

## Revelation 1:7 to 8

1. The doxology is followed by a bit of poetry that we should look carefully at.
  - a. To understand this passage we should look at Daniel 7:13, 14 and Zechariah 12:10-14.
    - i. What's happening in Daniel 7? Which direction is the "son of man" moving? Notice how he is "coming with the clouds of heaven". How does this fit into the story? Do you remember what role "clouds" fit into in the Old Testament? See Exodus 13:21, 14:19, 19:9, 19:16, 24:15, 33:9, 40:34, Lev 16:2, (lots more in Numbers) 1 Kings 8:10.
    - ii. What is happening in Zechariah 12:10-13:1.
      - (1) Notice it is only in John's account of Jesus' death that we have the story of the soldier piercing the side of Jesus (John 19:31-37)
      - (2) Notice that the nations here do not mourn for themselves but they mourn over Jesus.
      - (3) Notice also where the ability to this mourning comes from (I will pour out my spirit...) and that it leads to repentance and then cleansing.
      - (4) We see in this passage something we will see again and again in the book of Revelation. The context for many of the OT passages was specifically Israel. Notice that John will again and again broaden the scope of the understanding of the passage to include the entire world. "Every eye will see him..." See also Daniel 7:14 where the scope is very much universal.
    - iii. Also compare this verse to Matthew 24:29-31.
  - b. How do we understand this passage?
    - i. A universal impulse on the part of American evangelicals will be to understand this to be a "second coming" passage.
      - (1) "Coming with the clouds" will be seen as "coming through the clouds (sky)"...
      - (2) He'll come in judgment causing the people of the world to mourn for their own misery and calamity
      - (3) "even those who pierced him" suddenly then becomes a problem.
        - (a) Did the Apostles get the timing of Jesus' return wrong?
        - (b) Universalized to mean "those who stand against him"?
      - (4) Is this written to a dead generation who never got the comfort of seeing it happen? Or did they die in the frustration that it didn't happen for them? What about for us?
    - ii. If we understand the passage in the light of the OT passages a few things begin to look different.
      - (1) The Daniel passage is about the inauguration of Jesus' reign, think Philippians 2. Think about the resurrection and the kinds of statements Jesus made afterwards: "All authority has been given to me..."
      - (2) John seems to be universalizing the Zechariah passage. If he's universalizing the mourning/repentance, doesn't that also fit into the universalizing the Joel passage at Pentecost? And the "new covenant" in Jer 31:31?
      - (3) Could in fact this be a passage about the ongoing "coming" of Jesus throughout the history of the world in anticipation of the final coming.

- (a) Multiple “comings” (figuratively) in reward and judgment will in fact carry through in the book as he gets into the churches. Again, this isn’t unusual in OT language where God came in judgment against Israel through enemy armies, etc. and came in deliverance through prophets.
- (4) In this case “seeing” would be more figurative than literal, but that isn’t shocking for this book in which we are about to “see” Jesus all over the place. This “seeing” will also be in anticipation of a final “seeing”.
- (5) The next verse reinforces the ongoing and pervasive nature of God’s work
- (6) This does not undercut a literal second coming, but rather expresses the fact that he comes to every generation and every generation is called to “see” him and repent for the piercings they have perpetrated.