

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 10 January 2021

Sermon Title : Dreams, Visions and Destiny

Speaker : Rev Reuben Ng

Text : Daniel 7:1-28

INTRODUCTION

We all have our fair share of strange dreams and the prophet Daniel had such a strange dream filled with visions in the first year of king Belshazzar of Babylon (Daniel 7:1). Although Daniel was an interpreter of dreams who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams about a statue and the giant tree that was chopped down, he needed help in interpreting his own dream in Daniel 7.

Daniel's Dream filled with visions

A. Visions of 4 beasts (Dan 7:4-8)

1. Lion with eagle's wings (Dan 7:4)
2. Bear with iron rods (Dan 7:5)
3. Leopard with many heads (Dan 7:6)
4. A dreadful, terrible and very strong beast with iron teeth and 10 horns on its head. (Dan 7:7-8) Different from the first 3 beasts there was no reference animal mentioned by Daniel in describing this beast.

B. Vision of an awesome (awe-inspiring), majestic, almighty, omnipotent Ancient of Days (Dan 7:9-10)

Different Bible translations use "Ancient of Days" as "the Ancient One", "the Eternal One" or "the One who lives forever".

Who is this Ancient of Days?

- He is who we come together to worship Sunday after Sunday, God Almighty, God in His fullness, God in His glory, the Creator of heavens and the earth. The One who sent His Son to earth to die for all humanity so that all of us have the opportunity to receive Him and to know Him. He is the One whom we address when we pray prayers like "Our Father who art in Heaven". This Ancient of Days is God, our Father in Heaven.

Unfortunately, sometimes we become so familiar with God and forget how awesome He is. We hear so much about Him, read things about Him that He becomes like a familiar "pet" when He is actually God, the Eternal One.

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- Fire can be a scary thing although a small flame is nice as it gives a warm, fuzzy feeling. Fires can get out of control and burn down houses, forests, destroy properties and kill people. An out of control fire can take days, weeks or even months to put out. A fire is a powerful thing but here a fire is not powerful enough and God Himself controls the fire as the fire proceeds from His throne. That's how powerful our God is. (Dan 7:10)

C. The fourth beast slain (Dan 7:11-12)

"Many thousands were ministering to the Ancient of Days; many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him...." (v.10b) Daniel goes on to say that a court was convened and the fourth dreadful, terrible, very strong beast was slain and its body thrown into fire.

D. The Son of Man (Daniel 7: 13-14)

In Daniel's vision at night, he saw one like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. *"The son of man went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. To Him was given ruling authority, honour and sovereignty. All peoples, nations and language groups were serving him. His authority is eternal and will not pass away. His kingdom will not be destroyed."*

Who is the Son of Man?

Jesus is the only One who fulfils the descriptions given by Daniel. In the New Testament, Philippians 2:10-11 tells us that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord. The words 'will not' used in describing the Son of Man's authority and kingdom are important as they emphasize the eternal nature of His kingship.

Interpretation of Daniel's Dream (Daniel 7: 15-27)

Daniel was distressed and alarmed by the visions and approached one of those standing there and asked him the meaning of his visions. The angel spoke to Daniel and revealed the interpretation of the visions:

<u>Beast</u>	<u>Kingdom represented</u>
Lion	Babylon
Bear	Medo-Persian empire
Leopard	Greece
Terrible beast with 10 horns	Rome 10 kings would come forth from Rome. One of these kings

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	would displace and humiliate 3 kings and take their place. The final king would be very boastful & arrogant. He would suppress the holy ones of God and bring much suffering to those who worship & follow God. The oppression and suffering would not last forever. It would be for 3 and a half times. After this, the Ancient of Days would come and pronounce judgement. The final king would be removed and slain. Then Jesus, the Son of Man will come and receive all the authorities.
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Focus on Destiny

Many Christians stumble over the identity of the final horn. Some say it was Barack Obama, others say Saddam Hussein or Osama bin Laden. However, the focus of the angel giving the interpretation of Daniel's dream was not on the identity of the last king, kingdom or horn, but on the destiny of the kingdoms and on the destiny of God's holy ones. We should not get side tracked by the identity of the last king but focus on the destiny. The destiny for all kingdoms is that they will pass away. Every kingdom, influence, authority will not stand forever. Only the authority and the kingdom of Christ will stand forever.

Applications:

1. Confidence

The truths we learn in Daniel 7 give us certain confidence and hope. Regardless of the kingdoms, times or the people in power, the pandemic situation, the economic up's and down's, whatever circumstances we face – these things will pass away. However, we who are God's holy people belong to a Kingdom that will not pass away. That should give us confidence, hope, assurance and comfort. Let us be confident people and not give in to fears of the unknown or uncertainties brought about by the current situations in this world.

2. Consciousness

Now that we know Daniel's dream speaks of our destiny and our future, we should be conscious of that truth and spend time reflecting whether our values, attitudes and priorities are aligned with the values of the world we currently live in or with those of the eternal Kingdom we belong to. As we reflect on this, take time to tweak and realign our attitudes, focus and priorities with God's Kingdom values and priorities. If we do this, when we finally join God's eternal Kingdom, we will not feel like a fish out of water but will feel right at home.

CONCLUSION

May we have a clear sense of our destiny as God's holy ones. Let us be confident of the hope we have in our future and be conscious of the changes we need to make to align ourselves with the values and priorities of God's eternal Kingdom.

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As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting. Share also on God's prompting you have received on how your SG can be in the world, and not of the world but for the world in this New Year.

A. Review Sermon Content

Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.

Appoint someone to read Daniel 7:1-28 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, ‘This is the Word of the Lord.’

All to respond, “Thanks be to God.” Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now.”

- a. As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?

- b.
 - (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon “Dreams, Visions and Destiny”?
 - (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

- 2a. What does Daniel's description of the Ancient of Days tell you about God?
- 2b. (i) What are some tell-tale signs that we have become too familiar with the Ancient of Days and taken Him for granted?
(ii) What are some ways we can prevent or avoid this?
- 2c. How does Daniel's vision of the everlasting dominion of the Son of Man
 - (i) reassure and give you confidence about the future even while in this pandemic?
 - (ii) make you feel uncomfortable or troubled? What will your response be to this consciousness?
- 3a. What is one area of your life in your attitudes, values or priorities that needs to be realigned to God's Kingdom values?
- 3b. What is one thing that you must do or stop doing, to allow this realignment to take place in the coming week(s) until your next meeting?
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you to persevere in 3b above for the next week(s) until your next meeting?

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C. Testimonies and Prayer

Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.

4. Share your testimony on how God has transformed your confidence in your future which was based on the values of this world to that of His eternal Kingdom.

OR

Give thanks to God for helping you face the uncertainties and challenges in your present situation with renewed confidence and hope.

5. Bring all that has been shared in 3a, 3b and 3c to God, trusting in the omnipotent power and might of His Spirit to help you make the changes needed to realign your priorities to His. Commit to supporting and encouraging one another to persevere in this re-alignment so we may be confident of our shared destiny as God's holy ones despite our current situations.

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