WHY DO THE HEATHEN RAGE?

**DATE: 7/10/2011 am**

**TEXT: Psalm 2:1-5; Jude 8-11**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Psalm 2** is a stirring psalm that goes hand in hand with the **1st Psalm**

It continues to lay the foundation for the entire book of Psalms

This is a Messianic psalm

That is, it is a Psalm that exalts our Blessed Saviour and give prophetic references to Him

Some of the other Messianic Psalms are **Psalms 8,16,22,34,35,40,41,45,68,69,89,102,109,110,118**

This Psalm takes us ahead to the time of the Tribulation

Recognizing that this is a Messianic psalm, enables us to understand its meaning

Note the question asked in **v. 1**

***“Why do the heathen (Lost) rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?”***

David didn't expect a reply when he asked this question,

Because there really is no reply

It was an expression of astonishment

The Holy Spirit raises this question in David’s heart for 2 reasons

**1.** To Arouse our interest

**2.** To Demand an answer

Of course, we find the answer in the Word of God

Let me make a few statements -

*“As long as we live, people are going to say things that are not true”*

*“And if we do not know the truth, many of those things are going to upset us”*

*“But if we know the Truth, so much of what is said by this unbelieving world should not upset us?*

For the Christian, this matter should be settled as we study **Psalm 2**

I want to look at this question and try to answer -

***“Why Do the Heathen Rage?”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First we notice the -

**I. THE LOST SPEAKING – vs. 2, 3**

In the first 3 verses of this psalm, the Bible says that the heathen (the Lost) lift their voices with *rage*

The Kings represent the Political realms

The Rulers represent the Religious realms

They are *raging*, not simply dialoging or talking

To *Rage* means – to show extreme anger, outburst of objections, with extreme or unrelenting intensity, militant

**Example** - The Stoning of Stephen - **Acts 7: 54, 57**

First we notice that -

**A. They Take Counsel ‘Together’**

Those who do not know God, have come together to take counsel

**v.2 - *“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,”***

People who oppose what is right, always seem to think that if they can get a crowd to go along with the way they think, that somehow it’s alright

They have united their forces ***“against the LORD, and against His anointed”***

They go as far as to say in **v.3 – *“Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us”***

They are saying, *“we will not be bound by anything God says or by anything God wants us to do”*

We will break loose from every type of restraint that God places upon us

We want to be free to speak and do as we please

We do not want God telling us what to do!

**B. A ‘Description’ of those who Rage**

In **Jude vs. 8-11** we read another description of those who speak out against God

When those who are against God speak, we should not be troubled by their words

When they speak, they speak to their own shame – **v.13**

This is the voice of the sin nature found in each of us

All authority comes from the throne of God,

Whether it is authority in the home, the church, or the gov’t

Those who exercise authority must first be *under* authority, that is, accountable to God

But the Lost reject Divine Authority and set themselves up as their own authority

**1. The ‘Cause’ they have**

Their rebellion is found in the word ***“dreamers”*** - **v.8**

These people live in a dream-world of unreality and delusion

They have believed the lie

**Genesis 3:5 – *“ye shall be as gods,”***

**II Thessalonians 2:11 – *“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:”***

**Romans 1:24, 25 – *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:”
“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen”***

Having turned away from God's truth,

They feed their minds on false truths that inflates their egos and encourages their rebellion

**Jude 10** - informs us that the Lost are ignorant people who do not know what they are talking about!

***“But these speak evil of those things which they know not:*** ***but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves”***

Jude echoed Peter's description of these men as ***“brute beasts”***

**II Peter 2:12 – *“But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the***

***things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;”***

Animals live by natural instinct, and so do the Lost

When men rebel against God, they sink to the level of beasts

**2. The ‘Course’ they take**

Their rebellion is clearly described by Jude

**a.** As a result of their rebellion and pride,

They ***"defile the flesh,"*** living to satisfy their animal lusts

When a person despises God's authority,

He feels free to disobey God's Laws and live as he pleases

What he forgets is that those laws have natural consequences attached to them

So that he cannot disobey and escape the outcome

**Example:** all the social diseases, like HIV

**b.** They also use their tongues to express their rebellion against God

**Psalm 12:4 - *"With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?"***

The phrase ***“speak evil”*** in **Jude 8** & **10** simply means *"to blaspheme"*

Blasphemy involves much more than taking God's name in vain, though that is at the heart of it

A person blasphemes God when he takes His Word lightly and even jests about it,

Or when he deliberately dares God to judge him

**Psalm 73:9, 11 - *"They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth” “And they say, 'How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?'"***

**3. The ‘Consequences’ they face**

Their rebellion is seen in their own ruin

**Jude 10** - ***"they corrupt*** [destroy] ***themselves"***

**Jude 8** - They ***“defile*** ***the flesh”*** [themselves]

And in doing so, they destroy themselves,

Yet they have the idea they are promoting themselves!

