

“Reunited...Forever!”

Presentation Handout

An Unlikely Love Story

- Howard and Nancy Kleinberg’s love story is an unlikely story of 73+ years, beginning with their first meeting, in the notorious Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, when they were just teenagers.
- It happened on April 15, 1945, the day the death camp was liberated by the Allied forces.
- Howard laid down on the floor among a myriad of dead bodies, weary, and near death. And he probably would have if not for Nancy.
- She walked into the men’s barracks room where Howard lay on the floor among the corpses. Nancy had seen him a few times before when she used to visit her older brother.
- Nancy decided to try to save him, though her companions were skeptical that she could. But she persisted.
- She took Howard to a room left vacant after the Germans fled and laid his limp body on one of the bunk beds, a luxury after sleeping on the hard floor for so many years. For almost three weeks, Nancy tried to nurse Howard back to health.
- Yet, Howard was lifeless. Nancy didn't think he was going to make it. He didn't move from his bunk bed. He couldn't really do anything. He was so bad off.
- Then one day, something changed as Nancy and her companions went out to get some food. When they came back, he was gone. They didn't know what happened to him.
- Unbeknownst to them, British soldiers found Howard and took him to a military hospital to nurse him back to health, which took six-months. Obviously, in this amount of time he lost connection with Nancy.
- Soon after being released from the British hospital, Howard emigrated to Toronto, Canada. A month later, he found out the girl who saved his life was in the city, too.
- He managed to find Nancy’s address and showed up at her door, with flowers. He thought: *At least I should be a gentleman and thank her for saving his life.*
- When Nancy opened the door, Howard said, “You remember me?” (creative, huh?!) She said, “Oh, it's you?” Then he thanked her saving his life! He thought: *How many times can you say, “Thank you for saving me?”* He was lacking words in what to say.
- But somehow love was spawned. Three years later, the pair got married...for 73 years until Howard died in December 2022.



TAKE-AWAY: What an unlikely reunion...that led to love, marriage, and 73 happy years together.

There's another reunion/reuniting the Bible talks about involving love (a love deeper than the Kleinberg's) that ends in "marriage," not just 73 years together, but for eternity/forever!

The Bible calls it the "blessed hope" {*Titus 2:10-(13)*}—Jesus' Second Coming.

It might be a surprise to some that Jesus' Second Coming would be considered a reunion/reuniting. Isn't it an end-time, prophetic event, fulfilling Bible prophecy? Yes! But it's so much more! It's a reunion/reuniting of God with His people as we're discover.

Why Jesus Comes Again/Second Time

- **To be reunited with His people** {*John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*}
 - Jesus wants to be with us and us with Him for eternity! He likes us! He loves us!
 - This is why, He came to die for lost humanity so we could be reunited with Him throughout eternity.
 - ❖ With the Second Coming the Godhead keeps Their covenant promise to woo and redeem lost humanity back to Themselves {*Genesis 3:15*}, which has always been the desire of the Godhead {*Genesis 3:8-9; Jeremiah 31:3*}.
 - ❖ Also, this desire to be with human beings reveals the Godhead's **divine covenant love** for every human being—a love that was willing to be separated from One another and lost for eternity so that sinful human beings might be saved!
 - Throughout the Bible this reunion/reuniting between Christ and His people at the Second Coming is described with marriage language.
 - *John 14:1-3*
 - ❖ "I go to prepare a place...." {*v. 2*} ~ Jesus going to prepare a place for His people to live with Him forever is like a Jewish bridegroom going to his father's home to prepare a new home for his future bride in anticipation of their upcoming marriage.
 - ❖ "I will come again to receive you...." {*v. 3*} ~ Jesus' promise to come back for His followers is like the Jewish bridegroom coming back for his bride-to-be, to take her to his father's home for their wedding.
 - ❖ "That where I am, there you may be also...." {*v. 3*} ~ Finally, Jesus will be with His people, His bride, forever like a Jewish bridegroom living with his new wife for life—one he couldn't wait to spend his life with!
 - *Isaiah 54:6; Ezekiel 16:31-32; Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:7-9; 21:9-10*
 - ❖ Christ's Church is described as His bride with Him being called the Bridegroom {*Matthew 25:1-13 (5-6)*}.
 - *Revelation 19:7-9*
 - ❖ The aftermath of the Second Coming is described with language like: "marriage supper of the Lamb" and "His (Jesus") wife has made herself ready."
 - ❖ This is like the celebration that was part of a Jewish wedding, lasting many times up to one week, and much like our modern-day wedding receptions.
 - Why is all this marriage language used to describe Jesus' Second Coming?
 - ❖ It's more than a prophetic event! Much more.

