

The Jesus Trip, King of Kings and the End of Time

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Recap: Last week we looked at River in Ezekiel - not just a metaphor!

Ezekiel 47:12

“trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river... they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing.”

Revelation 22:1-2

“And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb... The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

We have access to the throne now, we have access to the river NOW (John 7:38), no matter what its future manifestation may look like.

Ezekiel 47:9

“...Life will flourish wherever this water flows.”

The river causes, looses and releases life. There is a pulsating, gushing, rushing River in you, from the very throne of God that will sweep you up into a life of righteousness and power - and you can't help it.

Intro:

The theme of right now... what's available today

Book of Daniel gives some strange, almost mind bending pictures and illustrations to wrestle with. Some of these visions trouble Daniel and he is actually even told to seal up the words of this book, seal it until the end of time. A very intriguing statement... thus a sermon Title: King of kings and the End of Time”

John 5:39 Jesus said that the scriptures (Daniel included!), its primary purpose was to testify of Him. Even the prophetic ones!

Matthew 5:17-18 (AMP)

“Do not think that I came to do away with or undo the Law [of Moses] or the [writings of the] Prophets; I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Important to note because: Daniel is full of familiar Sunday school stories, and if you are into it, familiar prophetic visions and the narratives that we have built around them.

In keeping with the Jesus Trip, if we believe Jesus, it's purpose is neither to reinforce our prophetic predictions about the future, nor is it to unveil the anti-Christ, and neither is it a book of moral lessons. What does it do?

Context:

Jews are in exile and are living in foreign land. We see a few examples in the book where Daniel and his friends risk their lives to be obedient to God while in exile.

But, if you look past the predictions and the moral lessons, behind the amazing picture of Daniel and his buddies staying true to God, there is a greater drama and contest. It's not actually about Daniel or Rack, Shack and Benni. It's about God Almighty, the God of the Jews verses the Babylonian gods and the Babylonian tendency to elevate humanity through humanistic religion.

So consistently, story after story God proves to be superior... and is able to save a protect from the wrath and the consequences of systems of misplaced worship and God-hating.

Nebuchadnezzar ends up confessing:

Daniel 2:47 (NLT)

"...Truly, your God is the greatest of gods, the Lord over kings, a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this secret."

Daniel 4:34-35 (NLT)

"After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is eternal.

Daniel 6:26 (NLT)

"I decree that everyone throughout my kingdom should tremble with fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, and he will endure forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his rule will never end."

When you look beyond the moralisms, the apocalyptic visions and prophetic prediction, and you look to see Jesus in the book of Daniel, it's not about prophetic gifts and mantles and activations. It's not about good behaviour and courageous moral living. It's not even about prophetic predictions

beyond this single fact! it points to Jesus. And in Jesus it helps us get into touch with some pretty significant kingdom realities.

Daniel does prophesy, he makes some amazing predictions about the future... but because Jesus said the scriptures point to Him, because he said, He came to fulfill the law and the prophets, I believe what Daniel spoke about was fulfilled in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ.

A couple of examples.

Daniel 2:

King Nebuchadnezzar has a dream about a statue with:

Head of God - Babylon.

Chest and Arms of Silver - Medes and Persians,

Waist and Thighs of Bronze - Greece - Alexander the great

Legs of Iron and Feet and toes of iron mixed with clay - the Roman empire. (ruled by senate and people) - 10 senatorial princess created by August Caesar in 27BC

Daniel 2:44-45 (NLT)

"During the reigns of those kings [the ten toes of iron mixed with clay], the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever. That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain, though not by human hands, that crushed to pieces the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God was showing the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain."

Daniel 9:24-27

24 "Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: ***to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.*** **25** Know therefore and understand: from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time. **26 After the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing,** and the troops of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. **27 He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease;** and in their place shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator."

Daniel prophesies that in 483 years from the time the decree was made for the Jews to leave captivity and go back to their land, and anointed one would show up.

