

THE PROPHETIC WORD IN CRISIS DAYS

Prophetic Messages Delivered at the West Coast Prophetic Congress
in the Los Angeles, Calif. area in mid-1961

by

Various Contributors

Copyright @ 1961

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CRISIS OF THIS PRESENT HOUR

SIMON E. FORSBERG

“Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

“Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him”
(Psalm 2).

There can be no question that the world today is in the grip of a great crisis which poses an unprecedented threat to humanity and to human institutions. We are living in an age which is marked by mighty political convulsions, treacherous revolutions, economic and racial unrest, bitter enmity against established order, and periodic wars. The threat to our freedoms and to our Christian way of life is by far the greatest that has ever been faced. However, the heart of the Christian today need not falter inasmuch as we have divinely given perspective in relation to the frightful events that are transpiring on this earth.

From a Biblical viewpoint, the history of the world centers around the person and work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The God who created this universe is sovereign over all. In His all wise providence He has designed the ages, and His plans and purposes are all centered in His blessed Son. The second Psalm is a remarkable portrayal of the Son of God, in relationship to human history, and to this extent it is a miniature divine account of human affairs.

The ultimate fulfillment of this amazing portion of Scripture will be realized in the future. We have here a description of world conditions which will prevail prior to the second coming of Christ to this earth. This Psalm speaks of a great impending crisis — a universal rebellion against God and against the Son of God.

Let us now concern ourselves with the divine commentary on human rebellion which is presented in this Psalm.

The Psalm opens with a question which at once engages our attention. The question is, **“Why do the heathen [nations] rage, and the people imagine [meditate] a vain thing?”**

What explanation may be given for the distress and chaos that is in the world today? The Word of God provides an answer to this question. The deceitfulness and the desperate wickedness of the human heart; influenced by the evil one, accounts for the unruly raging of the nations. Satan is behind the scenes of the present era, calling the moves that are taking place within this world system which is largely under his control.

The situation which prevails today is depicted by a motto which was once a favorite of Dwight L. Moody:

“The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, and they that dwell therein, but a usurper has it now.”

The world is witnessing a struggle for the minds of men. Satan, the prince of this world, is waging total war in an effort to capture the minds of human beings and to energize them in the direction of his sinister design for the race. It was in view of this terrible reality that Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once stated that the greatest necessity of the hour is to captivate the minds of men and direct them to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The raging of the nations suggests tumultuous assembly.

The visit of Mr. Khrushchev to the halls of the United Nations is a relatively recent illustration. His conduct on that occasion amounted to a rather tumultuous representation. The imagining of a vain thing suggests a situation characterized by a great deal of talking about nothing. A vain thing is an empty, foolish thing — a thing that will surely come to naught. It is evident that the nations are meditating upon such things because they will not have the One who is the very essence of reality — the Lord Jesus Christ.

The inspired prophet depicts the attitude of powerful leaders and strong nations toward the Almighty.

“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed . . .” (Psalm 2:2).

The idea of obstinate, determined hostility to the Divine Person Himself is suggested. Moreover, this hostility arises not only from individual leaders but from the organized, evil plottings of all. They combine their wicked genius and their armed might in an effort to bring to naught the purposes of the Holy One.

This confederacy of violence incorporates not only the might of **“kings,”** or governmental potentates, but also the sordid prestige of **“rulers,”** or ecclesiastical authorities.

Is it considered strange that religious leaders should oppose the Saviour?

Certainly they have resisted Him in the past. It must be remembered that in the days of His flesh it was the religionists that protested His every move and eventually arranged His arrest and demanded His crucifixion. Organized religion in our time is as antichrist as ever, and the prophetic Word foresees a coming crisis hour in which it will join with the civil powers to throw off the hand of divine restraint in the affairs of men.

The base design of these enemies of God is set forth in their own confession of purpose.

“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us” (Psalm 2:3).