- ❖ Dry prophetic facts will not prepare one’s heart to meet their Lord.
- ❖ Neither does this mindset reveal the beauty of the Godhead’s covenant love and commitment to save sinful people, rescuing them from sin and preparing them to live in Their presence forever.
- ❖ Only the concept of love between a husband and wife, can do justice to the beauty of God’s love and covenant faithfulness to sinful, fallen humanity!
- **To deliver His people from the wicked—the rejectors of His salvation** {*Malachi 4:1-2; Revelation 6:12-7:17; 16:12-16; 19:11-21*}
 - This is because the wicked (the lost) try to destroy God’s faithful, end-time people.
 - They hate them for being committed to Jesus—loving like Jesus loved, just like the religious leaders and people in general did when Jesus was on this earth.
 - God’s end-time people would be totally eradicated if not for the divine intervention of Christ Jesus at His Second Coming.
 - This is like Christ’s intervention for His people Israel while they were slaves in Egypt, seemingly doomed at the Red Sea, during the time of Esther, etc. {*Exodus 3:7-10; 7:8-11:10; 12:29-42; 14:1-30; Esther 4:1-17; 8:1-9:16*}.
- **To finish His redemption plan** {*Romans 8:22-25; 1 Corinthians 15:12-14, 16-26 (20-24; Ephesians 1:7-10, 13-14*}.
 - Jesus’ Second Coming is the crescendo, like a cherry on the top of a sundae, to God’s redemption plan for humanity.
 - The Bible makes it clear in both the Old & New Testaments that if God didn’t end death, resurrect the saved, or destroy Satan because of His rebellion then His salvation is fruitless—“gutted” of its power to save/redeem.
 - Also, God would be a “toothless” liar if Jesus would not have been raised from the dead, neither would God be able to save sinful humans.
 - But God did resurrect Jesus from the grave and will resurrect the redeemed who die in the Lord. He is the One who can save! And He will end sin and death for all eternity!!
 - While Jesus’ first coming/advent ushered in His kingdom of grace {*Matthew 3:1-(2); 10:5-(7); Mark 1:14-15*}, His Second Coming ushers in His kingdom of glory—the ultimate purpose/result of His kingdom of grace at work in the lives of human beings. Which includes the:
 - end of sin and suffering on the earth {*Romans 8:22-25*}
 - ❖ All the suffering in our world that we human beings, the animal world, and the created world suffer, which breaks the heart of God, was *NEVER* His will!
 - ✓ It’s because of human beings’ sin that our world is so broken and mixed up, not because of God’s will/plan.
 - ✓ Jesus’ Second Coming brings an end to sin and starts the process for God’s heart to ultimately stop breaking because of the results of sin.
 - destruction/end of death forever {*1 Corinthians 15:20-24, 26, 54-55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17*}
 - ❖ Death is also the result of sin. It did not originate with God. Neither was it part of His plan for humans, animals, or anything else in nature.

- ❖ According to Paul, death is the last enemy to be destroyed because at Jesus' Coming sin and suffering are ended and death is a byproduct of sin {*1 Corinthians 15:20-24, 54-56*}.

TAKE-AWAY: As we've discovered why Jesus comes the second time, now we'll learn the manner/how He comes. It might be different than some think.

Manner of Jesus' Second Coming

- **Visible** {*Matthew 24:26, 30; Mark 13:24-27 (26-27); Luke 21:25-28 (27); Revelation 1:7*}
 - There is nothing secretive about Jesus' Second Coming. Everyone living will see it.
 - When someone wants to celebrate something special, they don't hide the fact or do it in secret. They "splash" it all over social media, announce it to all. Neither will God hide Jesus's Coming like it is something to be ashamed of.
 - ❖ Jesus' Second Coming will not be a secret rapture.
- **Audible** {*Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:(15)-17*}
 - Not only is Jesus' Second Coming something everyone living sees, but it's something everyone living hears. Again, nothing secretive about His Coming!
- **Jesus' feet do not touch the ground** {*Matthew 24:26-27, 30-31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*}
 - Here is a "strange" sign that many don't think about. Yet, it markedly differentiates Jesus' Second Coming from the false christs and their "comings."
 - Jesus remains in the clouds at His coming.
 - The heavenly angels go to gather the redeemed/saints as they are resurrected by Jesus' command.
 - Then the redeemed/saints are caught up to Jesus to be with Him in the air.
 - Jesus warns us that the false christs (antichrists) will walk around on the earth, but He will *not* when He comes the second time. This is how we can know Jesus' true Coming from the false.

TAKE-AWAY: Thankfully, Jesus gives us this manner-sign because our senses would be deceived by the dazzling manner of the false christs' appearances. Along with the manner of His Coming, the Holy Spirit also gives us signs that His Coming will take place.

Signs of Jesus' Second Coming

- **Reminder His Coming is soon** {*Matthew 24: 32-33; Mark 13:28-29; Luke 21:29-31*}
 - These signs give an awareness/notice to the alert observer a "heads-up" understanding of where he/she is living in relation to biblical prophetic history and the time of the Second Coming.
 - It's similar to knowing spring is near when the weather begins to warm up or that summer is near when the air becomes more humid.
 - Or like road/exit signs on the freeways/interstates that help one know which exit to take or which direction to drive.
 - These signs also encourage one who understands them, building an anticipation for Jesus' Second Coming, like a birthday date does for one who knows they are going to have a party when their birthday arrives.

