

The Last Days re-visited

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Chapter three

“a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.” (Proverbs 17:27)

The Scriptures declare that as “Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.” (Proverbs 27:17) True friends attempt to sharpen one another. A commentary on that verse states; “as iron sharpens iron **so one friend learns from another.**” Have you ever sharpened a knife using an iron piece (steel)? If you have, you know that the knife needs to be rubbed against the steel for some time in order to be sharpened. In human interaction this means **continued** conversation, dialogue, discussion, shared study, etc.

Do you know what the word “exegesis” means? Just in case you do not; Biblically speaking, exegesis is a two part word “ex” meaning out, or take out, and “egesis” which effectively means explanation or understanding, thus taken as a whole in practical Bible study, “Exegesis” means the process of going into a particular passage of Scripture and digging out its true meaning in order to gain a proper understanding of the Scripture. Let’s look at an example:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the

glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily I say unto you, “there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” And after six days Jesus takes Peter, James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain apart,... (Matthew 16:24-18:1)

This is a very interesting passage; the question is **what does it really mean?**

A pastor wrote to me about verses 25-27, “these verses go together because they are a part of the thought process of loosing (*sic*), and gaining of life. When Christ comes, then shall we receive our reward according to our work (trust in Him).”

However, about verse 28 he wrote “This verse belongs to chp 17...” He knows as well as I do, that there were **no chapter breaks in the original text**. Chapter divisions are a relatively modern addition to the **Bible**.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the writers of the Synoptic Gospels, place these verses together, back to back. We have shown Matthew above, Mark and Luke are shown below.

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be **some of them that stand here**, which shall not taste of death, until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (Mark 8:38-10:1)

For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be **some standing here**, which shall not taste of death, until they see the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:26-27)

As we look at these three passages together, it becomes very clear that Matthew, Mark, and Luke **all understood that Jesus put those verses together as a unit**. He did not make verse 28, as some have tried to say “a part of chapter 17.”

The pastor also wrote to me that “The transfiguration is that picture of the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. Simon Peter was one of the Apostles present.” (at the transfiguration). Then he wrote, “Note: Jesus statement (Matt.16:27-28) was fulfilled for the Apostles in that day. The transfiguration was a miniature picture of the kingdom, and Simon Peter confirmed this for us.” He did? Where did he do that? We don't think that he did!

Now let's do some serious exegesis, and find out what the text really says.

About these passages the pastor wrote “these verses go together because they are a part of the thought process of loosing (sic) and gaining of life. When Christ comes, then shall we receive our reward according to our work (trust in Him). [Parenthesis in the original]” Up to this point, that pastor was partially right. These passages do go together, and Jesus told His first century disciples that when He comes - He “...shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matthew 16:27) **The question is when did Jesus say that he was going to come?**

According to this passage, Jesus clearly stated that three things would happen when He comes:

- He “shall come in the glory of his Father”
- (He shall come) “with his angels”
- “And then (when He comes) he shall reward every man according to his works.”

The pastor wrote that “The transfiguration is that picture of the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.” While it may be “a picture of His coming,” which we doubt, **it certainly was not His coming!** Now it is clear from his statement that *he agreed that the transfiguration was not His coming*, for he stated it was “a picture of His coming”. It is obvious that “a picture” of something is not the real thing. While the transfiguration may have displayed the Father’s glory, where were the angels that Jesus said He would have with Him? And who received their reward at the time of the transfiguration? There is **no record** of any angels being present at the transfiguration! In like manner, there is **no record** that anyone was given his reward at the transfiguration. Thus, **it becomes clear that Jesus was not talking about the transfiguration** in the passage in question, nor was, as that pastor wrote, Jesus’ “statement fulfilled for the apostles that day.” The transfiguration was only six days after Jesus told His disciple about **the timing of His coming** (Matt.16:28), *which of the disciples had died by that time?* The answer is obvious, *none of them had died*, yet Jesus told them that some of them would die before He came (returned). This alone destroys the transfiguration hypothesis.

Going back to the text, Jesus did not say anything about “a picture of His coming,” He was clearly talking about His actual coming. Again the question is; **when, did Jesus tell His first century disciples that His coming would occur?**

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all record that Jesus told them that **He would come before some of them had died.**

Matthew wrote that he heard Jesus say:

There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. (Matt.16:28)

Mark wrote that Jesus told him:

...Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (Mark 10:1)

And Luke also wrote that Jesus said:

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:27)

We know that *many do not want to admit this*, and I know that *it is not what they have been taught by whomever*, **but the truth is that Jesus said “I tell you *the truth*, some of you standing here”** -- talking with Him, that day in the first century, about what was going to happen in His coming -- **“shall not *die* until they see the kingdom of God,”** because before some of them had died Jesus was going to **“come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works”**.

