

Revelation 1:7-8 | Christ is Coming!

Revelation 1:7-8 (NASB)

7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Last week's text about Jesus

- This One is coming back again!
- The great hope of the Christian faith (**Christ died—Christ was raised—Christ is coming again!**)

Let's deal with some of the details of the text and then take a sort of broad look at the overall doctrine of the Return of Christ

Many see **verse 7** as the keynote of the whole book of revelation

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS

John here is alluding to a passage from the OT book of Daniel

- In which we see Jesus (predicted) as the Messiah who receives from God the Father dominion over the world when the evil empires of the world have been judged
- Daniel 7:13-14 (NASB)

13 I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, **with the clouds of heaven** one like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him.

14 And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.
- This is a Second Coming prediction as made clear by the NT
 - Jesus alluded to it in Matthew 24:30 (NASB)

And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

So, "**COMING WITH THE CLOUDS**" here is associated with the OT promise of the Messiah ruling over all the nations

- Confirmed by Jesus' own words that it was pertaining to another coming
- Made possible by the first coming (The Cross)
- Kingdom inaugurated then consummated

and every eye will see Him

This is in contrast to the first coming, which was localized

- The Second Coming will be global
- This was also made clear by Jesus
- Matthew 24:23-27 (NASB)

23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him.

24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

25 Behold, I have told you in advance.

26 So if they say to you, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness,' do not go out, or, 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms,' do not believe them.

27 For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

The first coming of Christ was marked by lowliness

- Hardly anyone noticed his birth except a few shepherds and magi
- Only a few hundred witnessed his resurrection appearances

The second coming is marked by power, majesty and glory

- All the world will experience it

even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.

Here John is alluding to another OT reference and prediction about Jesus the Messiah from the book of Zechariah

- The context there is the final days in which the nations are gathered in opposition to Israel and Jerusalem (and ultimately God) and the Messiah returns to rescue her (Israel and Jerusalem)
 - A reference to the Battle of Armageddon from Revelation 19
- Zechariah 12:8-10 (NASB)

8 In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them.

9 And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, **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.

Jesus (Matthew 24:30) and John expand this prediction to apply to the whole world

- Originally about only Israel
- Expanded to whole world (Cf. the Gospel)
 - **even those who pierced Him** = all who have sinned
 - **and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him** = all who failed to recognize Him
 - Repentance or Judgment

Contrasts between the Two Comings of Jesus

First Coming	Second Coming
lowly	glorious
local, few saw	global, all will see
some pierced/rejected him	all will recognize Him
rejoicing over his seeming defeat	mourning resulting in repentance or judgment

Hebrews 9:28 (NIV)

Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and **He will appear a second time**, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.

Commenting in Hebrews 9:28

- “Just as the first coming of Christ accomplished the **major purpose of God to provide salvation**, so the second coming of Christ will accomplish **the major purpose of God to place everything in subjection to Jesus Christ** as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” –John Walvoord¹

See: **2 Thessalonians 1:7-12 (NLT)**

¹ John Walvoord, *Major Bible Prophecies: 37 Crucial Prophecies that Affect You Today* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 361.

So it is to be. Amen.

- Greek and Hebrew phrases of affirmation
- John cannot affirm enough the wonderful truth of this
 - "Truly, truly, yes, yes, it is and yes, yes it is to be. This is truth!"
- In fact, This truth of the Second Coming of Jesus to establish His rule on earth is so important that the Holy Spirit next gives it confirmation from the Father in the strongest possible terms
- Verse 8 is like a signature of affirmation on the Second Coming from the Father
 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," **says the Lord God**, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

"I am the Alpha and the Omega,"

"Alpha and Omega" is a figure of speech called a merism

- A merism states polar opposites in order to highlight everything between the opposites
- Cf. From A to Z
- Cf. **The First and the Last** (v. 17)
- An affirming statement of total sovereignty and control
- These merisms express God's control of all history, especially by bringing it to an end in salvation and judgment through Christ's Second Coming
- The God who transcends time guides the entire course of history because he stands as sovereign over its beginning and its end

The One who is able to bring it all to pass

- Since one theme in Revelation is the conflict between the powers of good and evil, readers are reminded of who really has the power
- And who is Eternal (next phrase...)

