

The Daily Bread of Life

Feed your household with the bread that endures to eternal life.
Feast on the words of God and works of Jesus.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

God is the ultimate power

In the distressing events of our current world, we have this vision to remind us that God is in control. The vision also shows us that we will be victorious with him. In fact, though it doesn't look like it, we are already victorious. Christ is the King!

The Text

Daniel 7:13,14

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. ¹⁴He 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. ¹

Keys to Understanding

The Ancient of Days.

This refers to God the Father. Amid all the other upstart kingdoms of Daniel's vision, there is one individual who always has been and always will be—the Ancient One, God.

Authority, glory, sovereign power. The

Keys to Applying

It is helpful to read the context of these verses in Daniel 7:1-12, 15-27. Daniel has a dream in which God shows him four beasts which symbolize four powerful kingdoms—the Babylonian kingdom, the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman. The last kingdom especially would seem to be a threat to God's people. A portion of that kingdom would wage war against the saints and defeat them. But then the Ancient of Days gave the kingdom to the saints under the rule this man who came on the clouds, “one like a son of man.” This man is Jesus.

As the Jews waited for God to “restore the kingdom of David” as he

¹ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. 1984 (Da 7:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Father gives power to this king who will rule. This king's power will be worldwide.

had promised, they would see these other kingdoms rising to power over them. It would look like God had either lost control of things or lost interest in them. This vision would reassure them that everything was under control, and they would see it if they would only wait patiently.

Questions

1. Do we see God's power in world history, especially in present history?
2. What might cause us to forget that God is in control of the world?
3. How will this vision help you to maintain your faith in God through the godlessness of current events?

Because we are Lutherans...

Luther's explanation to the second petition of the Lord's Prayer

"Thy kingdom come."

What does this mean?

Answer: To be sure, the kingdom of God comes by itself, even without our prayers, but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us.

How is this done?

Answer: When the heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit so that by his grace we may believe his holy Word and live a godly life, both here in time and forever in heaven.

Bible Story

Jesus and Pontius Pilate

John 18:28-19:11

1. Note that Jesus says that he is a king.
2. Why was it hard to believe that Jesus was a king?
3. Who really had the power to decide whether Jesus would be crucified or not? (John 19:11)
4. What should we do when it looks like the worst is going to happen in our life?

In Liturgy and Song

341:1

Crown him with many crowns, The Lamb upon his throne;
Hark how the heav'nly anthem drowns All music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing Of him who died for thee,
And hail him as thy matchless King Through all eternity.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, may we see our lives with eyes of faith to understand that you are always ruling all things. May we be comforted by this thought, because you are ruling for our good. In all the terrifying and troubling things that happen, remind us that with you, we are already triumphant. Amen.

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Jesus is the only king who matters

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Keys to Understanding

Everlasting...will not pass away...never be destroyed. Unlike the other kingdoms of the vision, this final kingdom will last forever.

Keys to Applying

Every kingdom rises to power and then falls from power. The final kingdom will not, and no kingdoms are listed after it. The point seems to be that this kingdom ruled by the “one like a son of man” will be the only kingdom that matters anymore once it is set up. This kingdom is ruled by Jesus, and was set up when he died and rose from the dead. It is a kingdom of all who believe in him, in every place and every time.

² *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. 1984 (Da 7:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Questions

1. Why is it so hard to remember that Christ is still the only true ruling power in the world?
2. Do you find your heart more tuned into what is going on in Christ's kingdom or the earthly kingdoms (United States, etc.)
3. Why is Christ's kingdom the only one that really matters?
4. How does it help to remember that we belong Christ's kingdom when the worldly kingdoms are rising and falling.?

Because we are Lutherans...

The second article of the Apostles' Creed with Luther's explanation

*"And in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: he descended into hell, the third day he rose from the dead, he ascended into heaven, and is **seated on the right hand of God, the Father almighty, whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.**"*

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, delivered me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with silver and gold but with his holy and precious blood and with his innocent sufferings and death, in order that I may be his, **live under him in his kingdom**, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as he is risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.³

How did Christ form his kingdom? By purchasing us with his blood, so that we would be saved from sin and death and forever belong to him.

³ *The Book of Concord the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* 1959 (T. G. Tappert, Ed.) (345). Philadelphia: Mühlenberg Press.

Bible Story

The Stoning of Stephen

Acts 7:51-60

1. Stephen was stoned to death for preaching about Jesus.
2. At that time, the power of this Jewish government seemed strong and dangerous, but God let him see his place in Jesus' kingdom.
3. Stephen died knowing that he was triumphant because he was with Christ.
4. With this vision of his eternal triumph, Stephen was able to die in peace.

In Liturgy and Song

341:4

Crown him the Lord of heav'n, Enthroned in worlds above;
Crown him the King to whom is giv'n The wondrous name of Love.
Crown him with many crowns As thrones before him fall;
Crown him, ye kings, with many crowns For he is King of all.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, continue to strengthen us with the power and glory of your kingdom, so that our faith in you will be strong as the kingdoms of the world turn their power against you and against us. Amen.

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Jesus is human

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Keys to Understanding

One like a son of man. Daniel saw this one who was, by all appearances, a man. Jesus would use this term to refer to himself.

Keys to Applying

The first four beasts signified four kingdoms that would be frightening to God’s people. This last one is comforting. He is Jesus. He is the man who treated all of humanity with such compassion and kindness as he reached out to the crippled, the demon-possessed, the sinners and tax collectors. He comes with all the power and glory of God and he will destroy his enemies, but he has reached out to us as his friends. He is the one who bore our sins. He understands our struggles and will not lose his patience with us. Hebrews 4:15 says about Jesus, “we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with us in our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are, and yet was without sin.”

⁴ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. 1984 (Da 7:13–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Questions

1. Jesus has all authority and power. If you have not been very concerned about his kingdom, or if you have even worked against him at times, what would you deserve when he comes on the Last Day to destroy the enemies of his kingdom?
2. What good news is there in the fact that Jesus is a man, just like us in every way, except with out sin?
3. What good news is there in the fact that he is the man who bore our sins?

Bible Story

Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

Luke 22:39-46

1. Jesus was weakened by the thoughts of his coming suffering and death, and by the temptations to have it a different way. An angel came to strengthen him.
2. The blood mixing with Jesus' sweat shows that his temptations were real, and that they caused him much anguish.
3. How does it help to know that Jesus, your King who forgives you, knows what it is like to be tempted?

In Liturgy and Song

341:2,3

Crown him the Lord of love—Behold his hands and side,
Rich wounds, yet visible above, In beauty glorified.
No angel in the sky Can fully bear that sight,
But downward bends his wond'ring eye At mysteries so bright.

Crown him the Lord of life, Who triumphed o'er the grave
And rose victorious in the strife For those he came to save.
His glories now we sing Who died and rose on high,
Who died eternal life to bring And lives that death may die.

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, when you come to destroy your enemies, remember your mercy and forgiveness for us. Be patient with us, because you know our weakness. Rescue us when you come, because your blood has saved us from our sins. Amen.