St Mark’s and Putnoe Heights Church Partnership
Advent Course 2005

The Second Advent of Jesus
19 December 2005

Sam Cappleman
The Second Advent of Jesus

From the heavens to the new heavens

Jesus predicted it

The Early church believed in a future coming

We need to understand its implications for our lives

The Messiah Christ

Law
Prophets
Old Testament
Writings
Restoration
Diaspora
Divided
Covenants
Genesis

Epistles
Gospels
Collects
New Testament

Paul
Early Church
Western Church

Ecclesia Anglicana
A view of time

Cyclical View  divine cycle of endless repetition

Scriptural View  history moving towards a future goal

Jewish View  a coming age of the Messiah’s rule (olah hab’ah)
Passover will be celebrated in Jerusalem (Le’shana hab’ah b’Yerushalayim)

Jesus’ View  the present and future are side by side
He will return at the end of time, the future goal
A view of time

Cyclical View - divine cycle of endless repetition
Scriptural View - history moving towards a future goal

Jewish View - a coming age of the Messiah’s rule (olah hab’ah)
- Passover will be celebrated in Jerusalem
  (Le’shana hab’ah b’ Yerushalayim)

Jesus’ View - the present and future are side by side
- He will return at the end of time, the future goal

Need to separate fact from fiction when we try to understand the end times and the second Advent of Jesus the Messiah – the Parousia

The fact is indisputable – the details are less clear!
The Fact and the Fiction
Where do we find information about the end times?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Key Passages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Old Testament</td>
<td>Daniel, Psalms, Major and Minor Prophets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Gospels</td>
<td>Matt 24, Luke 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Epistles</td>
<td>Thessalonians, James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Revelation</td>
<td>All of it!!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Fact and the Fiction
Where do we find information about the end times?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Key Passages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Old Testament</td>
<td>Daniel, Psalms, Major and Minor Prophets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Gospels</td>
<td>Matt 24, Luke 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Epistles</td>
<td>Thessalonians, James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Revelation</td>
<td>All of it!!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How is the Parousia Described?

The Gospels

What we know

Jesus will come...

As the Son of man in His Kingdom
On the clouds in glory
Preceded by signs
  - wars
  - earthquakes
  - famines
  - persecutions
  - false prophets
  - darkening of sun and the moon
  - Gospel preached to all the earth
Visibly and publicly
Jesus will come back personally

Matt 16 v 28
Matt 24 v 30 (cf Dan 7 13, 14)
Mat 24 v 5 – 9
Matt 24 v 29, 30
Matt 24 v 14
Matt 24 v 27
Jn 14 v 3
How is the Parousia Described?

The Gospels

But what we don’t know is when

Jesus will come…

Soon, but we don’t know the time

Matt 24 v 36

Before a generation has passed away - does generation mean ‘race’?

Matt 24 v 34
How is the Parousia Described?

The Rest of the New Testament

What we know

Jesus will come...

He will come back the same way as He went
Imminently
The Lord Himself will come down
There will be terrible times in the last days
We’re living in the last days
His coming is near
To a specific place (Mt of Olives)

Acts 1 v 11
1 Thes 4 v 13
1 Thes 4 v 16
2 Tim 3 v 1 5
Hebrews 1 v 2
Jas 5 v 8
Acts 1 v 11 (Zech 14 v 4)
How is the Parousia Described?

The Rest of the New Testament

What we know

Jesus will come…

Imminently 1 Thes 4 v 13
We’re living in the last days Hebrews 1 v 2
His coming is near Jas 5 v 8

And then there’s Revelation…

The time is near Rev 1 v 1 – 3
- But certain events must take place first…
Revelation
The book of the apocalypse

The Structure

The Introduction of the purpose  Chapter 1 - 3
Pronouncement of judgement    Chapter 4 - 18
  - Letters to the 7 churches
  - Visions with recapitulation
    - seals (affects 25%), trumpets (affects 33%), bowls of plagues (affects all)
  - The suffering of God’s people
  - The rise of the antichrist
  - The destruction of existing world order
The triumph of the lamb           Chapter 19
The coming of Christ marking the climax of history  Chapter 21
**The Fact and the Fiction**

*Where do we find information about the end times?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Key Passages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Old Testament</td>
<td>Daniel, Psalms, Major and Minor Prophets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Gospels</td>
<td>Matt 24, Luke 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Epistles</td>
<td>Thessalonians, James</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Revelation</td>
<td>Rev 19 v 11 – Ch 20 v 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revelation
The Millennium (1000 years)

