

Behold He Comes With Clouds

Travis Bennett Convocation 2014

I'm starting backwards with you tonight... in an effort to more fully open our eyes to the coming beauty which rides upon the last day's clouds. I'm looking backwards... because clouds were not always the case. They have a special and varied use in the pages of our Scripture, one I'm quite eager to explore and unfold for you. One that will develop for us our Text in Revelation 1:7-8, more fully in just a bit. But by way of introduction I would like to go back to the Genesis of our existence, back to the cradle of our first parents. What a privilege for Adam and Eve, above all the newly created things of this good earth to have enjoyed the kindly friendship of their forever blessed Creator. "*And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...*" Gen. 3:8. I don't take this "*sound of the Lord God walking...*" to be simply a call for them to come approach, but rather a type of continual announcement of some sort. What a pleasant, and perfectly orchestrated melodious sound the approaching presents of God made in the cool of the day, when the man and his wife were at ease, and resting from the work of tending the paradise plot was finished. Its sound would beckon them to come and visit. In this paradise picture of relation between God and man we find no hindrance, no obstruction of face to face conversation and delight. This however is short lived...as in a bitter bite, and yet orchestrated Providence, this Garden of Eden delight was to become the sorrowed soil of sin and separation. One day, when the coolness of evening settled, and God came calling, "... *Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.*" The forbidden fruit had done its job. Willful disobedience and naked realization brought Adam and his wife to false coverings. The curse and judgment came swiftly... "*Who told you that you were naked?*" The answer solicited is proved by the nakedness, and mankind must now watch helplessly as thistles and thorns, and the salty beaded flowing sweat on the brow were to be the continual fragments of shattered peace leading to unrelenting ageing and the deep waters of moral defiance... and the ultimate cruel lash of death was now ever thrashing the new creation. But Adam and Eve were of more value to God than simply soiled, unprofitable servants... they had set in motion a necessity that was to be the greater purpose of their existence. They supplied all of humanity with a level playing field... Rom. 5:12, "*Therefore just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned...*" And this field of curse was to be the launching pad for a drama conceived in a Trinitarian display that was for a far, far greater weight of glory. You see the fallen man and his wife had a need that looked impossible to resolve... death had taken them for its own, and the Satan-serpent had become their new master, and in the strength of their flesh they were powerless to reverse it, and it could not help but be passed to all men thereafter through natural generation. But this was not unforeseen by the **omniscient** great planner Creator, who was in no way powerless, and He did the unthinkable... "*Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin and clothed them.*" Gen. 3:21. If you believe as I do that this God visitor is the Pre-incarnate Christ, what irony and deep imagery this stirs within our

souls. Here is regeneration in the OT, somewhat veiled until the fuller disclosure was to come in the person and work of Messiah incarnate. Here is the diminished presents of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, not because of inability, but because of the need to hide the mystery until the progression of the revelation was made fully ready. Here the One who would be the sufficient needed eternal sacrifice, gives instruction to his future Bride on how to sacrifice. And here, a slain earthly lamb, from the heart and hands of the living eternal Lamb comes the first tangible sacrifice... by God Himself. And as it were, the first allusion to a clouded relationship. The image of God in man which was full, innocent and free, was to be covered by the sacrifice of another. Now what the text doesn't say, but seems implicit in the actions of Cain and Able just 3 verses later is that the issue of sacrifice has become the new way of approach between God and man. That is not clearly set in stone, as it were, until Moses. But from this time and forward it's the action that reveals the heart, and brings covenant to bare... here me, please; it doesn't save, but is a type. And so I'm speculating here, but I believe God explained this to Adam and Eve when **He Himself** took the first innocent life as a picture of what **He Himself** was going to ultimately have to do on their behalf to reverse the sting of death and its consequence. And although I can't prove it... this seems to be to me, the first place in which fire would have entered the creation... and that for the offering of a sacrifice in the covering of a cloud. And so as they waited year after year, decade after decade and millennium compounded for the delivering One who was promised in 3:15 to be manifested, the One whom God had told Satan; *"He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."* I pray you can see the hope given them in the garden that day was a picture... not merely anger and displeasure, but rather the warm embrace of a friend, who knew the only way was in Himself. And He would have to go away and be hidden from these cool daily visits, until anew in another paradise, they and by extension we, could have unending face to face access yet again. Now take a step back... God didn't stop there... *"Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken."* Gen. 3:22-24. Protection demanded yet another separation, and that from life... for that which would have altered man eternally, but for the negative, must be kept from his body. The promise contained in this particular tree of life was of such a kind as to continually renew and give unending span... but in a freshly fallen world, enslaved to sin and death, and with no payment yet made to offended justice, man must be kept back from it, or be overcome by it, and enslaved forever in permanent separation, now known as hell. You see God was now to begin a process of withdrawal. No more does He come in the cool of the day and commune with Adam and Eve. Now He is withdrawn and hidden and things become clouded by the darkened glass of separation. And divine justice and holy wrath must be considered in the way of approach. And so the acceptance of God was to come in the form of renewed relationship based upon the full payment for all sin in the future work of God Himself. And the wafting wind driven swaying ashen colored cloud of smoke from a fire, with the even darker cloud of smoke from the continual sacrifice of the innocent singed flesh being laid on it,

becomes for us the eyes that give passage to understanding, all throughout the OT. As Heb. 9:22 states, "...for without the shedding of blood there is no remission." And remission was the only way back to the face to face relation once enjoyed; but now the **person** was hidden in a mystery of sorts veiled in shroud and cloud, but promised deliverance would come. And so we see that Satan's blind spot was Gods clouded deliverance.

So track with me brothers for just a few more moments as we survey the use and meaning of the multifaceted cloud in Scripture. And just so you know...I had to be selective and am pointing out the passages that shed light on differing aspects that speak to our particular study. And I've had to be broad in scope and wide in my view... much more could be said that time will not permit, so please bear with me. The aspects that I have chosen to look at are God in the Desert, God in the Tabernacle, God in the Temple, and God Incarnate, and then finally God unhindered. Let's examine the first...

