

**THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN
THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN IN HEAVEN
MATTHEW 24.30**

Context: Jesus is answering questions asked by his disciples that were provoked by Jesus telling them that not one stone of the Temple would be left upon another. The house of Israel has leprosy and must be torn down.

All of this (at least up to v. 35) will happen within the generation. So, all of this great tribulation, wars, upheavals, as well as his own coming will happen within the generation.

1. THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN (29-35)

Astronomical signs (29): heavenly bodies being darkened and falling from the sky = world powers—governments, nations, and rulers—losing their positions in the ordering and ruling of the world.

These were time markers. The time of the old creation is up. All of the ruling structures of the old creation have come to an end.

The sign of the Son of Man in heaven (30): “Then” = “at that time.” Events of v. 30 happen when all the heavenly bodies are displaced.

Bad translation: “Then will appear in heaven/sky the sign of the Son of Man.”

“Sky” is poor translation. “Firmament-Heaven” created on the 2nd day is not what we think of as “the sky.” All of the heavenly bodies reside in this place. Birds fly in the sky but across the face of the firmament (Gen 1.20; i.e. not *in* the firmament).

Translation leads you to believe that what is in heaven is the sign; i.e. a visible sign like a cross or a banner.

Literal translation: “And then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.” What is “in heaven” is the Son of Man, not the sign.

What the people will see is the evident token that the Son of Man has indeed ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. The events that will occur in and around Jerusalem will be the sign that Jesus is indeed reigning.

“In heaven” = the place of rule. The Son of Man in heaven means that he is now ruling. He is the one ordering the world events.

What will be that sign? *The sign that the Son of Man is ruling in heaven is that his words will come to pass which he is speaking now about the Jerusalem and the Temple being destroyed within this generation.*

Evidence: “and then/at that time all of the tribes of the land will mourn.” Ref. Zech 12.10-14, refers to the tribes of Israel. Jesus is speaking about the destruction of the Temple (24.2) and tells those in Judea to flee to the mountains (24.16).

See the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven...: Dan 7 (esp vv. 13-14); “I saw in the night visions, and behold, **with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man**, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

What the people *see/understand/comprehend* is that the Son of Man is ascending to the Ancient of Days with the clouds of heaven. In other words, this doesn’t refer to Jesus descending to the earth and appearing in bodily form at this time.

This refers to Jesus ascending to the Ancient of Days to receive his kingdom; the kingdom that was possessed by the four beasts previous to him.

His coming to the Ancient of Days will be the transference of the kingdom to him as the true Son of Man/Adam. No longer will the beasts of the old creation rule the world. The beasts ruling the world is itself a sign of the old creation. Now the Man rules.

“Coming on the clouds” - assoc. w/ God’s throne chariot; cf. Ex 13; Ezek 1, 8-10.

Many times in Scripture when God “comes with/on the clouds,” it is an indication that he is coming in judgment. Cf. Isa 19.1; Ps

18.7-15; Joel 2.1-2; Nah 1.1ff; Zeph 1.14-15

Jesus “coming with the clouds” as the Son of Man ascending to heaven is the time of vindication and punishment. It is a time when he is declared to be the true Son and heir to the throne of the world, and all of those who oppose his rule and authority are shown to be false sons.

Vindication - the opposite of being “put to shame.” Briefly, to be put to shame is to be shown to be in the wrong. It is to be exposed as a fraud.

To be vindicated is to be shown to be in the right, to be God’s true Son and rightful heir to all that is his. One very important aspect of Jesus’ vindication was his resurrection. Cf. 1Tm 3.16 “... *Justified/Vindicated in the Spirit* ...” = resurrection. (Cp. Rom 1.4)

Part and parcel to his vindication is also the time when those who sought to put him to shame are themselves put to shame; i.e. declared to be frauds by his word coming to pass about them.

The Son of Man coming with the clouds is his ascending to the rightful rule of the world on the throne of God *and* that rule being made manifest through the destruction of those who rejected him.

There is a vital point to this that must not be overlooked. The nature of the Son of Man in the prophecy in Daniel is not simply a singular man. The Son of Man is both a singular individual (i.e. Jesus) and a multitude of people (i.e. the church).

Cf. Dan 7.18, 27 - The Son of Man = the saints of the Most High.

The kingdom is turned over to the Son of Man who ascends to Ancient of Days and is, thus, positioned in heaven. But the Son of Man is *both* Jesus and the saints.

Cf. Mt 19.28 - in the regeneration the disciples would sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.

This should help us understand better what Paul means when he says that in Christ we are seated in heavenly places (Eph 2.6). We rule and reign with Christ *at this present time*. The saints are the Son of Man in Christ Jesus and rule the world with him.

So, again, how do the tribes of the land *see* this? Cf. Isa 19. When God comes with the clouds to destroy Egypt, he causes the Egyptians to fight one another. (Also true about Assyrians and Babylonians in other contexts).

The Roman siege of Jerusalem *is* the presence of Jesus b/c they are his servants as the Son of Man who rules in/from heaven.

“Power” = might or strength.

“Great glory” could be a strengthening of the word “power.” His glory is displayed in this act. He is glorified and vindicated through this.

It is not only in his compassion and healing that the glory and power of Jesus are displayed (though it is). It is also through the pouring out of his wrath upon all those who oppose him that it is displayed.

He will be glorified. He will either be glorified in us through the display of his mercy or through the display of his wrath.

Summary: the sign of the Son of Man in heaven is the evident token that Jesus has indeed been raised from the dead and ascended to rule at the right hand of the Father. The proof of this his vindication will be that all his words will come to pass and the old creation world especially embodied in Jerusalem and its Temple will be destroyed.

We are the Son of Man in Christ and, therefore, have ascended with him to the heavenly places and rule and reign with Christ.

Execute through worship/prayer (cf. Rev 8.1ff.)

This rule is preceded by and exercised through *service*.