

# The Future of this World

*Daniel*

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## **Ebenezer Free Reformed Church**

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The scripture reading this morning is Daniel chapter 7. Daniel chapter 7.

1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. 2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. 6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. 7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. 8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. 9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. 12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man

came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. 15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. 17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. 18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. 19 Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; 20 And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. 21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. 23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. 24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. 26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. 28 Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

Congregation, the portion of scripture we just read, Daniel 7 forms the text for the sermon of this morning. Beloved congregation, we have now come to the second part of the prophecies of Daniel. Now, the first part, the first six chapters, they refer more or less to history, and they explain to us about the events that took place in the days of Daniel. But this history did have a specific meaning, significance. It was not just an account of history, but the first six chapters, they explain to us how the Lord God rules all things, and that it was clear to even the kings of those heathen nations, that the Lord God of Israel rules all matters and this was great comfort to the people of God, that they realized that the Lord God was in control and that they were in his hand. And so the Lord gave

specific insights to Daniel and to his friends that they could explain dreams and that they knew what the Lord God was going to do.

It was clear that all idols are subject to the Lord God. The Lord God is supreme, and that is what Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and Darius and so on, they all had to confess. But now we've come in, Daniel, to the second part of his prophecies and that's the second six chapters, from Daniel 7 through 12, and there we see that these prophecies have a different character. They are actually apocalyptic. That's how they can be determined as apocalyptic. And you wonder, what does apocalyptic mean? Well, you may know the word apocalypse. An apocalypse is sometimes used to designate terrible war, terrible destruction. The apocalypse, that's the end of the world, destruction and bloodshed, and that's when we speak about the great apocalypse, that's actually what is intended. But actually, what does apocalyptic mean? It's a Greek word, the Greek word apo means from, and kalypto, that means removing. So apocalyptic means that you are removing something from its place; you're actually opening up something, you're removing a lid from something that was concealed. So, apocalyptic is actually revealing something that was hidden, something that was unknown. That's what the word apocalypse and apocalyptic means.

So, that's why, if you look at the Revelation of John, the final book of the Bible, it says there the Apocalypse of John. That's what it is, it's the apocalypse of John, because he received from the Lord Jesus insight in what was going to happen in the future and he received insight that something that was hidden was now going to be uncovered and that we have insight in what's going to happen in the future of this world and what already has been happening throughout the history. It's a great blessing. And also, this will show us the final outcome of world history, and that is that the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ will exist forever and ever, and that his people will be with him in glory. So, ultimately, everything will work out very well for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although the church may go through struggles, may go through afflictions, may go through persecutions, but still, during that period, the Lord will be with his people to strengthen them, to uphold them, to grant them special grace that they are able to continue and that they may be encouraged to know that the outcome will be most beautiful. And this is all being laid open to us so the apocalypse lays something open and bare for us, the future.

So the second half of Daniel is an apocalyptic document. It reveals to us something that at that stage was still to happen, but it was to that moment was hidden, but was now going to be revealed. And that's a great comfort also for the people of Israel, because it was clear that later on in the forthcoming centuries, the people of Israel would be in great suffering. There would be oppression in the land of Israel, especially from a Syrian king. That's what we hope to see in the next chapter in Daniel 8. But now we see then here in Daniel 7 that struggle is going to happen, but the people may know in advance what the result and the outcome will be. And so we now see Daniel 7, and this explains to us really the future of this world, and we see in the first place, warring, second place, warning, and the third place, waiting. So the future of this world, we see warring, warning, and waiting.

So what is it that we find here in Daniel 7? Daniel is revealing to us from a bird's-eye view what's going to happen in the history of this world, and Daniel 7 shows us where it will all lead to, what will it all amount to, that it will lead to the everlasting glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and of all his people. So Daniel 7 is to be of great comfort to us, that there needs to be no doubt who will have the final say in this world, that whose kingdom will last forever and ever, and which people have the future, and it will be the people of God. And so we may be encouraged at the very outset here of what the future will bring. You see, the focus on Daniel 7 is not upon all those various kingdoms and all those terrible animals that all depict kings or kingdoms and what's going to happen in terms of persecution. That's not the emphasis. We should read it not in a fearful manner, wondering what's going to happen in this world, but we should read it from an encouraged point of view, that the outcome of this world will be most blessed, that the Lord Jesus Christ will return, and he will display judgment, and that the kingdom of the Lord Jesus will be ushered in, and all those who belong to him will be in that kingdom, and then it will be clear that the kingdom of the Lord Jesus has every future and will exist forever and that's the outcome of world history.

