

Revelation - Chapter 1

Revelation 1:7

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Behold, he cometh with clouds;

The clouds are a multitude of angels (Psalm 68:17; Psalm 104:3; Mark 13:26, 27; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 24:30, 31; Matthew 25:31; Mark 8:38; Mark 13:26, 27; Acts 1:9-11; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17; II Thessalonians 1:7; see on Revelation 10:1, Revelation 11:12, and Revelation 14:14-16). While some might honestly and even reasonably suggest that these clouds are simply appropriate symbols of majesty, the above passages provide more than ample evidence that they are, in fact, an implicit reference to retinues of heavenly beings—that is, of “ministering spirits” —who had, throughout redemptive history, executed the will of God in the recovery and salvation of man (Hebrews 1:14). In a similar use of the word, though not referring to angels, the Apostle Paul utilizes the phrase, “a cloud of witnesses,” when referring to many witnesses, or a number so great that they seem to be a cloud (Hebrews 12:1). The comparison of a multitude of persons to a cloud is actually found to be common with the classic writers (see Homer II.4:274, 23:133; Statius 1:340). Of course, here, it is a “cloud” of heavenly angels who are seen accompanying Jesus, as would a body of aides and retainers attend an important person, royalty, etc.

“and every eye shall see him, which must shortly come to pass;”

Jesus’ second coming will not be a secret (Psalm 50:3-6; Jeremiah 25:30-33; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 24:27, 30; Luke 9:26; Luke 17:24; I Corinthians 15:52; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17). Here, it is adamantly stated—so there is no doubt—that, upon His return, Jesus will be made visible in his glory to all that dwell upon the earth.

and they also which pierced him:

Though only the righteous dead are resurrected at the second coming of Christ (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17; I Corinthians 15:21, 23; Revelation 20:6) and the wicked dead a thousand years later (Revelation 20:5), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, as well as physically abused him and put him to death, are raised to behold Him in His glory. At His trial, Caiaphas, raising his right hand toward heaven, addressed Jesus in the form of a solemn oath: “I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether

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thou be the Christ, the Son of God.” Every ear was bent to listen, and every eye was fixed on His face as He answered, “Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Matthew 26:63, 64 (see both Daniel 12:2 and John 19:37). Clearly, Jesus was referring to His future vindication before the “eyes” of those who were, then, involved in and intent upon his humiliation and destruction. Here we find its obvious fulfillment. No other explanation comes close to sufficing.

and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Greek, “All the tribes - φυλαὶ phulai of the earth.” The word “tribes,” other than what is commonly applied to the twelve tribes of Israel, here denotes nations and people in general—that is, as descended from a common ancestor. The words, “every eye shall see him” —that is, all that dwell on the face of the earth—requires this exception in meaning. The wicked from all nations “beat the breast” (Gr.) in remorse for not having prepared for the second coming of Jesus (Jeremiah 8:19, 20; Matthew 24:30, 42-51).

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"to shew...things which must shortly come to pass;"

Revelation 1:1