

The Kingdom in History and Prophecy

by

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE RETURN OF THE KING

THOSE passages which describe the calling of the Bride to meet the Bridegroom in the air are enriched with words of certainty and assurance. It is as though that event which had not been made known until the present age, and which portends such immediate blessings for the child of GOD should need an especial emphasis upon its certainty to strengthen the feeble faith of those to whom it is addressed. **"If it were not so, I would have told you." "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord." "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."**

Paul, when praying that we might know what is the hope of His calling and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, adds the word of assurance that this will all be accomplished by **"His mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come"** (Ephesians 1:19-21). There could be no greater power than this and on this power this personal assurance may rest.

In distinction to this, those passages which picture the return of CHRIST to the earth as the Messiah-King are laden with emphasis upon the fact that He comes with power and great glory. **"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory"** (Luke 21:27; Matthew 19:25; 24:30; 25:31; Mark 8:38; 13:26; Luke 9:26).

In the final picture at the end of the divine record the culminating event of all past ages is set forth in such majesty as it is possible for language to describe or human minds to comprehend (Revelation 19:11-20:15). The Lord of Glory proceeds forth from His wedding, out from Heaven, followed by His spotless Bride. He comes in **"power and great glory."**

Behold Him as lightning shining from the one part of Heaven even unto the other. He has a **"rod**

of iron" in His hand with which to dash the nations "in pieces like a potter's vessel." "His eyes are as a flame of fire" and "out of his month goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations."

That wicked one He shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. He is **"revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

"Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations are before him as nothing; and they are counted to him as less than nothing, and vanity . . . And he shall blow upon them, and they shall wither, and the whirl wind shall take them away as stubble."

"God comes from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covereth the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise. And his brightness is like the sun; rays stream from his hand; and there is the hiding of his power. Before him goes the plague, and burning pestilence follows his feet. He stands and measures the earth: he looks and makes nations tremble; the everlasting mountains are broken in pieces, the eternal hills sink down: His ways are everlasting."

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him and it shall be very tempestuous round about him."

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with deep red garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore is redness in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the peoples not a man was with me: and I have trodden them in my anger, and trampled them in my fury; and their blood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all mine apparel. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed was come."

Here is the Messenger of the covenant, a Refiner's fire, a purifier of the sons of Levi.

"He shall set up an ensign for the nations and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

"For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth."

"They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him."

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle."

Here is an unfolding of the sufficiency of GOD in His power to transform the earth and to change the shadow of darkness and sin to the ineffable light of His glory. What He hath promised will He not fulfill? All of the lines of hope from the first promise of final victory given in Eden to the present hour are focused upon the return of the King in His power, majesty and strength, and He will compass every issue of the ages and vindicate every purpose of GOD. It is not a marvel that He should come in renovating judgments to the earth: the marvel must ever be that He, the King of Glory, should bow the Heavens and come down to this earth as an unresisting Lamb. The great conquerors of the earth have been mere men who by personality, or favorable conditions, were able to marshal the allegiance of an army of sufficient strength to execute their will; but this One will not be dependent upon a majority and the brute force it represents. His power by which all things were created is sufficient to transform the whole universe, to bind all the forces of darkness and to consummate the hopes of the ages.

Beginning with Revelation 19:11 there is given the final picture of the return of CHRIST in power and great glory. Preceding this the Patmos Seer has recorded the events of the great tribulation, the appearance and reign of the Beast, the Man of Sin, and the casting of Satan and his host into the earth. Into the midst of this indescribable anarchy, wickedness and confusion the King appears. And He appears in all His glory. That glory is fourfold.

Ezekiel had seen the celestial beings who are ever before the face of the Lord and who reflect His glory. Their faces were four: the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle. There is striking agreement here with the divine manifestation as revealed in the four Gospels. Matthew portrays the Lion King, Mark the Servant Ox, Luke the Man Christ Jesus, and John the Son of GOD, fittingly symbolized by the eagle. CHRIST is the sum total of these four revelations.

In each manifestation there is a particular glory to be seen:

- As the Son of GOD, He had a glory with the Father before the world was; His eternal glory.
- As the Son of David, He will have another glory, of which the glory of Solomon was only a feeble type.
- As the Servant of the Lord, He has a personal glory; for **"it is more blessed to give than to receive,"** and He was among them as one who served.
- As the Son of Man He had an acquired glory, a name above every name is given unto Him because of His obedience unto death.

It is Luke who unfolds the mysteries of the physical birth, childhood and development of the Man CHRIST JESUS. In this Gospel every coloring is of the **"Son of man who came to seek and to save that which is lost."**

The four names ascribed to CHRIST in the final description of His return in power and glory again imply His fourfold glory, and His return is in that full glory of the only begotten of the Father.

- in this description He is first mentioned as "**Faithful and True.**" This is the Lord's Servant the Ox, the portrait given to Mark. Under this title it is said of Him that "**He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns.**"
- a second title ascribed to Him is "**The Word of God.**" The eternal Logos of the Gospel of John. To this title no words seem to be added other than that His saints, His Bride, are seen following Him clothed in the spotless white; the "**righteousness of God in Him**" (cf. 19:7, 8); for they shall see Him as He is and be like Him.
- the third title ascribed to Him is of a "**Name which no man knew, but he himself.**" And with this title it is said "**He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood**" (cf. Isaiah 63:1-4).

These three characters of the CHRIST are again seen in Philippians 2:5-11.

- as the Word of GOD He was equal with the Father, but deemed that equality no prize to be seized upon.
- as the Servant of the Lord, He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of a man.
- under the unrevealed title, "**A name which no man knew, but he himself,**" He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

In Hebrews 10:5-7, He is seen freely yielding His own body to the will of the Father as a sacrifice, thus bringing into full contrast the insufficiency of the former offerings of bulls and goats:

"But a body thou hast prepared me: in burnt-offerings, and sacrifices for sin thou hadst no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, a God."

Returning to the passage in Philippians 2:5-11, it may be seen that because of this "**obedience unto death, even the death of the Cross . . . God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.**"

"**Jesus**" then is the name which no man can know.

"**His name shall be called Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins,**" locked up in this name are the fathomless mercies of GOD. Who can know the meaning of that obedience, or of that, cross? Who can understand His atoning sacrificial death? Eternity cannot suffice to unfold His manifold grace. Truly "**Jesus**" is a name the full meaning of which "**no man can know, but he himself.**"

CHRIST is lastly seen in the final picture of His return under the fourth title of "**King of kings and Lord of lords,**" and gathers into Himself a far greater glory, as David's Son, than has yet been known by all the royal families of the earth.

Thus when He shall come in power and great glory that power will be for the transformation of a

sin darkened earth, and in that glory will be combined the ineffable glory of the Servant of the Lord, the Word of GOD, the acquired glory of the Cross, and the earthly glory of the Son of David, King of kings and Lord of lords.

In such a glory His Bride will share. For "**when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory,**" But that outward glory is incompatible with the consolation of the secret chamber where the Bride will be at home in the bosom of the Bridegroom. Every tear will be wiped away and with undimmed eye we shall gaze upon His face and go out no more for ever.

~ end of chapter 13 ~

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