

Majesty!

Daniel 7^{9-10,13-14}; Psalm 93; Revelation 1⁴⁻⁸; John 18³³⁻³⁷

You say that I am a King. [John 18³⁷]

George Frederick Handel wrote his music for *The Messiah*, and at times it is very clear that he is German. Just listen to this. (Opening of 'For unto us a Son is given' from the Messiah). Anyone who was a native English speaker would have put the emphasis on 'Son' or even on 'us', but Handel puts the emphasis on 'For', which is both delightful and wrong.

I spend quite a bit of time imagining how people say the words that are written in the Bible. The different emphasis that can be put on a word can completely change how it is heard and understood.

In the short phrase from Jesus' answer to Pilate, **you say that I am a King**, where do you put the emphasis? 'You'; 'Say'; 'I'; or 'King'? Where would you put the emphasis?

Then Daniel and Revelation ask us to envisage what this Cosmic King, the Messiah, the Son of God, would look like. What do you see when we envisage, Christ the King?

Where we put the emphasis on the words and what we see defines our relationship with the undoubted Majesty of Jesus? What model of monarch do we hold?

Is it the absolute monarchy of a place like Saudi Arabia where power is unchecked and is unquestionable?

Is it the Constitutional Monarchy of the UK – a safe pair of hands and good to know the Queen is there (what else would you put on a stamp of a bank note)?

Or is it the sort of Monarchy that the Australians seem to understand – it exists but it is rather an inconvenience?

I have to say that any image you may have of Jesus as King that doesn't have you quaking at the knees is inadequate:

- ✘ Daniel gives us a vision of Heaven with God the Father, **an Ancient One**, surrounded by all the dazzle of centre stage of a pop festival (and a crowd as large) there because **the court sat in judgement**. God the Son appears and **to him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him**.
- ✘ Revelation has the same sort of vision with the clouds shrouding Majesty stating that **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead and the ruler of the kings of the earth** and presents the same idea of permanence, **I am the Alpha and the Omega.. who is who was and who is to come, the Almighty**.

John adds that this majestic figure **loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father**.

The Kingdom of God isn't a Commonwealth where its members can opt in and out of various bits of having a monarch, nor can there be any Republican Christians who campaign against monarchs existing. If we are Christians, Christ is our King and the response if that we worship, we obey, we do what we are told!

The passage from Daniel goes on to tell us that after this vision **my thoughts greatly terrified me and my face turned pale** and John in the Revelation says that **I fell at his feet as though dead**.

How do you respond?

You may have noticed that I usually try to tie the beginning and the end of a sermon together and so we shall hear a bit of that glorious chorus, 'Worthy is the Lamb' as a fitting anthem to Christ the King.