

Malcolm's Monday Musings : 7 July 2025.

Greetings.

Tomorrow marks the anniversary of the homecall of Dr Paul Brand on 8 July 2003, at the age of 89. In his day, Paul W. Brand was a world-renowned Christian orthopaedic specialist and leprosy surgeon.

The following are a few thought-provoking quotations about pain from one of several books which Paul Brand co-authored with Philip Yancey:

(i) 'Pain is not the enemy, but the loyal scout announcing the enemy. And yet—here is the central paradox of my life—after spending a lifetime among people who destroy themselves for lack of pain, I still find it difficult to communicate an appreciation for pain to people who have no such defect. Pain truly is the gift nobody wants ... people who already own this gift rarely value it. Usually, they resent it.

(ii) 'In the modern view, pain is an enemy, a sinister invader that must be expelled ... (But when) regarded as an enemy and not as a warning signal, pain loses its power to instruct. Silencing pain without considering its message is like disconnecting a ringing fire alarm to avoid receiving bad news ... Listen to your pain. It is your own body talking to you ...

(iii) 'I divide the experience of pain into three stages. First there is the pain signal, an alarm that goes off when nerve endings in the periphery sense danger ... At a second stage of pain, the spinal cord and base of the brain act as a "spinal gate" to sort out which of the many millions of signals deserve to be forwarded as a message to the brain ... The final stage of pain takes place in the higher brain (especially the cerebral cortex), which sorts through the prescreened messages and decides on a response [Truly, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139. 14).] ...

(iv) 'My work with pain-deprived patients has proved to me that pain protects us from destroying ourselves ... In more advanced cases of leprosy, my patients felt no "pain" at all: no negative sensations reached their brains when they touched a hot stove or stepped on a nail. Yet all of them suffered, as greatly as any people I have ever known. They lost the freedom that pain provides, they lost the sense of touch and sometimes sight, they lost their physical attractiveness, and because of the stigma of the disease, they lost the feeling of acceptance by fellow human beings'.

('The Gift Nobody Wants', pages 187-188, 201-202, 219, 227, 251.)

I set out below this week's 'Musings'.

Taking a cue from the reference to the future coming of 'the Son of man' in the last of those Musings, I have added my own notes on the subject of our Lord's Second Advent, when 'the Son of man' is to come 'with power and great glory' (Matt 24. 30). The addition of my notes (titled 'The Coming of the Son of Man') results in a 'Musings' document considerably longer than is usual. I have, therefore, reduced the number of other 'Musings' for today.

Happy reading.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,

Malcolm

(i) Scripture.

He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

But one testified in a certain place, saying:

'What is man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet'.

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Hebrews 2. 5-9 (*The New King James Version*)

(ii) Food for thought.

'The Lord is my ...'.

(i) 'The Lord is **my strength and my song**' (Exod. 15. 2; cf. Psa. 118. 14; Isa. 12. 2).

(ii) 'The Lord is **my rock and my fortress**' (Psa. 18. 2; cf. 2 Sam. 22. 2).

(iii) 'The Lord is **my shepherd**' (Psa. 23. 1).

(iv) 'The Lord is **my light and my salvation**' (Psa. 27. 1).

(v) 'The Lord is ... **my shield**' (Psa. 28. 7).

(vi) 'The Lord is **my defence**' (Psa. 94. 22; cf. Psa. 59. 9, 17).

(vii) 'The Lord is **my portion**' (Lam 3. 24).

(viii) 'The Lord is **my helper**' (Heb. 13. 6).

**'Dear Saviour. Thou art mine.
How sweet the thought to me!**

Let me repeat Thy name,
And lift my heart to Thee.

'Mine! mine! mine!
I know Thou art mine;
Saviour, dear Saviour,
I know Thou art mine.

(Anna Hudson)

The Saviour.

The Lord Jesus is not the Saviour we deserved. He is not the Saviour we sought. He is the Saviour we needed.

Three memorable quotations from the pen of Warren Wiersbe.

(i) 'The Good Shepherd died for the sheep (John 10. 11) and the Great Shepherd lives for the sheep (Heb. 13. 20)'.

('So That's What a Christian Is', page 34.)

(ii) 'God doesn't always change the circumstances, but He can change us to meet the circumstances'.

('Be Amazed', page 136.)

(iii) 'Real contentment must come from within. You and I cannot change or control the world around us, but we can change and control the world within us'.

('The Bumps Are What You Climb On', page 152.)

'What is man ...? You have made him a little lower than the angels, and you have crowned him with glory and honour ... You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; you have put all things under his feet' (Psa. 8. 4-6)

'Jesus's incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension re-enact humanity's history.

'Humanity, made by God lower than the angels, was crowned by God with dominion over his creation. But we fell; we sinned. And because of our sin, we do not currently see everything in subjection to us. Because of the curse of sin that reverberates throughout the cosmos, some of the praise of Psalm 8 falls flat. We have left our position, and the world is not as it should be.

'But Jesus took up ... humanity and became lower than the angels for a little while. His descent did not stop at merely becoming a human, but He lowered himself to the point of death. Jesus took upon Himself the very thing that breaks mankind's dominion over this world: the curse of sin, which is death. But Jesus did not remain dead. He rose from the grave and was lifted to God's right hand, where He sits now enthroned and crowned with glory and honour ...

'To quote Hebrews, "We see Him" (Heb. 2. 9). Jesus, as a man, sits where humanity is supposed to sit, in dominion over all creation with all things subjected to Him ... Because we see him sitting where Psalm 8 says we should sit—in dominion over God's creation—we know that we will sit there with Him.

