

Daniel 7:13-14. "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. 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.

Christ the King Rules with a Calming Consistency.

1. The Son of Man brings peace.

2. The Son of Man rules for all eternity.

How was your Thanksgiving? I hope you were able to enjoy the God-given gifts of food and family. I hope you were able to have a day or two to enjoy some quality time to reflect and give thanks.

It seems that one of the unwritten - but much spoken about - rules of Thanksgiving is to not talk politics around the table. Especially in these days of political outrage, turmoil, and upheaval, it has become a general rule of thumb to avoid such discussions at family gatherings because of the unwanted tension that this might bring. There is certainly enough turmoil and discontent in our world to keep a guy up at night, and a family spat publicly hashed out over a turkey dinner would only add to the unrest. Fortunately, the LORD brings to us today words of blessed peace and assurance to souls who might very well be troubled by the strife that surrounds us. Through this vision from the book of Daniel, the LORD God assures us that **Christ the King Rules with a Calming Consistency. The Son of Man brings peace. The Son of Man rules for all eternity. And in this truth, we can be content as we serve the Lord with thanksgiving and praise.**

In our lesson for today, Daniel's mind had been filled with thoughts of tremendous political turmoil delivered in a spectacular way. As he was lying down for the night Daniel was given a series of visions that depicted incredible political turmoil and upheaval. Troubling images of beasts that appeared to come out of the sea greatly disturbed his slumber, but the LORD would also give him a wonderful vision that would restore peace to his troubled mind.

In the first of these visions in chapter 7, Daniel sees beasts that come forth out of the sea. We are told that these visions would represent 4 kingdoms that would come to power and would dominate the world for the next 500 years. The first beast, which was "like a lion," and appeared to have the wings of an eagle, is generally understood to be the Babylonian Empire. This was the empire that was still in power during Daniel's time. The second beast was like a bear, and it represented the Medo-Persian Empire. The third beast looked like a leopard with four wings on it back, and this beast depicted the swift spreading Greek empire that would reach its peak under Alexander the Great.

The fourth beast which was described by Daniel as terrifying and frightening and very powerful with large iron teeth, which crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left, was a picture of the Roman Empire.

With these troubling pictures rolling around in his head, Daniel was then given a peaceful picture of promise. In this part of the vision, a figure would come not from the churning sea but from the peaceful clouds. This being would come in the appearance of a man and not a beast. As this being came forward, he approached the Ancient of Days, God Almighty. The Son of Man came into the presence of the Eternal God. The Ancient of Days was so pleased by this one who came on the clouds that God gave to him authority, glory, and sovereign power over all peoples. His kingdom would be established, and his kingdom would have no end.

What a welcome and calming picture this must have been for Daniel! After Daniel is given a terrifying glimpse of the great tumult and social upheaval, political turmoil, and historical conflict, that was going to take place upon the earth for the next 500 years, what a marvelous contrast this image of the Son of Man would bring! The calming consistency of the Son of Man being appointed to rule all things forever; this was a promise of peace that still makes hearts content and thankful.

We know this to be a picture of the coming Christ for a number of reasons, especially from the perspective of the New Testament. Jesus often would refer to himself by this familiar moniker, the Son of Man. *The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost. The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as the ransom for many.* And when Jesus came, he did not come with the typical noise and ferocity of an earthly empire builder. Thus, we see him appear in the vision not as a beast, not as an earthly force or a leader of an empire that was bent on gain at the expense of others, but he came as one of us and for us. He came for the benefit of us all. He came as the one who would bring peace that would last. The Son of God came as the Son of Man to bring eternal peace between God and man. He would come as one of us, born under the law. Scripture reveals how Jesus would live in our place and give himself as the sacrifice for all sin, so that we might live with him forever. As the one who accomplished the promise of salvation - given by the Father at the beginning of time - the resurrected Jesus would eventually ascend to heaven to rule for all time. For the Father, pleased with the Savior's work, would appoint his Eternal Son to continue his rule over all things. And then he promised that he would come again to bring believers forever to his side. This is the magnificent picture of the Messiah's eternal reign which is fulfilled in Christ the King. The LORD comes to Daniel with this blessed promise of calming consistency. The Son of Man, Jesus Christ our King, will rule over all things for all eternity.

Pictured here in the midst of this terrible upheaval - nations rising and falling, kingdoms being built up and destroyed in the span of but a few hundred years - and he comes with unparalleled peace. He comes, and his presence assures Daniel, he assures

his people of all time that he will be a consistent source of hope and harmony. Peace with God is pictured, an eternal reign over all things is promised.

