

# The Glory of the Second Coming

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## Revelation 1

Someone has said that there are twice as many prophecies of Christ's second coming as there are of his first. That seems to make sense. Jesus coming to suffer and die and atone for sin is the hard part; how could the blessings, life and glory to follow not occupy at least twice the space?

Our text today in Rev. 1 begins our year together in beholding the glory of Christ in His second coming. All that is unpacked in the next 21 chapters flow from 1:12-20! He has all in Himself to do all that is outlined in this book of prophecy, including bringing in a new world.

This is His Glory. And we anticipate His return with great joy. But side by side is the awful truth that his enemies face eternal judgment.

Paul wrote of this:

<sup>6</sup> For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, <sup>7</sup> and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, <sup>8</sup> dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup> These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, <sup>10</sup> when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed-- for our testimony to you was believed. (2 Thess 1:6-10)

Recognize that the glory in the face of Jesus is an awesome glory. John was closer to him than any other disciple and had so many advantages of nearness to Jesus. But when John saw him here, he fell at his feet as a dead man!

All of us have fallen but who of us has fallen as a dead man, just passed out, at the sight of something stupendous or spectacular?

But this vision of the majesty of Jesus – and there is nothing else quite like this in all the Bible – is not just to *wow* us or to put us in the dust. No; we are being led to hear His “Fear Not” so as to rise up and stand, to walk, and run, and rejoice! For Jesus is coming!

How can we not rejoice? See in the early part of this chapter that Jesus is King over all things. The whole world is in his hands. (Read verse 1.5a.) Jesus has enemies; but all his enemies are beneath his feet, in his control, and in his sights! Jesus is on the throne!

See how King Jesus is in the middle of his people, whom he loves and saves. (Read 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 1.5.) He is Lord over death for them, walks among them and shows love to the 7 needy churches. Who would not be elated when we see Jesus is for us, with us, over us, and bringing us to himself and glory?

And lastly here, we need to know Jesus is going to win! Yes, in this great book of books, it seems like everything is coming down to a last play in the game. But this victory was won before the foundation of the world!

Let us behold this vision then, beginning at the top and working our way down to learn what Jesus is to us, to the world, and to the people of God forever!

## **We begin first with his head and hair white like wool, like snow!**

When we see white hair that tells us something! The Bible says white is the color of purity, of holiness, as well as of age, wisdom and respect. Jesus has a purity beyond words. He is our treasure of wisdom and age. And He is filled to all perfection as worthy of worship, honor and reverence.

Then we see his eyes – whoa! Like fire! A flaming fire! Here is where John’s knees would begin to buckle. Oh, what a truth! These are eyes that see all, that burn through all! The Lord Jesus is all-knowing, omniscient, all-seeing. And fire makes clear that all he sees does not please Him. Fire is a picture of anger and jealousy in the Holy One who loves righteousness and holiness. No sinner is going to look him in the eyes! But those eyes are filled with love to his church, his bride. He looks upon her in grace and with a holy, jealous love. As it says in the Song of Solomon: *Put me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, jealousy is as severe as the grave; its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD. (8:6)*

Now there is something else about his head. His face shines forth like the sun in its strength – v. 16. John wrote in his gospel how the Word became flesh and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (Joh 1:14) Glory was seen in Christ’s humiliation. And John with James and Peter saw Jesus when He was transfigured and became the brightest white, above that of the sun, while on the mountain!

But now Jesus is permanently transfigured. His face is bright like the sun. And not just the sun, but the sun in its fullest strength. This is a

noontime sun, not sun at daybreak or sunset, not the sun behind a cloud or fog. There is no shadow in his presence!

We can say several things about this sun-like glory:

1. This is native to him and not some reflection from Father. He is called the Sun of Righteousness in Mal. 4.2. He does not have *borrowed* light, but is God of God, Light of Light.
2. This light is divine and not creaturely, even though his human nature shines. He is the image of the invisible God; the fullness of God bodily; and the resplendent glory in Hebrews 1. This light is eternal, full of glory and his beams forth forever.
3. This light of glory is **greater** than that of the sun. Jesus did shine above the sun on Paul. But he is above the light of the sun which He created. The Creator's glory transcends all creaturely glory. This is why he is the light of heaven in Revelation 21 and 22. There is no need of the sun or the moon, for God and the Lamb are the light of that world!

Oh what will that Day of days be when He appears in the heavens? When He calls his saints to his side? When He comes in the glory of His Father and all the angels? What a jolt to hear the trump of God, the shout of angels, the hurrah of saints, and turn and see Him coming! He will outshine them all as He comes in His much-deserved glory!

**Let us look away now from the face of God to His Hands and Feet.**

It is surprising that we do not find the sword in his hand but rather is held in his mouth. This tells us that this is figurative. Jesus is not living in heaven with a steel blade coming from his lips! But His word, His commands and power are greater, sharper, more powerful,

than all the swords of all men of all the world combined! We will talk about his mouth and his Word in a moment.

