

INTRODUCTION

1. Acts 1 Jesus directs disciple's interest in *the kingdom* to the coming of the HS. v8 = programmatic - more detail re ascension - A 1:9-11 As Jesus parted from them [Lk 24:51], *He was lifted up & a cloud received Him*
 - i. Emphasis on seeing - Luke wants us to see cloud & realize that Jesus went into heaven.
 - a. *Heaven*: atmosphere; outer space & dwelling of God - called *3rd heaven* [2C 12:3]. Possibly another dimension?
 - b. Beyond our understanding - but Jesus is physically there!
2. Ryken: "Do we understand that even the joys of Easter Sunday are surpassed by the glories of the ascension?" [692] Jesus enters His glory signaled by this cloud that *received Him*. The cloud is an actor!

1st: The Shekinah Glory Cloud in History

1. Clouds in connection w/ acts & presence of God - Gn 9 sets rainbow *in the cloud* as sign of cov w/ Noah
2. The pillar of cloud w/ pillar of fire = Lord's presence: wilderness; Sinai. tent of meeting - tabernacle. "Shekinah": Heb - dwelling. Not used in OT Ex 40:34-38 summary of wilderness journey
3. Solomon dedicates temple - 1Kgs 8:10-14. Perspective on ascension.

2nd: The Shekinah Glory Cloud in Prophetic Vision

1. Isa 6 vision of heavenly temple - glory cloud filling temple - v1-4
 - i. Isa saw vision in yr of Uzziah's death [740BC]. Who do you think Isa sees seated on that throne?
 - ii. *Clouds & thick darkness surround Him; righteousness & justice are the foundation of His throne* [Ps 97:2]. Clouds - throne
2. Dan 7:1-8 4 Kingdoms. Rather than Man ruling animals, men rule like animals! Nebuchadnezzar & Belshazzar [Bab - lion]; Medo-Persia [bear]; Greece [leopard]; & Rome [beast wh/ is different w/ boastful little horn]. Dan is perceiving apocalyptic depictions of powers at work in history.
 - i. 4th beast typifies man's gov't wh/ epitomizes rebellion & persecution - informs NT eschatology. Dale Ralph Davis [p.96]

- ii. *keep looking* - v1, v2, v6, v7, [v8], v9, v11, v13 [v19], v21.
- iii. v9-10 sees *Ancient of Days* hold court
- iv. v11-12 - keeps looking & hearing that horn - beasts destroyed
- v. v13-14 *behold - clouds - One like Son of Man*: eternal kingdom
 - a. See the cloud of heaven? Into what did Jesus ascend?
 - 1b. That cloud serves as door wh/ opens to heaven's throne-room.
 - c. Son of Man receives kingdom.
- vi. Who did Isa see in Isa 6? Jn 12:41 - Rv 5.

Applic #1: What Should We See as We Look at the Cloud in Acts 1:9-11?

1. See what disciples saw. Not artistic depiction - Scripture interprets what can be seen.
2. The cloud is the door into heavenly throne-room of God.
3. This interpretation of Jesus as the ascended Lord must be proclaimed [Lk 24:46-47; 1C 1:21]. We are entrusted w/ both the message & the method of communicating that message: a summons & promise - words that inform our judgments & move our wills into faith & obedience.

Applic #2: Christ Reigns Over and Conquers the Rebellious Governments of Beastly Men

1. Review Dan 7:1-14 - we see Son of Man arrive for His enthronement while beasts rage. Dale Ralph Davis [*Daniel* p.101] "Seeing this secret behind history may not keep God's people from pain but it should keep them from panic; we may still be fearful but we should not be frantic."
2. Habakkuk saw approaching of Babylonian army & is told - *The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him* [Hab 2:20]. Who is that Lord? Our Savior Jesus Christ.
3. Beastly powers of demons & men rage around us, & we are given access into the throne-room of King Jesus. All the earth's scoffing & screeching is silenced as we worship Jesus in the serenity of His sovereignty.

4. *These things I have spoke to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world*
[Jn 16:33].