- However, one must remember that these signs do **not** pinpoint the exact date of Jesus' Second Coming.
 - Though they intensify in nature and/or frequency as history propels closer to the Second Coming, again they do not pinpoint the exact date of Jesus' Coming.
- **Builds faith in what Jesus promised is true** {*John 14:29*}
 - Anyone can make promises. The checkout aisles are full of all kinds of predictions/promises, particularly at the dawn of a new year. However, most of them prove false!
 - Yet, Jesus' promise of His Second Coming is confirmed as true as one sees His sign-prophecies unfold as He predicted!
 - His Second Coming will happen. He promised it. And the signs build faith in His word/promises that it will!
- **Signs Overview—eras, repeat, dual-meaning** {*Matthew 24:1-3; Mark 13; Luke 21*}
 - As one studies Jesus' description of the signs of His Coming, he/she will discover these signs fall into three categories: general signs—ongoing since the time of Jesus, around the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the Dark/Medieval Ages, and the time of the end—near the time of the Second Coming.
 - The structure of these signs involves eras of time, repeat, overlap, and/or dual meanings.
 - ❖ Dual application of prophecies is appropriate only when the biblical text indicates it, not on the whim of the reader.
 - ✓ Jesus' signs description in *Matthew 24 (vv. 1-3)* allows for dual application.
 - ✓ This is based on the disciples' two-part question: [1] what the sign(s) of the destruction of the temple would be and [2] the destruction/end of the world {*24:3*}.

General Signs	Destruction of Jerusalem	Christian Era	Time of the End/ Near 2nd Coming
▪ False christs { <i>vv. 4-5</i> }	▪ Abomination of desolation { <i>vv. 16-20</i> }	▪ Dark/Medieval Ages' oppression/persecution { <i>vv. 21-22; Daniel 7:21-26</i> }	▪ Natural signs: sun darkened, falling stars & powers of the heavens shaken { <i>v. 29</i> }
▪ Turmoil—national, militarily, religious, politically { <i>vv. 6-7</i> }	▪ Flee Judea { <i>vv. 16-20</i> }	▪ False christs & prophets { <i>vv. 23-25</i> }	▪ Jesus' 2 nd Coming { <i>v. 30</i> }
▪ Persecution of disciples { <i>vv. 9-10</i> }		▪ False christ/man of sin/antichrist { <i>vv. 26-27</i> }	▪ Gathering of God's redeemed followers { <i>v. 31</i> }
▪ False prophets/spiritual apostacy { <i>vv. 11-12</i> }			
▪ Gospel preached to entire world { <i>v. 14</i> }			

TAKE-AWAY: Finally, for some, Jesus' Second Coming creates fear of unreadiness, involving feelings of fear, dread, etc. "What if I'm not ready when He comes?" So, what does it mean to be ready for Christ's Coming?

Being Ready for Jesus' Second Coming

- **Meeting our “Lover”** {*Matthew 24:36-44; John 14:1-3*}
 - Just like a husband-to-be or a wife-to-be can't wait for their wedding day, those whose hearts have been captured by God's love and salvation will long for the day of our Lord's appearing.
 - It will not be a day of dread or fear, but one of longing, anticipation for the God we love with all our hearts!
 - This means the Second Coming will be more of a reunion/marriage than a prophetic event with prophetic facts surrounding it.
- **Alert/open to the signs** {*Matthew 24:32-33*}
 - Openness is a mindset of freedom that opens the doors to a world of possibilities.
 - If we live a life that is open to the signs of Christ's Coming, not in fear, but with an attitude that our God has graciously given us reminders of His Coming, we will see His Coming with joy and be open to the Holy Spirit's leading in preparation.
- **Living a life of ministry/service for Jesus** {*Matthew 24:45-51; 25:31-46*}
 - Waiting for the Second Coming is not a life of monk-like, self-exclusion from the sinful world around oneself.
 - Instead, it's a life of selfless service for others so they too may come to know/follow Jesus.
 - Jesus teaches real ministry also involves serving the “least of these”—individuals who are marginalized by society, thought of as “less,” etc.
 - Some would define this type of ministry as “social justice” service. But it is more than just a secular helping people. It's meant to reveal Jesus in practical service ways/opportunities.
- **Filled with Holy Spirit** {*Matthew 25:1-13*}
 - Having extra “oil” in one's “lamp” = being filled with and growing in the Holy Spirit through the study of God's Word/Bible.
 - This involves both personal and group study through devotions, study time, small groups, and corporate worship.

The Heart-Factor!

- Ultimately, Jesus' Second Coming is a marriage of lovers who can't wait to spend eternity together!
 - It's a relational reunion with our God, not just a prophetic event with prophetic signs.
 - It's not an event to dread or fear, but long for in anticipation, because our God can't wait to spend eternity with us.
 - His anticipation is based on His covenant love for each one of us, even to the point of death, so we could be reunited with Him!

LIVING CHOICE: Will you by God's grace: open your heart to His love that longs, longed to the point of death, to be with you for eternity as Jesus comes to take His children home with Him?