

I. JESUS THE CLOUD RIDER – INTRODUCTION

II. THE APPEARANCE OF YHW – THE CLOUD RIDER

A. The Exodus Narrative

1. The stunning drama of YHW bringing salvation to the Israelites in Egypt
 - a. Parallels to the end of the age, 10 plagues – seals, bowls, trumpets – drama designed to bring glory to God
 - b. Cloud narrative, the cloud marches before them providing shade, light, heat, hides and protects them, extra time
2. Personalization of the Cloud

Ex13.21 By day *the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud* to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.

- a. Notice - the LORD went before them in a pillar of a cloud – width of the pillar hides 2 million people - canopy
- b. Then the marriage covenant at Sinai, YHW comes down in scary cloud, dark, loud, lightning, fire, trumpets

Ex 19.16 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, *with a thick cloud over the mountain*, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ *Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace*, and the whole mountain trembled violently. ¹⁹ As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him. ²⁰ *The Lord descended to the top of Mount Sinai* and called Moses to the top of the mountain.

- c. Exodus 23 – talks about the Angel going before the Israelites (as the cloud?) and they should listen to him, fear him

²⁰ “See, I am sending *an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared*. ²¹ *Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him*. ²² If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. ²³ *My angel will go ahead of you...*

3. Not a distant, stoic God, but One who comes down, highly exalted, yet near, manifesting himself over and over again

B. Deuteronomy 33

1. Importance of the end of Deuteronomy
 - a. 31 Joshua’s succession, reading of the Law, 31.14 Moses begins to prophecy, Israel’s rebellion like Adam’s
 - b. The Curse of ch32, but the blessing of ch33, including the prophecy of the YHW appearing again, concentric circles

Dt 33.2-5 He said, “The Lord came *from Sinai*, And *dawned on them from Seir*; He *shone from Mount Paran*, And *He came from the midst of myriads of holy ones*; At His right hand there was *flashing lightning for them*. ³ Indeed, He loves the people; All Your holy ones are in Your hand, And they followed in Your steps; Everyone takes of Your words. ⁴ Moses issued to us *the Law*, A possession for the assembly of Jacob. ⁵ And He was king in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people gathered, The tribes of Israel together. (NASB)

2. God appearing again from Sinai and moving north with myriads of his holy ones with him, he has hands and feet for marching, God on the earth, like Sinai but different, marching north; where? why? confused Bible scholars for 1000yrs

Dt 33.26 “There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, *who rides across the heavens to help you and on the clouds in his majesty*.

C. Judges 5

1. Song of Deborah and Barak – their victory over Sisera and the Gen 3.15 way that the housewife Jael kills Israel’s enemy

² “When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise the Lord! ³ “Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I, even I, will sing to the Lord; I will praise the Lord, the God of Israel, in song. ⁴ “When *you, Lord, went out from Seir*, when *you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water*. ⁵ The mountains quaked before the Lord, the One of Sinai, before the Lord, the God of Israel.

2. Same themes as Dt33: Earth shaking, marching from Sinai through deserts to the north, glory with him, and rain clouds!
3. Connecting YHW the Cloud Rider & YHW the Desert Marcher – As we move into the Psalms, these 2 identities are further connected & a new theme: great procession to the temple in Jer. at the end of the age (Ps 24, 48, 68, 118, etc...)

D. Psalm 18.7-15

1. v4-6 Sheol and v16-19 Rez of Dead and in between? The Cloud Rider descending to the earth!

⁷The earth trembled and quaked, and the foundations of the mountains shook; they trembled because he was angry. ⁸*Smoke rose from his nostrils; consuming fire came from his mouth, burning coals blazed out of it.* ⁹*He parted the heavens and came down; dark clouds were under his feet.* ¹⁰*He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind.* ¹¹*He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him—the dark rain clouds of the sky.* ¹²*Out of the brightness of his presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of lightning.* ¹³The Lord thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded. ¹⁴He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy, with great bolts of lightning he routed them. ¹⁵The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth laid bare at your rebuke, Lord, at the blast of breath from your nostrils.

1. Notice the same themes of Dt. 33 and Judges 5 – YHW the one who comes on the cloud with lightning and fire
- E. Psalm 68 v4 and v32

⁴Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, *extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the Lord.*

³²Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth, sing praise to the Lord, ³³*to him who rides across the highest heavens, the ancient heavens, who thunders with mighty voice.*

- F. Psalm 104

³and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. *He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.*

- G. Isaiah 19 and 63

19.1 A prophecy against Egypt: *See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt.* The idols of Egypt tremble before him, and the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear.

63.1-4 Who is this *coming from Edom*, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? “It is I, proclaiming victory, mighty to save.” ²Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? ³“I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. *I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.* ⁴*It was for me the day of vengeance; the year for me to redeem had come.*

- H. Habakkuk 3

³*God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth.* ⁴*His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden.* ⁵Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. ⁶He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed—*but he marches on forever.* ⁷I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish.

- I. Nahum 1

³The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished. *His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.*

- J. Daniel 7 – The Seed Prophecies and the Cloud Rider Appearances are Joined in the Son of Man
 1. All these cloud rider prophecies and desert marcher prophecies shows YHW in anthropomorphic form, but not really as a human, we are made in his image, God has a body/back/feet/ate w/Abraham – his coming appearance, but different then the seed prophecies from Gen 3.15
 2. Only YHW rides on the clouds, but Daniel 7 introduces a new figure, the Son of Man who will approach the Ancient of Days on his throne, coming with the clouds of heaven

Jesus the Cloud Rider

⁹“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. ¹⁰A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. ¹¹“Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. ¹²(The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.) ¹³“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one *like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven*. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; *all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him*. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

3. Here a Man comes with the clouds of heaven, approaches YHW’s throne and is given an eternal kingdom on the earth
4. Daniel 7’s Importance
 - a. Before Daniel 7 the appearances of YHW as the Cloud Rider or Desert Marcher described him anthropomorphically
 - b. Here, a second figure like the Son of Man comes in the clouds, walks right up to YHW in unapproachable light and is given an unending kingdom and worship from the whole world – Combining the Cloud Rider prophecies and the Seed prophecies from Genesis 3:15
 - c. Son of Man phrase, Jesus is favorite way to describe himself, well understood by Jews during 2nd temple period
 - d. Jesus is the Snake-Crushing Seed from Genesis 3.15 but also the Cloud Rider and the Desert Marcher from the OT

III. JESUS THE CLOUD RIDER IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. Son of Man – the Cloud Rider Kingdom Owner from Daniel 7
- B. Return of Jesus in the Clouds – His Trademark – The Sign of His Genuine Return

Matthew 24:29 “Immediately after the distress of those days “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ ³⁰“Then will appear *the sign of the Son of Man in heaven*. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see *the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*. ³¹And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Matthew 26:62 Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶³But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, “I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”⁶⁴“You have said so,” Jesus replied. “But I say to all of you: In the future you will see *the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven*.” ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, “He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.

Luke 21:27 At that time they will see *the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*.

Acts 1:9 After he said this, *he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight*. ¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? *This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven*.”

¹ **Thess 4:16** *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.* ¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together *with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air*. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Revelation 1:7 “Look, *he is coming with the clouds*,” and “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.

IV. OUR RESPONSE

- A. One God, One Story, One Hope, One Means to that Hope
 1. Not a division between OT and NT, one continuous story declaring the same hope
 2. Cross as the means to that hope – Jesus the Cloud Rider can be good or bad news depending on your response to his Cross
 3. Encourage one another with these words – the healing of the justice of the Day of YHW
- B. Worship the One Who Rides on the Clouds