**Ecclesiastes 8:11 - *"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"***

The way of rebellion is but the way to ruin

Arrogant speech is a dangerous thing,

And so is despising the authority that God has established

In **Jude 9** - Even the Archangel Michael did not dare to rebuke Satan, but respected the authority given to him by God

**4. The ‘Condemnation’ …**

…of the false teachers is given in **Jude 11 -** ***"Woe unto them!"***

Jude cited three examples from the Old Testament to illustrate the enormity of their sins,

Three men rebelled against God's authority and suffered for it

**a. Cain**

Cain rebelled against God's way of *salvation*

Cain rebelled against God's *authority* in salvation,

He refused to bring a blood sacrifice as God had commanded

The ***"way of Cain"*** is the way of religion without faith, righteousness based on character and good works

**b. Balaam**

Balaam rebelled against God's authority in *separation,*

For he prostituted his gifts for money and led Israel to mix with the other nations

**1)** The ***"way” of Balaam*** is merchandising one's gifts and ministry just for the purpose of making money

**2)** The ***"error” of Balaam*** is thinking that they can get away with this kind of rebellion

**3)** The ***"doctrine” of Balaam* [Rev. 2:14]** is, Thinking we can violate our separated position and not be affected!

**c. Korah (Core)**

The story of Korah is found in **Number 16**, and it too centers on rebellion against authority

Korah rebelled against God's authority in *service,*

Denying that Moses was God's appointed servant and attempting to usurp his authority

**Why Do the Heathen Rage?**

**Because they want their own way!**

 First we saw **-**

**THE LOST SPEAKING**

But, now we notice -

**II. THE LORD SPEAKING – vs. 4-9**

**A. God is Listening**

Before God ever says anything, we can be sure that He has been Listening

**1.** Don’t ever think for one minute God is Not listening!

**Isaiah 59:1 – *“Behold, the Lord'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear:”***

In **vs. 4 & 5** the Bible tells us that God hears the Lost lifting their voices against Him

**a.** In **v.4** the second half of that statement is repetition of the first half but with more severity

***“Derision”*** is using laughter as ridicule, mocking scorn!

He watches and listens as they rage against the Restraints of the Bible, and God Himself

**b.** When we listen to a lot of Christians, one would think that the world is out of control

However from God’s vantage point, He sits in heaven and laughs

He not only laughs, He ridicules them with laughter

The Bible says that ***“the Lord shall have them in derision”***

Not only is **God Listening**

But -

**2. God will Speak**

I cannot put myself in God’s place

But I do understand what this psalm is saying as the world lifts its fist against God

The same God who made and sustains them looks in disbelief as they throw off any thing to do with Him

**V.5** says – ***“Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure”***

He is going to speak to them in His ***“wrath”***

He is going to ***“vex”*** [annoy, agitate, confound] them in His ***“sore”*** [angry or irritated] displeasure

**Example:** Esther, Mordecai and Haman

We must never forget that God writes the last chapter

**B. The Battle of the Kings**

Often we hear only one side of the story

We hear the heathen rage against God

We see them lining up against God

We hear all about the immoral, indecent things that stir us up

We should be stirred up,

But there is no need to Worry, Fear, or Fret

God is in Control

And we should never forget that God still sits on the throne of the Universe

As this psalm progresses in **v.6**, the Lord says –

***“Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion”***

The kings of the earth may have their plans,

But God has a greater plan

**V. 7** speaks of the promise from God that the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign

***“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee”***

**Hebrews 1:1, 2**

We need to keep this in mind when we read -

**Isaiah 9:6 – *“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful,***

***Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace”***

The Lost (Heathen) may rage,

But they are not going to affect the plan of God

**Example:** How about Herod killing all those babies in Bethlehem?

Kings have their plans and God has His

What did God do? Herod died and the baby lived

We are not losing this battle

The victory is ours

We have God’s guarantee!

We ought to have such confidence in God to know that all these things going on around us are not going to affect the plan of God …

Or the outcome He has determined for our world

Jesus has won the battle on the Cross and in His resurrection

**Romans 1:4 – *“And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:”***

The Bible tells us that God as spoken by His Son and raised Him from the dead, and is alive forevermore

The Victory is ours in the Lord

We call **Psalm 2** a Messianic psalm because it is full of prophecy concerning our Saviour

**V.2** says – ***“Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion”***

**Isaiah 9:6** says – ***“… the government shall be upon His shoulder”***

This is established, this is settled forever, its immovable, its immutable, it’s done!

The Lord Jesus Christ shall reign

**THE LOST SPEAKING**

**THE LORD SPEAKING**

**III. LET US SPEAK – vs. 8-12**

In this psalm so far we have hear the Lost Speaking and we have heard the Lord Speaking

Now, we need to recognize that those of us who know the Lord must Speak up

The pronoun ***“they”*** in the last verse includes all true believers

We must speak!

We read in **vs. 8, 9**

The potter’s vessel cannot be put back together again

So God warns in **vs.10 – 12a**

This is one of God’s great invitations

Man and God can be reconciled

This is done through His work on Calvary

We are living in a very unusual day

We are approaching the coming of Christ

We are nearer than any other generation ever has been

**Bible Illustration: Acts 4:23-29**

When the early church at Jerusalem was threatened

They went right to the **2nd Psalm** for comfort

They were saying – *“This is the way unbelievers always behave”*

The greatest thing we can do in this hour of human history is to have a bold testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ

This is a time of Boldness

**CONCLUSION**

We must not become so distracted by the raging of unbelievers that we forget that God has already set His Son on His holy hill of Zion

While they are speaking against Him …

Let us lift our voices for His glory

The greatest thing we can do in this hour of need is to have a bold testimony for our Saviour

This is a time for courage and compassion

Let us rise up and speak up!

**Why Do The Heathen Rage?**

Why did you rage when you were lost?

You didn’t know better, you were ignorant

God’s been good to us, let us go out and do the same for them

**THE LOST ARE SPEAKING**

**THE LORD IS SPEAKING**

**LET US SPEAK**