Isaiah 63:1-6 Commentary

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Introductory Comments: Keep the context in mind - (1) Isaiah 62:1-5 = God's Intense Interest in Israel; (2) Isaiah 62:6-9 = Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem (3) Isaiah 63:10-12 Jewish Evangelization Commanded (4) Isaiah 63:1-6 = Return of Messiah to Deliver Israel

Isaiah 63:1-6 is a fascinating back and forth conversation between the prophet Isaiah (a "**watchman**" on the wall - cf Isa 62:6), and the Messiah. The Spirit of God in some way has "transported" the prophet to a time future to himself and even future to today (2014). Clearly Isaiah 63:1-6 is prophetic or eschatological and is one of the most majestic, intriguing descriptions of the Messiah at His Second Coming. While it is a passage addressed to Israel, it is a passage filled with great hope of a great future redemption by our Great God, Who alone is **mighty to save.** Paul writes these encouraging words regarding this grand future event at the consummation of the history of the earth as we know it today...

> For the grace of God has appeared (Messiah's humble First Coming as the Sacrificial Lamb of God), bringing salvation to all men (to all who believe in Him), 12 instructing (child rearing) us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age (preceding the Messianic Age), 13 looking for the **BLESSED HOPE** (Messiah's triumphant Second Coming as King of kings) and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:11-14-note)

Warren Wiersbe has a good word on prophecies like Isaiah 63...

> Whenever a prophet foretold the **future**, it was to awaken the people to their responsibilities in the **present**. Bible prophecy isn't entertainment for the **curious**; it's encouragement for the **serious**.

So one practical application of Isaiah 63:1-6 is that it should stir a Spirit given and Spirit sustained hope, recalling that Biblical "hope" is not a "hope so" but a "hope sure." The event described in the conversation between a finite, mere mortal and the infinite Majestic Messiah is truth that is given to saints of all ages in a "hopeless" (secular sense), devolving (not evolving) world, so that we might have hope, the absolute assurance that God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit, will do good to us in the future.

Dear saint, you may be in the **slough of despond** like Bunyan's Pilgrim, and yet the Spirit inspired truths such as those in Isaiah 63:1-6 which are calculated to lift your head toward the clouds in the Eastern sky, from whence one day will surely come our Redeemer, the One Who Paul says is Himself "our Hope," the literal personification of the Hope (1Ti 1:1) promised even before the world began (Titus 1:1-2-note), yea, even before Adam fell into sin (Ro 5:12-note). What a Mighty God we serve!

Isaiah 63:1 Who is this Who comes from Edom (map), this One Who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

- **is this**: Ps 24:7-10, Song 3:6, 6:10 8:5 Mt 21:10
- **from see map** Am 1:11,12
- **marching**: Ps 45:3,4 Rev 11:17,18
- **speak**: Isa 45:19,23 Nu 23:19

- **mighty**: Jn 10:28-30 Heb 7:25 1Pe 1:5 Jude 1:24,25

JEHOVAH THE AVENGER OF HIS PEOPLE

Who is this Who comes from Edom - **H. Van Dyke Parunak** observes that "The exchange is what one might expect from a **watchman** on the city wall (**Ed**: cf Isa 21:11-12, see also Ezek 3:17, 33:7), interrogating someone who approaches the city. The first question has to do with the identity of One Who approaches. The second asks an explanation for the striking appearance of His garments." (**Isaiah 63:1-6: The Redeemer Speaks**)

Triumphant and victorious he appears,
And honour in his looks and habit wears.
How strong he treads! how stately doth he go!
Pompous and solemn is his pace,
And full of majesty, as is his face
Who is this mighty hero--who?--
-Norris

From Edom (red) - Yeshua is coming from Bozrah in Edom which is to the southeast of Jerusalem (**see discussion of proposed sequence of End Times events**) . **Fruchtenbaum** explains that "While the general conception is that when the Messiah initially returns, He will return to the Mount of Olives, the Bible actually puts the Second Coming elsewhere. Four passages definitely place the Second Coming at the city of Bozrah or Petra and a fifth may refer to this event." (Isaiah 34:1-7, Isaiah 63:1-6, Habakkuk 3:3, Micah 2:12-13).