The Desert: God is distant and hidden

Fast forward with me some 2600 years from Eden to the time of Moses. The Children of Israel were in bondage to the Egyptian Pharaoh, who was to be brought low by ten sweeping soul bearing plagues that finally loosened the grip of their long embittered slavery. Just shortly after that, God was to meet with Israel in the desert of Sinai. "*Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.*" Ex 24:15-18. The cloud was now taking shape as it brought the glory of God into a visible purview and blanketed Sinai in visible terror for every eye to see. The loud continual blast of the trumpet and the quaking of the mountain sank the heart of the newly freed Hebrew slaves. Had the often told story passed down from age to age finally arrived... had the day of recompense and personal judgment finally come? Was the Promised Land ahead the return to Eden and that which would be given to those who had trusted in the promise of the coming Deliverer? What thoughts must have run through their minds? But the answer was No, it wasn't time yet. This use of the cloud was to be the veil through which God would make his immense presence both feared and felt, all the while hiding His person. This use of the cloud was to reveal exactly what Adam had given up in the bitter bite of disobedience. PERFECTION was now demanded in stone tablets, and this revealed the impotence of fallen flesh. Because it wasn't just the outward that was being considered, but the hidden man of the heart. Perhaps Israel could keep their outward behavior in check... and yet still break the commandment in the disposition of sin lodged in their fallen enslaved wills, with motive, intent, and thought. And so the kingdom of nation priests that were to be the light and ministry to the world refused entrance into its covenant calling that day. But notice, God, the clouded hidden God does allow a man to approach... A man of priestly heart and courage from the tribe of Levi. And so Moses becomes

for us the priest eyes that see into that clouded smoky fiery desert mountain. His account is what makes the smoky furnace of Ex. 19-20 understandable, for he himself grew tired of being obstructed in it and only hearing a voice... you see he wanted the reversal of Eden lost. He wanted to see his Lord... face to face... However this was not possible at this time though, because Israel wasn't ready for the encounter... They weren't free in their conscience, as they had been slaves for 430 years... and they could not believe, that is have faith enough to enter into that rest... which is further proved by the enslavement to idolatry with the golden calf incident... and this at the foot of Sinai, while Moses was yet in the cloud. And so God withdrew and remained hidden. *"For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it."* Heb. 4:2. So in wrath, but not rejection the Sabbath Rest of God which would be the coming of the kingdom of God, was withheld and the return to the walks of Eden were not to be found in the sand of a desert. And the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night could but illumine the darkness and restrain the relentless heat as for 40 years they trudged to the land of promise, and that generation died off, not entering the land and therefore not obtaining the promised kingdom. But another important picture emerges from within their context that progressed the revelation, for it reveals the heart of God.

The Tabernacle: God dwells in their traveling midst... yet hidden

In the next example the cloud now becomes more intricate in that God has gone into the custom tent and furniture business... Same people, progressing the revelation. God says; *"And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so shall you make it."* Ex. 25:8-9. Hear the heart of God brothers, *"...that I may dwell among them."* His determination to be with His covenant people is so clearly seen in the deep pool of His affection found in those sweet words. But offended holiness and unrelenting justice must make the approach and the ceremony become more enforced, so that the demands can be clearly understood by the details involved. And thus lives are lost, as the way to communion in this tent, is narrow... and that by design. The demand for the heart and conscience to be more changed was displayed when strange fire from the hands of misguided priests was answered with death. *"Now the LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered profane fire before the LORD, and died; and the LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat. "Thus Aaron shall come into the Holy Place: with the blood of a young bull as a sin offering, and of a ram as a burnt offering." Lev. 16:1-3.* These two sons typify the problem; strange fire brings the wrong cloud... as the heart is clearly displayed in the concoction and offering, and therefore both heart and ceremony are rejected. Think with me... The first cloud to be encountered was from the burning flesh of the sacrifice upon the outer court Altar. Then there was the constant care for the Altar of Incense, which progressed priestly service into the Tabernacle. The old ash

cleaned out and the fresh fire in place, another offering was to be made in the form of incense; which would plume a haze of wafting fragrant, ashen colored smoke, filling the second of the courts and obscuring the light from the earthly organic man-made light of the Menorah. Revealing that this cloud could only be passed through once the veil was opened. Then there was to be the cloud of glory hiding the person of God from the priest representative of the people... Get this picture brothers, the pre-incarnate Christ could not be seen in fullness from this clouded inner place of mercy, but he could be seen to have been dwelling there, ready to be merciful. You see the uninvited, thoughtless, disengaged sons of Aaron never made it to this place of mercy... they fell short having only reached the Altar of Incense, the second cloud to be encountered. The idea then of having a priest come in once a year, with an acceptable sacrifice for the people and for Himself, engaged in heart and mind takes him past the cloud of sacrifice and incense, and brings him closer to the cloud of Shekinah, which is represented behind the thick veil. There the people's representative priest was to look to the seat of mercy with blood for cleansing. And sprinkling the mercy seat with blood further conveys the concept of an elected representative at the appointed time with that which is acceptable. Mercy will be given to the one entering with the sacrifice at the appointed time on behalf of the people, and not a moment sooner. And so the Ark of the Covenant and the adjoining Mercy Seat, hide the commands and cover them with the cloud of God's presence until they can be satisfied in total. The Law had to be coupled, that is, linked or brought together in some way with mercy, as chest and lid rest on one another, because they were made to fit together, as Justice and mercy kiss in the Son. But that was only half of it. The change that made possible the entrance at all was the indwelling Holy Spirit and the promised payment of the eternal covenant by the Son.