It's an incredible vision that Daniel is privileged to take in. It is an incredible vision that provides a wonderful perspective to us who so often lay down at night and wonder what is going on with our world and our nation. Another important message that we also ought to glean from this reading is that living in the peace that Jesus brings we have been set free to simply: keep calm and serve Christ our King. Christ Jesus is in control. Everything is going to be alright. The one who ruled over all things since the beginning of time, who held dominion and power as ancient kingdoms rose and fell, is still in control of all things. All nations, all people, all rulers are under his feet. No matter what is going on around us in the world today, or in our nation, or in our lives, Jesus is ruling all things for our eternal good. And that message brings peace and a blessed perspective.

While it is good to be informed and even passionate about what is going on in our world, the perspective that God gives to us through these visions is vital. Earthly powers come and go, earthly kingdoms and rulers, rise and fall, but the LORD Jesus reigns forever. Too often, we get caught up in the political and social uproar around us. We get sucked into that turmoil which can be so detrimental to our emotional, physical, and even our spiritual health. We might put too much of our trust in princes and mortal men who cannot save. We may rely too heavily on particular leaders, or parties, or organizations that are imperfect, flawed, and not built to last. Leaning so heavily on such things our interest and our devotion becomes misplaced as passion turns to outrage and we harbor feelings of hatred towards those who disagree with us. We may even lash out in hate towards those who see things from a different angle. This outrage, this turmoil, this tension, when let loose may even cause unneeded and deep divisions within family members and members of our church family as we give in to our worst natures. The turmoil around us feeds the turmoil within us and it can easily overflow in ugly and ungodly ways. On the other hand, while some might not be so prone to outrage the other extreme is that we get so fed up with all the outrage around us that we give up, and give in to despair. We may even be tempted by the devil to think that God doesn't care, or he is simply not in control. In the midst of this complex upheaval, the LORD Jesus approaches his people and he gives us his word of truth that brings to us blessed peace and perspective. Jesus reigns. The one who came to save us rules over all things for good. He will come again, and we will live and reign with him for all eternity.

This is the truth that gives us peace between God and with each other. Christ the eternal King brings a calming consistency that also unites his people.... Daniel's vision tells us, ***He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations, and men of every language worshiped him.*** Jesus is the King and Ruler of all people. Whatever your political leanings, whatever your race, ethnicity, or background, he is the Savior of all. He came as one of us, born under the law, to keep all of it perfectly for

us. He came in peace and refrained from anger and outburst, hatred and harm of his neighbor. Even as those who arrested and crucified and mocked him, Jesus would not sink to their level. He remained silent in the face of those who slung their insults and fists into his face. He remained calm as he went about the difficult and painful and shameful task of bringing about our salvation.

As some have said Jesus brings outrageous grace to a culture of outrage (Christ Hold Fast Conference – 2018). Jesus would come with unparalleled, outrageous grace, as he would leave his throne on high, and take on a servant's form for us. I say outrageous grace in this sense: Why would the divine take on the humiliation of humanity for those who in anger and rage and pettiness often act like crude beasts? Why would he come and live a life of obedience and holiness in the place of the disobedient and profane? Why would he who had no sin so willingly die the death that we sinners deserve? Only because of his undeserved love, his goodness, and grace, he lives and dies for us. Only because of his outrageous, incredible grace; only because he so dearly wanted us to live with him forever; did he set aside his glory for a time to take on utter shame and our punishment of hell for us. He set aside his glory and came to win the victory for us. But his life and his work would not end at the cross. The head once crowned with shame would be crowned with glory once again. He would rise from the dead. He would send out his disciples with the message of forgiveness and eternal life that only comes through his redeeming work. He would then ascend to the right hand of God, the Father, Almighty. From there he promises that he will come again in glory to bring us to his side forever.

This is something that happens only because of the incredible kindness and undeserved love of God. God sends his Son to suffer and die for us and he will come again on the clouds, just as he left, to take us to our eternal home in glory. Peace upon peace is given to those who hear and believe this gospel truth. Our Savior, who grants us peace with God, is now ruling over all things for the good of those who love him. And we who have been brought to believe these truths through the power of the gospel have been given one more layer of peace in knowing that our Savior will one day come back on the clouds and take us to be with him in heaven forever.

He is the one we thankfully rely on in times of both prosperity and trouble. He is the one who grants us peace in this life and in the life to come. In such a time of turmoil and unrest, in such a time of uproar and outrage, let us continually rejoice in, live in, and share the peace that Christ brings. As those who are eternally blessed by his gift of peace let us speak the truth of God's Word and do so in love. With contentment and thanksgiving that comes from Jesus, we can keep calm and serve Christ our King. **Christ the King Rules with a Calming Consistency: The Son of Man Brings Peace to his People. The Son of Man Will Rule for All Eternity.** Praise and thanks be to God for the unchanging truth of his Word. Amen.