A post millennial view
2nd coming follows the millennium
Church will Christianise the world (evangelise and prepare)
This will be the millennium followed by Armageddon and the return of Christ
Simultaneous resurrection and final judgement

An a-millennial view
No physical millennial reign
2nd coming preceded by apostasy and wickedness
Antichrist will appear and Christ will defeat him at His coming
Simultaneous resurrection and final judgement

A pre-millennial view
Millennia is literally 1000 years
2 returns, one for His people, the other with His people
Antichrist ultimately defeated at the battle of Armageddon
Jesus reigns for 1000 years, then Satan let loose, initiates rebellion and is then defeated
Eternal state initiated
Revelation over-emphasis
The Millennium (1000 years)

A post millennial view
Influenced many missionary movements, prepare the world for Christ return
William Millar – 7th Day Adventists. The end is 1843 then 22 Oct 1844
Charles Taize Russell -> Joseph Franklin Rutherford (the end is 1926)
Led to Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1931
Resurrection completed in 1881, millennium kingdom started in 1914
Christ and the 144,000 rule since then
Conversion the way to avoid consequences of Armageddon

An a-millennial view
Held by Augustine
Satan bound from the time of the birth Christ until His second coming
New Jerusalem is already here in each believer, we are part of that New Jerusalem

A pre-millennial view
Held by the early church fathers, Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian
Saints will be resurrected and live in peace for 1000 years in greatly enlarged Jerusalem
Peter the Hermit used this model to recruit huge numbers for the 1095 crusade
Joachim of Fiore influenced Richard the Lionheart in the same way for the third crusade
Twentieth Century Interpretations

Hal Lindsay – the Late Great Planet Earth

Need a start point to calculate the end
Use the restoration of the state of Israel (1948)
End will be ‘something like 40 years (‘this generation’) from that date
If wrong date/datum is used wrong answer results!
Enemy from the North is Russia

Rewrote the story in Planet Earth – 2000 AD
Islam is the enemy
Iran will force Russia to go to war with Israel
Twentieth Century Interpretations

**Hal Lindsay – the Late Great Planet Earth**

Need a start point to calculate the end
Use the restoration of the state of Israel (1948)
End will be ‘something like 40 years (‘this generation’) from that date
If wrong date/datum is used wrong answer results!
Enemy from the North is Russia

Rewrote the story in Planet Earth – 2000 AD
Islam is the enemy
Iran will force Russia to go to war with Israel

**Beware those who think they know the date!**

The Millennium is a metaphor which symbolises God’s triumph over evil in the person of Jesus Christ and the vindication of the victims of oppression and injustice
But what about the role of Israel?

The Messiah will come – the place of Israel and Jerusalem

I will save my people from the countries of the East and the West – I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem

Written after the return from the exile

In that day the Lord will reach out His hand a second time to reclaim the remnant

Dry bones brought to life then imbued with the spirit

Physical return then spiritual return of the Jews to Israel

The land will be too small

Only 50,000 returned after the exile

Return of the Jews to the ‘one they have pierced’

Spiritual awakening and openness
Jerusalem
The Second coming of Christ is almost certainly linked to the coming of the Jewish Messiah. Christians too should look forward to: Next year in Jerusalem - Le’shana hab’ah b’ Yerushalayim

(The restoration of the state of Israel is probably important in cosmic history)

Rome
The role of Rome at the time when Revelation was written is also important. Understanding the Roman Empire probably gives Revelation a context. If we fail to take it into account we will probably read too much into the text.
Why is Rome Critical?

Greek Philosophical dualism and thought
The end of the physical world and the coming of a new age belonging to the eternal world

Hebrew Philosophy and prophecy
The New Age will be established on earth

Hence John in Revelation wants to
- Rid the world of the beast
- Have God and the Lamb on the throne on earth

Cosmic collapse for John in Revelation does not mean the end of the world
It does mean the end of an idolatrous imperial power (Rome)
Why is Rome Critical?

