

VIEWS FROM THE PEWS:– John 1- 6-8 & 19-28 - After John the Baptist.

In verses 6 to 8 of John's Gospel is a further reference John the Baptist. And then in the verses beginning with verse 19, there is an exposition of the message and work of the Baptist. That so many references to John the Baptist grace the stories in the New Testament is evidence of the importance of the place of the Baptist in the story of Jesus while on Earth. He was the Herald, the forerunner of the Messiah and as such his message needs to be taken seriously.

In the Advent season we turn from the beginning of Jesus' life on earth to the very end of time. We have learnt something of the work and message of John the Baptist and we turn now to what is referred to as the "Second Coming".

At the Ascension of Our Lord at the conclusion of His earthly ministry, while the disciples stood around watching, two 'men' clothed in white appeared to them,

saying "Why are you gazing up to heaven?. This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will come again in the same way as you saw Him go into Heaven (Acts 1 v11). And we happily sing "Lo He comes with clouds descending" marking our firm belief in His promise that he would return to us.

Apart from the passage quoted from Acts there is not all that much that is recorded in the Gospels about the second coming. Among the more conservative of Christian denominations one can find much speculation about what the second coming might mean for us if we are still alive when this happens. For my part I would rather rely on the promises made by Our Lord

that God is as a loving parent than indulge in speculation that may well, in the finish turn out to be somewhat valueless.

By teaching, as our Church does, to trust in God and follow His teachings throughout the year we should be in good space to meet Jesus when "He comes with clouds descending".

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