Because these sacrifices were never enough... as mere animals cannot atone for the sin of mankind. They do not bare the same image, but were a way for God to in a picture show what was required and then pass over as it were, the penalty of the bitten fruit until the Greater Lamb sacrifice would come. I hope in the Tabernacle we can see the longing heart of God to be with His people, in spite of His people. They had sinned with the golden calf at Sinai and coupled with that, rejected becoming the representatives of God to the nations out of fear of God's presence on the mountain, they would not enter in themselves, instead choosing to allow Moses and Aaron to go and represent them before God, Ex. 20:18-21. Which manifested the way the rest of the OT was to run its course, i.e., priest on behalf of people. The nation misunderstood Mount Sinai... **Moses and Aaron were the same as them...** and yet they were allowed entrance. And so they missed the meaning, they feared the cloud, and stood and watched it as it walked by to the Tent of meeting, satisfied as only spectators and therefore they rejected its invitation to be a witness to the nations through being light bearers, as Moses shown with glory after having been in the cloud. And they became content to try and keep the Law externally, and hide from God in ceremony and tradition upon tradition which could not change the heart. And we know the outcome, stringent adherence to Law, is a long way from grace and mercy, that's what Israel couldn't see because of the cloud. The One who came down in the cloud to sit in the place of mercy had to remain hidden to safeguard the promise made to Adam and Eve of a coming

deliver in the Garden. And Nadab and Abihu point to the issue yet unresolved, there is only one way in...the admixture in your heart will always mean death, unless mercy is given when you sin, because a continual sacrifice operates on your behalf. Also it shouldn't be lost on us that Arron was the co-conspirator in the golden calf episode at the foot of Sinai. He was never reprimanded by God or Moses, but simply passed over. But perhaps his lacks judgment gave way to crops he never wanted to grow... And two of his four sons saw no danger in intermingling their own brand of cloud... and Aaron bore the death of those boys in the silence of his own rebuke. Brothers... Mercy is never totally absent in the giving of the Law, because the fact that God even approached Israel to tell them of it, means He is reaching out to make Himself known by it. But Law can only point to Grace which leads to mercy; and Aaron had received it, but failed to pass the idea on to his sons. And so the need was for someone to fulfill the obedience of the Law perfectly, and then rend the veil, having paid the debt once and for all and remove the cloud that hid the identity of God. However the return to the walks of Eden were not to be found in the visiting of a tent. Which opens to us the next example.

The Temple: God dwells in the Promised Land, yet hidden

The revelation now advances, the covenant keeping clouded God would now settle in one location, the Temple, as the, "Come and See!" and that in the great city Jerusalem in the hard fought for Promised Land... the one flowing with milk and honey, surely this was the place of unclouded disclosure. Surely Israel now was to be the nation of priests and have its renewed kingdom at last. With Solomon, the wisest of all men at the helm... the seed of David, the one allowed to build this great Temple, the question arose; could he be the promised one, the anointed one...Messiah? And look at this structure He is erecting, could this be the establishment of the new millennium? This depiction of worship is not to be missed...The sheer opulence of its ornamentation, gold, the most sought of all the metals...was everywhere to be seen. Stark pale massive hand cut and polished stones enclosed the furniture of God. Artwork and craftsmanship scares to be imagined was employed at no spared expense. Myriads of slaves were employed off site to build it, then transport it...seven years in the making...was there no limitation to this son of David? Surely God the deliver would come at the great dedication and remove the cloud from Himself, and usher in the new kingdom promised, and yet... *"... It came to pass, when the priests came out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. Then Solomon spoke: "The LORD said He would dwell in the dark cloud. **I have surely built You an exalted house, and a place for you to dwell forever.**"* 1 Ki 8:10–12. The last portion of this statement reveals his and therefore their clouded thinking. The idea that this building was to be the permanent dwelling place of God among His people, and among the nations, shows the mindset they had evolved to. And when the thick cloud descended... they were happy. **Satisfied with a distant God!** What seems to escape their understanding was that God was still separate from them in the clouded place, behind the veil... and they were happy to have it so. This Temple was not the needed place of

dwelling... **but it was the needed** progression of the idea, but it fell short of the realized kingdom when Messiah will dwell with men, unveiled. It advanced however the awareness and understanding in the minds of the settling nation, that a kind of permanent dwelling was needed... so that many could come and worship from every corner, "...*that all the peoples of the earth may know that the Lord is God; there is no other.*" 1 Kings. 8:60. **Because God WAS to be the center**, and what better place for Him to dwell than in the midst of the nation in a permanent structure... But what kind of structure and what kind of place? And yet this, the most beautiful edifice of the ancient world, this opulent Temple would be destroyed by the Babylonians in just 372 years after its completion. So much for the permanence of a stone and cedar dwelling. The weakness of human flesh would ultimately destroy this Temple... For God says to Solomon, "*If you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep my commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have sanctified for My Name I will cast out of My sight.*" 1 Kings 9:6-7. And as we know, "...*the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.*" 1 Kings 11:9. And in judgment for his divided heart God said, "*I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.*" 1 Kings 9:11b.