Revelation is a critique of the effects of the ideology of the Roman Empire, a systematic expose of evil, and shows the alternative on offer in Christ

Revelation confronts the dominant culture of the day and offers to the faithful an alternative to the world of present experience. Written after Nero’s persecution of the early Christians and the fall of Jerusalem (Nero Cesar in Hebrew numerology is 666)

It’s a literary genre, deals in metaphor, parable, myth
- Relates back to the Old Testament story, prophecies and images

Written to address a crisis in faith
- Roman Empire ruled supreme
- Question the cult of the Emperor at peril
- Some Christians has compromised their faith by accepting some of the precepts
Why is Rome Critical?

Revelation is a critique of the effects of the ideology of the Roman Empire, a systematic expose of evil, and shows the alternative on offer in Christ

Revelation confronts the dominant culture of the day and offers to the faithful an alternative to the world of present experience.
Written after Nero’s persecution of the early Christians and the fall of Jerusalem

It’s a literary genre, deals in metaphor, parable, myth
- Relates back to the Old Testament story and Images

Written to address a crisis in faith
- Roman Empire ruled supreme
- Question the cult of the Emperor at peril
- Some Christians has compromised their faith by accepting some of the precepts

Revelation presents a vision of an alternate symbolic universe where the world has become the Kingdom of the Messiah who will reign for ever
Links with Rome?

Revelation Chapter 13 & 17

The Lamb and the Beast and the Harlot

The beast rises out of the sea…
…but the Roman proconsul would rise over the horizon on the Aegean Sea on his annual visit to Asia Minor…

The beast has 7 heads, the seven hills on which the harlot sits…
- the beast can be taken to symbolise Rome’s military might
- the harlot can be taken to symbolise Rome’s civilisation

The harlot rides the beast
- Rome’s civilisation was being supported by military might
Links with OT Imagery

Revelation Chapter 4 v 1 - 11
God is on his throne – the court takes on the appearance of the Temple
4 living creatures - seraphim from Isaiah 6
- cherubim from Ezekiel 1
- cherubim at the Temple Mercy Seat from Exodus 35
- cry out ‘Our Lord and God’ (cf Domitian’s demands)

Revelation Chapter 5 v 5, 6
The Lamb open seals and things begin to happen…
The Lamb is described as Lion of Judah, Root of David, Messianic titles
BUT
The Lamb appears slain, the writer sees the marks of slaughter

When Jewish expectation is turned into vision and reality…
…we see the Christian understanding of redemption and salvation

Ultimately it is the Lamb who is worshipped, not Caesar or the Roman Empire
The New Jerusalem
A Vision of a New and Alternate Society
A New Heaven and a New Earth
The New World Order that comes with the Second Advent

The Old has passed away – God now dwells with humanity as His bride
The New Jerusalem is the bride of the Lamb

The city is 12,000 cubits long, high (= 144,000) - its also a cubical, 12,000 high
Same dimensions as the Holy of Holies in the Temple, only 1000 times bigger
There is no Temple in the New Jerusalem, it is all Temple
People are drawn to the New Jerusalem to worship

‘The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates are always open. People bring their honour and the glory of the nations into it. Nothing unclean will enter it. Those who enter will be written in the Lamb’s book of life…’ Rev 21 v 24 - 27

Its particular and universal, it’s the 144,000 and the great multitude
It’s the people of God and the nations at large
The New Jerusalem
A Vision of a New and Alternate Society
A New Heaven and a New Earth
The New World Order that comes with the Second Advent

…the leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations
…there will be no more night, they will need no lamp or sun for God will be their light

It's not just a blueprint for a new city, it's a new quality of life in the new age

The faithful don't escape to a heavenly world, but life on a renewed earth
The faithful are not taken up into a New Jerusalem, it comes down to them

The Lamb that was slain is now raised to life

The message of Revelation is primarily a message of hope
John is convinced of the second coming but in reality tells us little about it
The Second Advent
What does it mean for us?

The Kingdom was inaugurated when Christ came, but still awaits in consummation
Then God’s intentions revealed in Jesus will triumphantly fulfilled

Christ second coming marks the completion of the work began at Bethlehem
We should be more concerned with the purpose of Christ’s coming than the timing
- Christ will come to welcome His people into His presence

We, as Christians, are part of His people and will come into His presence

We are to look to the future, in the hope that Christ gives us

BUT

The Millennium and the New Jerusalem are not only hope for the future…
…they are an agenda for the present
The Second Advent

What do we know?

Christ will come again!!

It will probably be a bit noisy

Israel will probably be important

We will probably know its happening

We don’t know the time