The Anointed One did show up, 483 years, or 7 + 62 weeks of 7 years later, around AD 27, he was publicly baptized and received the Holy Spirit. And, for three and half years the anointed one Jesus walked the Earth.

Jesus is the rock that came from above, who ushered in a new kingdom.

Jesus is the one who put an end to sin, atoned for iniquity, brought in everlasting righteousness, sealed the vision and the prophet, anointed the most holy place, made a covenant with many, and made sacrifices and offerings cease. He did that in his death, burial, resurrection and ascension.

Hebrews 10:12-18

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds," he also adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin."

Do you recognize Jeremiah in there? Do you recognize Ezekiel's words in there? Do you see in this statement where Daniel speaks about the end of the sacrifices? It all points to Jesus.

When they spoke of the end-times they saw the end of the world as coinciding with the coming of the Messiah. The end of time as the end of the times of humans floundering under our own rule and government, enslaved to powers and forces beyond our control.

Hebrews 1:1-2 (NRSV)

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.

We are in the end times. And... that sealed up message has been unsealed: it was "the mystery kept hidden from ages past, **BUT NOW REVEALED TO US, CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY. Col. 1:26-27**

It's all about Jesus.

Daniel 7:23

*As I watched in the night visions, I saw one **like a human being** coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed.*

Not a future event for us. Daniel accurately prophesied a heavenly event, but it's one that happened. Jesus, the one the Gospels reveal to us as the Son of Man approached the Ancient of Days after his resurrection. The king of glory ascended, to the right hand of the father, took his seat and is waiting for his enemies to be made his footstool.

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth **has been given** to me. (**Matthew 28:18**). That's not some day in the future... the King is the king now... he is Lord of lords, King of kings right now, with legal right and power to reign and rule.

So how come we don't see it! How come there is so little evidence.

Different question. What did he do with the authority he had when he came into his kingdom? What did he do with His power... and might and ability to subdue all things to himself?

He took it... and he invested it in us. He gave it away! After having obtained eternal redemption for us all, he sits down and says "now you, you use the power and authority I am freely giving you... and I will sit here til I make my enemies my footstool with my power and authority **in you.**"

He has made us king and priests. **Revelation 5:10**. Not to say we don't have difficulty, even tragedy. All things are not yet as they should be. But we are the ones who instead of hiding from them and trying to figure out why they are happening or not happening, need to be engaged and one situation at a time, bringing kingdom.

So, here's the message of Daniel as seen through the lens of Jesus:

Jesus Christ is king of kings and Lord of lords. He has ushered in the end of time .. already. He reconciled the world to himself (cosmos) and has made all things new. Now He is waiting for us to believe it and manifest it.

Jesus brought that kingdom and now all our moral problems are gone as we are born into a kingdom where the power to rule us, to dominate our behaviour is no longer the power of sin, death, or the law. Sin we are told in Romans 6 will no longer have dominion over us, rule us, because we are not under the law but under the power, reign, dominion, Lordship of grace - not sometime in the future, but right now.

The Book of Daniel did point to a coming King and Kingdom, but He came, and that kingdom is established now. There is no delay. There is no waiting for a coming King. ***He will come again - but not to re-do or add to what He already did!***

Paul Ellis from the Gospel in Ten Words:

"Some people treat Christianity like a game of checkers. If you live carefully and navigate your way safely to the other side you can declare 'King me!' But in truth, you were kinged at the beginning of the game. The moment you were put into Christ, you became royalty." (p. 137)

Right here right now, in Christ Jesus we are royalty. And lest we try to complicate this and make it something its not.. as if kingdom is us living according to God's Holy Kingly decrees:

those who reign in life are not the ones who are better at "submitting to and obeying the king" as good and holy as that sounds. The ones who reign in life and manifest all the realities of which we have been speaking are simply the ones who by faith "Receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness," and who understand that the rule of Jesus in your life is not you in your willpower submitting, but Him in you reigning.

As kings and queens in a now present kingdom, we who know our God, we "display strength and we take action." **Daniel 11:32**