"who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

- Refers to His eternal nature

So, this **first prophecy** of the book of Revelation, the **Second Coming** of Jesus, is also the **theme statement** of the book and is attested to by **The Lord God Almighty**

- This is key to our entire understanding of Christianity

3 questions about the Second Coming:

- 1. Is it literal?
- 2. When will it happen?
- 3. What happens next?

1. Is it literal?

John 14:1-3

1 Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

3 **If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again** and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

Acts 1:9-10

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

11 They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way** as you have watched Him go into heaven."

- How did Jesus come and go the first time? = **Literally and physically**
- How will Jesus come the second time? = **Literally and physically**

2. When will it happen?

Matthew 24:21, 29-30

Then **there will be a great tribulation**, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will...

But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

And **then** the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

This is the outline that we see in the book of Revelation

- **Chapters 6-18** tell us about the tribulation
- Both, the wrath of Satan unleashed on believers and the wrath of God unleashed on the unrepentant
- And Christ's victory over the enemy
- Then in **chapter 19** we have the Second Coming (**See: Revelation 19:11-21**)

This is very clear

- But it also creates another question:
 - What about the Doctrine of Imminency?
 - The times where the NT says things like: "No man knows... like a thief in the night..."

Keep a finger here and turn to **1 Thessalonians 4**

- See: **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (IMMINENCE)**
- 1 Corinthians 15:51-51 (NASB)
 51 Behold, I tell you a **mystery**; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,
 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and **we will be changed. (IMMINENCE)**

Notice just a couple of things:

- The Second Coming is **a movement of Christ from heaven to earth with** those who are His to establish the Kingdom
- The event mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15 is **a movement from earth to heaven of** Christ's people to be with Him
- = 2 events
 - They may happen at the same time = the post-tribulation view of the Rapture
 - They may happen at different times = pre-tribulation or pre-wrath (mid-trib) view of the Rapture
 - Notice just a couple from things from **Revelation 19:5-8 (see)**
 - The church is already there in heaven
 - Notice a couple of things from **1 Thessalonians**
 - **5:9 and 1:10**
- Seems to point toward a Rapture before the tribulation or wrath (wrath of God on unrepentant world)
- We can debate that back and forth—but **the salient point is that there is a difference** between the Rapture and the Second Coming (sometimes we condense them in our language—"Coming Again")

Contrasts between the Rapture and the Second Coming

Rapture	Second Coming
Translation of all believers	No translation at all
Translated believers go to Heaven	Translated believers return to Earth
Christ comes <u>for</u> His own	Christ comes <u>with</u> His own
Imminent	Preceded by definite signs

The purpose of the Rapture is to take the church out of the world and bring them to the Father's house

The Purpose of the Second Coming is to establish Christ's millennial kingdom on earth

- That answers the 3rd question

3. What happens next?

See: **Revelation 20:1-6**

- The Millennial Kingdom

3 Views on the Millennium

- **1. Pre-millennial**
 - The millennium is a literal 1,000 year reign after the Second Coming in which Jesus rules on earth visibly
- **2. Post-Millennial**
 - The millennium is an undetermined period of time preceding the Second Coming in which the Gospel triumphs and Jesus rules on earth through His church
- **3. A-millennial**
 - The millennium is a symbol of the present Church age culminating in the return of Christ

See: **Revelation 20:11-15**

See: **Revelation 22:1-5**

So what?

- Hope (He is coming)
- Sanctification (impetus for holy living)
- Mission (time is limited)

1 Peter 3:2-15^A (NLT)

Communion:

- 1 Corinthians 11:26
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.