There seems to be two main points missing from their understanding. The role of the Holy Spirit, not just indwelling, but indwelling in fullness... And the person and make-up, and role of the Messiah, both of which their own Scripture clearly showed them. "*I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses. For He said, "Surely they are My people, children who will not lie." So He became their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His Presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; so He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.*" Is 63:7-10. This afflicted Redeemer Savior was prophesied by Isaiah years in advance of the destruction of the Solomonic Temple. And yet the mindset of the Hebrew nation seems to have missed the implications. Was Isa. 53 to be a real person? Or was this person to be a type found in a corporate representation in their national identity? And the direct mention of the person of the Holy Spirit feeling grief over their national rebellion... It escaped their understanding because they had become accustomed to keeping externals. And so the great city was besieged, and **Jeremiah wept the river of God's heart trying to stop it from coming to this**, but they refused. And so God through Jeremiah asks the all-important question. "*What injustice have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me?*" Jer. 2:5. As though God had not done enough or borne with them long enough, or given them enough to merit their allegiance and heart affection. But a certificate of divorcement in Jer. 3:8 puts perspective on the abused heart of God by the wayward nation. And then **wrath**... as the distraught wounded

lover in righteous holy indignation plows the nation for the day of cleansing. Lamentations 2:1 “How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger! He cast down from heaven to the earth the beauty of Israel, and did not remember His footstool in the day of His anger.” Details too hard to pen fill the quill of the weeping prophet-feeler, as God’s broken heart is described and the conditions of the once golden city now grown dim. And 70 long years later... from a different kingdom in a land not their own, God remembers exiled Israel and as we know the 49,897 people who returned from the captivity, did so under the dictate of rebuilding another Temple. And so in this “Take Two” Temple, the people were humbled and it was but a meager representation and not as opulent, as there few numbers and extreme poverty dictated their ability. Curiously though, something is missing... In Ezra 3, they built the Altar of sacrifice and started the Evening and Morning offerings immediately...then laid the foundation. But in Ezra 6 when they completed the Temple and readied for dedication... What was missing? **There is no mention of the cloud descending?** No presence of the Lord filling the place of worship, taking His place behind the veil over the place of seated mercy. This cannot be passed over to quickly... **no cloud meant no indwelling which meant the Temple was not the kind of arrangement that was to be permanently indwelt!** And so the return to the walks in Eden were not to be found in the smooth stones of the walled temple. BUT ONE DAY, There would be a day in which glory would walk into this Temple on His own two feet, and this different arrangement in physical human form would be a witness that would make plain who the One seated in the place of mercy had been all those long years... but He would wait for another generation and a distant day of dawning hope; which leads us to our next consideration to be brought in the “...fullness of the times...”

Incarnation: God dwells as one of us, yet hidden

Let this quote from John Miley sink deep brothers... “The distinction of the Son from the created universe is profound. His existence is, not by creation, but by generation, and before all created existences. Not only is he distinguished from all creatures in the mode of his own existence, but is himself the Author of all creation.” The incarnation is more than just a God-baby coming to Bethlehem! It’s about the only way out of the clouded relationship that has existed since Eden... **because He created Eden and its circumstances... The plan has always been that God must come Himself.** Nothing else can suffice the demands of offended justice and eternal retribution, there never was a plan B. God the Father, offended by Adams sin, must send God the Son, to come be the propitiation or satisfaction for that sin in the form of an offering, so that God the Holy Spirit can make it known and Glorification of the Trinitarian God can be had by those saved from its penalty. I love what Thomas Watson said... “God the Father who gave us life; God the Son, who lost His life for us; and God the Holy Ghost, who produces a new life in us; we must bring glory to the whole Trinity.” The incarnation makes the whole God known, not

just one person in Eden, Sinai, or Jerusalem. And so there is an eternity of things we could look at in the person and work of Christ, as His life and beauty press the limits of our intellectual and spiritual parameters; but I am constrained into looking at just a few examples from it. Wading into the waters of the Jordan was a man who had known of the coming Christ since before his birth...Of course I'm referring to the forerunner John the Baptist, who leaped in his mother's womb over the announcement of Christ coming. But on this day, "*When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased."*" Lk 3:21-22. The clouded witness of 4000 years to the nation of Israel... what had been the pillar of furnace filled smoke that came to represent the presence of God in the act of their worship... was suddenly wafted away, "...while He prayed, the heaven was opened." And without all the priestly pomp and cultic ceremony of the extravagant glistening white stone Temple, and the constant billowing smoke of blackened sacrifice... "*... The Holy Spirit descended in bodily form upon Him*"... and the cloud of mystery was cleared with the descriptive voice, long awaited by the continually troubled nation, "*You are My Beloved Son; in You I am well pleased.*" **Here is the glory of the temple inauguration!** But note sweet brothers the contrast... "*For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form of comeliness; when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.*" Isa. 53:2. Here is the personification of the God-head bodily, the Anointed One Himself, holy harmless and undefiled. Free from the darkened trappings of hiddenness and yet... **blindness!** WHY? The Herod expanded temple mount became for the Jews not just a place to meet with God, but also a status symbol of **their** greatness as a nation... and it was again to lead them to judgment. **Dumb were the ears** to the words of their own written prophets... and **Blind were the eyes** to the Man in their midst. And **hard was the heart** that preferred the stones of this earthen edifice instead of the stone of stumbling and the rock of offence. And Christ would declare it with His own mouth... "*Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple.*" Mt 12:6. And so out of the baptismal waters that day. "*He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.*" And so rejection and constant frustration over Christ's way of life and ministry were to lead Him to the cross. But just before that fatal and pivotal point of all of human history... Something has to be contrasted... Jesus must take them back to the mountain... back to the cloud... and "*He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."* While he was still speaking, behold, a **bright cloud** overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!*" And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, "*Arise, and do not be afraid.*" When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only." Mt 17:2-8. Please listen sweet brothers... And hear what could not be

