

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS - December 29 & 30, 2007
St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church – Watertown, WI

THIS IS OUR KING! PSALM 2

Often when a child is born, people will ask, who does that child look like? What characteristics can we see in that child from either his mother or father? People will also speculate on what that child might become and do with his life.

On Tuesday we celebrated the birthday of a child born over two thousand years ago. That child is Jesus Christ born to the Virgin Mary in the village of Bethlehem. We already know much about this child. For you and I know the history of his life. We know who he is and what he did to rescue the human race. In our reading for the first Sunday after Christmas we turn our attention to something written about the Savior about a thousand years before the events that took place in Bethlehem. As we ponder the words written by King David, an ancestor of Jesus, we note this important fact about Mary's child – **THIS IS OUR KING!** As we carefully examine David's words we learn much about **I) Who He Is**. Then as David comments on people's reactions to this king, he says to you and me, **II) Take Refuge In Him**.

WHO IS HE?

Today when you read about people's thoughts on the person of Jesus Christ, it is very interesting the concepts and ideas that people have about this child born in Bethlehem. Some consider Jesus merely a human being who lived an exemplary life and serves as an example for us on how we should live so that we can attain eternal life by our life and works. Others see Jesus as a man who became God as he lived such a wonderful and kind life and then died an innocent death. That is not what the Bible teaches about Jesus and that is not what Jesus revealed about himself during the 33 years of his life on this earth.

Let's look at what David writes by inspiration of the Holy Spirit in Psalm 2. In verse two he states, "The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One." (v. 2) This child is the Lord's anointed one. In the Old Testament God had Prophets, High Priests and Kings anointed. This was done by pouring olive oil on the head of the prophet, high priest or king to note that God had chosen this person to serve in that particular office and that he was pouring his Holy Spirit on this person to help him carry out the duties of his office. Today when people are chosen to a special office, we often elect them. Upon their election, they take an oath of office and promise to carry out their duties. Then we as Christians pray for God's guidance and protection for our chosen leaders. The Anointed One David is writing about is neither himself nor his son, Solomon. This is the special one anointed or chosen by God to be our prophet, high priest and king. In fact, that is why Jesus is referred to as the Christ. The word Christ means chosen or anointed one. Jesus is the person that David is referring to. In the book of Acts we are told that the early believers prayed a portion of this psalm and said, "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen." (Acts 4:27-28)

Mary's baby is the chosen one of God. He was chosen by God to be the human race's perfect Prophet, High Priest and King. Every word he has spoken is the truth. He announces peace, forgiveness and eternal life to the world. He is the world's perfect High Priest. He offered the perfect sacrifice to God for the sins of all people, himself. He continues to intercede for us daily before the throne of God and continually wins for us the verdict, "not guilty". As our holy King he rules this world and causes all things to work for the good of his people, the Holy Christian Church.

But there's more. Mary's child is not just the Lord's Anointed. In verse seven we hear the Anointed One, the Christ, speak. He says, "I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: 'He said to me, 'You are my Son; today I

have become your Father.” (V. 7) This is the eternal Son of God. Already in eternity before time began the Son existed with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God. The Son was begotten of the Father before time began. This is part of the mystery of the Holy Trinity. It makes absolutely no sense to my human reason. Yet that is what the Bible reveals about the Son of God. He is separate from the Father and the Holy Spirit, yet he is one with them. So the eternal Son of God took on human flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary and became one of us. He is true God and true man in one person. Already one thousand years before this event took place in Bethlehem David was writing about the Lord’s Anointed and that he is the eternal Son of God.