The kings and rulers openly declare their purpose to be independent of God. This is the fruit of man's original departure from God in the Garden of Eden. The desire for human independency was later stated at the Tower of Babel. It was manifested at the cross, when they crucified the Lord of Glory. Fallen man has ever been antagonistic to the will of the Sovereign One. Human government, culture and religion is contrary to His plan of the ages. In the latter days this inherent hostility will find open and brazen expression in the counsels of unholy men. The final parliament of nations will assert independence of God and His Christ.

Will the throne of God be jeopardized by the ragings of men? God forbid!

“He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision” (Psalm 2:4).

God will deal in contempt with those who set their faces against Him. He will rebuke their rebellion. The heavenly throne can never be imperiled by earthly creatures. In due time God will thunder in judgment, and the tragedy will be so serious and solemn as to bear at least some affinity to a scene of comedy.

“Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision” (Psalm 59:8).

The Lord's response to organized human rebellion will include the outpouring of righteous indignation.

“Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure” (Psalm 2:5).

Ezekiel's prophecy describes God's judgmental dealing with the great northeastern confederacy (Ezekiel 38-39). He will impose upon that anti-Semitic conspiracy the stinging fury of the elements. Hail and fire and earthquakes are forces under His control, and these will rush to His service in the hour of His wrath.

But with striking suddenness the curtain falls to obscure the scene of vengeance. Almost as suddenly our view is focused upon the person of the Anointed One.

“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (Psalm 2:6).

God's oath and covenant will remain unchanged. God the Father will honor His solemn commitments to the nation Israel. His promise of an eternal Davidic throne (II Samuel 7:8-17) will reach its fulfillment when the Lord Jesus Christ occupies the throne of David. Christ today is upon the throne of His Father God in heaven. But one day He will return in person to this earth. He will come to Mount Zion in Jerusalem and there establish the throne of His father David, from which He will bear rule over all the nations of earth.

The words of the Son, the Anointed King, are recorded next. The Father has just disclosed His intention to honor His ancient covenant. Now the Son voices His responses.

“I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee” (Psalm 2:7).

The Messiah quotes the Father, and thus declares the decree of His kingship. The Father's historical recognition of His Son is the basis of the Son's personal fitness for the kingly office. He is the only begotten Son of God. He is deity. He is the Firstborn, the supreme One in relation to the Church. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ declares His rights of sovereignty and warns traitors of their doom.

It was a custom of ancient kings to grant the requests of certain favored ones. Here the Son discloses that the Father has invited Him to lodge a request.

“Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession” (Psalm 2:8).

“The Father has told me to ask of Him,” says the Son, *“and when I ask of Him, I'm going to ask of Him the nations for my inheritance.”*

Thank God, the day is coming when the nations will be His inheritance. He is now upon His Father's throne, waiting until His foes become the footstool of His feet. One day He will lodge His request with the Father, and the theocratic kingdom will be inaugurated, bringing the nations of earth under His sovereign dominion as His inherited possessions.

The policy to be followed by the Son in His rule over the nations will be dictated by necessity.

“Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel” (Psalm 2:9).

The rule of God today is one of grace, mercy and love. But His millennial kingdom will not be established by grace. It will be instituted amid the thunderings of divine fury against the rebellious world of that frightful hour.

This truth is pictured with remarkable vividness in the last book of the Bible:

“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15).

Since the will of man stubbornly refuses to submit itself voluntarily to the One who possesses the rightful prerogative of universal dominion, He will of necessity appear with an unprecedented display of might to put an end to rebellion and secure His own supremacy.

The Holy Spirit concludes the Psalm with an exhortation to those civil and ecclesiastical leaders who resist the Divine program.

“Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him” (Psalm 2:10-12).

Readiness to receive instruction is always a mark of wisdom. Especially is this true where spiritual verities are concerned. It is the part of wisdom to submit before the stroke of judgment falls. Never has the urgency of compliance with God's expressed desire for the salvation of the soul been greater than at the present time.

The multiplied crises of this present hour combine to press upon every individual a choice between salvation and judgment. Those who foolishly spurn God's gracious provision for personal salvation through faith in the crucified and risen Saviour must tremble under the threat of impending doom as the cataclysmic events of the Great Tribulation appear about to break upon a Christ-rejecting world. Christ alone can save us from the crisis of this hour.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