said at Sinai... but was hinted at in the continual blast of the trumpet... Christ standing upon this high and holy mountain is meant to represent Sinai... **and see** with fresh eyes... **and see** that even after walking with Jesus for all of His earthly ministry...eating, sleeping, and ministering; seeing the countless miracles performed by this, "Supremely Anointed One," this "Messiah"... and now **this** gift from Jesus to them, **this** pulling back of the veil, **this** sneak peak...**this** transfiguration... displayed in unimagined beam and brilliance; which was meant to secure their faith in Him, as the cross was fast approaching. But now here in the holy moment... the three closest friends of our Lord, Peter, James and John...the inner circle of the 12... **in fear** turned away... **in fear** hid their faces from the glory emanating from the cloud overhead... **Just like Sinai. They hide** like Adam and Eve in the garden...**from the presence** of their Lord. And were it not for the next display of kindness... one like Sinai's revelation to Moses, God would still remain hidden. But Brothers see, O See... think back, God the Son on Sinai allowed Moses, in a show of love and affection, to peek behind the clouded veil, to see the back side of His person... which revealed a human form and a pre-incarnate person. Which was in essence showing Moses, the One who would be the end of the clouded relationship. Now fast-forward, and here in this clouded unveiling, Moses is seen talking with the transfigured Christ...And unlike Sinai, where Moses was hidden in the rock on the mountain that is, hidden in the Law... he speaks openly and face to face with Him. And this incarnation, this Jesus, personal and pleasant... doesn't remain hidden in the Law, but came out of the transfigured cloud and was declared to be the very Son of God! **The very thing the Law was meant to bring us too...** like a school master. The fearful disciples were to see the connection, as Messiah, and incarnation met like justice and mercy kissed in this Son of God, who would remove all hindrance and obstruction... and rescue them from the bondage and dread of fear... **But How?** "*Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."* Whereas Moses could only see his form, these brothers had His kind and friendly human touch... The touch of God... This personal touch... O brothers, can you feel this touch in this passage... let's explore this touch of... our... God.

This touch is seen in the cleansing of a leper... Sequestered in the tombs of the forgotten, and continually crying out... "**Unclean, Unclean, Unclean**"... **this kind touch** of our merciful Christ restores to life the newness of baby's flesh on those bound in grave cloths walking.

And this touch is seen in the healing of a centurion's servant... as the unbound by time and space healing presence of Christ reaches out to the gentiles when none other would, and gives them hope... as this healing touch was a foretaste of the nation's receiving His witness and by faith trusting in His person, as "*...many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.*"

This touch is seen in eating with sinners and not the self-righteous... The sharing of a meal with those who were bruised reeds and smoking flax, had an impact eternal in its touch, on the souls of the second-class ... **this hand reached out...** **and this hand touched** the hurting lives of the fallen lost, preferring to sit in the seat of the lowly, than at the bended tables of plenty with the

fatness of the reputable, as He Himself had left unimagined glory to be the great physician of the soul as He, "...made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of sinful men... He, humbled Himself."

And this Touch is seen in commanding the fallen hellish demons ... "Come Out of Him"... As the soon to be damned fallen minions begged Jesus for mercy as they fled for the foul flesh of feeding swine... **And in This Touch** we see the power of the finger of God at work on the subjects of the fallen underworld. "*What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?*" And with one word..."GO" ... freedom from bondage manifested the beach-front of grace, as another soul was set at liberty from the tyranny that once enslaved.

And This touch is seen as the dead are called to life... When the Omniscient, pre-planned purposed time had passed, and the friend called Lazarus, bound fast by grave cloths, and held firm in the fortress grip of the seemingly impregnable dungeon of death; heard a cry from the voice of raw creative power..."**Come Forth!**" And Life, New Life witnessed to the power of this regenerating summoning touch. Lazarus received new marching papers as he was again beckoned from paradise to show that the death of death, was in the death Christ!

And this compassionate touch, multiplies bread and fish to thousands in a dry and weary desert... **And this hand** turns water into wine and saves the best for last... **and this hand heals** the pitch black night of the blinded, as it hears the cry of the clouded and answers to the heart-wrenched faith-filled yelp, "Son of David have mercy on me..." And the flow of pressing passer byes is stopped, **as this hand** always hears the hurting soul and never rushes away from the place of ministry.

This touch is seen in its touch on the sinning soul... As the barely blanketed sins of an adulterous woman are brought into the Temple by the religious pious, wanting death and entrapment, but getting conviction and restoration... and **This hand** is recognized by the friends of the lame as having supernatural power, who by faith and determination wagged him up a ladder, and would stop at nothing, as they tore off the roof to just get their friend into **this God-man's hands of healing...** "*Which is easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven you, or to say, Arise and walk?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins,"...He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed and go to your house."*

Yes brothers... **this hand**, "fully God and fully man" **is connected to our Christ...** the One who has touched us and made us clean... this yet unpierced hand is beaming on this mount of transfiguration, and this soon to be pierced hand reaches out of the cloud and gives comfort to His fearful friends... it's a picture, if you have eyes to see... **But please don't check out on me!** We have two more places to visit right after this small climb... We're going up... so walk with me as we look at the end of what is passing away. As we take a walk in the clouds so to speak. For what shouldn't escape us in this glorious transfiguration is the bright cloud of overshadowing... The One that was left still speaking, and yet still hidden in the "bright cloud,"

the speaking voice of affirmation and love for His begotten Son... the Father. God the Father must still appear in the form of a cloud at the mount of transfiguration. For to look on Him is death by reason of His unmatched holiness, and splendor. You see, the incarnation made the way of mercy and sacrifice clear, that is, the Messiah who would die to bring us past the two outer courts and into to the face to face relationship behind the veil, to a place that is not of this earth, which goes beyond the Garden of Eden, **because this fallen creation was never made to be our final place of community.** The problem was that the plan for glorification of the Son meant the death of this creation in the fall of Adam, and the needed salvation of it, remember... *“For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because **the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.**”* Rom. 8:20-21. Peter, James and John were shown the future of the unveiled beauty of the lifted cloud, the place of openness and fullness. Unhindered by fallen flesh and cursed and groaning soil. God’s plan was never just the joy of daily intermitted walks among the beauty of Eden! **He wanted Indwelling...** And that in unhindered fullness, so that the union shared could never be marred by the misuse of an innocent and corruptible will. This indwelling would make us acceptable as volitional creatures before God in His presence and his emanating glory wouldn’t kill us. Christ had to agree to die before ever coming to this earth in an eternal covenant that secured the ability to even form this creation. As good as it was, it wasn’t heaven. That is, it wasn’t the final place for us to dwell. God needed to be the love in man that’s what would make the love of man acceptable to Him. He must be the lover in man loving Himself. Because man’s love is tainted with the ability to fall under the beggarly elements... and His love is Trinitarian, and totally for the glorification of Himself. No admixture... free to be true and open, and unending... As it has always been in all eternity between Father, Son and Spirit.