'A day is coming when Psalm 8 will be true of all redeemed humanity in Christ. The exalted position God intended for mankind ... as his representatives and regents was not abandoned at the fall. We see it in Jesus now. We will see it in ourselves in the new creation'.

(D. Stevens, 'Songs of the Son: Reading the Psalms with the Author of Hebrews', comments under the heading, 'Reading Psalm 8 again'.)

'The mystery of iniquity doth already work ... then shall that Wicked be revealed ...whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders' (2 Thess. 2. 7-9 KJV).

'The same words which are used to describe the manifestations of this power of Satan are employed in speaking of the proof of the mission of Jesus Christ as Messiah (Acts 2. 22) ...

'The coming of Antichrist is spoken of just as the coming of Christ; one, a "mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. 2. 7), the other, a "mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3. 16). As the Son of man is to come, so also will the Antichrist come'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Studies on the Book of Daniel', Collected Writings, Volume 5, page 192.)

(iii) Go on, smile.

Food for thought.

1. George and Grace were sitting down to eat at the dinner table.

Grace commented, 'You know, George, when we were first married, you would always take the small portion and give me the larger. Now you always take the large portion and leave me the smaller. I do wonder whether you love me as much now as you did in those early days'.

'Grace, dear', George replied, 'I assure you that I love you as much as ever—it is simply that ...

... you can cook much better now'.

2. Ron and Sue decided to try a new restaurant that had just opened called Riccardo's Garden Ristorante.

When starters had been brought to their table, Ron gestured to Lorenzo, the waiter, to come back.

Lorenzo: 'Yes, is something wrong?'

Ron: 'There certainly is. The soup. Taste it'.

Lorenzo: 'I beg your pardon, signor?'

Ron: 'I said, taste the soup'.

Lorenzo: 'I assure you that our soup is always excellent'.

Ron: 'So you say—but I want you to taste it'.

Lorenzo: 'But, signor, I can tell you that this soup was made this morning with only the very finest ingredients'.

Raising his voice, Ron: 'And I am telling you—taste the soup!'

Lorenzo, exasperated: 'Va bene. If you insist, I will taste your soup'.

Then, after a short pause, Lorenzo: 'And where, signor, is the spoon?'

Ron, triumphantly:

'Aha ... light-bulb moment!'

THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN

Introduction

1. Biblical prophecy

The subject of our Lord's Second Advent (when 'the Son of man' is to come 'with power and great glory', Matt 24. 30) occupies very many passages of scripture. Before embarking on a study of an event of this nature, it is important that we remind ourselves of the nature and purpose of biblical prophecy—'prophecy', that is, in the sense of *foretelling future events*.

God has revealed coming events for at least three reasons:

- First, that when the events happen, people of the day will be able to recognise these and to act in accordance with the instructions He has given; see, for example, Matt. 24. 15-16.
- Second, that when the events happen, they will provide confirmation that God both knows the end from the beginning and infallibly fulfils His purposes. See, for example, Isa. 41. 22-24; 44. 7; 46. 9-11; Ezek. 2. 5; 17. 21; 33. 33; John 13. 19; 14. 29; 16. 4. Meanwhile, biblical prophecy serves to inspire us with confidence that He does indeed know the future and that He has clearly defined purposes which, notwithstanding all opposition and appearances to the contrary, will surely 'come to pass'. We are assured of the certainty of His triumph.
- Third, that in advance of the fulfilment, God's people can learn practical lessons which fashion and mould their attitudes and behaviour towards present day events and tendencies—in other words, that the true character of principles at work in the present can be identified by reference to the fully developed versions of the future, and our attitude to the principles now at work be determined accordingly. See, for example, Rev. 1. 3; 18. 4-5.

The point is that Bible prophecies are not given primarily to enable us to map out a precise and detailed program of future events. Nor, indeed, have we any hope of doing so with any great certainty.

2. The problems

When considering a subject such as the Second Advent, we face three main problems.

Let me illustrate. Imagine that I am confronted for the first time with a large number of jigsaw pieces on a board. The jigsaw pieces are scattered randomly and there is no picture available to guide me as to how they fit together—if they do at all. My three problems are as follows:

1. I cannot be sure that all the pieces on the board belong to the same jigsaw. In the context of the Second Advent, there is the danger that, because of my ignorance, I try to fit in passages of scripture which do not in fact have anything to do with the subject. The verses in question may relate to some other future event or even, particularly in the case of passages in the Old Testament, to events which have already taken place.
2. I cannot be sure that the pieces on the board are sufficient to complete the whole jigsaw. For all I know, many pieces (even important pieces) may be missing. In the context of the Second Advent, this is almost certainly so. Many of the difficulties which I have in piecing together the various biblical passages would no doubt disappear if I only possessed all of the facts. But I don't; only the events themselves will reveal many of the connecting links between the pieces which I do have.
3. Always assuming that the pieces on the board do fit together, I cannot be sure how or where. In the context of the Second Advent, I have no alternative but, having sought the Lord's help, to attempt to construct a likely sequence of events on the basis of those passages which appear to be relevant.

I am consoled by the knowledge that both the Old Testament prophets and the Jewish saints in the period prior to our Lord's first advent were in at least as difficult, if not more difficult, situation. After all, they had jigsaw pieces on their board which related to both advents and they didn't know that there would be two separate advents; see 1 Pet. 1. 11-12.