Messiah's Path to Victory
click to enlarge

Edom was the land originally inhabited by Jacob's older twin brother **Esau**. Recall that Jacob (= heel-catcher, supplanter, Ge 27:36) tricked Isaac into bestowing the blessing on him rather than **Esau** who was the rightful heir by birth order (Ge 25:24-30, 31-34, 27:6-26, 27, 28, 29). Jacob's trickery led to life long enmity between the offspring of the twins (Ge 27:41, cp He 12:15-17). And so when Israel (Jacob) had been released from Egyptian bondage and was seeking safe passage through Edom, the king of Edom would not allow it, instead attacking Israel (Nu 20:14-17, 18, 19-21, cp Dt 2:1-8). Later the Edomites opposed King Saul (1Sa 14:47), fought against King David (1Ki 11:15-17), opposed King Solomon (1Ki 11:14, 18-25), opposed King Jehoshaphat (2Chr. 20:22), and rebelled against Jehoram (2Chr 21:8) (see also Isaiah 34:5ff-see discussion.; Ps 137:7; Ezek 35:10-15; Amos 1:6, 11).

Buksbazen - Edom, although a brother nation, personifies the unrelenting hostility of the pagan world toward Israel (see Isa 34:5ff, Jer 25:22ff, Jer 49:17ff, etc) In later rabbinical literature Edom became symbolic of Rome and all oppressive, pagan power....the name Edom, the other name of Esau (Ge 36:8) comes from "adom" -- "red," suggesting blood. Bozrah is related to the word "Bazir" -- "a vintage."

Obadiah (Obad 1:1-21) records a **prophecy of doom** against Edom who would finally reap the years (even centuries) of enmity (Obadiah 1:10-14) sown against Jacob/Israel (cf Gal 6:7-8-note), recording that “the **Day of the Lord** draws near on all the nations. As you (Edom) have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head." (Obadiah 1:15) This prophecy was fulfilled in part in the Fifth Century BC when the **Nabataeans** dislodged the Edomites from their territory, causing them to withdraw to **Idumea** in southern Palestine. Indeed, the sibling rivalry that had begun in **Rebekah's** womb would be seen in the birth of Jesus, who was from Jacob's line through his son Judah. Julius Caesar had appointed Antipater, an Idumean, as Procurator of Judea in 47BC. His son **Herod** became king of Judea in 37BC. And so we see **Herod the Great**, an Edomite, continued the enmity against Jacob (Israel) by slaying "all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi." (Mt 2:16) The Lord extracted vengeance by killing King Herod shortly thereafter in 4BC, which was a preview of coming attractions when the Lord would finally and fully extract vengeance on all His enemies (typified by "Edom"). **MacDonald** sums the significance of Edom: "Edom personifies the unrelenting hostility of the pagan world toward Israel."

With this historical background, one can see why many commentators see this reference to **Edom** as representative of all who hate Israel, and ultimately all who hate God. Note that the use of "**peoples**" in Isa 63:3, 6, also supports the interpretation that **Edom** is used as an "archetype (**Ed**: archetype = the original pattern or model of which all things of the same type are representations or copies) for the Lord's enemies." (NET Bible Note).

Delitzsch - Babylon and Edom are always to be taken literally, so far as the primary meaning of the prophecy is concerned; but they

are also representative, Babylon standing for the violent and tyrannical world-power, and Edom for the world as cherishing hostility and manifesting hostility to Israel as Israel, i.e. as the people of God.

John MacArthur commenting on Isaiah 63 writes that "Messiah, coming as the Avenger approaching Jerusalem to reign after having avenged His people on His and their enemies (**Ed**: Note that Messiah is approaching Jerusalem coming from the south, coming from Bozrah and the land of Edom), is presented in imagery taken from the destruction of Edom, the representative in this picture of the last and most bitter foes of God and His people."

