

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE

LECTONARY #161

READING I Daniel 7:13-14

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

As the visions during the night continued, I saw
one like a Son of man coming,
on the clouds of heaven;

when he reached the Ancient One
and was presented before him,

the one like a Son of man received dominion, glory,
and kingship;

all peoples, nations, and languages serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not be taken away,

his kingship shall not be destroyed.

Imagine the scene. Use a tone in your
proclamation that paints a picture for the
listener and invites them into the epic vision.

Do not rush the list of gifts that God enjoys.

The permanence of God's reign is made
clear. The use of negatives makes the
statement definitive.

For meditation and context:

R. The Lord is king; he is robed in majesty.

The Lord is king, in splendor robed;
robed is the Lord and girt about with
strength.
Your decrees are worthy of trust indeed;
holiness befits your house,
O Lord, for length of days.

And he has made the world firm,
not to be moved.
Your throne stands firm from of old;
from everlasting you are, O Lord.

the question, though it seems less likely to
refer to a generic person in this instance.
Both Old Testament senses of "Son of
man" appear in the New Testament. While
at times the phrase seems to refer to
humanity in general, it is used in Acts 7:56 to
refer to Jesus standing at the right hand of
God. Likewise, in Revelation 1:13 and 14:14
Jesus appears as the glorified Christ reminis-
cent of the "Son of man" in this passage.

READING II

This Sunday we recognize
and worship Jesus Christ as
king of the universe. Today's second reading

of the son of man's kingship which encom-
passes "all peoples, nations, and lan-
guages." Furthermore, his kingship is
perpetual, withstanding all trials and tribu-
lations. The son of man reflects God's
sovereignty over all of humanity.
The question remains of who, then, is
meant by the "Son of man" in this reading.
There are several possible contenders,
including the faithful community, the angel
Michael, the angel Gabriel, Judas Macca-
beus, Daniel himself, or simply a generic
human being. There is no clear answer to

Today's first reading focuses
on the prophet Daniel's
description of the "Son of man," in the Old
Testament, the title "son of man" is mostly
used as a generic term for man/humanity/
mortal. Ezekiel uses it with this sense
around seventy times. However, in today's
reading, Daniel seems to attribute a differ-
ent sense to the phrase.
This passage from Daniel depicts the
son of man's heavenly descent. Further-
more, this figure is described as having
received dominion, glory, and kingship. This
first reading emphasizes the universality

READING II Revelation 1:5-8

A reading from the Book of Revelation

Jesus Christ is the faithful witness,
the **firstborn** of the dead and ruler of the kings of the earth.
To him who **loves** us and has **freed** us from our sins by
his blood,
who has made **us** into a **kingdom**, priests for his God
and Father,
to him be **glory** and **power** forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, he is **coming** amid the clouds,
and **every** eye will see him,
even those who **pierced** him.
All the peoples of the earth will **lament** him.

Yes. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God,
"the one who is and who was and who is to come,
the almighty."

Notice the different ways Jesus Christ is described. Proclaim them with praise!

Be familiar enough with the Lord's words in the last lines to deliver them looking directly at the assembly.

reminds us that his rule is rooted in the great love he has for us, and it outlines the extent of his kingship. He conquered death, making him "the firstborn of the dead." Christ's rule stands above and beyond all others as he is declared king of kings, confirming his kingship over all the peoples of the world.

Having described the extent of Christ's kingdom, this passage next reveals the kind of king he is. He is a loving, sacrificial king who freed humanity from the bondage of sin by means of his very blood. His salvific love is transformative, creating a royal and

priestly people, a kingdom, for God the Father. The letter to the Hebrews explains that the people express their priestly function in offering a sacrifice of praise (13:15-16).

Finally, the last lines in today's reading contain God's direct speech, in which he depicts his transcendent nature as "the Jesus coming from the clouds echoes the description of the "Son of man" in the first reading. Thus, the Book of Revelation answers the question of the identity of the "Son of man" in Daniel 7:13 in a final and complete sense: he is Jesus Christ, triumphant king of the universe.

It is noteworthy that the description of Jesus coming from the clouds echoes the description of the "Son of man" in the first reading. Thus, the Book of Revelation answers the question of the identity of the "Son of man" in Daniel 7:13 in a final and complete sense: he is Jesus Christ, triumphant king of the universe.

GOSPEL John 18:33b-37

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Pilate said to Jesus,
 "Are you the King of the Jews?"
 Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own
 or have others told you about me?"
 Pilate answered, "I am not a Jew, am I?
 Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me.
 What have you done?"
 Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world.
 If my kingdom did belong to this world,
 my attendants would be fighting
 to keep me from being handed over to the Jews.
 But as it is, my kingdom is not here."
 So Pilate said to him, "Then you are a king?"
 Jesus answered, "You say I am a king.
 For this I was born and for this I came into the world,
 to testify to the truth.
 Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

Distinguish between the two characters in dialogue.

Is Pilate curious or accusatory? Perhaps both?

Jesus is not flustered. He has truth on his side.

Proclaim Jesus' last line with sincerity. His words apply to us today.

GOSPEL

John's Gospel presents a stark contrast between an earthly king and the divine kingship of Jesus. Previously in John's Gospel, those who called Jesus a king (1:49; 6:15; 12:13) fell far short of the reality of Jesus' identity because they were expecting a messiah to establish his reign and restore the kingdom of Israel through military force. They failed to recognize Jesus' true messianic kingship because they could not see beyond their own expectations.

Likewise, Pilate struggles to understand if Jesus is truly a king. Jesus insists

that his kingdom is not of the world and, for Pilate, the world is the only possible realm for reigning as king. He does not recognize that Jesus' kingdom belongs to the heavenly realm. Like the other people in John's Gospel, Pilate cannot see who Jesus truly is because Jesus' kingship goes beyond his expectations.

Furthermore, Jesus' kingship encompasses all of humanity since the invitation passes all of humanity open to all. It requires listening to Jesus' voice, as the sheep heed the voice of the shepherd. In so doing, they recognize the truth to which M.B.

Jesus testifies and are drawn into that truth. Through baptism, we receive the new, spiritual life that makes us children of God and heirs to the kingdom.

Today's reading reminds us that as heirs of the kingdom, we too are not of this world (John 17:16). During our earthly life, we remain a part of the world, otherwise we cannot evangelize effectively. Yet, at the same time, we should keep in mind that we work for a kingdom that transcends earthly concerns and for a king who will-ingly shed his blood that we might live.