

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

¹³ “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. **This is God’s Word.**

Dear Members of God’s Kingdom,

Have you ever given any thought to how God communicates with his people? The Book of Hebrews tells us, **“In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.”** (Hebrews 1:1). Today God comes to us through the Words of the Bible, but in the past he spoke to some of his prophets directly, to others through angelic messengers, and to others in dreams. Daniel had a number of dreams in which God came to him in visions. Somehow God must have made it apparent to Daniel that these dreams were from him, and that Daniel should record them. And that’s what Daniel did. When he would wake up he would write down the vision God had given him. The portion of scripture before us today is one of Daniel’s visions from God.

As we celebrate Christ the King Sunday, let us consider, **“Daniel’s Vision of the King,” “His Vision Shows Us the Unique Qualities of the King,”** and **“His Vision Shows Us the Unlimited Boundaries of His Kingdom.”**

I. ¹³ “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.” There are some familiar words and pictures in this description of Daniel. The phrase, **“Son of Man,”** is a very important phrase because earlier in this vision Daniel had seen four beasts. The four beasts were symbolic of four major world powers – the Babylonians; the Medo-Persian Empire; the Greek Empire; and the Roman Empire. These four beasts came out of the sea but the Son of Man is different.

This is the phrase that Jesus liked to use to describe himself. A phrase that indicates how Jesus, as true man, came into this world the first time to redeem us from our sins with his holy precious blood. Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us, **“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”** Son of Man is a comforting term that reminds us of our Savior’s great love. He gave up his heavenly throne to humble himself as he came into this world as a human being. He gave up his heavenly throne to bring us freedom from sin, death, and the devil.

Another familiar phrase in this portion of scripture is, **“Coming with the clouds of heaven.”** The first time Jesus came into this world, he was born in humble surroundings. His birth was announced in some spectacular ways but most of the world missed it.

The second time Jesus comes into the world will be different. He will return the same way he left, at least visibly. After Jesus ascended into heaven, angels spoke to the disciples saying, **“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”** (Acts 1:11). He will return with the clouds and our lesson from Revelation reminds us that everyone will see him. Jesus does this so that His power and glory will be evident to all. His second coming will be evident to all and no one will be able to miss it.

Daniel’s vision continues by describing how the, **“[Son of Man] approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.”** This reminds us of the special relationship between God the Father and God the Son. Our salvation depends on the Father’s plan which the Son willingly carried out. It is the Son who now sits at the Father’s right hand interceding for us.

What an awesome vision Daniel had of Jesus. This one verse reminds us of Christ’s humanity, his power and glory, and how he is one with the Father. The Bible supports this in so many ways and yet many people deny that Jesus is the Savior of the world. They might acknowledge that Jesus was a great prophet or a great teacher or that he can show us how to work our way to heaven, but they fail to see him as our Savior-King who battled the serpent on the cross and dealt him a head-crushing blow by paying for the sins of the world. They fail to recognize him as our Savior-King who brings us freedom from the slavery of sin.

There are times when we fall into the trap of not recognizing Jesus as our Savior-King. We don’t give him the honor and the glory that he deserves. When we sin and disobey our Savior’s Word, we are spitting in his face with our disobedience. We deserve death, but our Savior-King brings us life by pardoning our sins.

John’s words in our second lesson remind us that Jesus did this because of his great love for us and his desire that we be part of his kingdom. And we are part of that kingdom because of the faith the Holy Spirit has planted in our hearts. And what a kingdom this is. As we continue with Daniel’s vision we see that this kingdom has unlimited boundaries.

II. Daniel notes that **“He was given authority, glory and sovereign power.”** Jesus had this as true God but once he had completed his work of redemption, God exalted his human nature. Jesus told his disciples just before he ascended into heaven, **“All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.”** (Mt. 28:18). He has been given divine authority, glory, and sovereign power to rule for the benefit of his church – for our benefit.

Daniel goes on to note, **“All peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”** Even unbelievers will recognize Jesus as the Savior of the world on the last day. It will be too late for them, but nevertheless Paul tells us, **“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.”** (Philippians 2:9-10). On the last day every knee will bow and give all honor and glory to Jesus. And he deserves it!

Our Savior has a kingdom unlike any earthly kingdom. In our Gospel lesson Jesus told Pilate, **“My kingdom is not of this world.”** and we are thankful it is not. Earthly kingdoms come and go. Empires don’t last forever and neither do great leaders. Eventually they all fade away, but not so with the kingdom of God. It will never be destroyed. Our King has no limits and neither does his kingdom. The final goal will be reached when this earth is destroyed and our Savior-King comes again to take all believers to be with him in his heavenly kingdom.

Never forget that you are part of God’s kingdom. The faith you have in Jesus as your Lord and Savior makes you a member of his kingdom and as a member of God’s kingdom he brings you a peace that the world cannot give you. The peace of knowing your sins are forgiven and your Savior-King has prepared a heavenly home for you.

Until that day comes, when your Savior will take you to that heavenly home, may you let God rule in your hearts through his Word. May you keep your eyes and hearts fixed on your heavenly goal as your Savior-King comes to you through the Means of Grace – The Gospel in Word and Sacrament. Amen.