Note that some commentaries such as Delitzsch see Isaiah's oracle as directed specifically against the literal nation of **Edom**, but that does not fit well with the context. As noted Isa 63:1-6 begins with the name **Edom** but then expands the "target audience" to the "**peoples**," (Isa 63:3, 6) which clearly takes the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy far beyond the nation of Edom.

With garments of glowing colors ("in crimsoned garments") - As discussed below Isaiah sees Messiah coming from Bozrah with blood stained, albeit majestic garments. This fact is one which strongly suggests that when Messiah returns to triumph over His enemies, He first returns to Bozrah, where He begins "**the great slaughter in the land of Edom**" (Isa 34:5, See also the Map for proposed order of events in the final "Campaign of Armageddon.")

Glowing (02556) (**hamets**) has a somewhat complicated etymology in the Hebrew lexicons. According to some entries it refers to that which is leavened or has yeast added. Other entries (Louw-Nida) state that it signifies to be stained crimson or brightly colored. The Septuagint translation of the Hebrew phrase uses the Greek word **erythema** (cf our English word describing "redness" of the skin) which describes a redness or that which is dyed red and which is used only in Isaiah 63:1. The **NET Bible note** renders the Hebrew as "bright red garments." The context (Isa 63:2) would support the interpretation of "red garments," for Isaiah proceeds to ask why are His garments red? In sum, it seems fair to say that the phrase "**glowing garments**" is better understood as "crimson (scarlet, red) stained garments." There is a play on words for **Edom** means red, and the One coming from Edom has His garments stained red!

Fruchtenbaum writes that "**garments of glowing colors**" suggests that Messiah is arraying with His **Shekinah Glory**, and indeed Yeshua Himself declares that He will come "on the clouds of the sky with power and **great glory**." (Mt 24:30, Mk 13:26, Lk 21:27). In a passage most interpret as a reference to Messiah's Second Coming and which sounds like a description of His **Shekinah Glory**, the prophet Habakkuk writes " His radiance is like the sunlight; He has rays flashing from His hand, And there is the hiding of His power." (Habakkuk 3:3-4-note)

From Bozrah - Messiah is proceeding from Bozrah, and almost certainly is traveling northward to Jerusalem. Regarding Bozrah **see location on map** = modern-day Buseirah about 25 miles southeast of the Dead Sea. Bozrah means "sheep fold" or "fortress," (a few sources say the name Bozrah means "grape gatherer"!). It is interesting to note that the emblem of a winepress was stamped on the coins of Bozrah during the time of Roman rule. In addition the area of **Seir** (Edom) was well known for it's grape vineyards. This association probably explains Obadiah's use of a grape related figure of speech in his prophesy of Edom's destruction asking "If **grape** gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleanings?" (Implying that Edom's destruction would be total!) (Obadiah 1:5+). Finally, it is notable that the famous city of **Petra** (See Images of Petra which some think equates with Sela/Cela) was characterized by rose (reddish) colored stone walls.

> **Comment**: As an interesting aside, many conservative commentators think that Petra (Sela/Cela) will be the place the believing Jewish remnant goes to seek shelter for the horrible three and a half year period Jesus called the **Great Tribulation**, (which corresponds to the "**time of Jacob's Trouble** [Distress]" - Jer 30:1-7, esp Jer 30:7+ - See Discussion of the relationship between Jacob's Trouble and the Great Tribulation) during which the Satanically empowered Antichrist will seek to destroy ALL Jews! (See Rev 12:6+ [1260 days = 3.5 years], specifically the Sheep in Bozrah)

Marching (Buksbazen = "Swaying"; HCSB = "rising up proudly in His great might?" NET = "marches confidently") - Louw-Nida has an interesting definition of this verb **tsa'ah**, stating that it can mean to "stride, i.e., walk in a purposeful manner toward a goal, with a focus that the stride causes a slight stooping of the upper body, either due to a weight, or intensity or speed of the stride."

Buksbazen - "Tsoch" is translated in the KJV as "traveling" or "marching." The Hebrew term means "to sway" and is descriptive of a mighty man as he marches.

