

Luke 21:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Analysis

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. After cosmic signs and global terror, Jesus prophesies His visible return—tote opsontai ton huion tou anthrōpou (τότε ὄψονται τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, "then they shall see the Son of Man"). The future middle verb opsontai (ὄψονται, "they shall see") indicates direct visual perception—not spiritual insight but physical seeing. The title "Son of Man" alludes to Daniel 7:13-14, where Daniel saw "one like the Son of man" coming with clouds to receive everlasting dominion. Jesus consistently used this title to reference His messianic identity and future reign.

The phrase erchomenon en nephelē (ἐρχόμενον ἐν νεφέλῃ, "coming in a cloud") echoes His ascension (Acts 1:9-11)—as He departed in a cloud, so He returns in a cloud. Clouds in Scripture signal divine presence (Exodus 13:21, 19:9; 1 Kings 8:10-11). The manner of His coming combines meta dynameōs kai doxēs pollēs (μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ δόξης πολλῆς, "with power and great glory"). Dynamis (δύναμις) is inherent power, ability, might; doxa (δόξα) is glory, radiance, majesty. Unlike His first coming in humility, the Second Coming displays His divine authority unmistakably.

This public manifestation fulfills Jesus' prophecy at His trial: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64). Every eye will see Him (Revelation 1:7), including those who pierced Him. This is vindication, judgment, and coronation combined.

Historical Context

Jesus' self-identification as Daniel's 'Son of Man' was revolutionary. Daniel 7:13-14 prophesies a divine-human figure receiving eternal dominion from the Ancient of Days. By claiming this title, Jesus asserted authority over all kingdoms. His trial before the Sanhedrin turned on this claim—when asked if He was Messiah, He answered by citing Daniel 7:13, which the high priest recognized as a claim to deity (Mark 14:61-64). The Second Coming will vindicate this claim before the world. Early church confessed "Jesus is Lord" (Philippians 2:9-11), anticipating the day when every knee bows at His visible return. Reformed theology emphasizes Christ's present reign at God's right hand, which will be manifested openly at His return.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' return 'with power and great glory' contrast with His first coming in humility, and what does this reveal about the two advents' different purposes?
2. What is the significance of Jesus using the title 'Son of Man' from Daniel 7, and how does this claim relate to His deity and authority?
3. How should the certainty of Christ's visible, glorious return shape Christian hope and perseverance through present suffering?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τότε	ὄψονται	τὸν	υἱὸν	τοῦ	ἀνθρώπου	ἐρχόμενον
And	then	shall they see	G3588	the Son	G3588	of man	coming
G2532	G5119	G3700		G5207		G444	G2064
ἐν	νεφέλῃ	μετὰ	δυνάμεως	καὶ	δόξης	πολλῆς	
in	a cloud	with	power	And	glory	great	
G1722	G3507	G3326	G1411	G2532	G1391	G4183	

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 1:7 (Parallel theme): Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

Matthew 24:30 (Glory): And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Mark 13:26 (Glory): And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

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

Matthew 25:31 (Glory): When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Daniel 7:13 (Parallel theme): I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.