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GLORIFIED!

The word "glory" conjures up wondrous things in your mind's eye. "Awesome, majestic, amazing" and "exponentially beyond extraordinary." But anything we can experience or imagine is only a glimpse of the reality of the glory of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who came from heaven to earth and back.

Both Old and New Testament proclaim the necessity for Him to return to heaven forever. This involves three important aspects: He returns to glory; He returns to a place; He returns to reign. First, His glory:

1- GLORIFY ME - In John 17 Jesus prayed, *"Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You, since You have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom You have given Him... I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave Me to do. And now Father, glorify Me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed."*

In the gospel of John, Jesus spoke of His "glorification" as His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension - all rolled into one guaranteed astounding miraculous activity of His divinity. It signals the accomplishment of His mission. Then, He returns to be re-enthroned in Heaven from whence He came. John opened his gospel by describing the eternal glory of the pre-incarnate "Word" who always existed with God as God the Son, our Creator. He came, John says, and we have seen His glory. Glimpses of His divine heavenly glory shone in Jesus Christ through His miracles, His words, and His character, as *"full of grace and truth."* They shone in His incarnation, His transfiguration, His resurrection, and His ascension.

2- SON OF MAN - Jesus referred to Himself over 80 times as the "Son of Man" - which reminded Jewish minds of the vision in Daniel 7: *"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."*

The term also underscores the humanity and the divinity of the unique God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ. HE is this "Son of Man" who ascends on the clouds. He returns to His coronation as the God-Man who accomplished his earthly mission - to be enthroned on high with divine authority to judge and to rule in glory from His throne in heaven. This is what Jesus prayed in John 17 - to be returned to the presence of God with the glory He had before the world existed.

3- HUMANLY HUMILIATED - All this is what the apostle Paul explains in Philippians 2: *"Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped (held on to), but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."* Before He was Jesus Christ in space and time on earth, He was the eternal second person of the one Triune God, the Son of God. He has always existed, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. One God in three persons, the unique revelation of the one true God in the Bible, His written witness of Himself.

Paul continues, *"And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."* Jesus, the eternal Word, humbled His divine self, laying aside His glory, in order to become flesh and dwell among us. To serve, not to be served, and to give His life as a ransom for many. He perfectly obeyed God's plan and purpose, through incarnation, ministry and crucifixion.

4- HIGHLY EXALTED - His perfect obedience in humiliation becomes His perfect exaltation, through His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven. Philippians 2 continues: *Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Jesus returns to His rightful glory. Eternal glory. Divine glory. If you will not bow to Him as Lord in this life, you will certainly bow to Him in the next. But only those who believe and receive Him on earth will live forever with Him in His heavenly glory. What is YOUR response? The glory of Jesus REQUIRES worship! Bow down to Him, your eternal Creator and Redeemer, who ever lives and reigns - for YOU, if you will receive Him as your Lord and Savior. Trust and obey Him today - and look forward to His glory!