I wonder how I would have fared had I been confronted with prophecies which clearly indicated that, when He came, Christ would: *enter Jerusalem on the foal of an ass, be born of a virgin, bring light to Galilee of the Gentiles, have His hands and feet pierced, be consumed with zeal for God's house, come out of Bethlehem, be sold for 30 pieces of silver, be called out of Egypt, be brought as a lamb to the slaughter, preach the acceptable year of the Lord (and the day of God's vengeance!), see no corruption in death, be called a Nazarene etc. etc.* ...not to speak of passages which we now know still await fulfilment; such as *His coming with blood-sprinkled garments from Edom, sitting as King on God's holy hill of Zion, slaying the wicked with the breath of His lips, splitting the mount of Olives, coming with the clouds of heaven, etc. etc.*

The mind reels.

But you and I have the benefit of hindsight. The fulfilment of those prophecies which relate to the Lord's First Advent, as recorded for us in the New Testament, has made all plain. We know how the various pieces fitted together so wonderfully. And one day the Lord's Second Advent will equally be history. Then, and only then, will all be clear.

I repeat, 'In the context of the Second Advent, I have no alternative but, having sought the Lord's help, to attempt to construct a likely sequence of events on the basis of those passages which appear to be relevant'.

Whereas the general shape of events seems clear enough to me, many of the details do not. I am aware that many godly and well-read students of biblical prophecy would disagree over several details in this paper. I make no pretence of being right and simply submit the outline below as one possible construction.

3. The assumptions

I have made the following key assumptions:

1. That all divinely inspired prophecies and all God's unconditional promises will be fulfilled. And that, when due allowance is made for apocalyptic symbolism, they will be fulfilled literally and as understood by those that communicated them and those that received them. The literal and historical fulfilment of those prophecies which concerned the Lord's First Advent encourages me to expect the literal and historical fulfilment of those which concern His Second Advent.

2. That single passages of scripture (and sometime even single verses) may cover events separated by quite lengthy periods of time, even though they give no indication of doing so. For example, many Old Testament passages refer without any attempt at distinction, to the two Advents of Messiah—events which we now know to be separated by some 2,000 years at least. From the prophet's perspective, future events are seen as great mountain peaks on the horizon. From a distance these seem almost to touch each other. It is only as one comes near to them that one realises that wide valleys sometimes extend between them. By way of example only, consider Isa. 9. 6-7; 11. 1-9; 61. 2; Zech. 9. 9-10.

3. That the invasion and defeat of Gog, Ezek. 38. 1 to 39. 22, occurs some 3½ years before the Lord's Second Advent. This assumption rests largely on the conditions applying in Israel at the time of the invasion. The land will have recovered from earlier wars and desolation; the people will have been re-gathered, will be wealthy and will be dwelling in security and ease in unwallled communities, Ezek. 38. 2-14. These conditions appear to fit better into the first half of the seven-year covenant between Israel and the Roman Prince (the Beast), Dan. 9. 27, than into the time of the Second Advent. With a peace treaty confirmed between Israel and the powerful Prince, it is likely that they will feel confident to disarm; compare Isa. 28. 15.

It is quite conceivable that the dramatic divine intervention to destroy over 80% of the combined forces of Gog and his allies, Ezek. 38. 18 to 39. 2, and the consequent deliverance of the land of Israel, will encourage many in Israel to seek God again. This might well cause the Roman Prince to react by putting a stop to all sacrifice and offering, by the setting up of 'the abomination of desolation' in the Holy Place, and by aggressively persecuting the people, Dan. 9. 27; Matt. 24. 15-16, 21-22.

That is, on the human level, the defeat of Gog may be one of the contributing factors to trigger the Great Tribulation; on the spiritual level, it will be the casting down to earth of the dragon which directly occasions it, Rev. 12. 6-17.

[The only viable alternative timings for the Gog invasion are:

- i) very soon after the destruction of the Beast, together with the Kings of the East and their respective armies—certainly within 2½ months of the end of the Great Tribulation, Dan. 12. 12 with Rev. 12. 6, 14, or
- ii) when Satan is released after 1,000 years of imprisonment in the abyss, Rev. 20. 2, 3, 7-10.

As far as (i) is concerned, although Israel will certainly dwell 'safely' then, Jer. 23. 6; Zech. 14. 11, it is hardly conceivable that men will readily pit themselves against the demonstrated might of the One who so recently has descended visibly at the head of a mighty heavenly army and, with a word, totally annihilated all the concerted forces arrayed against Him.

As far as (ii) is concerned, the 'Gog and Magog' of Revelation 20. 8 are distinguished from the 'Gog of the land of Magog' of Ezekiel 38-39, in that the former are gathered from 'the four quarters of the earth' whereas the latter pour down mainly from the 'farthest parts of the north', Ezek. 38. 15; 39. 2 (lit.), albeit with assistance from Iran, Ethiopia and Libya, Ezek. 38. 5.]

4. That, when the Beast of the book of Revelation (Rev. 13. 1-10) represents the personal head of the coming empire, rather than the empire itself, he is to be identified with (a) the 'little horn' of the fourth beast, Dan. 7. 7-8, 19-20, 23-26, with (b) the Roman 'prince', Dan. 9. 26-27, with (c) the 'king' who does 'according to his will', Dan. 11. 36-45, and with (d) the 'man of sin' (or, more accurately, 'man of lawlessness'), 2 Thess. 2. 3-12. The key references to the Beast in the book of the Revelation, covering both the empire and its ruler, are Rev. 11. 7; 13. 1-10; 17. 3, 8-14; 19.19-20.

