

Living Way

January 17, 2024

Opening Hymn: LSB 401 *From God the Father, Virgin-Born*

Lecture Hymn: LSB 595 *O Blessed Spring*

Daniel & Nebuchadnezzar's First Dream

*Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, and told them **to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery**, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night.*

— Da 2:17–19

“Daniel immediately seeks out his fellow believers in Yahweh. Not only are they facing the same danger as he, but also they alone can share in prayer to God in true faith, asking that He deliver them. This seeking the company of other faithful followers of God to worship and pray, especially in times of crisis, is characteristic of the saints throughout history (e.g. Acts 4:23-31)”

— Steinmann, 124.

Daniel's God, our God, is worthy of praise, honor, and blessing.

Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said:

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
whom belong wisdom and might.

He changes times and seasons;
he removes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who have understanding;
he reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what is in the darkness,
and the light dwells with him.

To you, O God of my fathers,
I give thanks and praise,
for you have given me wisdom and might,
and have now made known to me what we asked of you,
for you have made known to us the king's matter.” —Da 2:19-23

Thanks and praise is due to God for His gracious and merciful response to prayer.

This same God's authority extends over all things created (everything that isn't Him)

Daniel 2—Daniel 7

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Revelatory to Nebuchadnezzar, interpreted by God through Daniel

He wants the “wise men” of his court to know the dream without being told. (2:1-11)

4 Kingdoms represented by a statue (2:31-45)

- Babylonians
 - Nebuchadnezzar's is the head of gold, pleasing him.
- Media-Persia
- Greeks
- Romans

What about the stone?

- God's Kingdom is represented by a stone cut and breaking the feet of the statue.
 - Daniel 2:35, Isaiah 2:2, Psalm 118:22

This dream is God revealing to Nebuchadnezzar, through Daniel, what is coming. It doesn't, however, specifically highlight a figure that can be interpreted as messianic. Nebuchadnezzar is pleased with the dream as it feeds his ego.

Daniel's Vision

Revealed to Daniel alone

4 Beasts (7:1-8)

- A lion with eagle's wings.
 - Jer 50:17 –Nebuchadnezzar compared to a lion
 - Jer 4:13—Babylonian army
- A bear with ribs in its mouth, raised on one side.
 - Medo-Persian Empire (Persians having greater power)
 - This correlates to the Ram in 8:3
- A leopard with four wings and heads.
 - Alexander the Great (Greek Empire)
 - The number 4 in chapters 7-12 points to Greek dominance.
- A terrifying destroyer, iron teeth and ten horns.
 - This aligns with Roman practices of ruthlessly subduing to bring people groups under their control.
 - Ten horns point to overwhelming dominance.

The picture painted by Daniel's vision in chapter 7 is one of the rise and fall of earthly empires and judgement. The near context would be the four empires in the left hand box. This is parallel to Daniel 2, but with an explicit Messianic connection, both in the first and second Advents of Christ Jesus. The inbreaking of the Reign of God came in Jesus' incarnation, it is here. It will be fully visible at His return.