

WHEN THE HEAVENS BLAZE WITH GLORY

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When Christ comes again all the world will know it, They will see Him come. There will be nothing secret. nothing hidden, about this history climaxing event. Men will not have to be told He has come - "every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7. Thus the Bible reveals that everybody will see Christ return. In fact, Christ warned His disciples against any thought of a secret return. In Matthew 24:25-27 we read these words: "If any man shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ or there; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shines even unto the west: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

So, if any should say Christ's return will be secret in any way, our Savior warns "believe it not." Why? "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shines even unto the west: so shall also the coming of the Son of m-n be." "So" shall His coming be as the lightning flashes across the heavens in dazzling splendor. In Revelation, the book which was especially revealed by Jesus, He definitely states that "every eye" shall see Him. "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kingdoms of the earth shall wail because of Him." Revelation 1:7. This certainly does not teach that only the righteous shall see Him. Those who wail at His coming cannot be the righteous, because they rejoice when they see their Lord coming. In Isaiah 25:9, we read the words of the righteous when they see Jesus appearing: "it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

Oh, no, the return of our Lord is not a spiritual, secret event. It will be accompanied by the resurrection of the dead - actually, literally - "for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

How we need the comfort of these words. Yes, the coming of our Lord means the resurrection of the righteous dead. Death has severed the dearest ties that this world has ever known. There is scarcely a home but it has been robbed of a loved one. There is hardly a person anywhere but can visualize a little mound of earth in some lonely graveyard, that for them calls back the most sacred memories. Shall we see them and know them again? The coming of Christ answers that question. The coming of our Lord means the re-linking of the family chain. Friends long separated by death will meet again, nevermore to part. Children that have been snatched away by the cruel hand of death, will be placed again in their mothers' arms. Oh, what a grand re-union that will be.

It will be a day of tremendous glory, a day of intense brightness. Everyone who has his natural eyesight can see the lightning as 'It flashes across the sky, so Christ chose that as an example of His return. The glory of this most stupendous of all events is beyond man's power to describe. In Luke 9:26 I read: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's and of the holy angels." The glory of one angel is spoken of at the resurrection of Christ. The Roman soldiers guarding the tomb fell as dead men, struck down by the glory of one angel. What will it be like when Jesus returns with all the holy angels with Him? (Matthew 25:31). No wonder the wicked will call for the rocks and the mountains to hide them from the glorious appearing

Down the pathway of the glory-gilded skies the great King Eternal will come; His face shining as the sun in its strength; His form clothed with the glory and radiance of heavenly majesty; His voice as the sound of many waters; His head crowned with a halo before which the sun pales; His flowing robes more colorful and beautiful than the rainbow. He comes with clouds - clouds of myriads and myriads of angels - the Immortal Conqueror, the Eternal King comes to take His own. These brilliant bands will fill the glory-flashing skies from end to end. How magnificent beyond all human description will be the advancing pageantry of the skies. How sublime beyond all human comprehension, will be the Lord Jesus when he "shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels."

My friends, beware of any teaching that connects the return of Jesus with the word "secret." Christ uses words just the opposite to describe His return - "glory," "power," "voice of God," "a shout," "trumpet," "lightning."

The Bible is very explicit regarding the manner of the second coming of Christ. It declares: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28. The word "appear" should be given special attention. Christ, when He comes the second time, will come in an open, public manner; there will be nothing secret about it; there will be nothing hidden from the eye of man; He will "appear" - that is, He will actually be seen by the people that dwell on the earth. I call your attention to the following expression: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13.

The return of Jesus will be an appearing, not a spiritual, invisible coming unrecognized by the world as some have thought. Christ will appear. His coming will be literal, personal, bodily, visible. It will be a real thing, not the coming of a "spirit being" an "invisible Lord" but the very same Jesus who walked with His disciples on the hills of Galilee. The Spirit of God has seen it to be so important as to emphasize this thought that the Lord will appear when he comes that this word is used again and again in speaking of His coming:

"When Christ who is our life shall appear." Colossians 3:4.

"When the Chief Shepherd shall appear." 1 Peter 5:4.

"And now little children, abide in Him; that when He shall appear we shall have confidence." 1 John 2:28

"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him." 1 John 3:2.

"Be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:7.

Certainly these passages should be sufficient to settle for ever the point that when Christ comes the second time. His coming will be a literal, personal, visible, public coming.

One of these days, and friends, it will not be long now, there will be seen in the eastern heavens a mysterious light, a new and awesome spectacle. The King will travel in the greatness of His strength. The wide-spreading heavens will open. Down the parted heavens will come the King of kings, and Lord of Lords. The derisive jests have ceased. Lying lips are hushed into silence. The clash of arms, the tumult of battle "with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood" is-stilled. Naught is heard but the voice of prayer and weeping. The cry bursts forth from lips so lately scoffing, "The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks rather than meet Him, whom they have despised and rejected. The voice that penetrates the ear of the dead, they know. How often has its tender tones called them to repentance and prayer. How often has it been heard in the touching entreaties of a friend, a brother, a Redeemer. To the rejection of His grace, no other voice could be so full of condemnation as the voice which has so long pleaded, "Turn you, turn you from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Jesus says: "I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught My counsel and would have none of My reproof." That voice awakens memories which they would fain blot out -warnings despised, invitations refused, privileges slighted.

The only assurance you can have that you will be able to look on the face of Christ as He returns, is found in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Whosoever believes in Him shall not perish. The coming of Jesus means eternal life to all who believe in Him. It should not bring fear to your heart; it should bring the greatest joy. There is no need for any to perish at that time. God has made ample provision that all may be saved. You do not need to be among those who will seek refuge among the failing rocks. If you found refuge in Jesus today.

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