Two More Clouds

I have to move on... I have to bring in the next of our considerations, remember I’m trying to get to Revelation 1:7-8. But first I have to tie up the missing loose ends that makes the Revelation of Christ in the form of a second coming possible. After the mount of transfiguration, Jesus has to die to be the eternally acceptable sacrifice; and then be resurrected as the first born over the grave, defeating the serpent-Satan in the crushing blow prophesied in the garden, and gaining the keys of death and hades. But we have an interesting development after the resurrection and ascension... as the risen Christ was giving the disciples instruction as to the timing of the coming kingdom restoration and the place of the coming fullness of the soon to be poured out Holy Spirit on all flesh... and that **on all flesh**, not just Jewish flesh, but the gentiles as well. Here these remarkable words... *“Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, **and a cloud received Him out of their sight.** And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.**”* Ac 1:9–11.

This going away was not foreseen by the disciples... They wanted to know if Jesus was about to set up the promised earthly millennial kingdom at this time, but remember it had only been, not yet 50 days, as Pentecost had not yet fully come... The absence of the established earthly kingdom of Christ in a visible way makes the Gentile change of guard and Gentile coming of age all the more interesting. The revealed way of salvation, and the person and work of Christ was to take on a life of its own in the providence of God as Church history was to have to wrestle with all of the issues raised by the incarnation and therefore deity of Christ. We are told that we are looking through a glass darkly which is just another way of saying in NT language that we are still somewhat in the cloud... And the second coming, is to be unfolded with the Gentile at the wheel... in a ministry role as engrafted branch. But we have dangers... just as the Children of Israel had... Our pride and the replacement of the abiding distinction, with a monument to enduring individualism could and has reeked loss of our collective witness, as we fail to see the plan of God being worked out in the re-gathering of this rejected nation after its long absence, and the issues that would make for the setup of the end. And so in this Gentile age... the cloud has had to be employed as a manifestation of covenant blindness on the natural Jewish nation, but also as an unrealized fullness as yet upon the Gentile witness; both of which serve the purpose of God's providence until the approaching final end. Which leads us to our last consideration...

The Second Coming: Christ's Revelation is God unhindered

*"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. **"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,"** says the Lord, **"who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."***

I said I was starting backward... but now I've come full circle. We started in Genesis with our first parents and now we are in Revelation awaiting the second coming of Christ. Getting to this point isn't easy, because our drama called human history has come at a very high price. I've worried that I was losing you in the trek it has taken us to arrive at this moment of fullness. And so please press in, come a little closer brothers... let us see the end for which God created the world. In the book of the Revelation given to John on the Isle of Patmos, the writer is pressed upon by natural and supernatural pictures to awaken within the reader one overarching theme... This uniting theme is singular in all that God does, and all that our existence is about, and will be the focal point of an eternity for every soul that has ever lived, whether saved or damned... that is, the beauty of His person expressed in the fullness of his divine attributes which comes to us most fully in the word...glory. ***"And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!"*** Rev. 5:13. This singular concern for the glory of God is the unrelenting expression of entirety for the whole of the revelation given to John. Never before in human history has so great a weight, so enormous a burden been exacted, at the consideration of such an offense.

Christ has awakened the fury of His offended holiness at the nation's rejection of His sovereign rule, and in the successive strokes of His just exacting retribution He will subdue them to submission and restraint. Visualize *“Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword that with it He should strike the nations. And He himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He himself treads the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”* Rev. 19:15. Therefore it is a dis-service to you if I only bring out the good of the second coming, as that would serve to bring us to joy and not humility. Because as I see it, brokenness, which will lend itself to oil and wine, will serve us better than just merriment of soul. And so I must look at this text with you honestly, weighing the judgment of God in the approaching clouds with sobriety. These clouds that are coming, that is, that bear our Christ are of two sorts. In the first consideration they are the awakened clouds of supreme judgment. The second consideration, the beaming clouds of fullness, though more pleasant in many respects, still is burdened with the since of cost at the expense of so rich a blessing being given to such unworthy sinners as you and I. And so let us launch out, for a few minutes more into the approach of such sober circumstances.

Establishing a context for the end:

All references in this next part will be in the book of the Revelation 15:1–16:21

I going to take us to the time very near the end... perhaps just months or even weeks before the second coming. I hope you can feel the intended soul robbing emptiness and desperation in the following verses as the ever tightening grip of Gods providence like the building of a cage moves AC forces right into His pre-planned final resting place. The bustling activity of heaven is first to catch our attention. *“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete...”* *“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”* The targeted splash zone of wrath is the kingdom of the beast comprised of his 10 king coalition. These cascading, almost rhythmic in time rushes of wrath are really insights into God's varied degrees of separation. While on the one hand, they should solicit repentance from the recipients, however they are barred from doing so as the majority upon whom they descend have already taken the mark of the beast, a measure from which there is no return. On the other hand they are meant to strip the soul from its ability to deny the source of their origin... the offended vengeance wielding Christ. So catch the sting of the lash on the back of the Lion who has come up from his thicket as the offended Christ imposes His will.

First Bowl: *“So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.”* The target point of this outpouring is the flesh of the AC kingdom... This sore could be the outbreak of a disease or a boil of sorts like those of old on the Egyptians. This foul and loathsome sore is meant to immobilize the movements and restrict and restrain the capabilities of his forces. Also it should be notes that this sore is not on the Christian of this time, nor the

144,000, as Goshen's or places of refuge as it were are dotting the landscape. And in this distinction a way has been provided in an extra special act of mercy on His flock, as they have not bowed to AC or taken his mark of eternal separation.

