

The Revealing – Unlocking Hidden Truths on the Glorification of God's Children: Notes-#6

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THE PAROUSIA

THE PAROUSIA AND THE OLIVET DISCOURSE

In Greek, the word for the return of Jesus is *parousia*. This word is the word most often associated with the second coming of Christ.

Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your **coming**, and of the end of the age?"

Mat 24:20-31

Ray Stedman's book, *What on Earth's Going to Happen?* is the inspiration for some of this section.

In Matthew 24, two Greek words are translated as "coming": *parousia*, and *erkoma*.

Parousia means (1) presence and (2) a coming, an arrival, advent, often of the second coming of Christ. *The word used in the New Testament for Christ's coming for His Bride, or what we have come to call **the "rapture."***

Erkoma means "to come, to go, the coming one," i.e., the Messiah.—denotes the coming of Christ in power and great glory to judge and then to rule the earth.

The disciples asked, "what shall be the sign of thy 'parousia'?" Jesus gives a brief rundown on the last 2000 years of history and then of the last 3½ years, which is also called the Great Tribulation (Matt 24:21).

Jesus explains that there will be false prophets talking of His presence in the desert, here, and there at the time of the Great Tribulation. Then He gives them a picture of how His presence will truly be manifested during this time (last 3½ years).

Jesus says His parousia will be like the lightning flashing in the east, but the effect of it is seen all over the sky. He is not describing a universally visible manifestation of his glory, but the universal effect of his presence behind the scenes.

Like lightning flashes, he will be seen by his own in different places, at all different times, but the effect of those appearances will be felt throughout the earth.

So will be the presence, the parousia, of the Son of man. He will appear and disappear at will. Whenever there is need for him he will be there, just as he was during the post-resurrection period.

Jesus indicates the proper way to find him in that day, "Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together."

Jesus will appear and disappear at will, just as He did after His resurrection. Remember the sheaf of firstfruits. This is the great ingathering. The eagles, or vultures, means the same as the phrase "where there's smoke, there's fire." Wherever He manifests His presence, the signs will be evident, just as you know where a carcass is by the vultures circling above.

Church Christians will join the Lord Jesus in this ministry behind the scenes during the tribulation. They will be like Moses and Elijah who appeared with the transfigured Christ on the Mount...

He, with them, will remain throughout the "end of the age" period, appearing only to those whose hearts are ready to believe in him. Rumors of his presence will continually be spread abroad, so that men will be saying in that day as they said during the forty-day period, "Where is he?"

THE PAROUSIA AND THE EPIPHANY OF HIS PAROUSIA

This flaming advent is part of the parousia, actually the event that marks *the end of the secret presence*. It is the outshining of his presence *before the eyes of the whole world*.

Paul says, "The Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:8). That last phrase, "his appearing and his coming," is literally, "the epiphany of his parousia." Epiphany is a word that means unveiling, or outshining.

"Then will appear the **sign of the Son of man** in heaven, and then all the tribes of earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

This is the outshining of his glory; the sudden unveiling of his presence. It is often called the "second coming," though in truth that term covers the whole period of Christ's secret presence. But it will be the second time the world sees Jesus Christ—this time coming triumphant in power and glory.

This is the answer (the sign of the Son of Man) to the question of the disciples: "What will be the sign of your coming?"

Jesus links this sign with the statement, "then all the tribes of the earth will mourn." It appears *that he means the tribes of Israel*. Since this sign is thus linked with Israel it strongly suggests that the sign will consist of *the reappearance of the cloud of glory which accompanied the nation of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness for forty years*.

There is a reference to this same event in Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, everyone who pierced him; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him." It could simply refer to the atmospheric clouds, but the repeated emphasis seems suggestive of more.

This will mark the close of the age, and the opening event of a new age, where God dwells with His people.

Since the Shekinah is the sign of God's presence with man, it is fitting that it should reappear as the sign that explains, clarifies, and reveals the meaning of Christ's coming.

He comes that he may be, as the Old Testament prophets whispered, "Immanuel-God with us."

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name *Immanuel*.

Several thousand lighted candles, would be very bright. When the gathered glorified saints are together in one place, with the Head of the Body, Jesus Christ, "the brightness of His Glory" (Hebrews 1:3), the light will blind those who have only ordinary eyes.

From far away, the cloud of saints with their Lord *would look like a larger version of the cloud of glory* that led Israel through the wilderness.

Exo 14:19: And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and *the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them*.

Exo 23:20–22 ²⁰"Look, I *am about to* send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, because he will not forgive your transgression, *for my name is in him*. ²²But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes."

We learn from Michael Heiser and others that "My name is in him" means that God, himself is present in the angel.

Other verses confirm this: **Lev 11:45, Josh 24:17–18a, Duet 4:35–38**

Jud 2:1 And the angel of Yahweh went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and I brought you to the land that I had promised to your ancestors"

Jesus Christ was in that cloud in the wilderness, just as He will be amidst the cloud of glory along with His saints (His holy ones – the Church). He will lead Israel through the spiritual wilderness they are in.

Recall that in our resurrection discussion, we learned Jesus ascended into heaven via a cloud. *Our logical conclusion was that this cloud comprised Old Testament saints as firstfruits of the end-time harvest.*

THE GREAT TRIBULATION (THE DAY OF THE LORD)

Compare Dan 9:24-27 with Mathew 24:15-28

Jesus speaks of the final 3½ years before the kingdom is established on earth. The abomination of desolation, vs 15, is the same as in Daniel 9:27 in the 70th week, which is the last week (7) of years. There were 70 weeks (7's) altogether (Dan 9:25). The abomination takes place at the 3½ year mark. In Matthew 24:21 Jesus says this 3½ year period will consist of great tribulation – and from this descriptive phrase came the name “Great Tribulation”

Rev 2:22 and 7:14 also mention “great tribulation.”

Jesus also marks this as the time of His parousia or secret presence in Matthew 24:27. Then, He proclaims in verses 29-30, that immediately after the tribulation of those days, He will return in power and great glory (erkoma).

2 Th 2:1-8 ¹Now, brethren, *concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ²not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition*, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

Here Paul says that the *Day of Christ will not come until there is a falling away, and the man of sin is revealed... but by what? The abomination.* He beseeches them by the coming (lit. *parousia*) of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, here is the same 3½ years called the day of Christ and a reference to the *parousia* in verse 1 and verse 8 (unveiling of His *Parousia*).

Other Old Testament names for The Great Tribulation and The Day of Christ: “the Indignation”, “the Day of the Lord,” and “Jacob’s Trouble.” **Jer 30:3-7, Isa 10:25**

Isa 26:20 Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until ***the indignation*** is past.

Isaiah speaks of the chambers, or *tabernacles* that the church will enter *during the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles*. This will be God’s protecting Glory on behalf of believers, comprising the Body of Christ in the last days, possibly before or at the outset of the Great Tribulation

Rev 11:2-3 talks about the two witnesses who prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days (3 ½ years)

Rev 12:6 & Rev 13:5-7 mention *one thousand two hundred and sixty days (3 ½ years)*

These references concern the same 3½ years (whether 42 months or 1260 days). After God receives the congregation (the Church at the beginning of the Parousia), His judgments begin.

Rev 13:5-7

We see the Antichrist blaspheming God, His tabernacle, and those who dwell (literally, “pitch their tents”, chambers, or tabernacles) in heaven during the Day of the Lord. *This is the Parousia, the Body of Christ dwelling in the heavens above the earth.*