

Daily Devotionals

November 17, 2021

Overall theme for the week: Even after Israel had experienced the instability of kings, the people still longed for a true king to set things right. He would have the king's title of Anointed One (Messiah); he would be the "one like a human being" (Son of Man) given dominion in Daniel's vision. Jesus is given these titles, even though he is nothing like an earthly king. His authority comes from the truth to which he bears witness, and those who recognize the truth voluntarily listen to him. We look forward to the day he is given dominion, knowing his victory will be the nonviolent victory of love.

As we celebrate Christ as our king, we need to understand what this means. His kingdom is not of this world, but one that is accomplished through love and peace. Jesus is not interested in military might and power, nor is he interested in intimidation and force. He comes to show that his kingdom is one of mutual love and service in community. As he gave of himself for the world, we are transformed to live in peace and joy in community.

Scripture Reading: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

To the community for whom this passage was written, it seemed as though the oppression they were experiencing would never end. Daniel's message is: It shall end. The Ancient One, who is judge, will call all nations to account and will give dominion to "one like a human being," the Messiah. God is faithful, even when God's people are not!

Day 1: Reflect on Daniel 7:9-10

- What image of God as ruler to do we find in these verses?
- What hope or strength would this image bring to an oppressed people?

Day 2: Reflect on Daniel 7:13-14

- Who is being prophesied as the "one like a human being" that is given power?
- What foreknowledge of Jesus are we given in this Old Testament prophecy?

Scripture Reading: Revelation 1:4b-8

The book of Revelation begins by celebrating the Almighty God, who spans all of time. Similarly, Jesus is celebrated as the firstborn from the dead who rules over the world's rulers. He is the one whose return we eagerly await. In the meantime, he has set us from our sin by his blood to be servants of God in love for one another.

Day 3: Reflect on Revelation 1:4b-6

- What does it mean that the ruler of the earth loves us and frees us from our sins by his blood?
- What does this image of Christ inform how we are to live out our lives?

Day 4: Reflect on Revelation 1:7-8

- Do you fear the end times? Why or why not?
- What strength does this image of Christ give us for the end times?

Scripture Reading: John 18:33-37

In John's gospel, the story of Jesus and Pilate presents two different ways of exercising power: through force or with love. Jesus reveals that his sole purpose is to show forth the truth about God's love for all creation, not rule through might or power.

Day 5: Reflect on John 18:33-35

- What contrast in rulers do we begin to find in Pilate and Jesus?
- What does Pilate not understand about Jesus as a king?

Day 6: Reflect on John 18:36-37

- What does Jesus reveal is his ultimate goal or purpose?
- What do you do in your life to seek out truth?

Day 7: **Psalm 93**

¹The LORD is king, robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength.

The LORD has made the world so sure that it cannot be moved.

²Ever since the world began, your throne has been established;
you are from everlasting.

³The waters have lifted up, O LORD, the waters have lifted up their voice;
the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.

⁴Mightier than the sound of many waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea,
mightier is the LORD who dwells on high.

⁵Your testimonies are very sure,
and holiness befits your house, O LORD, forever and forevermore.

Reflect upon what it means that God is king, robed in majesty. What comfort does this bring? What fear could this provoke? What strength does it bring knowing that our majestic God cares enough for us to die for us?

We give thanks that God is the ultimate ruler and king. Despite images of God as power and might in the bible, we also know in Christ that God ultimately rules through love. It is God's sole purpose that we turn from sin and evil and come to God and find forgiveness and new life. God is not interested in having dominion over us, God looks to be in communion with us to bring us life in its fullest.