The Beast is to be distinguished from the False Prophet, who is mentioned by name three times, Rev. 16. 13; 19. 20; 20. 10, and described more fully as the 'beast coming up out of the earth', Rev. 13. 11-17. There is no suggestion in scripture that the False Prophet will be a king or possess any political power in his own right (as will the Beast); his role is plainly subordinate to that of the Beast, directing all worship to him and his image. He will be the ultimate 'false prophet', just as the Beast will be the ultimate 'false Christ', Matt. 24. 24. (See Appendix A for a series of suggested contrasts between the Beast and our Lord Jesus.)

The reference above to Daniel 11. 36-45 should be noted in particular. I assume three things: (i) That the reference in these verses is to a figure of the end times, and not to the historical Antiochus Epiphanes—who is the subject of the earlier part of the chapter. (The evidence for this interpretation is marshalled well by E. B. Pusey, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*, pages 91 to 98.) (ii) That the Beast (the 'king' who does 'according to his will') is to be distinguished from the King of the North; that is, that three kings and not two are mentioned in verse 40. (iii) That the Beast, and not the King of the North, is the subject of the remainder of the chapter (that is, from the end of verse 40 to the end of verse 45) as well as of verses 36 to 39. This last assumption affects considerably the suggested outline of events which follows.

The Scene

Briefly, as I understand it, the background is as follows.

Halfway through the seven years of Daniel's 'seventieth week', Satan will be cast from heaven to earth and will energise and empower the 'Beast', Dan. 9. 27; 2 Thess. 2. 9; Rev. 12. 9-14; 13. 2, 5. With Gog and his allies destroyed, for the best part of 3½ years the Beast will rule as undisputed ruler of world. He will demand universal worship. Because religious Babylon, the apostate church system, will be of no further use to the Beast, he and the ten confederate kings under his sway will utterly destroy it, Rev. 17. 16.

The Beast will also put stop to all sacrifice and oblation, and will for a time blasphemously sit himself in the inner-shrine of the Temple, Dan. 9. 27; 2 Thess. 2. 4. In this Holy Place, an 'abomination of desolation', will be set up, Matt. 24. 15, which may well consist of an image of the Beast, Rev. 13. 14-15; compare Daniel 3 (noting the underlying numeral '6', both in the dimensions of the image and the number of the musical instruments, Dan. 3. 1, 5; compare Rev. 13. 18).

The erection of the 'abomination of desolation' will herald the beginning of the 'Great Tribulation', Matt. 24. 21-22, during which the dragon, through the Beast, will 'make war' with the saints of Israel, Dan. 7. 21, 25; Rev. 12. 17; 13. 7. The Great Tribulation will last for 3½ years, Dan. 7. 25; 9. 27; Rev. 11. 2; 12. 6, 13-14, and will be the most intense period of suffering ever known, Jer. 30. 7; Dan. 12. 1; Joel 2. 2; Matt. 24. 21. Two-thirds of the Israelites in the land will perish in the persecution, Zech. 13. 8; death will claim the firstborn's portion! Many will be slain because of their witness for God; compare Rev. 11. 1-8. Nevertheless, the faithful will continue to preach the gospel of the kingdom, although they will not have covered all the cities in Israel by the time that the Son of man comes, Matt. 10. 23; 24. 14. The persecution will be so severe that, apart from its duration being curtailed, Israel would be totally annihilated, Matt. 24. 22.

At the 'time of the end', encouraged perhaps by seeing the Beast reel from some of the divine judgements falling during the Tribulation period, the 'King of the South' (heading a North African alliance comprising Egypt, Ethiopia and Libya) and the 'King of the North' (a formidable military and naval power) will challenge the authority of the Beast, Dan. 11. 40. On his way to deal with the King of the South, the Beast will enter the land of Israel ('the glorious land'; compare verse 16) but, passing down the coastal plain, will leave Edom, Moab and Ammon untouched, Dan. 11. 41.

With the Beast preoccupied elsewhere, these three local nations will take advantage of the opportunity to attack and besiege Judah and Jerusalem. But 'the peoples round about' will discover that they have bitten off more than they can chew! Supernaturally empowered by the Lord Himself, the men of Judah and Jerusalem will destroy them, Zech. 12. 2-9. The nations will prove incapable of supporting the 'burdensome stone' which they had presumed to lift, and it will crush them.

Meanwhile, the Beast will conquer Egypt, taking great spoil, and both Ethiopia and Libya will submit to him, Dan. 11. 42-43. But he will hear disturbing news out of the east and the north, v. 44. The latter may well refer to the formidable 'King of the North', v. 40. As far as the east is concerned, the Euphrates is to be dried up to make a path for the invading 'kings from the east' ('sunrising', literally), Rev. 16. 12. The Euphrates, the eastern boundary of both (i) the land of Israel promised to Abraham and (ii) the old Roman Empire, represents a natural barrier against invasion from that direction.

An army of 200 million will pour westwards to confront the Beast and will be responsible for the death of one third of the human race, Rev. 9. 14-19. (But is an army of 200 million feasible? It is of interest that, in his book *'The Final Encounter'*, Dr F. A. Tatford describes China as 'a country with a population of 1,000 million, and an army of 200 million', page 460. And what might be the capabilities of the Muslim world?)