What is the reaction of many to the LORD and his Anointed? Listen to what David writes, ““Why do the nations conspire and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand against the LORD and against His Anointed One. ‘Let us break their chains,’ they say, ‘and throw off their fetters.’” (Vv. 1-3) The early Christians applied what the Jews and the Romans did to Jesus as a fulfillment of this prophecy. We continue to see the same reactions to Jesus and his teachings, don’t we? Through the course of history nations have attempted to destroy the church of Jesus Christ. The Roman Empire outlawed Christianity. That empire has been gone over 1,500 years but the church of Jesus still stands to this day. The atheistic communist government of the Soviet Union attempted to stamp out the Christian faith. That government no longer exists but the church of Jesus still proclaims peace and forgiveness to the world. We see it every year at this time when non-Christians get very vocal in their opposition to the celebration of Christmas. But we also see it in our own lives when we reject the teachings of the Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ. When we don’t like some particular teaching that God has given us, we are essentially saying, “Let us cast aside his teachings and throw away his commands.” We see it over and over again when people disregard God’s commands regarding greed and the love of money. We see this attitude when it comes to our speech and what we say about others or how we misuse God’s name on a regular basis. We see it in many people’s attitudes toward marriage and sex. This is a rejection of God’s holy law. We also see this same attitude in people who think and say that they are basically good people and that God should accept them because they have tried to do their best. This is a rejection of God’s Gospel, of his promise of forgiveness and eternal life as a free gift through Jesus Christ.

TAKE REFUGE IN HIM

David now issues a warning to the people of his day and also to us. He reminds us that the Anointed One is King and what that means to be king. He encourages us to take refuge in the Lord our King.

When people ignore God’s Word, reject what the Bible says about them, about the way of salvation, about the moral absolutes that God has established, what is God’s reaction to all this? Listen to what David writes, “The One enthroned in heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ‘I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.’” (Vv. 4-6) We may attempt to overthrow the Anointed One and his Word, but God laughs. He has established his Son as the eternal King and supreme ruler of all. Compared to the power and might of our eternal king we are like a snowball in a frying pan. We have no power. We have no strength. We are helpless.

David then goes on to tell us what the LORD says to his chosen King, “Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.” (Vv.8-9) This seemingly helpless infant who seemed just as helpless as a man when he was crucified by his enemies has been given the world as his inheritance. He rules with power and great might. In the end he will destroy all those who have rejected him and his Word. That’s what it means that he is king. He has the power and he will judge and punish.

Now David closes his song with this encouragement for all of us, “Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.” (Vv. 10-12) We need to submit to the LORD. That’s what David means when he writes, “Kiss the Son,

lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way.” (v. 12a) We need to carefully listen to his Word and follow his instruction. We need to believe what he tells us for what he reveals to us is the truth.

What is the result of listening to the Lord and following his Word? David writes, “Blessed are all who take refuge in him.” (v. 12b) The Lord will bless us. In this life we are blessed when we listen to the Lord’s Word and follow his instructions. When we speak well of people and take their words and actions in the kindest possible way, we don’t become known as the town gossip. When we seek to follow the laws of our land, we don’t have to be afraid of being arrested and fined or thrown in jail. There are definite blessings when we seek to live according to God’s Word and not follow the ways and teachings of this world or the ideas of our own sinful and corrupt nature.

When we run to the Lord for refuge, for forgiveness and strength, we will be blessed. For the Lord will never turn us away. We come to Jesus our King seeking his mercy and pardon and we will never be disappointed. He never turns his back on us, but receives us with open arms and says to us, “I don’t condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.” (John 8:11)

Just think, this little baby born in Bethlehem over two thousand years ago is an amazing person. He is the eternal Son of God in human flesh. He is the almighty King of the universe who has been given all authority and power over everything. He is our Savior and King. He is our refuge and strength in every situation we may face in our lives. This is Jesus, the Christ, our King and Savior.

Amen

This Is our King!

I. Who is He?

- A. He is the Anointed one
 - 1. What it means to be anointed?
 - 2. Who was anointed in the OT
- B. He is the eternal Son of God
- C. The reaction of many to him.
 - 1. They rebelled against him & killed him
 - 2. Reactions today – rejection of his word

II. Take Refuge in him

- A. What does it mean that Jesus is king
 - 1. he is almighty
 - 2. He is the judge and punisher
- B. Go to him
 - 1. Submit to his word and will
 - 2. We will be blessed
 - 1. We are blessed in this life
 - 2. We are blessed for eternity

**“Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.”
(Acts 4:27-28)**

I don't condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.