

(Rev 14:14) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. The only place in scripture where “white cloud” is used. The Bible has much to say about clouds; used in scripture – 107 times in KJV of the Bible.

There is great fascination pertaining to clouds. As a young boy I liked to lie down in the grass and view the clouds as they slowly change in shape when set in motion by wind and image different shapes. Artists have attempted to capture the beautiful sunsets on his canvas. Photographers use special types of filters in taking pictures of the marvelous beauty of clouds, especially during a sunrise or sunset. Farmers anxiously look to the forming of clouds in anticipation of needed rain. All of us eye storm clouds with great concern.

Today we will discuss how God used clouds in carrying out His Will. Clouds are tiny drops of condensing clear water vapor and/or ice crystals that settle on dust particles in the atmosphere. Some clouds are big and fluffy on warm days while others clouds bring precipitation, such as rain, hail, snow, sleet, and freezing rain.

In demonstrating His great power, God questioned Job and his friends about the clouds in which He produced with His great power. ***Job 38:34, “Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?*** Neither Job, his friends, nor you or I can command the clouds and control the weather. But we can pray to the Heavenly Father who can provide us rain. Let consider five ways clouds are used in scripture.

1. **GOD USES CLOUDS FOR PURGING.** It provided moisture for the earth and its inhabitants. Initially moisture came from the earth. ***Gen. 2:6 “But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.*** But as we know, since the flood, the earth receives its moisture from the heavens via clouds. As a point of interest, do you know how many gallons of rainwater falls over an acre if the rain amount equals one inch in a rain gauge?

One acre equals 43,560 square feet, and one cubic foot equals **7.481** gallons. So if one inch of rain is one twelfth of a foot, this means the volume of water that falls in an

acre is 43,560 divided by twelve, or 403 cubic feet. **That is equal to about 3,000 gallons of water.** That's about 6000 fifty-five gallon barrels

By way of clouds above and water from fountains within the ground God used the flood to cleanse the earth of sinful humanity. Just as rain can cleanse the earth of its pollutions, God used it to remove sin. Because man's thoughts were only evil continually God repented that He had made man (Gen. 6:5-6). However, **Gen. 5:8**, "***Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.***" God instructed Noah in the building of the ark to save his family as well as other types of life from the flood. (***Gen 7:11***) ***In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened*** (clouds).

2. GOD USED THE CLOUD FOR PROVENTIAL CARE. After Noah got off the ark, God made a covenant with him that he would never destroy the world by a flood again. This was the beginning of his caring for mankind. (***Gen 9:13***) ***I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.***

Later, when the children of Israel left Egypt, God provided a cloud to lead them unto the promised land of Canaan. **Ex. 13:21-22**, "***And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, frombefore the people.***"

The cloud regulated when and where they would travel. It also determined the distance they would travel in a day and how long they would remain in a given locality. (***Exo 40:36***) ***And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: (37) But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. (38) For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*** The cloud served a multiple purpose for the Israelites. It not only led them along the way by day, but at night it changed to a pillar of fire depicting the glory of God's presence over the tabernacle. It

gave direction and it also protected them; beginning with the Egyptian army. (Ex. 13:19-20). The cloud was a lamp and a light.

Just as the cloud guided the children of Israel, God's inspired Word directs us in the way we should go. Psa. 119:105, "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*" Later the prophet declared the same sentiment. Jer. 10:23, "*O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*"

3. THE CLOUD WAS USED FOR PROCLAMATION

On the mount of transfiguration there appeared with Jesus, Peter, James, John, Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:1-6). Peter suggested that they build three tabernacles honoring Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Evidently Peter meant well, but this would put Moses and Elijah on equal footing with our Lord. A bright cloud overshadowed them and the Heavenly Father spoke from it saying, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him*" (Matt. 17:5).

Not only is Jesus far superior to Moses and Elijah, but we are to live under the New Testament given by our Lord, not the Old Testament. Paul concerned about his fellow kinsmen once said Gal. 5:4, "*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*"

4. THE CLOUD LEAD TO PREPERATION

After his resurrection Jesus ascended into heaven in clouds and will return at the end of time in clouds. 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 steadfastly 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, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*"

Jesus returned to heaven to prepare a place for his followers. The Son of God is now preparing a place for His obedient believers. John 14:1-3, "*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many*

mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

5. THE CLOUD WILL BE A TIME OF PICKUP

At the end of time the Son of God shall return in clouds, not a cloud; but clouds plural, to receive the redeemed. **Rev. 1:7**, ***“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.”*** I want you to understand that this occasion will not be something done in secret. Indeed it will be seen by all mankind. Instead of returning to establish an earthly-type kingdom, our Lord is returning to receive His kingdom, which is the redeemed, and deliver it unto the Heavenly Father. **1 Cor. 15:23-24**, ***“But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.***

That delivery will be in the clouds. ***(1 Thes 4:16) For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (17) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.***

He is also returning to take vengeance upon those who know not God and those who have not obeyed His gospel. **2 Thess. 1:7-9**, ***“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”***

We don't know when this time will take place. The Lord tells us that no one knows but the Father only. So we have a glimpse into heaven when the message from the temple coming to the Lord and saying it's time. ***(Rev 14:15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust***

in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

Closing:

Now when you gaze up unto the clouds you will be reminded of these great Biblical happenings involving clouds. But most of all, the Son of God will return at the end of time in clouds for the redeemed. Are you ready for that day?

Invitation