

Psalm 2 asks: Why do nations get all worked up? Why are they all huffing and puffing in hatred and cruelty?

The psalmist, already in ancient times, laments the world's lack of progress into mature partnership where one nation's wellbeing is achieved not by subjugating its own people and not by waging war with other nations but by just laws and in balanced cooperation with other nations also trying to procure their own wellbeing. Over two thousand years later, the world is still a scary place in need of evolution.

Talking about the centrality of love in human identity, theologian Ilia Delio writes:

If we find ourselves in a violent world today, it is not only because we have lost sight of the human person but because we have lost sense of love. We equate love with self-gratification, not with the core beauty of our individual being. Without real love at the center of our lives, we are not free; hence, we cannot be for another.¹

If God is Love,² then when we love we manifest God, we see God at work. Lack of love translates into lack of God: when there is no love but hatred, cruelty, corruption and all the affiliates, God is missing. People may pray as much as they want and claim triumphantly that by their acts of violence

¹ Ilia Delio, *The Unbearable Wholeness of Being*, p. 134; see also <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/02/14/opinion/welcome-to-the-voyage-of-the-damned.html>

² 1 John 4:8

they serve God, but they do not bow to the God of Jesus but to the god of war.³

It appears the people do not yet know God and make plans to oppose all that is God's. But God watches from above and laughs at their plan. (See Psalm 2:4) The evil people conspire to do is no match for God. Evil may seem for a time powerful and unbeatable; it may cause suffering, destruction, death and much despair, but at the end, it will be well for those who remain faithful and endure, for those who find refuge in the Lord. God's plan is for wholeness and healing: Shalom, a new heaven and new earth will be established.

The disciples' first-hand experience of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus testifies to this. Jesus' resurrection is a vindication of his total trust in God especially when he faced temptations, antagonism, betrayal, abandonment, physical torture and humiliating death on a cross like a criminal and enemy of the state. His after death spiritual apparitions to the disciples is an implicit announcement of what is to come for all the faithful: his reality will be ours.⁴

Similar to Paul's comments to the church in Corinth that his testimony was not made "with superior speech or wisdom,"⁵ Peter reassured the recipients of his letter that he did not

³ <https://publicwitness.wordandway.org/p/at-national-prayer-breakfast-hegseth>

⁴ Romans 6:8 and 1 John 3:2

⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:1

follow the lead of “cleverly devised myths” to report about Jesus’ life but spoke out of his own personal experience: he and his companions are eye-witnesses to Jesus’ power.

You are surely familiar with the century-old song “This Little Light of Mine,” a very popular song with children but used extensively as a song of resistance during the Civil Rights Movement.⁶ The theme develops from Jesus’ proclamation of a disciple’s identity in Matthew 5:14-16, “You are the light of the world...” That light is in us because we are created in God’s image and likeness: we carry the imprint of God, and our job is to discover, relish, give space and allow the Light of God (“God is Light”)⁷ to illumine our inner self and all that is around us.

The “prophetic message” that Peter and the other apostles carry is meant to be “a lamp shining in a dark place” (v. 19) and needs to awaken the light within.

Today, high on a mountain, Jesus transfigures and in his full brightness shows us where that light originates from. In that glow, we contemplate Jesus’ divinity and, therefore, ours!

The Transfiguration of Jesus is reported in three of the four Gospels: Matthew (17:1–8), Mark (9:2–8), and Luke (9:28–36). The Gospel of John does not include an account of the

⁶ [This Little Light of Mine - Wikipedia](#)

⁷ 1 John 1:5

Transfiguration but offers a distinctive perspective on Christ's identity. Rather than focusing on singular moments of revelation, as in the Transfiguration, John continually presents Jesus as the one who reveals God's nature. In passages such as John 1:1–3.14, Jesus is described as the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth, whose glory is witnessed by his followers.

Throughout John, Jesus is depicted in close relationship with God, often using the phrase “I am” to signal his divine identity and connection to the God of Israel. John's narrative highlights signs and teachings that unveil Jesus's divinity: turning water into wine, healing the blind, raising Lazarus from the dead, and proclaiming “I and the Father are one.” Rather than a dramatic transformation witnessed by a few, John's vision is of Christ's ongoing, radiant presence (God with and within us) revealed in actions, words, and relationships.

On the mountain, the three disciples watch Jesus' glory in full display as he converses with Moses and Elijah, two preeminent seers of God representing the Law and the Prophets in the Hebrew Scriptures (i.e., the OT). Only Luke⁸ tells us that the jest of the conversation is about Jesus' upcoming arrest, torture and murder by the state powers.

⁸ Luke 9:28-36

Peter enjoyed the divine experience and didn't quite want to let it go: "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will set up three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." The reference to the Feast of Tabernacles is very clear to a Jewish community: Peter wanted to celebrate God's continued provision and protection during the 40-year desert wondering by Israel.⁹

But that is unnecessary: a voice from a "bright cloud" (symbol of God's presence or Shekinah) commands: "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" (Matthew 17:6) They have him, and all they have to do is to listen to him, to follow his example.

No matter how deep and how mind puzzling an experience, they are ordered not to tell anyone. People wouldn't understand: they weren't there and didn't go through it. It'll be clear at the time of the necessarily connected experience of death-resurrection: with Jesus, we don't have death without resurrection (evil can't keep him dead) and no resurrection without first going through physical death (glory and power are manifested in vulnerable sacrificial love).

The disciples' eyes were fixed on the transfiguration of Jesus. Now they reenter everyday life with a new command as they

⁹ [What is the Feast of Tabernacles / Booths / Sukkot? | GotQuestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org/What-is-the-Feast-of-Tabernacles-Booths-Sukkot/)

2 Peter 1:16-21; Psalm 2; Matthew 17:1-9

keep their eyes on a cruel world in need of healing. Will they testify to the light? Will we? May God help us. Amen.