So what we see here then, in the explanation of Daniel 7, is a succession of various empires, and they are all bloodthirsty and there's a lot of misery, and there's a lot of warring here, and a lot of destruction. It also explains to us persecutions that will fall upon God's children. And when we see all this, yes, we are inclined to throw up our hands and to despair and think what a terrible future, but we must realize this is not how we are to read this chapter. We are to consider what God is ultimately doing. He will be with his people in all their situations, and it will be well with them through Christ. He watches over them. He leads them. He will display to them his power and his grace. He will invigorate them so that they will be enabled to give a good testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ even against their persecutors. And after the Lord has been with them, he will take them into glory where he is and there they will see the King and his beauty, and they will be there when his kingdom on earth will be established, when a new heaven, a new earth will be called into existence, where the Lord will dwell with his people, and where his people shall forever rejoice in their blessed Savior.

This is the final outcome of Daniel 7 and this is what we must keep in mind, and so as we look at Daniel 7, we start with something positive, something very good, something encouraging, and we will also end with this beautiful scene, the future of God's church. So let us be encouraged from the outset that we know who has the future, and how blessed it will be that the Lord Jesus will make all things well with his church and with his people, and so we must focus on the beautiful reality of the kingdom of Christ, where there will be no misery, no tears, nothing that offends them, that that future is coming, his kingdom, where there will be perfect communion and love with the risen Lord Jesus Christ, that all God's children will rejoice in the Lord, and together they shall have holy and godly fellowship. His kingdom is ultimately glorious, and this is where everything is going to lead to.

As we look at chapter 7, again we must not be negative, that we must be positive. True, it will go through struggles and through great difficulties, but it will work out well. We can

draw an example. People familiar to many of us that there are people who have to go to the hospital and they undergo very severe treatments, maybe chemotherapy, with all kinds of awful side effects, but the people still go through it because they realize that after this, it will be well with them. They realize they will recover, or they hope to recover, and they realize that they will become hopefully better, and that is what keeps them going. And likewise, God's church may be called to suffer, and to go through hardships, to be sidelined, to be ignored, and even worse, that they may know that they must continue their fight against the devil, against the world, against their own flesh, and that this struggle will involve some degree of suffering but we see here the outcome of this struggle. and that is to be forever with the Lord Jesus Christ in his beauty, in his mercy and so they may realize that the future belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, if we look at this chapter, then we first see that it refers to warring. Nations are at war with each other and various nations have the upper hand in this warfare. Why is it? Because God gives them the strength to make war, and God gives them the victory. The Lord leads all events. Daniel is now in the first year of Belshazzar, and we have every impression that Daniel now has been put to the side, that he has been demoted. We even think that Belshazzar had never even met Daniel. Before that, during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was head of all the wise men in Babylon but when a new king came, this Belshazzar, he demoted Daniel. Have you ever been demoted? That's painful. Daniel went through that. He was referred to a mediocre position in the Babylonian bureaucracy but the Lord still knew where Daniel was, and the Lord still gave Daniel deep insight and visions, and this also happened during the first year of the reign of King Belshazzar. People had pushed Daniel aside, but the Lord still remembered Daniel.

So the Lord gave a dream to Daniel, and it was so clear that Daniel could remember it in detail, and that Daniel was convinced he had to write it down, and also what this dream meant. In this dream he saw four winds of the heaven striving upon the great sea, and the sea is the sea of the nations, the place where people are active. And from this sea of people, Daniel sees four consecutive empires called up. He first saw the kingdom of Babylon, and that was, you read here, strong like a lion, and it had eagle's wings, but the wings were plucked up and it was lifted up upon its feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. Well, this probably refers to the fact that during this first kingdom, the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon, that Nebuchadnezzar was what became, was changed, that Nebuchadnezzar became a person who acknowledged that the Lord leads all things. He gave honor to the God of heaven and earth, that he upholds, that he lifts up, and he casts down. He learned to acknowledge God for every blessing, and therefore he was much more human than the other oppressors.

Well, Daniel saw another beast coming forth that was like a bear. It was devouring flesh. This refers to the empire of the Persians. The Persian Empire conquered Babylon and destroyed it and this Persian Empire was a huge empire. It was larger than any empire that had been there before. Daniel felt and knew that he had to serve also in this kingdom of the Persians. It was a bloodthirsty, ruthless kingdom, that's why it's depicted by a bear that devours flesh. And the bear rises up on one side. He's ready to pounce. It's ferocious.