Second Bowl: *"Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died."* Some form of despoiling effect has made the sea of this region to be as the stench of death... Its vision would be hideous... and the diseased water then fills the area with a sickening aroma of dead sea-creatures of every kind. This would cause the mind to be physiologically overwhelmed, as such a mass of once clean water is now a red sea of entrapment and a lost food source and restricted way of travel.

Third Bowl: *"Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due. And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."* The agreement of the Angel of the water, in the declaration of affirmation, at such a critical event as the cutting off of a regions water supply, is a gauge of the feeling in the heavens. Divine justice will be served... And when the water is polluted and becomes undrinkable human life reaches a critical point in just a few days. Coupled with the desert heat and the next coming splash of judgment means certain death but in a slow energy depleting soul-weakening way. This will diminish the mass of those who are the populace of the beast kingdom, as young and old will give way first...literally only the strong will survive, and it is quite possible that a mass exodus will ensue.

Fourth Bowl: *"Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory."* The average temperature in many Middle Eastern countries in summer is anywhere from 80-100, and can be 10-24 degrees more when records are reached. What does it mean to turn up the heat? The text says that *"...men were scorched with great heat..."* The burning, charring, searing, singeing effect on the skin at the suns unrelenting ray will drive many in search of some kind of shade... any kind of shade, and water any source of water. The plague could empty certain countries of their entire populations... But the one descriptive effect mentioned by John is the clinched fist of blasphemy raised in defiant frustration and anger at the source of the channeled heat...Christ... This shows the loss of rational ability and the purely demonic animation of those in the beast kingdom. The sealing of the mark and the limiting of life sustaining resources has almost brought them to the end of themselves.

Fifth Bowl: *"Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds."*

When the sun sets and the moon takes its place in the heavens... its dark. But when God pours out a special form of darkness hidden in the reserves of His final forms of targeted wrath... its blindness at noon-day. It may be that the many other Scriptural references to the sun and moon not giving their light could correspond to this events... but this could also be another type of darkness. The reason I say this is because of the effect it has on the people of the kingdom of the beast. "...*And they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores...*" That seems to be more to me than the loss of light in the heavens. Also take note that this is regionally enforced... not worldwide in its scope and outpouring. The recalcitrant eternally enslaved mark bearers are pushed to the brink of hopelessness in the deep recesses of their already trouble souls and weakened physical bodies as this palpable, dense darkness removes all hope of any kind. And knowing that all is lost tears at their insides as if the claws of the damned in desperation were craving a way out of what is finally about to be sealed. And then the giant enemy of the diminished soul, the great fiend despair is loosed to wreak his cruel devices. So feel the weight of this rejection, for its measure, like the sins that come because of its effect, carries the hammer that pierced the humbled Christ servant, and has been storming the gates of His righteousness by the rejection of His sovereign rule and the usurpation of His covenant people and land with every "*peccatus*," the Latin word for the smallest of sins, ever since. And so like the clouds of judgment that were gathering in the opaque milky clouded skies over Sodom, this coming of Christ is but a prelude to the yet fuller unrestrained wrath of Christ in eternity, and they are beginning to feel it. **As those who continue to reject Him, and therefore have no covenant covering, will themselves be eternally pierced by the fire of His luminous unrestrained glory.** There end is in sight, their destruction is sure, their damnations hastens like the beast after its prey, as the ever widening jaws of the smoldering glowing orange eternal pit of endless loss is spread wide to receive the greatest of slaughters in this last days finale of carnage and savagery unknown or unimagined until this end-time. Like the pulling of a bow across the strings of a base Chellos... the deep subdued tones of somber melody that have come to so characterize the emptiness of the ravaged hopeless human soul, are now summoned in the dark wrath-fill majestic clouds gathering overhead. Visualize it... As you see the hate filled, angry, dusty dirty darkened faces of the tight-jawed, bearded AC amassing Muslim military. With its spine like rows of billowing dusty clouds arising from marching soldiers and equipment approaching the land of Israel, headed for the valley of Megiddo's damning decision...waving the endless wind-filled flapping black flags... each step closer, pushes out the jugular vein in heart pounding adrenaline, as they will in this final showdown be brought to the Armageddon of God.

Sixth Bowl: "*Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*" Whatever the event is that squelches the fountainhead of the great

river Euphrates, it must be significant... What minions are these that leap from the mouths of the triad of evil, seducing the nations to take up arms and amass for the most devastating battle of all time...? I have said before, that I think it is possible that Armageddon will result in the death of upward of a half billion and probably more human souls, in one final showdown. These Spirits of seduction must be able to seed into the consciences of the remaining world powers the need to cast off the yoke of the AC no matter the cost to life and land, or his continued rule would mean death to any who oppose them. And then as if the faith and patience of the saints were almost to give way, and the days were shortened lest no flesh would survive, these pregnant words stream out of the Saviors mouth... *"Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."* *And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon."*

