

The People of the Apocalypse
“The Nature of the Lord’s Second Coming”

After the Lord Jesus arose from the dead, he appeared on numerous occasions to His disciples and other followers. He was seen on the road to Emmaus by “two of them” (Luke 24:13) and spoke with them and broke bread. The Lord eventually “vanished out of their sight” (Luke 24:31) most likely returning to heaven.

Mary Magdalene on resurrection morning, while visiting the sepulcher where Jesus was buried “saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus” (John 20:14). After the Lord called her name she recognized Him and the Lord said, *“Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father”* (John 20:17) indicating that He had not yet ascended to heaven after His resurrection.

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you.” (John 20:19)

He then showed His followers His hands and His side but one of His disciples, Thomas, was absent. He eventually left them and returned to heaven. Eight days later He appeared unto them again, Thomas included, and showed His wounds to Thomas:

“And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and My God. Jesus said unto Him, Thomas, because thou has seen Me, thou has believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:28,29). The Lord once again returned to heaven.

“After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed He Himself.” (John 21:1)

The account continues with the Lord and the disciples on the seaside and the Lord calls them to *“come and dine”* (John 21:12), followed by the account of the Lord’s conversation with Peter concerning feeding His sheep. The Lord then returned to heaven.

Mark 16:9-20 also tells of these appearances of the Lord after His resurrection, to Mary Magdalene, to the two on the road to Emmaus, and to the eleven as they sat eating, eventually ascending into heaven. After each of His post-resurrection appearances He returned to heaven, now being exalted at the right hand of the Father.

However, He was in His glorified resurrection body and was able to appear on earth at one moment and then vanish, returning to heaven the next. While there are no specific texts indicating exactly where the Lord went when He disappeared during His post-resurrection ministry, it is logical to assume that during the time between appearances He went to His home in heaven where all of those with glorified bodies like His will spend eternity.

So it will be with His second coming. He will appear and fulfill what has been written and then return to heaven until the entire work of His second coming is complete and He comes to physically rule and reign upon earth for 1,000 years which is also known as the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-4). His second coming will unfold in these three major appearances:

1. The Glorious Reception

(John 14:3; Matthew 24:29-31;

I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 7:9-17)

2. The Grand Redemption

(Isaiah 59:20; Romans 11:25, 26; Revelation 14:1)

3. The Great Retribution

(Daniel 2:44, 7:11,12; Revelation 19:11-21)

These three appearances will occur when the Lord Jesus Christ physically intervenes on earth and brings a close to the following events:

1. The Glorious Rapture/Reception will end the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21-31)
2. The Grand Redemption will end the 70th Week of Daniel
(Psalm 2:6; Revelation 11:15, 14:1)
3. The Great Retribution will end the Day of the Lord
(Daniel 7:11,12; Revelation 16:14; 19:11-21)

When God's plan is accomplished, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth ending these major series of events and in the process He will complete God's ultimate purpose for each of them:

1. The Great Tribulation prepares the Church for:
The Glorious Reception (Ephesians 5:27; I John 3:1-3; Jude 24)
2. The 70th Week of Daniel prepares all Israel for:
The Grand Redemption (Daniel 12:10; Zechariah 13:9)
3. The Day of the Lord prepares the Gentiles for:
The Great Retribution (Isaiah 13:11-13; Revelation 9:20,21, 16:9,11, 19:11-21)