16; 1Chr17:10-14).

(SPEAKER—GOD THE SON)  
GOD'S SOVEREIGN DECREE

- [7] Note the change of speakers; the one now speaking (i.e., the Son) is being addressed by Jehovah, 'the LORD hath said unto me'.

Here is revealed that the coming Messiah will be Jehovah's Son (Prov30:4; Isa9:6-7; Jn3:13,16). Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ's use of the title "the Son of God" was a decidedly messianic title taken from this psalm. Furthermore, just as a son has the same nature as his father, the Pharisees understood that Christ's use of the title "the Son of God" was a claim to deity (Jn10:30-36).

Much controversy has surrounded the interpretation of 'this day have I begotten thee', and similar statements elsewhere in Scripture that refer to Christ as God's 'begotten son' (e.g., Jn3:16) or 'firstborn' (Col1:15). Scripture is clear that such designations of Christ refer to His resurrection (Act13:33-34; Rom1:4) as the firstborn of the new creation (1Cor15:20-23), and not to His incarnation. The idea of the incarnational sonship of Christ, advocated by some (today most notably John MacArthur), cannot be supported from Scripture, which presents the second Person of the Godhead as a 'Son' from all eternity (Isa9:6; Prov30:4; Gal4:4).

- [8] Here, the Son of God claims His inheritance from the Father, promised by Jehovah in His covenant with David (1Chr17:11-14), which is an eternal kingdom over all the nations of the earth (Rev11:15). In this reign (i.e., the Millennial Kingdom) the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ and joint-heirs with Him (Rom8:14-17) will participate (Rev5:10).
- [9] Christ's 2nd Coming to claim the earth as His possession will be a violent affair (Rev19:11-21). All rebellious creatures, both Jew and Gentile, will be judged and destroyed (Ezek20:33-38; Joel3:12-14; Matt25:31-46). The 'rod of iron' with which Christ takes possession of the earth will also be used during His Millennial Kingdom to enforce righteousness (Rev12:5,19:15). Though not all subjects of the Kingdom will love King Messiah, universal obedience will be enforced (Ps18:44) under threat of judgment (Zech14:17-19).

(SPEAKER—GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT)  
ADVICE TO REBELLIOUS GENTILE KINGS

- [10] It is the role of the Holy Spirit to direct worship toward the Second Person of the Godhead, the Son of God (Jn16:13-14). Here the Holy Spirit speaks, offering advice to the Gentile rulers.
- [11] In light of the futility of their rebellion, they are exhorted to serve Jehovah their God. The exhortations to 'serve with fear' and 'rejoice with trembling' are expressions of worship by humble creatures in submission to their Creator.
- [12] Serving Jehovah requires submitting to His Son the Messiah (Matt22:42; 1Jn2:22-23). 'Kiss the Son' pictures homage paid to a sovereign lord (1Kgs19:18; Hos13:2).

The destiny of all those who refuse to willingly submit to the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to 'perish' (cf., Jn3:16) in the Day of His wrath. Here, the antecedent of the pronoun 'his' is 'the Son'; thus, the coming "day of the LORD" which is an outpouring of the wrath of God includes the wrath of the Son (Rev6:16-17).

In contrast to the rebels who will perish, those who put their trust in the Son of God will be 'blessed'