Then we see a third animal, It's a leopard. You know, boys and girls, a leopard, it's a very fast animal. It's one of the fastest animals. It can gain speeds up to 170 kilometers, if I'm not mistaken. At certain moments, that's how fast a leopard can run. And this leopard has even four wings on top of it, on its back, so it can fly even. So it's very fast, and that refers to the kingdom of Greece that came after the Persian Empire. The kingdom of Greece, under Alexander the Great, established a huge kingdom, and it was very quickly done. He sped through the Middle East right into India, and very quickly he was able to put up and establish a kingdom.

Daniel saw in the night visions a fourth beast and he cannot really explain what this beast looks like. It was exceedingly dreadful. It was terrible. It had iron teeth. It had claws of brass. It devoured and broke in pieces. What was left he stamped into dust. And this fourth beast had ten horns. And what does this beast refer to? It refers most probably to the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire was ruthless in putting down rebellion, was ruthless in carrying out its power. Rome was cruel. And you see that also in what they did to God's children in the arenas. They didn't do that in the realm of Babylon or Persia or Greece, but they did do that in Rome. God's children were devoured by animals in the arenas to entertain the population. It was a terrible beast. This is the fourth empire.

But after that empire, there is a splitting up, this empire that results then in ten kings. It's not the idea that we should be fixated on who those ten kings were, those ten nations, that may not exactly be clear. Ten is the number of fullness so that means that this huge Roman Empire that eventually would become the Western and the Eastern Roman Empire would crumble into various kingdoms. And the whole of Europe actually flows forth from the Roman Empire. The various nations there, they come forth out of Rome. And so the point is not to specifically point out those three horns that are going to be overthrown, or those ten horns, or exactly be able to say who and what they are, the idea is to see that there's a multiplicity of kingdoms coming forth from the empire of Rome.

And so as we see all this, we see that the kingdoms of this world are always engaged in warfare. We see that throughout history. There's so much bloodshed, so much useless wars, there's so much sorrow, deception. We should keep that in mind. We should not be surprised when news of wars that are breaking out comes to us. Empires battle against one another. If you see what's happening now in Russia and in Ukraine, how Russia is fighting against Ukraine, you think of what's happening in Israel, that they are surrounded by people who only want one thing, that is to exterminate the whole nation of Israel, every Jew has to be killed. And you see a clear animosity going on, but you see it in other parts of the world, in Africa, and throughout the world, there's so much tension, and the tensions are rising. You see, the nations are always engaged in warfare. People want to be important, they want to establish a kingdom, but in the end, all those kingdoms will be overthrown.

And then if we look back at this Roman Empire and the ten kings that come forth from them, we see that there's another king that comes forth. It's called a little horn and three of the first horns were plucked up, and this one little horn grows, becomes larger, becomes exceeding great, far above the other kings, and this displays a ruler who will make

himself very strong, very mighty. And this king is also very intelligent, because this horn has human eyes, like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. He is speaking blasphemy against the Lord. He is shouting out that he is most important and that he's going against the commandments of the Lord. And he has intelligence, he has the eyes of man and that's what this one ruler is going to be. And so we see here a word of warning, warning because this one king is going to persecute the children of God. He will make war against those who follow the Lord Jesus and he will even have power to overcome them, so that it seems as if he is winning, and that the people of God are losing the battle. Many of them, indeed, are killed. Their families are plunged into poverty. It seems as if God does not hear. It seems as if God does not see. But the Lord is still there, and the Lord comforts them.

We see that this king wages war against the saints and he, verse 21, he prevails against them. And in verse 23, we read that this fourth beast, the kingdom of Rome, shall be different from all kingdoms, it will devour the earth, but that after Rome this one tyrant will rise up, who will speak great words against God. And verse 25, he shall wear out the saints of the most High. He will change the times and the laws. He wants to have nothing to do with the years of Christianity. He wants to denounce Christianity. This tyrant will overcome three kings, and he will persecute God's children.

So this shows us that there will be grave persecutions, and that God's children will be killed, and that it seems as if the church of the Lord Jesus is no longer present in public. The public testimony of the Lord Jesus will be overcome, and instead God's children will be brought before tribunals, they will be put to death, and this man, this one ruler, is no one else than Antichrist. John speaks about him in the book of Revelation and refers to him as the beast. This is a great reality, and we should not close our eyes for this reality. This chapter warns us for the activities of the beast and tells God's children to be careful and to be watchful in this world in which they live. There needs to be a personal and living communion with the Lord. And eventually it will seem as if the church is overrun. But still God's children will be sustained. They will realize that the Lord Jesus is still stronger, that he gives his people courage to resist evil, he gives his people courage to trust in the name of the Lord and to call upon him.

