

An Evening Service by Zoom

Sunday 25 June 2023



Daniel's four beasts and the Ancient of Days, depicted in the medieval Silos Apocalypse

Reflecting on Daniel

Opening prayer

In a world vibrating with action
we have come here to be still.

In a world of deadlines and schedules
we have come to rest in the present.

In a world of tumult and upheaval
we have come to experience constancy.

At the still point of our churning world
**we can meet the unchanging God
and know his peace.**

Silence

Prayer

God, we give you thanks that you are sovereign over all of history
and yet you care for us individually and respond to our cries.

We put our trust in you afresh this evening.

Amen

Canticle

**In the shadows of Your wings
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.**

The Lord is my light, my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the refuge of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

**In the shadow of Your wings
I shall sing Your praises, O Lord.**

One thing I ask of the Lord,
one thing I seek;
to dwell in the presence of my God,
to gaze on Your holy place.

**In the shadow of Your wings
I shall sing Your praises, O Lord.**

I believe I shall see the goodness
of the Lord in the land of the living.
O wait for the Lord!
Have courage and wait,
wait for the Lord.

**In the shadow of Your wings
I will sing Your praises, O Lord.**

Reading

The Book of Daniel – Chapter 7, verses 1-14

In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, and four great

beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it. Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks in its mouth among its teeth and was told, 'Arise, devour many bodies!' After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns. I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly.

As I watched,
thrones were set in place,
and an Ancient One took his throne;
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
and its wheels were burning fire.

A stream of fire issued
and flowed out from his presence.

A thousand thousand served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand
stood attending him.

The court sat in judgement and the books were opened.

I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. 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.

Reflection on Daniel's dream

Images will be shown on screen

Closing Prayer

Almighty God,
help us always to trust in you
and to remain steady and unwavering in our faith
as you are steadfast in us.

Amen

Blessing

Lord, bless us and keep us...

Lord, be gracious unto us...

Lord, give us peace, this night and always.

Amen

Service compiled for the 'Langhale Benefice' (June 2023). Opening prayer adapted from Susan Sayers, 'Stillness' in *Reflective Services* (Stowmarket: Kevin Mayhew Ltd; 2010 edition), p.22.