And like the majestic cry of an eagle screaming in the misty heavens, the piercing voice of the Arch-angel of Almighty God with let lose the shout of ingathering... and the lifting of the glistening trumpet will wind to the lips of another close by, who will drink deeply the air of holiness and time shall no more... And the blast of refuge and advance from the golden sound of that horn will hasten the host of heaven to the gathering of the elect from the four winds of heaven... and then the cry which proceeds from the throne "IT IS DONE! Will pierce the blackness of the human condition, as noises, thunderings and lightnings crack the gathered clouds, as in a moment in the twinkling of an eye you and I will be change! And the ride of our lives will be under way, Hallelujah! This mortal coil that has long been susceptible to the weakness of the fallen world will be swallowed up in glorified, ever renewed flesh, and clothed with the rich robes of Christ-like righteousness, never to be removed or stained by the taint of sin. Why? Because... *"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."* Brothers Abraham was asleep when the Fiery Furnace walked between the sacrificed halves. **He didn't get to see it...** Moses didn't get to enter the Promised Land, he only saw it from a distance. **He didn't get to enter it...** And the heart desire of the great King David was given to another, **and he didn't get to build it...** And the great prophet Elijah never saw the nation of priests, only a remnant hidden away, **He only knew of it...** And Ezekiel could only see in a vision the valley of dry bones spring to life. **He never lived to see it...** **But you and I, sweet fellow heirs of eternal life in Christ Jesus haven't missed it... Upon whom the end of the age is dawning!** Brothers we must take full advantage at the humbling privilege of opening the very written Word of God and looking across the vast promised land of Christ's kingdom...which we carry in our own two hands, in a language we can understand, and a translation of our own choosing. And we can look into its deep unending, never tiring, always fresh, and full liberating revelation of the eternal, unclouded, God-man come to us... riding on the clouds as one of us... **In His own... Word... He's described as:** The wisdom of God, Immanuel-God With us, The Great Shepherd of the Sheep, Before Abraham was... I Am! He's lauded as My Servant, The Righteous One, The Branch, The LORD our righteousness, The OT Messiah and the NT

Christ, The Son of David, Son of Abraham, The Son of God, The king of the Jews, The coming bridegroom, The revealer, That prophet like unto Moses, And the Judge of all the earth, Rabbi and Teacher, The Sunrise from on high, The Savior of the world, The Word of God made flesh, The Creator, The light that has come into the world, The Lamb of God, The bread of life, The door, The vine, The way the truth and the Life, Lord of all, Lord of glory, Head of every man, The second man, and the last Adam, The Head of the church, The chief cornerstone, The foundation of the church and the pillar and ground of truth, The image of the invisible God, The first born over all creation, The Preserver, The Mediator between God and man, Our Great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Our Guardian, He's the Advocate of the fallen, And the Master over the grave, The Great witness, The Lion of the tribe of Judah, The bright and morning star, The King of kings and Lord of lords: The Alpha and the Omega, Hallelujah! And He promised me in His never failing, always true, written Word that He was coming back, so that where He is... there I may be also! And I believe it with every fiber of my being! It is true, and it is coming, because He cannot lie nor can He be hidden forever, as His glory cannot remain away from His blood bought called out ones from all time. I'm purchased... I'm His... never to be given over finally and thoroughly to the dictates of the fallen feeble frailty of the weak and beggarly elements! Hallelujah! Redeemed... I... Am... REDEEMED! Paul said that when he returns I'll be made like Him, glorified... unashamed... and freed from the weight of a fallen world and a life of sin... Freed from the penalty of death and the grip of Satan in this creation... I'm going to be with Him brothers... and I'm going with you... Bound hand in hand we will march to Zion's holy hill together. Amen! In a moment...in the twinkling of an eye... just when all is lost... Crack the evening sky, here comes the Revelation of God to man unhindered, forever to be unclouded... That's who's coming back... Behold HE is coming with clouds... That's our LORD!... (Repeat). I'm tempted to stop here... But I have one more consideration.

I would like to make a note of distinction between the recipients of this clouded culmination. *"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him."* We have two groups of people spoken of in this passage. "...they who pierced Him..." is the continuation of the OT reference given to the Jewish remnant who are alive in this day. And the second group mentioned is the rest of humanity, "...all the tribes of the earth..." representing the rest of the Gentile world. This abiding distinction, is the one that has been maintained since the days of Abraham, when God said He would make of him a great nation, and he was called out into covenant relationship that is clearly still understood as binding even by this last hour. The text says that "every eye" will see Him which makes the Revelation or the unveiling of our Christ in this final event transcend the natural limits of all know science. Think with me, the coming of Christ in the full weight of His lighted glory will reach not just around the globe, but press through the very structure of the earth as saturation, so that to be on the opposite side of the earth's sphere will make no difference. Much like the beams of a powerful light expels the darkness even though objects stand in its path. The solid objects are illumined as the light penetrates and chases away the darkness by pressing through it...and so how much more will the beaming radiant fullness of the transfigured spirit infused brilliance of the glorified Son of God shine in His unclouded fullness! I would like to call your attention to the latter portion of this statement. *"...And all the tribes of the*

earth will mourn because of Him.” And then let’s tie it to the same event spoken by the same Lord at an earlier time on the Mount of Olives and share the resulting insight. Jesus says in Matt. 24: 29-31, “*Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*” What is missing and what is referenced? What is missing in the Mt. 24 passage is the distinction between the two groups... It is said that “...*all the tribes of the earth will mourn...*” but what shouldn’t escape our understanding is that which is supplied in the Rev. 1. One group, natural Jews will at the same time see the one whom they have pierced... that is, **they have a different experience of the unclouded witness of that final fullness...** one of corporate salvation, not dread. And so there is no mention in either of these passages of the nation of Israel **mourning the tears of destruction and judgment**, No! Not on This Day! Why? Because for the comparatively few remaining natural Jews of the end there will be no tears of sorrow in the since that they have fear and dread thrust upon them and now they are faced with extinction or slaughter by the sword of the Lords vengeance or the armies of AC., NO Brothers... **The nation will be born in one day!** And the tears of repentance will flow like the weeping of prodigal at being returned to the Father. “*Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name, after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid. When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD.*” Ezek. 39:25–29. And again in Zech. 12:10–11 “*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem...*” Notice that the clouds of Christ return are for the Natural Jews of this last day of oppression, also a great time of outpouring of the Spirit of God. In both those passages it mentions this great expression of overflowing love. Abiding covenant vindication is now bubbling up in the cooperate, collective wells, of broken hearted Jews worldwide. As they embrace the long awaited, **and just in time, coming radiant Messiah**. I can see it unclouded brothers because His written Word declares it to me in plainly. Let’s pray...