

# The Anointed One is Awesome 1) His Kingdom Endures

Psalm 2 • 2024-01-07 • Epiphany Series



Czar Nicholas II is called the “last czar of Russia.” He held autocratic power and held onto it tightly. At a time when his rule was questioned, and his failures were mounting, people grew increasingly upset at him and wanted him to relinquish his position of power. But he refused. That might not have been a problem for Czar Nicholas except he was, as historians describe him, shy, weak, indecisive, and incapable of leading his military. He was out of touch with the common people’s plights. So, in 1917 he became the last czar of Russia, and the Russian Revolution began. Nicholas was forced to abdicate the throne. Within just over a year, he and all the royal family were murdered by the Bolsheviks who had seized power from their czar.

It is one thing to have a claim to power. But it is another thing to hold onto that when the people you rule don’t want you to rule over them anymore. What does our God do when people no longer want the one God has put in charge to hold their position of power? The one God has put in charge and in the highest place of power isn’t sitting on some throne in an earthly palace. He sits above every king, emperor, dictator, autocrat, prime minister, and president. He is the one chosen by God himself to rule over all. Today we consider how awesome the Anointed One, the Chosen One is. And we will look at Psalm 2 today and see just why despite all the rebellion his kingdom endures.

Psalm 2 talks about something far greater than the Bolsheviks turning against the last czar of Russia. It talks about what all nations conspire together to accomplish. Everyone across the whole world is involved in this rebellious plot and conspiracy to overthrow their king. This Psalm, which was written 3000 years ago by King David says, *“Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed.”*

All over the world people are turning against their rightful Lord and their King. Rulers and people from across every nation are in direct opposition to “the Lord and his Anointed One.” David had been anointed to be king over Israel. The prophet Samuel poured the oil over him signifying that God had selected him to be the King over Israel. But this rebellion extends far beyond the nations around Israel rebelling against King David 3000 years ago. As we read through this Psalm, we will see that it really applies to the one we call today, “the Anointed One,” which is “Christ” in Greek or “Messiah” in Hebrew. The people of this world are rising and turning against the Lord and against his Christ.

Why are they plotting against the Lord and the Christ? They are saying, *“Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.”* Christ has overcome this world as the anointed one. He cast out the demons and demolished the work of the devil. He showed his power over all evil. He preached the truth. The devil and his demons hold sway over the powers of this world, and they have influence over the heart of every unbeliever. Satan tempts each human heart with the question, “Why should the Lord be in charge? Why should you listen to his Word and pay any attention to what the Bible says?” So every heart with its own evil inclination turns against the Word of God.

You see this today. The Lord’s will is that all worship him. But people turn to all types of religions and the occult. They worship themselves and pay greatest homage to sports, entertainment, and sexual immorality. They mock the Lord’s rule. They misuse the Lord’s name. They despise the preaching of his Word. They call his commands “burdensome.” And claim that the Lord is “out of touch” with the common people and their needs. They hear what he says about the gift of life and they claim pregnancy is a disease or burden instead of a blessing. So they take off the shackles and kill. They claim marriage is too restricting and they reinvent sexuality for the sake of perverted pleasures. The human heart hates the commands of God.

And when anyone preaches Christ as Lord, the human heart rebels. They tell Christian pastors and teachers, “Who are you to tell me what is true?”

We could look at all of this and despair. We might try to contain the church’s power as we strive to gain more money to gain more influence. We might frantically insist that the Christian part of society is in the right and insist that others must listen, only to fear no one is listening. If we were in charge of maintaining the kingdom for our King we would be as helpless as the bodyguards of Czar Nicholas. We would see the tide against us. We would cave in and only turn against our king. Some Christians have turned against Christ as they abandon the faith and regard their king as a burden. They secretly plot against him and remove him from the throne of their own hearts.

But if we were to give in to this plot and join with the world, we would be greatly amiss and on the wrong side of history. David records the Lord’s response to the world’s rebellion against his Anointed One. *“The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ‘I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.’”* God laughs at rebellion! He is not some weak and indecisive czar desperately grasping for power. He holds all power. He has already selected his King. He has anointed his Son.

