

## **Monday Evening Bible Reading Group: August 7<sup>th</sup> 2017: Some Notes**

**Daniel 7:** Christians are understandably delighted to have an Old Testament narrative that fits in so well with the Christian perspective on God. This is a key chapter in Daniel: a sort of turning point. It was written in Aramaic, whereas the chapters around it were written in Hebrew. If you look closely, it isn't quite a Jesus picture. It talks of someone who is like a human being rather than who is a human being. It talks about "a" son of man, not, as Jesus re-used Daniel, "The Son of Man". One of the commentaries thinks that the Daniel writer may have had in mind the Archangel Michael. This is interesting, because Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was the Archangel Michael. What impresses here is the universality of the picture of the Messiah and Salvation. Daniel is a message for the world, not just a message for persecuted Jews.

**Psalms 97:** One of the enthronement psalms. The main theme is the righteousness of God, rather than the dramatic stuff. Note that here, as in the Daniel reading, there is recognition of the Canaanite idea (and Greek and Roman) of a pantheon of gods, with Jehovah as the boss. The psalm says that the other gods aren't real gods, but it also hints that they are real but very inferior.

**2 Peter 1:** The Early Church was not without its heresies, and the Epistle writers needed to remind the local Christian communities to hold fast to the essential Gospel truth, not being carried away either by the temptation to hang on to all the legal niceties of Judaism, or to go away with the fairies. The last lines are a lovely picture and a lovely promise.

**Luke 9:** A turning point in Luke's story, with Jesus moving on from both the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). A personal view, but I think it is important not to see the Transfiguration showing the "real" Jesus, as if the human Jesus was a sort of make-over for our benefit. As Barry said, the real Jesus was equally the naked human hanging on the cross not long afterwards.