The Beast will turn north with great fury, Dan. 11. 44. Initially at least, his brutal attack will be directed at Jerusalem. It is by no means unlikely that, following their crushing defeat of the 'peoples round about', the men of Israel will feel encouraged to rebel against him. But this time Jerusalem will fall, amid scenes of terrible cruelty and lust, Zech. 14. 2. Half of the population of the city will go into captivity and the Beast will establish his palace and headquarters in the Holy Mount of Zion, Dan. 11. 45.

The forces from the east and north will converge on Palestine. Their armies (or, just possibly, those of the Beast) will encamp at Armageddon, Rev. 16. 16. The name (*'Har-Magedon'*, literally) points to the hill of Megiddo in the vast plain of Esdraelon. This is some 60 to 70 miles north of Jerusalem and has been the scene of many decisive military battles, both in biblical times and since.

Three distinct controlling factors account for the gathering of the various nations to the land of Israel. At the *human* level, the nations will be motivated by the desire for power and world domination. At the *spirit* level, they will be lured by the Satanic trinity, with the dragon's ultimate purpose of employing them in war against the Lamb, Rev. 16. 13-14; 17. 14; 19. 19. At the *divine* level, they will be summoned by God that He might execute His fierce anger against them as a prelude to establishing His kingdom on earth, Joel 3. 9-14; Zeph. 3. 8; 2 Thess. 1. 7-9; Rev. 16. 16 (note the 'He', not 'they'). The forces of evil (both human and spirit) operate within the constraints of His will; compare Rev. 17. 17.

The Sequence

At the human level, the Second Advent of the Lord will be totally unexpected, Luke 21. 26-30. The first indication of His approach will be signs and disturbances in the heavens, causing great darkness

on earth and filling men with fear and foreboding, Joel 2. 30-31; 3. 15; Matt. 24. 29-30; Luke 21. 25-26.

In their extremity, the godly in Israel will cry to the Lord for deliverance—and He will come to save them! He will come from heaven itself, Rev. 19.11-16. Note this section of scripture; it provides the last full-length portrait of Christ in the Bible. Attention is drawn in particular to (i) His four names, (ii) His clothing (a blood-stained garment to alert His foes to their inevitable destruction), (iii) His head (adorned with 'many' diadems, in contrast to the specified numbers of diadems worn by the dragon and the Beast, Rev. 12. 3; 13. 1), (iv) His eyes and (v) His mouth. The lengthy description of Royal Warrior stands in marked contrast to the brief description of the ensuing conflict, Rev. 19. 19-21.

He will come both on and with clouds, Matt. 24. 30; Matt. 26. 64 (compare Dan. 7. 13); Rev. 1. 7; see, also, 'in a cloud' Luke 21. 27; Acts 1. 9-11. He will come in great power, Matt. 26. 64; Mark 13. 26, and great glory—both His Father's and His own, Matt. 16. 27; 25. 31; Luke 21. 27. He will be accompanied by vast companies of saints and of angels, Matt. 16. 27; 25. 31; I Thess. 3. 13; 4. 14; 2 Thess. 1. 7; Rev. 19. 14 (compare v. 8); see, also, Zech. 14. 5 and Jude 14-15—to be understood, probably, in the light of Deut. 33. 3 with Acts 7. 53. His coming will be highly visible, Rev. 1. 7; it will be as the lightning flash across the sky, Luke 17. 24, and in 'flaming fire', 2 Thess. 1. 8; compare Isa. 66. 15.

Initially, He will come to the mount of Olives, Zech. 14. 4-5; compare Acts 1. 10-12. The feet which were once pierced a little outside Jerusalem, Zech. 12. 10, shall then stand upon the mount to the east of the city. The mount will cleave, creating a vast escape valley for the those trapped inside the city, fearful for their lives on account of (a) the proximity of the Beast, (b) the looming battle between the assembled world powers, and, no doubt, (c) the earthquake which will have split the mount. (The reference back to a previous flight before an earthquake in the days of Uzziah indicates that the passage is to be interpreted literally.)

The Lord's approach will cause the tribes of the earth to wail in dismay, Matt. 24. 30; Rev. 1. 7. The various world powers assembled in Israel will drop all plans for conflict between and among themselves and will unite to wage war against the Lamb and His heavenly army, Psa. 2. 1-3; Rev. 17. 14; 19. 19. Doubtless they will hurl at Him the most powerful weapons they possess—but these will all avail nothing! 'The Lord shall have them in derision', Psa. 2. 3, 9. He will 'go forth, and fight against those nations', Zech. 14. 3. The Beast's base camp at Jerusalem will be destroyed and replaced by the Lord's own dwelling there, Joel 3. 17. Although there is no clear statement that the Lord's heavenly armies will be involved in any conflict (indeed, the armies of Revelation 19. 14 hardly appear dressed for battle!), it seems that the men of Judah will be given the satisfaction of sharing in the Lord's victory at Jerusalem itself, Zech. 14. 14; compare Mal. 4. 3.

Israel's great Deliverer will come from Zion to save them, Joel 3. 16; Rom. 11. 26; compare Jer. 30. 7; Dan. 12. 1. He (and possibly His angelic 'mighty ones') will do battle with the forces then assembled in 'the valley of Jehoshaphat', probably the region of the Kidron valley outside of Jerusalem, Joel 3. 9-16. ('Jehoshaphat' carries the appropriate meaning, 'the Lord judges' or 'the Lord has judged'.)