Jesus, the Son of David, fulfills the words of the prophecy given to David that a King would sit on David's throne who would rule over all nations and rule forever. Those who plan any other King need to picture the Lord of heaven laughing at their plans. Jesus, the man, is the Anointed One, and he has already been installed and sits enthroned.

The next part of the Psalm records the Anointed One speaking. *"I will proclaim the Lord's decree: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have become your father."* This was openly proclaimed as Jesus was about thirty years old. He came, as we read earlier today, to the Jordan river to be baptized by John. When he had been baptized, he was anointed with the Holy Spirit who came in visible form in what looked like a dove. And the voice from heaven spoke saying, "This is my Son!" That is a special decree that the Father made at Jesus' baptism indicating who Jesus is. He is the anointed one and fulfillment of Psalm 2.

His reign extends beyond the region from the river Jordan to the ends of the earth. *"Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."* He holds power over all this earth, and he now rules in the hearts of all his people.

It didn't necessarily look like this when the Anointed One came. After his baptism he continued in appearance as a lowly man. He preached and taught and healed. But the rulers of the people and the authorities plotted against him. They grew jealous of his influence and plotted his death. They took their stand and handed him over to the Roman authority. He was then crucified and buried. The rulers thought they had cast off his chains and were free from him.

But the Lord laughed. They would not be able to fulfill their plans against the Anointed One. The devil and all those opposed to the Lord have failed. Jesus rose to life again. Can you picture Christ laughing as he exits the tomb? Can you picture the Anointed One alive again, breathing and laughing at his enemies? He proclaimed his victory over the devil with laughter and confidence. He ascended into heaven. And he remains seated on his throne.

No one can change that! When you despair that it seems like the devil and the unbelieving world have the upper hand, you can just laugh. Jesus lives! He is the awesome Anointed One. His kingdom endures forever. It doesn't matter how much all the people of this world might oppose his rule, he lives and rules.

So what does that mean for us now? The Psalm includes instructions for those who once had rebelled against the King. They are invited to celebrate his rule or be crushed as his enemies. *"Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling. Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction, for his wrath can flare up in a moment."*

In what ways have you treated your King lightly? All the rulers of the earth and all peoples are urged to recognize the Awesome Anointed One. He is not one to trifle with or treat with contempt. Any attempt to dismiss his authority and his kingdom will end in ruin and condemnation.

*"His wrath can flare up in a moment."* So often we like to portray only one side of the man Jesus. We portray the patience of our King. And that is true and right. He came in patience and mercy to fight for his people. He came in love and mercy to defeat the devil by the cross and his resurrection. He is full of mercy and great patience for his people. But when that patience is ended, the unrepentant sinner will find nothing but judgment and punishment. He will crush all those who tried to dethrone him.

Yet I have good news. Even if you are guilty with the rest of this world for going against the king, he invites you to find refuge in his kingdom. Even if you are one of the many countless sinners who have chafed at his rule, he invites you to celebrate his rule in reverence and with faith in him. Even if you have bucked against his commands and failed to serve him, he now invites the pardoned sinner to serve him and honor him who died and rose again.

There is a promise for you and all his subjects: *"Blessed are all who take refuge in him."* How awesome that it doesn't say blessed are all who never sinned. Nor does it say blessed are all who have been perfect subjects. Rather, it says we are blessed as we come before the Anointed one, the Son, and find refuge in his kingdom.

It is a kingdom that will endure. Czar Nicholas had a daughter who was rumored to have survived the murder of the royal family. Anastasia was rumored to have lived and the royal throne was thought to have survived the rebellion and the Russian Revolution. Sadly, for those loyal to the Czars that rumor proved to be false. It would have made for a neat story if Anastasia had survived. But modern forensics has confirmed all the royal siblings were buried together. The bodies remained dead.

But it is not so with the Anointed One. No body was found when the plot to end his reign took hold. With laughter he rose again to rule. And with laughter we will rise from the grave to live with him in his kingdom forever. The Anointed One is awesome! His kingdom endures all opposition, and his people will live with him forever.