The only honest and accurate way that anyone can understand these passages of Scripture is that Jesus clearly taught His first century disciples that he would come after many of them had died, but before some (at least one) of

them would die. At least one of them would still be alive when He came. Even if some of the disciples lived to be 100 years old (which they didn't) this would mean that Jesus clearly taught His disciple that His coming would occur (at the latest) sometime before 100 AD not sometime in the 21st century or later as many are now being taught by the "religio-science fiction" writers!!!

There is a very interesting conversation record in the fourth Gospel that has a direct bearing on this discussion:

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. **Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou was young, thou girded thyself, and walked whither thou would: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou would not.** This spake he (Jesus), signifying by what death he (Peter) should glorify God. And when he (Jesus) had spoken this, he saith unto him (Peter), "Follow me." **Then Peter, turning about, sees the disciple whom Jesus loved¹** (Lazarus), following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrays thee? *Peter seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?* **Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he (Lazarus) tarry until I come, what is that to thee (Peter)? Follow thou me.** (Fourth Gospel 21:17-22)

In the conversation quoted above Jesus told Peter that Peter would glorify God by being "bound and carried were he did not want to go." Thus, Jesus told Peter that Peter would bring glory to God by being martyred, i.e. that he would be killed by his enemies, **but that Lazarus would live until Jesus should come, i.e. return for them²!** This is, of course, the same coming that Jesus discussed with His

¹ The disciple, whom Jesus loved, according to the actual testimony of Scripture, was Lazarus, not John. See the fourth Gospel 11:3, 5, & 36, see also 21:12-22)

² See the fourth Gospel chapter 14 for the passage where Jesus explains to the disciples that after He has been away for a while in the Father's house, He would come back for them and receive them unto Himself.

disciples in Matthew 16:27-28; Mark 8:38-9:1; and Luke 9:26-27 and much more extensively in the fourth Gospel chapter 14.

There are two other passages of Scripture that are directly related to the above passages, and have an important bearing on this discussion. A long time after the transfiguration event, after Jesus Christ had been arrested, He was taken to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled (Matt.26:57). The high priest asked Jesus if He was “the Christ the Son of God.” Look at Jesus’ answer to that question:

Jesus saith unto him (the high priest, Caiaphas) Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter **you shall see the Son of man** sitting on the right hand of power, and **coming in the clouds of heaven.** (Matthew 26:64)

In the verse quoted above, Jesus clearly tells the high priest, Caiaphas, that he will see Jesus doing two things:

- Caiaphas will see Jesus “sitting on the right hand of power,” and
- Caiaphas will see Jesus “coming in the clouds of heaven.”

“Sitting on the right hand of power” is an idiomatic expression, which in plain English, means “seated at the right hand of the Father” While “coming in the clouds” is an idiomatic expression, which in plain English means, “coming in judgment upon Jerusalem and the Jewish people.” Therefore, in plain English, Jesus told Caiaphas that He was indeed the Christ the Son of Yahweh (God), and that Caiaphas would soon see Him seated on the right hand of God in the Father’s throne³, and, from that position, Caiaphas would see Him coming in judgment on Jerusalem.

³ See Revelation 3:21 for the specific statement from Jesus. “To him that overcomes I will grant *him* to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Re 3:21 AV) Matthew 29:28, Luke 22:29-30, and Matthew 25:34 also have a direct bearing on Jesus sitting on His own throne, i.e. the “throne of David” promised to Him, See Luke 1:30-33.

The second passage of Scripture that we need to look at now is Acts 1:9-11:

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, **he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.** And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come **in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.** (Acts 1:9-11)

In this passage we are informed that the first century disciples saw Jesus “taken up” off the ground and then a “cloud received Him out of their sight,” and as they stood there watching the cloud ascend “toward heaven” an angel told them that Jesus would return “in the same manner” as He went up. The text is clear, Jesus was “taken up in a cloud,” and He told Caiaphas that he would see Him coming in a cloud; just exactly as the angel told the disciples that Jesus would come again!

The Scripture is very clear. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Lazarus all wrote that most but not all of the disciples would die before Jesus Christ should come; i.e. return in the first century, *not in the 21st century*, the futurists not withstanding! At least one, Lazarus, would still be around and alive when, in Jesus’ words, “I Come!!!” According to the Scriptures, this “Parousia of Jesus Christ” occurred in the first century before the Disciple Lazarus died!