

Advent III - Returning for What's His

Revelation 1:7 --The comparison between the His two appearances on earth is so rich and all the more when highlighted on a day just after Christmas.

The contrasts between Jesus' first and second advents are stark:

Forgive sin—punish sin, In humility—in glory, few saw Him—all will see Him, Lamb—Lion, to die—to kill (“we shouldn’t talk about Jesus that way” the Bible does in an 8 to 1 ratio!), Came alone—With the hosts of Heaven, To Purchase back what was lost—take possession of it.

Jesus is coming back, but why?

--“To get His own people”—technically, no

--One, the Bible tells us that once we die, we who are His and go straight to be with Him.

--Two, those who aren’t dead will be raptured out sometime before His second coming to go up to be with Him.

--Then why come back? Because when He died 2,000 years ago He didn’t just purchase people back to God, He purchased everything!

--Look around, name one thing that isn’t God’s, it’s all His but it’s all messed up.

--Sin had stolen everything away not just people—everything was cursed

--At His second advent, He’s going to fix all that.

1. Let’s take a look at our focal verse in Revelation and see what more we can learn—

Rev. 1:7

What Jesus is really coming to do is restore creation to its original condition: no more death, killing, pollution, destruction, cataclysms, no more of the current order of things—you might say Jesus is the ultimate environmentalist.

--Another way to think of Him is as the world’s ultimate antibiotic comes to clear up the infection called sin.

--“**Behold**” – like ringing a bell every time you see it in Scripture. Similar to: “Hello, wake up -- you can’t afford to miss this”

One writer illustrated “behold” this way: “I was flying from eastern Canada all the way to Vancouver out west, and sat down next to a guy who I had a lot in common with. And we got involved in an extended conversation such that he did listen to flight attendant’s announcement when he landed. The plane landed, so it was time to get off. He went down and rented a car and is driving away from the airport and hears the announcer on the radio give weather report for Calgary, Canada. “Why would he give Calgary’s weather report in such detail over here in Vancouver...I’m not in Vancouver!”

--“Wake up world, you are not where you thought you were” – (Behold is used some 30 times in Revelation)

--Jesus said it would be just as it was in the days of Noah, living as if everything will continue as if nothing will ever change, and then: WHAMO! or should I say, “**BEHOLD**”!

2. At Jesus’ first advent—only a few knew about it.

Mary and Joseph, some shepherds, some wise men, Herod—you could probably count the number on just two hands. His second advent—everyone will know it.

There are some characteristics here that will make it unmistakable:

Visible to all – “**Coming with the clouds**” – Two things to learn here: One, nothing new in Revelation = key to its interpretation. Two, every time the Scripture interprets Scripture, it interprets it literally.

--We saw that God has been saying this for a long time –

Dan. 7:13-14 – Daniel was written more than 500 years before Jesus.

--Jesus Himself said it: warned those who condemned Him to death Easter week 2,000 years ago: **Mk. 14:61-62**, then He promised it to His disciples **Mt. 24:30**

--Do you suppose those are nimbus, or cumulus, or cirrus clouds?
--The key is the rest of Scripture where we find that God does almost nothing visible without a cloud, but they aren't regular clouds *they are clouds of glory.*
--Remember in I Kings when the Temple was dedicated: the building was filled with a cloud and it wasn't as a result of the water cycle!

--"Every eye will see Him" –again, not the first time the Bible has said this: **Mt. 24:26-27**
--It is one of the sharpest contrasts between His first and second advent.
--The shepherds had to be told: "We bring you good tidings of great joy..." – It won't be like that the second time.

It will be dreadful for the unsaved on that day: **Rev. 6:14-17**
--Who's afraid of a Lamb? When was the last time you had a bad dream about one?
--There is coming a day in which the whole world will see and greatly dread a Lamb!
--A lamb is a great analogy of Him in His first advent.
--This is how the Bible describes Him in His second: **Rev. 19:11-16**

"Every eye" – "even those who pierced Him" – this is speaking specifically about those who were responsible for hanging Jesus on the cross—the Romans and Jews in particular.
How would you like to be the person on that day who was responsible for: condemning Him to death? For falsely accusing Him? For slapping Him in the face? For whipping Him to the point of death? How about the guy who wove the crown of thorns? Or the one who dressed Him in a purple robe and bowed down to Him mockingly? How about the one who spit in His face? Would you like to be the one responsible for nailing His hands and His feet to the tree?
--It won't be a good day for the people responsible for that stuff!
--Worst part of it is the fact that when the Bible names those responsible for these unspeakable atrocities against the Son of God—it implicates all of us.
--**Everyone of us is implicated in the torture and murder of the Son of God.**

Jesus will come at an undisclosed time to restore righteousness on earth and He will utterly destroy everything corrupt and sinful and every unsaved person who sins or causes sin will experience His full wrath.
--The only thing good about that day as far as sinners like us is concerned: So far, **Today is not that day!!**

--The bad news is that on that day He will enforce righteousness, but the good news today is that same Jesus, today, offers righteousness.
You are familiar with a feature of most computers called "system restore". It allows you, when your computer has gotten infested with viruses and spyware and poorly installed programs and its software is hopelessly tangled, to return your computer to its condition on a previous date. To back it up to a day when things were better and ran smoother.
Wouldn't you like to market that feature for human lives?
--Day before you did what you did,
--The day before you said what you said, day before this or that huge mistake, day before you did something that could never be undone, day before you did something you will always regret.

--**What Windows calls "system restore" – God calls "Redemption"** --That's why Jesus came the first time, that's why He did all that He did so that the "Wrath of the Lamb" would be nothing you should fear.
You and I are sold under sin, but Jesus has come to buy us back and restore us to God through His perfection.