There are so many examples of this happening. We know of Nazi Germany, how people were thrown into concentration camps, where pastors could not hide anymore. They all had to swear allegiance to Adolf Hitler, and those who did not do that they went into concentration camps, also German pastors, and they gave their lives for this cause of the Lord Jesus. We think of what happened in Russia, where scores of ministers were put to death. They were rounded up in the late 20s and in the 30s. They were killed and put to death there. Loved ones didn't know where they were, what happened to them. They simply disappeared. Just like in Nazi Germany, people would just disappear. Nothing would be known about them. We think of what happened in Communist China, where young people had the choice to adhere to the Communist Party or to adhere to the Lord Jesus Christ and many young people, there are examples known that 200 young people had to make that choice, and they chose to be beheaded one after the other in plain

public. They would not want to renounce the Lord Jesus Christ, and so they were beheaded in public because they refused to deny Christ.

And so we see that this one tyrant depicted here is not just one person. It's typical. It's again a picture of what happens in this world. There are also other persecutors who come up. It's not just one man. It's a multiplicity of people who attack God's church, who will persecute God's children. So this one king is not just a one-time event. He has always been around, and he always will be around, but he has different faces. It can be a face of a Roman emperor, or it can be the face of a Roman Catholic persecutor, or a Muslim oppressor, or a communist dictator. This reality is continually present amongst us. We must realize that, and we must be warned, and so God's word warns us for the activities of this one king or tyrant displayed here in Daniel's prophecy.

But how can you stand when that would happen? We all cringe and we fear when we read about also these examples. How can we then stand? How then shall we live? It may very well be that we have to lay down our life for the Lord, but we must never underestimate the power of the Lord, because he is with his people to direct them, that by the power of the Lord people become brave, and they become steadfast, and they receive opportunity to speak well of the Lord, to testify against their persecutors of the goodness of the Lord, and that is because the promise of the Holy Spirit is upon them. And so, we need to be filled with his Holy Spirit. It's only then when you have a close walk with the Lord, and a close walk guided by God's Spirit, that the Lord will watch over you, and he will be with you if we would have to be called to suffer for his name's sake because he said, "Behold, I am with you all the days." And it's very true. He is with them. It's not that the Lord is at a distance. He is beside them. He was with the three young men in the fire. The angel of the Lord was with Daniel in the lion's den. And so the Lord who is most faithful will be with his people in those extreme circumstances, and they will glorify the Lord Jesus by the death of a martyr, and when they are put to death, that will be the day of their victory. It seems as if it's the day of their being overthrown, of their defeat, but it's the day of their victory.

That's the warning that we are to realize that this will happen and then we are coming to a third point, that is waiting, waiting, and now we come to the main thrust of Daniel chapter 7, and the main thrust is not to make you scared or frightened. It's not to let you panic. It's not to make you morbid. But it's a means to give you grace, that we would realize that this is reality, and that you are not alone in this reality, not only because other children of God are with you, but you are not alone in this reality because the Lord Jesus Christ himself is with you. And then the Lord states what the ultimate outcome will be and we find that already explained to us in verse 9, and it shows that this has the emphasis throughout this chapter. It's the kingdom of Christ that is the emphasis, because there Daniel saw that thrones were cast down, and there was one whose garment was white as snow, and his hair was pure wool, his throne was like a fiery flame, and thousand times thousands ministered unto him.

We are witnessing here the final judgment and the books were opened and then you see what happens, the beast Antichrist and all those who look like him who have appeared at



various stages of world history they were slain and their body was given to the burning flame. And then you see in verse 13 how the Son of man, the Lord Jesus comes from heaven. This is the second coming of Christ. This is what the Lord Jesus referred to when he was interrogated by the Pharisees and when the high priest put him under oath and Caiaphas said, "Tell us, are you the Son of God?" And the Lord Jesus quoted Daniel 7, that he would come with the clouds of heaven in great glory and power, because this refers clearly to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 14 you read that dominion and glory and kingdom were given to him so that every nation would serve him, and here we clearly see that his kingdom will never fade, it will never be destroyed. His kingdom lasts forever and ever. And all those who resist the Lord Jesus, it seems as if they have all power, but they will all be overthrown. It seems as if they are winning, but they are losing totally. They are under the authority of Christ.

