

Grace, Mercy and Peace are yours in abundance through faith in our Lord and Savior; Jesus Christ. Amen.

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. ⁷ Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.

⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” **This is God’s Word.**

Dear Friends,

Have you ever been afraid? Afraid of snakes, or spiders or heights or whatever? Have you ever feared the future? What will happen to your children or grandchildren? What will the world be like for them? What about when Jesus will come back, or if he even will come back? It’s easy to have a lot of fears but God tells us in this portion of scripture to, **“Have No Fear, the King is Near!” “He’s Coming with All Power,”** and **“He’s Coming with Pure Grace.”**

I. John wrote the Book of Revelation. He is the only disciple to die a natural death and he wrote this book towards the end of his life probably around 95 AD. God came to him with the visions and the words to write. These words are meant to encourage God’s people, especially when they are suffering persecution and to point ahead to the end times and when Christ will come again.

On this Christ the King Sunday we focus on how Jesus is going to come again – his second coming with all power and glory. That is something new for us because we usually think of Jesus coming in humility – his first coming when he was born in the stable in Bethlehem. Many of our sermons focus in on how he suffered and died on the cross to pay for the sins of the world including all of our sins. Our picture of Jesus is not usually one of a King coming in power and glory.

Even as Jesus stood before Pilate in our Gospel lesson, he did not seem very kingly but he acknowledged to Pilate that he is a king, only his kingdom is not of this world. It is not a physical kingdom but rather a spiritual kingdom and so much larger for as Jesus states in this portion of scripture, he has made us and all believers to be his kingdom.

But Jesus assures us that he is our Savior King. The evidence is there to support that. We see his power in all the people he healed, the demons he cast out and the miracles he performed while on this earth. We see his great love and power as he hung on the cross to redeem the sins of the world so that we can receive forgiveness through the gift of faith. Scripture assures us that he is our Savior King as he is now ruling for the benefit of his Church – believers like you and me. And as our king he rules in our hearts as he walks with us through life; guiding us and protecting us or working our troubles out for something good according to his plan for us.

As I get older and learn more and more about my Savior I look forward to his second coming and I hope you do as well. John gives us a glimpse of what that will be like, **“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen.”** He will come just as he left, “on the clouds.” Everyone will see him – no one will miss it. Even those who pierced him – or caused his suffering and death – will see him come again. And all those living in sin without faith in Jesus will mourn because they will recognize him as the Savior/King but they will also recognize that it is too late. For John says, **“So shall it be. Amen!”** Sort of like that stamp that says – this is it and there will be no changes!

But on that day all believers will say, **“to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”** For as believers, we trust what Christ has done for us and we are thankful for the salvation he brings us and we want to give him all praise and glory.

Judgment Day will be a great day for God’s people but in our weakness, sometimes we don’t want Judgment Day to happen just yet. We might think there are things we want to do and things we want to see. We forget that Judgment Day is all about our Savior King Jesus coming to take all believers – to take us – home to heaven. Then nothing on this earth will matter any longer for it will all be destroyed and everything in heaven will be so much better! The day our King Jesus comes will be a glorious day; better than we can even imagine. So, let’s look forward to this glorious day and keep Jesus at the center of our lives because John reminds us, **“He’s Coming with Pure Grace.”**

II. John describes Jesus in this portion of scripture this way: **“Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.”** If you remember Catechism Class, you might see that John is describing Jesus as our Prophet, Priest, and King. As a Faithful Witness Jesus is fulfilling his office of Prophet by revealing himself to us through God’s Word. As the Firstborn from the dead he is fulfilling his office as Priest; reminding us that he gave his own life as the sacrifice for all sin and He was the first to rise from the dead; never to die again. Through his resurrection he removed the sting from death for all believers. As the Ruler of the Kings of the Earth he fulfills his office as king; ruling for the benefit of his Church and ruling in our hearts.

And so John gives us this doxology: **“To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, ⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”** He reminds us that Christ freed us from our sins with his holy precious blood and through faith he has made us part of his kingdom as well as a priest in his kingdom to serve God – all reasons to move us to thank, praise and glorify God. Amen.

Finally, Jesus himself, speaks to us as he tells us, **“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”** He reminds us he is the “Alpha and Omega” the beginning and the end. He was there as the world was created and he will be here on Judgment Day. He is the one who is with us today to assure us that our sins are forgiven and our salvation is complete. He is the one who was – who came as true God and

true man the first time he came into this world to redeem us. And he is the one who is to come as our King to take us and all believers to heaven forever.

Therefore, no matter what is going on in our world, we have no reason to fear for our Savior/King Jesus is near. He speaks to us as we gather for worship and he speaks to us every time we read his word. He is near and hears our prayers as we speak to him and he not only hears them but answers them. He is near as he forgives our sins and walks with us through life – sometimes even lifting us up and carrying us. And he assures us that He will come in power on the Last day but we already are experiencing his power as he acts in our lives day by day. And finally, we know He will come with the grace that we are experience every day as we live our lives as part of his kingdom. So on this Christ the King Sunday, we along with John, gladly say, **“To him be all power and praise and glory. Amen.”**