If there is an actual conflict at *Har-Magedon*, it will likely take place immediately after, and as an extension of, that in the valley of Jehoshaphat. It should be noted that scripture does not actually speak of a 'battle of' (or 'at') *Har-Magedon*; indeed, the word translated 'battle', Rev. 16. 14, indicates 'war' rather than a single battle. It is possible that *Har-Magedon* will serve only as a rallying point and camping-ground for the assembled forces, which will move from there to the area around Jerusalem before the final conflict, although the impression given is that there will be an actual confrontation at *Har-Magedon*, Rev. 16. 14, 16. Also, at some point, the Lord will personally execute vengeance upon Edom, south-east not only of Jerusalem but of the land of Israel itself, Isa. 63. 1-6.

It is no doubt significant that the lake of blood which flows from the 'great winepress of the wrath of God' is seen to extend for 183 British miles (200 Roman miles), Rev. 14. 18-20; compare Isa. 63. 3, 6; Joel 3. 13. The distance from Dan to Beersheba is some 145 miles. Clearly, therefore, the destruction of the assembled armies will involve an area roughly the size of Palestine. 'The slain of the Lord shall be many', Isa. 66. 15-16. (How fitting that the winepress will be trodden 'outside the city', Rev. 14. 20, for it was outside that very city that the Lord Jesus was crucified, John 19. 17, 20. Once it was His 'own blood' which was shed there, Heb. 13. 12; now it will be the blood of His foes.)

The Lord's main destructive weapon will be the word which comes out of His mouth, Psa. 2. 5; 46. 6; Isa. 11. 4; 30. 21; Joel 3. 16; 2 Thess. 2. 8; Rev. 19. 15, 21. This will be His only 'sword'. Note that He has a name written where a sword would normally hang; it is 'King of Kings', Rev. 19. 16. As at the creation (Psa. 33. 6, 9), He has only to speak and it is done! No doubt it is His word which will give rise to the greatest earthquake ever known, to hailstones each weighing about a hundredweight, and to a plague which will consume the eyes and tongues of those which presume to war against His city, Zech. 14. 12; Rev. 16. 18-21. Also, as so often in the past, the Lord will cause confusion and division

among His foes, Zech. 14. 13. The devastation will be tremendous, leaving millions of corpses and necessitating the cleansing of the land by vast numbers of carrion-fed birds, Rev. 19. 17-18, 21.

The Beast and his empire will be destroyed, Dan. 7. 11. The Beast himself will have his dominion taken away, v. 26. When 'that determined shall be poured upon the Desolator', Dan. 9. 27 lit., he 'shall come to his end', Dan. 11. 45. He will be destroyed by the breath of the Lord's mouth, 2 Thess. 2. 8. Together with his viceregent, the False Prophet, the Beast will have the dubious distinction of being 'cast alive into the lake of fire', Rev. 19. 20. As two good and godly men have in the past been carried direct to heaven without dying, 2 Kings 2. 11; Heb. 11. 5, so these two bad and ungodly men will in the future be consigned direct to eternal fire. Described as 'the son of perdition', 2 Thess. 2. 3, to 'perdition' the Beast will assuredly go, Rev. 17. 8, 11.

This will bring a sudden and violent end to the long period of Gentile rule, Dan. 2. 34-35, 44-45. The times of the Gentiles now fulfilled, Jerusalem will never again be trodden down of the Gentiles, Luke 21. 24. Nor will it ever again be thrown down, Jer. 31. 38-40.

'Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord', will be the people's glad acknowledgement, Matt. 23. 39. But their shout of triumph will suddenly turn to wailing and lamentation as their blind eyes are opened and they recognise the glorious Lord as none other than the One they will have for so long despised and rejected, Zech. 12. 10-14; Rev. 1. 7. The whole nation will then make the same discovery once made by Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9. 3-5. Following their 'Damascus Road' awakening, there will be universal, yet individual, mourning. Then, through their tears, they will be able to say from the heart the words of Isaiah 53. 3-6!

The Sequel

The whole nation of Israel will be regathered to their own land 'from the four corners of the earth', Isa. 11. 11-12; Jer. 23. 3; Ezek. 34. 11, 13; 36. 24; 37. 31; Matt. 24. 31; 'none of them' will be left behind, Ezek. 39. 28-29. This regathering will be permanent, Amos 9. 14-15, as will be the reunion between the northern and southern kingdoms under one Davidic King, Ezek. 37. 16-25; compare Isa. 11. 10-13. As a result of their sufferings during the Great Tribulation and their purging by the Lord at His coming, the nation will be purified and spiritually restored to Him, Ezek. 20. 33-38; Zech. 13. 9; Matt. 24. 39-42, 49-50; Rom. 11. 26-27. They will be *contrite*, Zeph. 3. 11-13; *chastened*, Jer. 30. 14; *corrected* in measure, Jer. 30. 11 (compare Jer. 46. 27-28); and *cleansed* from their filthiness and idolatry, Ezek. 36. 25, 29, 33; 37. 23; Zech. 13. 2. When the Lord comes to His temple, the house of Levi will be purged and purified, Mal 3. 1-5.

The Messiah will have the glory, dominion and kingdom, Dan. 7. 18, 25-27. His kingdom will be universal, Dan. 2. 35, and everlasting, v. 44—unconditionally His as long as the heavens endure, Psa. 89. 3-4, 28-37; compare Isa. 9. 6-7; Luke 1. 30-33. The Lord shall be King in that day, Psa. 2. 6; Jer. 23. 5; Zech. 14. 9, and the kingdoms of the earth will all be His, Zech. 9. 10; Rev. 11. 15. His past humiliation and present rejection will then be requited by glory and universal acclaim.

