

ANCIENT OF DAYS

The visions of Daniel unveil the timeless Ruler of human history, agelessly present in every era.

SCRIPTURE*	MUSIC†
Deuteronomy 4:30-40 Psalm 47 Psalm 147 Isaiah 33:5-22; 57:15 Daniel 7:9-10, 24 Daniel 7:13-14 Daniel 4:1-3; 34-35 Habakkuk 3 Jeremiah 10:6-12; Micah 5:2 Acts 17:22-31	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name Bow the Knee God of the Ages God of the Ages (Larson) SATB Great God, Everlasting (Lantz) SATB Great Is Thy Faithfulness I See the Lord (Chisum & Moen) Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise Jesus Shall Reign O God, Our Help in Ages Past Rejoice, the Lord Is King Sing Praise to God The Ancient of Days (Lynch) SATB Worthy of Worship



NORTHWEST VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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* Daily preparatory readings shown in **bold**.

† Published choral and vocal music shown in **bold**.

PRESENTING & PROMOTING THIS THEME

DANIEL

In the book of Daniel, we see the story of the rise and fall of kingdoms throughout the passage of time. But this same book presents One Who reigns over all, the Ancient of Days. The idea of the Ancient of Days is similar to “God of the Ages” or One Who rules “from everlasting to everlasting.” He sits on His throne, ruling over all the kingdoms that Daniel talks about. God is not tied to a kingdom; He has no need to be because He has His own eternal kingdom. Our knowledge of Him as the Ancient of Days gives stability to all the changes of history and governments that we read about or experience ourselves.

GOD INHABITS ETERNITY

“Ancient of Days” is the idea that God inhabits eternity. We might say that someone lived in the 1800s, but God “lives in” eternity. Show a picture or pictures of someone who has died. (Some suggestions are actors from I Love Lucy, The Wizard of Oz or Andy Griffith; survivors of the Doolittle Raid.) Our lives on earth are temporary. Nations are also temporary, as in the context of Daniel 7 where God is called the Ancient of Days. Both individuals and nations have their “moment” as part of God’s plan for the ages, but God is characterized by “always-ness.”

HOW OLD IS GOD?

Make and show a video of young children (around 4-5 years old) answering the question, “How old is God?” The answers that children give to a question like this will probably vary widely, and those answers are humorous to us because they reveal how little of a concept of age children have. However, in many ways, we are very much like children when it comes to trying to understand the concept of God’s eternity. The Ancient of Days has always existed and always will, outside the confines of time, and although we will never fully grasp that truth, we still worship Him for it.

OZYMANDIAS

Daniel 7:12-14 | Poem: “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley | *As an official in the court of Babylon, Daniel saw several kings rise and fall. God gave Him visions of what is to come, and a recurring theme is that God is on the throne, no matter what happens in the kingdoms of man. We feel like our current situation will last forever, but it won't. As the Ancient of Days, God is greater than our politics. He is the Alpha and Omega, the true King of Kings, and we are His people. We are not powerless. We can pray to the Ancient of Days.*

Our theme this morning is “Ancient of Days,” which is a name for God taken from Daniel 7. This title is about more than just God’s age; it appears in a portion of Scripture which contains prophecies about future world empires. But over them all stands the Ancient of Days, who existed long before any of those empires and who stands in sovereignty over them all. In Daniel 7:12-14, the Ancient of Days (God the Father) gives a kingdom to the Son of Man (that is, Jesus). In that passage, Christ’s dominion is described as “everlasting,” “and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”

We often assume that powerful empires are also long-lived, but history proves that assumption false. Take for instance, the bible character Daniel. During his lifetime, Daniel watched the rise and fall of mighty Babylon! One day, Belshazzar, king of Babylon was also king of the world. The next, he was dead, and his empire, non-existent.

Not only that, but many of these ancient kings are all but forgotten!

How many of you have read the poem “Ozymandias”? It’s about a fictional king of whom all that remains is a broken-down statue and a vague inscription. The poem is intended to highlight the fact all human beings—including great kings—eventually die and are forgotten. Let me read the poem to you. See if you can follow along.

*I met a traveller from an antique land,
Who said—“Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal, these words appear:
‘My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains.’ Round the decay
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.”*

The irony of that poem lies in the dramatic contrast between the king’s boastful inscription and the pathetic state of his ruined statue, half sunken in the sand.

Brothers and sisters, we must remember that all human rulers except the Son of Man will one day be like Ozymandias. And yet, to the Son will be given a kingdom which will not be destroyed, and you and I will share in that kingdom!

How should we apply these truths? Psalm 146:3-5 says this:

*Put not your trust in princes,
Nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.
His spirit departs, he returns to his earth;
In that very day his plans perish.
Happy is he that has the God of Jacob for his help,
Whose hope is in the Lord his God.*

Let's put our hope in the Ancient of Days. (Kristopher Schaal)