MESSIAH'S
FIRST ANSWER
Isaiah 63:1b

It is I (cf Isa 43:25) - As determined from the **context**, this is clearly the Messiah speaking.

Constable - This Warrior was coming to Israel, having defeated Israel's enemies. He was a mighty man, strong and majestic, wearing vivid garments. The Warrior identified Himself as someone who speaks (cf. John 1:1-2; John 1:14). This is the outstanding characteristic of God from Genesis 1:3 to Revelation 21:5. His words were right and His strength was for salvation.

Jamieson amplifies Messiah's declaration " I, who have in faithfulness given a promise of deliverance, am now about to fulfil it."

In righteousness (Isa 45:23, Isa 55:11) - Messiah is the One Who "constantly and characteristically speaks what is right. The idols cannot do this (Isa 43:9), for they do not know either the past or the future." (Oswalt)

I speak in righteousness...

> Isa 45:23 "I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness And will not turn back, That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.
>
> Isa 55:11 So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

Mighty to save - "The same Messiah that destroys the unbeliever saves the believer." (Jamieson) This phrase emphasizes that Messiah is strong enough to accomplish deliverance. Even in the midst of wrath, He is able to show mercy and bring about salvation. The same power that destroys a sinner may save a saint.

Related Resource: **See devotional article Mighty to Save**

F B Meyer - Jesus, the Mighty to save, stands between you and your besetting sins, between you and your fears, between you and the power of the adversary

Matthew Henry - He is mighty to save, able to bring about the promised redemption, whatever difficulties and oppositions may lie in the way of it.

'Tis I who to my promise faithful stand,
I, who the powers of death, hell, and the grave,
Have foil'd with this all-conquering hand,
I, who most ready am, and mighty too, to save.
-Norris

Pett - He comes to offer deliverance to His people. Yet why, if He is mighty to save, the bloodshed? The only reason can be that their continual and persistent rejection of the offer of the covenant. They ("Edom") had rejected God's Anointed One once and for all. Thus by His judgment He had spoken righteously. But now He comes to face Judah with their similar choice. For Jacob there is yet hope, for though He speaks in righteousness He is still mighty to save. Because of what the Servant has done (Isaiah 53:1-12) He can save them in righteousness. He is coming to offer salvation. The Bloodstained Judge of Edom will, if they respond, become the Anointed Saviour of Jacob (**Editorial**: See Description of the salvation of the Jewish remnant in the end times = Zech 12:10-note, Zech 13:7-9-note, Romans 11:25-27-note)

W M Statham on mighty to save...

> 1. **Mighty**—in His own revealed grace and power.
>
> 2. **Mighty**—in that every degree of guilt and sin is reached by His infinite arm.
>
> 3. **Mighty**—in that He saves right through, which is the meaning of the word "to the uttermost."

James Denny used this phrase "**mighty to save**" in a famous saying that has impacted many preachers...

> "No man can give the impression that he himself is clever and that Christ is **mighty to save**."
>
> **John Piper writes**: This has been one of the most influential sentences I have ever read regarding how we talk about Christ. Does this mean that any conscious craft or art in writing or speaking elevates self and obscures the truth that Christ is mighty to save? (The Power of Words and the Wonder of God)
>
> **Charles Simeon**: Consider how "mighty He is to save:" He is "a Saviour and a Great One [Isaiah 19:20.]," even "a Prince and a Saviour [Acts 5:31.];" or rather as he is called by an inspired Apostle, "The great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ [Titus 2:13.]." This is the great argument whereby he encourages us all to trust in him; "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God [Isaiah 45:22.]!" and this is the view in which all his Ministers are commanded to hold Him forth: we must "lift up our voice with strength, and say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God [Isaiah 40:9-10.]!"