Israel will exist 'as a nation' as long as the heavens continue, Jer. 31. 35-37, and at this point the kingdom will be restored to them, Acts 1. 6-7. (Note that, having spoken to the disciples of the kingdom for 40 days, Acts 1. 3, the Lord did not correct their expectations for Israel as false or unwarranted. He simply pointed out that the Father had reserved the timing to Himself; it was a matter of 'when' not 'whether'.)

At some time immediately following the Second Advent:

1. Saints slain during the Great Tribulation will be raised, Rev 20. 4-6. So, probably, will be the saints of Old Testament times; see Isa. 26. 19; Ezek. 37. 12-13 and Dan. 12. 2-3.
2. There will be a time of sifting and discrimination. The Lord will come with His fan in His hand to separate the wheat and the chaff, Matt. 3. 17. The bad shall then be taken away and the righteous 'shall shine forth as the sun' in the kingdom, Matt 13. 38-43; compare verses 47-50.
3. All nations will be judged, Matt. 25. 31-46. Their destiny will be settled on the ground of whether they will have practically expressed faith in the Messiah by deeds of kindness and sympathy towards His 'brethren'. The 'blessed' will inherit and enter the kingdom, v. 34, being required to make annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the feast of tabernacles, Zech. 14. 16-19.

4. There will be dramatic topographical and physical changes:

- A vast plain will extend from 10 miles north of Jerusalem to 35 miles south-west, Zech. 14. 10. Jerusalem will then be exalted above all the surrounding terrain, Isa. 2. 2; Mic. 4. 1-2.
- Living waters will flow without intermission from Jerusalem, Zech. 14. 8. A fountain will flow out of the Lord's house, Joel 3. 18; compare Ezek. 47.1-12. 'There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God', Psa. 46. 4; compare the context of verses 6-10.
- The creation itself will be set free from its present bondage to corruption, Rom. 8. 19-22; compare Isa. 11. 4-9.

It seems likely that these events, along no doubt with many others, will take place during the 2½ months (75 days) immediately following the Lord's Second Advent; compare Dan. 12. 12 with Dan. 7. 25; 12. 7; Rev. 11. 2; 12. 6, 13-14.

In these notes, I have suggested one possible outline of events surrounding our Lord's Second Advent. Such are the uncertainties in piecing together the details of events yet future, I make no pretence at having got it right. The one thing which we know for certain is that, one day, **the Son of man will come!** ... and, who knows, the *scene*, the *sequence* and the *sequel* may even be something along the lines I have suggested.

'THE LAMB' AND 'THE BEAST'**'The Lamb'** (the Lord Jesus)**'The Beast'** (see note 1 below)

