

Revelation of Jesus Christ Study 4

Back to the Future 4

Rev 1:7-8

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Last study we saw that John us with five truths about His second coming:

They are:

1. Its Necessity
2. **Its Glory**
3. **Its Scope**
4. **Its Response**
5. **Its Certainty**

We studied the 1st of these five last week. We will study another of the truths tonight.

THE GLORY OF THE SECOND COMING

Rev 1:7b "He is coming with the clouds"

Clouds in Scripture frequently symbolize God's presence. A cloud was used as the visible manifestation of God's presence with Israel during the wilderness wandering.

Ex 13:21-22 "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people."

Ex 16:10 "Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud."

Num 10:34 "And the cloud of the LORD was above them by day when they went out from the camp."

At the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai “*a thick cloud upon the mountain*” symbolizes God’s presence

(Ex 19:16; 20:21; 24:15-18)

When the Lord communicated with Moses at the tent of Meeting (the tabernacle) “*the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the Lord would speak with Moses (Ex33:9; 34:5)*

Both the tabernacle (*Ex 40:34-38*), and the temple (*1 Kings 8:10-12*) were filled with a cloud symbolizing God’s glory at their dedications.

Jesus ascended to heaven on a cloud (*Acts 1:9*), believers will ascend with Him in the clouds at the rapture (*1 Thess 4:17*) “Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord”.

And as the present verse indicates, Christ will return with clouds!!

Dan 7:13-14 “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”

Matt 24:30 “Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

The clouds picture Christ’s descent from heaven. More significantly, they symbolize the brilliant light that accompanies God’s presence, a light so powerful that no one could see it and live (*Ex 33:20*)

The appearance of the blazing glory of Jesus Christ, “*The radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of His nature*” *Heb 1:2-3 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*” and the lesser brilliance of the innumerable angels and the redeemed who accompany Him, will be both an indescribable and terrifying pageant.

One like the world has never seen before;

THE SCOPE OF THE SECOND COMING

Rev 1:7c and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

During the incarnation Christ's glory was veiled. Only Peter, James, and John caught a glimpse of it at the Transfiguration

But at His second coming every eye will see Him; His glory will be obvious to the entire human race.

Note here that John divides those who will see the Second Coming into two groups. Those who pierced Him does not refer to the Romans soldiers involved in Christ's crucifixion but to the unbelieving Jews who instigated His death.

In *Zechariah 12:10* God says, *"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn"*

Peter affirmed that the Jewish people were responsible for Christ's execution, boldly declaring:

Acts 2:22-23 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;"

Israel's mourning, noted in *Zechariah 12:10*, will be that of genuine repentance.

Many Jews will be saved during the Tribulation, both the 144,000 and their converts. But for many others, the Second Coming will be a time of their salvation, it will be *"in that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity"* (*Zech 13:1*)

John describes the second group as all tribes of the earth, a reference to the unbelieving Gentile nations.

Like the Jewish people, they too will mourn over Christ. Some of that mourning may relate to the repentance of those who are saved at that time (7:9-10, 14) But unlike the Jewish nation, the Gentiles mourning will not generally result from genuine repentance.

The word mourn here is from *kopto* which literally means to cut.

The word became associated with mourning due to the pagans' practice of cutting themselves when in extreme grief or despair.

1 Kings 18:28 "So they cried aloud, and cut themselves, as was their custom, with knives and lances, until the blood gushed out on them."

The Israelites were strictly forbidden to engage in such pagan rituals (*Lev 19:28; Duet 14:1*)

The Gentiles mourning, for the most part, will be prompted by terror, not repentance.

The Gentiles will mourn not for the Christ they rejected, but over their doom. They will not repent of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their immorality, nor of their thefts (*9:20-21*) Read

THE RESPONSE TO THE SECOND COMING

"So it is to be. Amen" Rev 1:7d

Having given the response of both believers and unbelievers to Christ's Second Coming, John interjects his own response.

Using the strongest words of affirmation both in Greek (nai; so it is to be) and the Hebrew (amen), John pleads for the Lord Jesus Christ to return.

THE CERTAINTY OF THE SECOND COMING

Rev 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

In this verse the Lord God puts His signature on the prophecy of the Second Coming recorded in the previous verse.

Three of His divine attributes guarantee the certainty of the pledge of Christ's return.

The Alpha and the Omega emphasizes God's omniscience.

Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet, and Omega is the last.

All knowledge is conveyed through the letters of the alphabet; thus God's designation of Himself as the Alpha and the Omega affirms that He has all knowledge. He knows, therefore, the certainty of this promise

As the one who is and who was and who is to come, God's transcendent eternal presence is not confined by time or space or any feature or event in them.

There is no possible contingency of which He is unaware regarding the Second Coming.

His promise that the Lord Jesus Christ will return settles the issue.

The designation of God as the almighty; (4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22) affirms His omnipotence. Since He is all powerful, nothing can hinder Him from carrying out His sovereign will.

No one or no thing can possibly prevent Christ from returning in glory as described in verse 7.

Jesus came the first time in humiliation; He will return in exaltation. He came the first time to be killed; He will return to kill His enemies, He came the first time to serve; He will return to be served, He came the first time as the suffering servant; He will return as the conquering King.

The challenge of the book of Revelation makes to every person is to be ready for His return.

John Phillips writes;

One of the most stirring pages in English history tells of the conquests and crusades of Richard 1st, the Lion hearted.

While Richard was away trouncing Saladin, his kingdom fell on bad times. His sly and graceless brother, John usurped all the prerogatives of the king and misruled the realm.

The people of England suffered, longing for the return of the king, and praying that it might be soon.

Then one day Richard came. He landed in England and marched straight for his throne. Around that glittering coming, many tales are told, woven into the legends of England. (One of them is the story of Robin Hood.) John's castles tumbled like ninepins. Great Richard laid claim to his throne, and non dared stand in his path.

The people shouted their delight. They rang peal after peal on the bells. The lion was back! Long live the king!

One day a King greater than Richard will lay claim to a realm greater than England.

Those who have abused the earth in His absence, seized His domains, and mismanaged His world will all be swept aside.

(Exploring Revelation, rev.ed.[Chicago: Moody, 1987; reprint, Neptune, N.J.: Loizeaux, 1991], 22-23)

Only those *“who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim 4:8)*, who love Him and acknowledge Him as the rightful King, will enjoy the blessings of His Kingdom.