C H Spurgeon - “Mighty to save.” — Isaiah 63:1

> By the words “to save” we understand the whole of the great work of salvation, from the first holy desire onward to complete sanctification. The words are multum in parro: indeed, here is all mercy in one word. Christ is not only “mighty to save” those who repent, but he is able to make men repent. He will carry those to heaven who believe; but he is, moreover, mighty to give men new hearts and to work faith in them. He is mighty to make the man who hates holiness love it, and to constrain the despiser of his name to bend the knee before him. Nay, this is not all the meaning, for the divine power is equally seen in the after-work. The life of a believer is a series of miracles wrought by “the Mighty God.” The bush burns, but is not consumed. He is mighty to keep his people holy after he has made them so, and to preserve them in his fear and love until he consummates their spiritual existence in heaven. Christ’s might doth not lie in making a believer and then leaving him to shift for himself; but he who begins the good work carries it on; he who imparts the first germ of life in the dead soul, prolongs the divine existence, and strengthens it until it bursts asunder every bond of sin, and the soul leaps from earth, perfected in glory. Believer, here is encouragement. Art thou praying for some beloved one? Oh, give not up thy prayers, for Christ is “mighty to save.” You are powerless to reclaim the rebel, but your Lord is Almighty. Lay hold on that mighty arm, and rouse it to put forth its strength. Does your own case trouble you? Fear not, for his strength is sufficient for you. Whether to begin with others, or to carry on the work in you, Jesus is “mighty to save;” the best proof of which lies in the fact that he has saved you. What a thousand mercies that you have not found him mighty to destroy! (Morning and evening)

- **See C H Spurgeon's Sermon** - **A Mighty Saviour**
- **See Alexander Maclaren's Sermon - Mighty To Save**

Isaiah 63:2 Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the One Who treads in the winepress?

- Rev 14:19-20, 19:15, Joel 3:13,14

THE DIVINE VINTNER

Vintner = One who makes wine, including the process of crushing grapes. In ancient times ripe grapes would be placed in a vat or container and then an individual would step into the vat and begin to crush the grapes to prepare the juice which would be used for the wine.

Why is Your apparel red? - The watchman's question to Messiah. The idea is not that Messiah's entire garment is red, but that it is spattered with red, even as happens to the garments of those who trample grapes is spattered. In context the answer is clear that Messiah's garments are red because of blood. But who's blood is the question - His or those on whom He treads?

Oswalt - Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, and other church fathers boldly applied this passage to Christ, asserting that the blood that spattered his garments was his own and that the winepress he trod was on Golgotha. Reacting against anything that might smack of allegorization, Calvin spoke out strongly against this interpretation, and virtually all commentators since have followed him....(Oswalt goes on to add that) the blood that spatters the robes of the Warrior is unquestionably that of his enemies. Sin and evil will be converted or destroyed. Second, this is not an allegorical presentation of the crucifixion. What the Warrior has done here may include the crucifixion, but it is not limited to, or primarily about, that event.... (NICOT-Isaiah)

David Levy ties the description of Messiah in Isaiah 63:1-2 with the parallel passage in Rev 19:13 - His “vesture [is] dipped in blood” (Rev 19:13). This is not His own blood, shed on the cross, but the blood of His enemies. First, His garments will become blood-spattered when He delivers a remnant of Israelis living in Bozrah, who will flee to the land of Edom and hide in Bozrah to escape the wrath of the Antichrist (Isaiah 63:1–6). Then His garments will become even more blood-spattered as He destroys the armies at Armageddon (Rev 19:15; cp. Rev 14:14–20). In contrast, the garments of His armies will not be stained with blood. **Christ alone** will fight and gain this victory.

Like the One Who treads the winepress - Notice that the watchman addresses this question to Messiah. Isaiah uses a term of comparison (**"like" = a simile**) depicting Messiah's garments as similar to the grape spattered garments of those who trample and crush the grapes in the winepress. Isaiah clearly is struck by the reddish stains on Messiah's apparel, stains which in context are not from the juice of grapes, but from the lifeblood of men who have persisted in their rebellion against and hatred of the Messiah (Even as we all had done before being transformed by the Gospel and God's Spirit! See Ro 1:30-note, Ro 5:10-note, