

## Fulfillment of Prophecy

### *Singing the Sacred*

Core 52 – Week 10

We have songs for every occasion. Music for every mood. You've just been through a bad breakup, you grab your Kleenex and you put *Someone Like You* by Adele on repeat. You're singing your child to sleep at bedtime, you swing a sweet lullaby like *Rock-a-bye-baby* while you secretly wonder what kind of freak puts their baby in a treetop. You're getting pumped up for the big game, so you're going to blast *Get Ready* by 2 Unlimited. You want to rock out, you crank the volume up to 11 and listen to *For Those About to Rock*. You're feeling romantic, you dig out the old vinyl, you drop the lights and you drop the needle on *When a Man Loves a Woman*. You're about to hit the gym and get your sweat on, you'll pump some *Survivor* by Destiny's Child.

In the same way, there are many kinds of songs in the book of Psalms. There were songs to be sung to prepare you for worship. There are songs of thanksgiving. There are wisdom psalms. There are even what are called the Psalms of Lament, which is their version of the sad songs. They are what Israel sang when they felt like singing the blues. They had all these different kinds of songs for all these different occasions.

One kind of song we find in the Psalms might be unfamiliar to us. They are the royal psalms. The royal Psalms are...surprisingly, song about royalty. They are songs about the king. There are 10 such royal Psalms— Psalm 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132, and 144. Don't worry, you don't have to remember that. It will not be on the test.

This morning we want to look at the first of the royal psalms, Psalm 2, and how it fits in with the overarching story the Bible is telling. We're tracing this story by connecting the dots of 52 of the most important verses in the Bible. A couple of those dots that we've connected in just the last few weeks have to do with King David and how not only was he Israel's greatest king, but God used him to point the way to an even greater heavenly king, the King of kings, Jesus.

### **Game of Thrones**

Psalm 2 connects perfectly with those dots. Now, to understand Psalm 2, we actually have to begin in 1 Kings 1. There's some real *Game of Thrones* stuff going on here. David is old man at this point. His health is failing. Basically, he's on his death bed. Everyone knows a transition of power is about to happen. But David, because of his advanced age, is kind of clueless as to what's really going on.

David has a son name Adonijah who has ambitions for the throne, and he openly flaunts it. 1 Kings 1:5-7 sets the scene.

*Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6 His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, "Why have you done thus and so?" He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom. 7 He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him.*

So, David's got this son playing the part of a king to set the stage to become king. He rallies some strong

support. He gets a priest. He gets one of David's favorite military commanders. He gets this armored escort to follow him wherever he goes. He's got his own motorcade and he's not even king yet.

And what Adonijah does is he calls together all the royal officials and family members except those who were faithful to David and his designated heir, Solomon. They then offer sacrifices and anoint Adonijah as the next king of Israel. And David doesn't know a thing.

Well, the prophet Nathan gets word of what's going on. He goes and tells Bathsheba, David's wife and mother of Solomon. They then go in to see David and tell him what is going on. David tells them to take the faithful priest Zadok and anoint Solomon as the king of Israel and to bring him directly to the throne of David.

So, while Adonijah and his supporters are still feasting, they hear this trumpet blast of Solomon's party on their way to the throne declaring that Solomon is the new king of Israel. And there was this big celebration over Solomon's coronation, and Adonijah's supporters now all realize the jig is up, and they all run their separate ways acting like they didn't do anything. Adonijah himself flees to the temple and clings to the altar begging that Solomon spare his life. And that's how Solomon became king and narrowly escaped a coup attempt by his own brother.

What has this to do with Psalm 2? Most Bible scholars believe that not only is Psalm 2 a royal psalm, celebrating the king, but specifically this song was used at the coronation of Solomon, and following Solomon this song was used whenever a new king was installed on the throne.

And what's important about this Psalm and our core verse this morning is that it refers back to God's promise to David in 2 Samuel 7 where God promises to be a Father to David's son. Now, remember, how in Bible prophecy, it can be like a picture where there's something in the foreground, but something even greater in the background. In the foreground here is Solomon, but the greater thing in the background is Jesus.

### **God Laughs**

We see God's response to all of these shenanigans in Psalm 2? His first response is laughter. He laughs at Adonijah's maneuvering for the throne. The Psalm opens talking about the people plotting and conspiring against God's anointed one. But verse 4 says, *"But the one enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them."*

They plot and scheme in vain, just like Adonijah trying to steal the kingdom from his brother. All of his power plays mean nothing to God.

But it isn't just Adonijah. What about the petty power plays in our own lives? How often do we try to position ourselves for the best advantage? We put stuff on social media to make ourselves look better than we really are. We take 10 selfies, but we pick only the one that makes us look good, then we crop it, and apply 3 different filters all to present just the right image we want for others to believe. We hammer out an email to paint someone else in the worst possible light.

Is this really that much different from Adonijah running around with his little entourage acting like he's king when he's not? How often does God look down on our little games of oneupsmanship and just laugh? How silly is it that we expend so much time and energy and expense to prop ourselves up and

say, “Hey, look at me?”

### God Acts

As we move further in the Psalm, God responds by enacting his plan despite what everyone else does. God does what He planned to do anyway. We see the first part in verses 6 and 7, and this is where we find this week’s core verse in verse 7:

*As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.*

*I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.”*

This is God fulfilling his promise, in part, to David. I am becoming the Father to your son. I am making him my son. The phrasing here is very similar to the phrasing used in an ancient adoption ceremony.<sup>1</sup> On Solomon’s coronation, God is adopting him, saying, “*You are my son.*” God is now including Solomon into his covenant with David.

### Something Bigger

If this is where it ended, it would be pretty cool. We could say, “Look, God keeps his promises. He is faithful. He does exactly what is said he was going to do.” But this isn’t where it ends. It gets SO MUCH BIGGER than this.

This Psalm isn’t just about the coronation of Solomon or any other earthly King. It is about the coronation of the Ultimate King, the King of kings, King Jesus. This Psalm is what we call a Messianic prophecy. It is a predictive foretelling of Jesus.

There’s a few clues right in the text. **Clue #1:** In verse 2, talks about the rulers of earth setting themselves against the Lord’s anointed. The Hebrew word there is the word for *Messiah*.

**Clue #2:** Comes in our core verse, verse 7. Not only does God adopt Solomon as his son saying, “You are my son, but he adds this, “*I have begotten you.*” This is a term used when a man physically impregnates his wife. This the term used when a woman gives birth. It means you physically come from me. You are a part of me. I could mean simply “I will love you like you are my own physical son.” But when we turn to John 3:16 we get the idea that something much bigger is happening in the background of this verse.

You remember that verse in the Old King James or New American Standard Bibles, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son...” Now God didn’t father Jesus, but Jesus was the Son of God in the sense of He was sent by God. He was God. He was of the same divine essence as God.

**Clue #3:** There are some things in this Psalm to don’t quite fit Solomon, but they fit Jesus. The opening verses of Psalm 2 talk about how the nations rage and the people plot. The kings and rulers of the earth set themselves against the Lord and His Anointed. This doesn’t quite fit Solomon because it wasn’t the kings of the earth who opposed him. It was his own kin and clan. His own countrymen.

You might argue poetic license here, but it certainly fits Jesus. Herod, Pilate representing far away Rome, Jewish religious leaders, Roman soldiers who came from countries all throughout the empire. Jesus was literally opposed by the nations, and in the centuries since, how many armies have marched against?

How many kings have banned Jesus? How many nations have outlawed His words? How many rulers have closed his church doors, and all of it in vain?

Verses 8 and 9 also promise the coronated king authority and power over the nations. This king will rule over them with a rod of iron. All the way to the ends of the earth. That never happened under Solomon. Certainly, Israel defeated her enemies and had a sphere of influence over the nations around her. But Solomon certainly never reigned over a global kingdom.

But you know who does, and who will. Jesus. Remember, at his name, every knee will bow. Every tongue will acknowledge that he is Lord. Listen to this vision of Jesus from Revelation 7:9-10:

*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

You see Solomon doesn't really fit the bill. It will take someone bigger and better. Long before Jesus came, Jewish rabbis believed and taught that this Psalm was talking about the Messiah.<sup>ii</sup>

I want to show you what happens when we get to the New Testament and Jesus comes. The New Testament is filled with quotes and allusions to the O.T. Depending on how you want to count them, there are about 850 such quotes and references. No other Old Testament passage is quoted as much as Psalm 2. 60 percent is quoted in the New Testament, either directly or indirectly. And every time it is applied to Jesus. The first time is in Matthew 3 at the Baptism of Jesus. You remember the story. John the Baptist is preaching in the wilderness and baptizing people for repentance and Jesus comes to him to be baptized.

John says he is not worthy, but Jesus insists. And the Scriptures say,

*Immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him: and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*

Literally, it says, "You are my son, my beloved." This is God himself quoting Psalm 2 saying, "You are my son," and He says it about Jesus. That's a big deal.

The same thing happens in the middle of Jesus ministry. This time Jesus takes three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John up on a mountain and he shares this incredible moment with them. For just a little bit, Jesus' veil of humanity is lifted, and they see Jesus in all his glory. It says his face shone like the sun and his clothing blazed with white light. And again, it's God himself who speaks. "This is my Son, my beloved."

The apostle Paul quotes our core verse in Acts 13:33 in this way.

*And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, 33 this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you.'*

Later on, in the book of Acts, after Peter and John are arrested for speaking publically about Jesus, the believers gather and pray for boldness. In their prayer, they quote from the first 3 verses of Psalm 2 about the nations raging, and they apply it directly to Jesus.

*For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, 28 to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.*

Verse 9 is quoted three separate times in the book of Revelation, and each time it refers to Jesus. Now considers this. Psalm 2 is simply just one of many messianic prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. The Old Testament contains more than 300 prophecies about Jesus. Some of them, admittedly, are a little vague, but many of them are also quite specific.

#### Major Prophecies Concerning Jesus

- Where Jesus would be born (Micah 5:2)
- How Jesus would die (Isaiah 53:3-5)
- The price of his betrayal (Zechariah 11:12)
- Jesus would enter Jerusalem on a donkey (Zechariah 9:9)
- Jesus would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14)

Taken together, these prophecies prove that Jesus is exactly who he said he was.

Peter Stoner, a professor in mathematics, wrote a classic book on apologetics, which is just a fancy word for a defense of the Christian faith. His book was called *Science Speaks*. I don't recommend that you go to Amazon and get yourself a copy, because last I checked a used copy of this small paperback will set you back \$140. In this book, Stoner calculates the mathematical probability that one person throughout human history could fulfill just seven of these prophecies. He figures the odds at only 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000 100 quadrillion. (10 to the 17<sup>th</sup>). REALLY BIG NUMBER

Stoner helps us visualize the really big number. He says you cover the state of Texas in silver dollars, and you would have to stack them two feet deep across the entire state. Now, take just one of these coins and mark it, then throw it back in with all the other coins and you mix them all up. Now, you take a volunteer and you blindfold them, and you tell them they can only pick one silver dollar and the very first one they pick has to be the coin you marked. The chances of that happening are the same as any one person fulfilling just seven of these messianic prophecies.

Jesus doesn't just fulfill seven of them. He fulfills hundreds of them. He fulfills all of them.

I want you to be assured this morning that not only do you have reason to believe, you have really good reason to believe. I want you to rest assured in the confidence of your faith. Faith does not require turning off your brain. It is not a leap into the illogical

In fact, when you consider the power of fulfilled prophecy, it's the only thing that makes sense.

I know some of us struggle sometimes with our faith. You have doubts. You have questions, and that's okay. God's grace is big enough to handle your questions, and the reasons to believe are strong enough to stand against our doubts.

I think there are times in our journey for every follower of Christ where we are like the father of the demon possessed boy in Mark 9. The frantic father brings his suffering child to Jesus pleading, "If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Jesus responds by saying, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes."

Then this desperate daddy cries out, "I believe; help my unbelief."

Oh, how often that has been the cry of my own heart. "I believe; help my unbelief."

I want you to know this morning that Psalm 2, and all the other fulfilled prophecies are there to help your unbelief.

The other thing these fulfilled prophecies tell us is that we can be confident and trust what Jesus has said about our own future destiny, that he has gone to prepare a place for us. We have hope in heaven.

He's everything he claimed to be. He is the Bread of Life. He is the Light of the World. He is the Door. He is the Resurrection and the Life. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the True Vine. He is King of kings. He is Lord of lords. Who is Jesus to you?

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<sup>i</sup> Tesh, S. Edward & Zorn, Walter (1999) The College Press NIV Commentary: Psalms Vol. 1. Joplin, MO 95

<sup>ii</sup> <https://jewsforjesus.org/answers/is-psalm-2-considered-messianic-by-the-rabbis-and-jewish-sages-2/>