But what is in his hand? Seven stars! Again, we are told these are not literal stars but messengers. If they were literal, we would have to say Jesus has ALL the stars of heaven in his hand! He calls them all by name, says Psalm 103! He commands their paths! And He who spread them like a curtain will roll them up as a scroll on the last day!

No these stars are angels! Some say this can mean messengers, and so say they are pastors of the church. But that does not fit with the impressiveness of the picture. “Look at mighty Jesus with seven pastors in his hand!?” NO. This number seven is symbolic of the great and heavenly host which right now surrounds the throne of Jesus and serves Him! And time and time again, seven angels are sent forth with seven seals, seven trumpets, seven thunders and seven vials.

They do his command. They all are powerful, fiery flames eager to serve at his beck and call, and to serve you, the heirs of salvation! They will be sent forth at last to gather all the elect from the four corners of the earth. How they desire to look into the things of your redemption!

If Jesus has all the angels in his hand, does he strain to keep you? Oh of course not. Can he not reach you or keep you? He has on his belt the very keys of hell and death! He can, he will free you from death’s dominion. Oh, put your hand, your heart, your hope into his hands.

And then his *feet* – feet of brass or bronze, aglow from the furnace. They are burning amber-like in color. This is a metal that was very

strong. This includes purity again but more the foundation of Jesus is steadfast and immoveable, sovereign and almighty.

Think with me for a moment of where those feet once were! Those feet were once bathed in tears of repentant sinners, women washing and drying them with their hair. Those feet once walked on water and stepped forth to bid Peter join Him. Those beautiful feet led him about doing good – healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead, preaching the gospel, and serving his people. Those feet stooped down to wash the feet of his disciples. And those feet were pierced with cruel spikes on the cross, and lay dead three days in a borrowed tomb!

Then those feet walked out of that tomb. Those feet did climb to heaven, leading captivity captive beneath his feet. Oh, and it was those feet that tread down Satan that serpent and crushed his head with His heel! He now stands in the highest place, all beneath His feet, and awaiting all enemies to be subdued to His footstool!

Those feet are walking toward you right now! They are coming, they approach YOUR door; will you be ready, friend? When he stands at the door and knocks? Do you walk in this shepherd's footsteps as he leads you, so you can say, "Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death; I will not fear; for thou art with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me – surely goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell..."

**The last feature then is His Word, His Mouth, His Speech.**

On the one hand His Word is described as a tremendous torrent of water and earlier as a loud voice like a trumpet. And then it is a terrible two-edged sword, sharp and at the ready.

Many times I have stood at the edge of the Niagara Falls and felt the spray of that incredible torrent, heard the sounds that drown out everything else. It is even louder at the bottom on the boats you can ride for a fee. But that never sounded like a trumpet.

There is the powerful nature of the Lord's Word. It is overpowering. It is a trumpet blast that cannot not be heard. It is overwhelming. The word of God bowls us over. The Word of God awakes the very dead!

None can stand before the sword of the Lord, His Word. A sword that kills and makes alive? It lays us low to make us stand!

This weapon is against all His enemies, but it protects his people. The word of God, the very Name of Jesus, is the life of his children. He has summoned you, Lazarus-like, to 'come forth!' And come forth you did, from your sins – stronger than death; from your misery apart from God. He said, "come to me" and forth you came!

But the Word of God is the death of his enemies. They will hear awful Words from almighty lips: "depart from me, workers of iniquity, to the hell prepared for a devil and his angels."

But let us not end here – let us end on Jesus raising John up and what he does for him in verse 17 and following.

He comes to him who is dressed in this priestly garment, a robe of righteousness and intercession for his people. He comes to rescue filled with love - kindness - grace.

And before He speaks, He lays his hand, His right hand, His tremendous hand on him. This is the hand of mercy and power, of gentleness and firmness; the hand that holds all angels holds us!

Then he speaks who has a voice like Niagara Falls and the Sword of swords. And what does He say? Fear not; do not be afraid – **I AM!**

I am the **First** and the **Last**. In chapter 22, this is coupled with Alpha and Omega. Jesus is your All in all at all times. This name was Jehovah's in Isaiah, of how He is always God from the beginning to the end. Jesus IS, and nothing or no one else, no one besides Him can be your Savior! He is your priest, your prophet, your king – not some pope, some guru, some political hope.

And he is the Resurrection – the living One, who was dead, and behold is now alive forevermore. He has tasted death and misery and suffering and loneliness and fierce temptations and trials for you.

This speaks of so many things – but especially, that he is your life, your eternal life; you will abide as long as Jesus is alive! Death is conquered for the Christian because God has become the enemy of death and the grave.

Yes, Jesus is coming back! All things must be put right and good and holy and pure! Know that you will see Him, you will hear Him, you will fellowship with Him forever and ever and ever!

Go today confident in the sound of His glorious voice over you. Go as those who have Him as their all-glorious friend, whom to have is everything. No matter what you have or don't have – to have Jesus is to have all things! Go in the glorious power of everlasting life, which raised you, making you new creatures in Christ, a new and blessed humanity, awaiting a glorious new heavens and new earth – in which our glorious God and Savior Jesus is the center!

Let us all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. (2 Co 3:18)