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| <p>1. One of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, Matt. 28. 19, 2 Cor. 13. 14.</p> <p>2. He came from above; John 3. 31; 8. 23.</p> <p>3. He was sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world, 1 John 4. 14.</p> <p>4. He really is God, John 1. 1; 20. 28.</p> <p>5. He became poor, 2 Cor. 8. 9.</p> <p>6. He is given His authority from the Father, Matt. 28. 18; John 5. 27.</p> <p>7. He came in His Father's name, John 5. 43.</p> <p>8. He came to do the Father's will, John 6. 38.</p> <p>9. He refused to accept the kingdoms of the world, with their power and glory, which were offered in exchange for worshipping the dragon, Luke 4. 6-7.</p> <p>10. He hates lawlessness, Heb. 1. 9 (lit; 'iniquity' in the KJV).</p> <p>11. He ministered to the people of Israel for 3½ years.</p> <p>12. He was accredited by miracles (acts of power), signs and wonders, which God did through Him, Acts 2. 22.</p> <p>13. He humbled Himself, Phil. 2. 8.</p> <p>14. He did not lift up His voice in the streets by way of self-advertisement, Isa. 42. 2; Matt. 12. 19.</p> <p>15. He spoke only the words which the Father gave and taught Him, John 8. 28; 12. 49-50.</p> <p>16. He possessed no outward form or glory to attract or impress people, Isa. 53. 2; Mark 6. 3; John 1. 46.</p> <p>17. He was despised and rejected, Isa. 53. 3, John 1. 10-11.</p> | <p>1. One of the three which comprise the unholy 'trinity' (triad or triumvirate), Revelation chapters 12-13; Rev. 16. 13; 20. 10.</p> <p>2. He will ascend out of the bottomless pit ('abyss', lit.), Rev. 11. 7; 17. 8; see note 2 below.</p> <p>3. He will be sent by the dragon to be the destroyer of the world, Dan. 7. 23; Rev. 13. 2; 19. 20-21.</p> <p>4. He makes out himself to be God, 2 Thess. 2. 4; compare 'shall be as God', Gen. 3. 5 (Revised Version).</p> <p>5. His name will provide access to the world-wide commercial system, Rev. 13. 16-17.</p> <p>6. He will receive his authority from the dragon, Rev. 13. 2.</p> <p>7. He will come in his own name, John 5. 43.</p> <p>8. He will come to do his own will, Dan. 11. 36.</p> <p>9. He will gladly accept the kingdoms, the power and the glory from the dragon, with the result that the dragon will be worshipped, Rev. 13. 2, 4, 7. See note 3 below.</p> <p>10. He is the lawless one, 2 Thess. 2. 8 literally ('wicked' in the KJV.)</p> <p>11. He will persecute the people of Israel for 3½ years, Dan. 7. 25; Rev. 13. 5-7.</p> <p>12. He will be accredited by miracles (acts of power), signs and lying wonders, performed in the energy of Satan, 2 Thess. 2. 8.</p> <p>13. He will exalt himself, Dan. 11. 36; 2 Thess. 2. 4.</p> <p>14. His mouth will speak great things, Dan. 7. 8; Rev. 13. 5.</p> <p>15. He will open his mouth in blasphemy against God, Rev. 13. 6.</p> <p>16. His 'look' (appearance) will be 'stout' (great, imposing), Dan. 7. 20.</p> <p>17. He will be welcomed, worshipped and wondered at, John 5. 43; Rev. 13. 3, 4, 8; 17. 8.</p> |
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| 18. When He is honoured, the Father is honoured, John 5. 23. | 18. When he is worshipped, the dragon is worshipped, Rev. 13. 4. |
| 19. He is God's true King, Psa. 2. 6; Zech. 14. 9; Rev. 19. 16. | 19. He will be the devil's false 'king', Dan. 7. 24; 11. 36. |
| 20. He both spoke and is 'the truth', John 8. 40; 14. 6. | 20. He will be the great deceiver, 2 Thess. 2. 10-12. |
| 21. He 'glorified' God and 'manifested' His name, John 17. 4, 6. | 21. He will 'blaspheme' God's name, Rev. 13. 6. |
| 22. He is the great peacemaker, Eph. 2. 14, 17, Isa. 9. 6; Zech. 9. 10. | 22. He will be the supreme warmonger, Rev. 16. 13-14; 19. 19. |
| 23. He was the 'man of sorrows', Isa. 53. 3. | 23. He will be the 'man of sin', 2 Thess. 2. 3. |
| 24. He died and lived again, as the result of the intervention of the Father's might power, Rev. 1. 18; 2. 8; Eph. 1. 19-20. | 24. He will be 'wounded to death' and live again, as a result, no doubt, of the dragon's intervention, Rev 13. 3, 12, 14. See note 4 below. |
| 25. He has been exalted to the very highest place in heaven, Phil. 2. 9. | 25. He will be abased to the very lowest hell, Isa. 14. 14-15; Rev. 19. 20. |
| 26. He is pointed out by the Holy Spirit as 'Lord', the proper object of our worship, 1 Cor. 12. 3; Psa. 45. 11. | 26. He will be pointed out by the false prophet as the proper object of worship, Rev. 13. 12. |
| 27. He has the true church as His bride/wife, spoken of also as a city, Eph. 5. 25-27; Rev. 19. 7-8; Rev. 21. 2. | 27. He will have the counterfeit church as his harlot, spoken of also as a city, Rev 17. 1-3, 18. |
| 28. He has inaugurated an everlasting covenant; Heb. 13. 20. | 28. He will confirm a covenant for only seven years, and this he will violate halfway through, Dan. 9. 27. |
| 29. One day, He will be 'revealed', 2 Thess. 1. 7. | 29. One day, he will be 'revealed', 2 Thess. 2. 8. |
| 30. He wears many diadems (kingly crowns), for He is 'King of Kings, and Lord of Lords', Rev. 19. 12, 16. | 30. He wears only ten diadems, for he heads a ten-nation confederacy, Rev. 13. 1; 17. 12-13. |
| 31. He will 'make war' against the 'beast' and his forces, and will overcome, Rev. 19. 11, 20-21; 17. 14. | 31. He will 'make war' against the Lord and his army, and will be overcome, Rev. 19. 19-20. |
| 32. Following the defeat of the 'beast', together with the kings of the earth and their armies, He will dwell in Zion, His 'holy mountain', Joel 3. 17, with verses 9-16 and Rev. 19. 19-21. | 32. Prior to his 'end', he will establish his base and royal residence in the glorious 'holy mountain', Dan. 11. 45. |
| 33. He will be given the kingdoms of the world by the Father, Psa. 2. 8, Dan. 7. 13-14. | 33. He will be given the kingdoms of the earth by the dragon, Rev. 13. 2, 7; compare Luke 4. 5-6. |
| 34. According to God's unconditional promise, His Davidic throne will endure as long as sun or moon, Psa. 89. 36-37. | 34. According to God's sure word, his throne and dominion are to be taken away, Dan. 7. 26; Rev. 13. 2; 19. 20. |

Notes

1. This table assumes that the 'beast' of Revelation 13. 1-10 is to be identified with (a) the 'little horn' of the fourth beast, Dan. 7. 7-8, 19-20, 23-26, with (b) the Roman 'prince', Dan. 9. 26-27, with (c) the 'king' who does 'according to his will', Dan. 11. 36-45, and with (d) the 'man of sin' (or, more accurately, 'man of lawlessness'), 2 Thess. 2. 3-12. (As in paragraph 3. 4 of the main paper above.)
2. This is probably a figurative description of his satanic appointment and empowerment.
3. As the Father seeks worshippers, John 4. 23, so too does the dragon, Matt. 4. 8-10; Rev. 13. 4; compare 1 Cor. 10. 20.

4. The 'deadly', sword-inflicted wound probably refers to the sudden and violent loss of political power, restored in a dramatic fashion by the dragon following his expulsion from heaven. That is, the Lord Jesus died and lived again *physically*; the 'beast' will die and live again *politically*.

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