And the outcome is verse 26, they shall take away the dominion of Antichrist, it will be consumed and destroyed and then the kingdom and the dominion shall be given to the people of the saints of the highest, and they shall be partakers of Christ's kingdom. That's the outcome, the result and this is what world history will ultimately lead to, and this is what Daniel 7 is explaining to us. And so God's church may have comfort and may have sure hope that the Lord will deal powerfully, saving every one of his people. It displays also to us the glorious future of Christ's kingdom, that the church of Christ never has to doubt what the future will bring. They may know that they are more than conquerors through Christ who loves them but now they are called to continue in love and in the power of the Lord, and to maintain his witness, because the Lord Jesus gives them such power that they can speak words which they never thought they could say, such words the Lord will give to them, so they are not to be afraid what may happen to them, but they may stay calm, knowing the Lord will be on my side, he will be with me and they give a clear testimony of who the Lord Jesus Christ is.

And here you see then that final judgment and this judge is depicted by white hair and by 10,000 times 10,000 who stand before him. This is all the dignity of this Judge is displayed by this white hair and by this glory. He is the mighty God. He became man to dwell here with us and to stay with us for a while, to live amongst us, and to teach us the proper way and then the Lord Jesus would return to heaven. But at the same time, reassuring his people that he is with them.

And so, congregation, the question comes to us: what are we living for? What moves our lives? You cannot live for the world because it can very well be that the beauties of this world seduce us. We want to have an easy life but think for a moment of the martyrs in ancient Rome. They were richly comforted by the Lord. They were willing to give up their lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus. They knew that the Lord would give them all they needed. And this thought is glorious, because from his divine throne we read also here that streams come out to put down everything that opposes him and to invigorate all God's children. God is the invincible one, and Daniel sees what this heavenly King will do. One word by the Lord Jesus and all his enemies shall be overthrown. But it doesn't happen immediately, but it will happen. It will happen to dictators also today, because the

Lord Jesus is the Prince of the kings of all the earth. He determines what shall happen, and that overthrow of those wicked realms that will not be involved by means of war, there's no war needed to bring an end to the wicked kingdom of Antichrist. The Lord Jesus shall do it with the breath of his lips. In 1 Thessalonians you read about that, and his people shall see how he consumes the wicked with the breath of his lips. And then his people shall be forever with him and human power will lose all its ability to resist the Lord Jesus.

And what a great vision was given to Daniel. The Lord Jesus often referred to himself as the Son of man, and as I said, he identifies himself with this one referred to in Daniel 7. He's the Redeemer of his church. He's the ultimate Judge. And this is the blessed reality, that this blasphemous individual, this Antichrist, will be completely made powerless. and that God's children will reign forever with the Lord Jesus Christ. And the whole of history is moving again towards the emergence of this little horn who will be a big horn, and we can also expect that still to happen in our days. A little horn will be a big horn and in arrogance will resist the Lord Jesus, and it will appear as if he is winning, as if he is gaining, winning on all fronts, but God will cut him short, and he will ruin him. When his evil power is in full flow and even when he's at the very height of his power, that's the victory that the Lord Jesus shall achieve and that his children shall receive. In this world it may seem that evil is omnipotent, but it's an illusion. As Daniel sees here again that the kingdom of Christ is above all idols, above every other power, it means that evil shall not dominate. The wicked powers will be overthrown. It may seem as if the devil is triumphing, but in a moment he will be cut off, and the new heaven and the new earth will be ushered in, and there will be no trace of anguish. And therefore it's essential that we, like Daniel, would keep this in full view. A full victory awaits the church of Christ, but evil men will become worse and worse until the man of sin be revealed but all the authority and power rests in the hands of Christ, the one who overcame evil by bearing the marks of whipping in his own body, who bore the marks of crucifixion. The title of Lord will be exclusively his, and therefore we need to belong to the Lord Jesus Christ not just outwardly, not just in a formal matter, but that our lives and hearts are united to Christ, that we need him as our teacher, as our prophet, as our guide. And then he will lead you in all truth, and he will also be able to teach you to withhold and to withstand all evil. Regardless what people will try to do to you, in Christ you are safe. Amen.

Shall we pray?

*O Lord, in heaven we humbly thank Thee that Thou art in control of all events. Although terrible things have happened in this world and are still happening and are still going to happen, that it appears as if Thou art not in control, that it appears that the powers of evil can do what they want, but yet we may know that Thou art God in control, and that this world history will amount to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and his glorious kingdom. May we therefore belong to Thee, and may we learn to lay down before Thee and surrender unto Thee, that Thou wilt be our Lord and our King and our Ruler and our Guide. We thank Thee, Lord, that we could conduct this worship service. Wilt Thou bless the proclamation of Thy word, and wilt Thou go with us also the remainder of this day?*

*Be Lord, with ?? as he may preach Thy word this afternoon, and go with us this day and this week. For Jesus' sake, amen.*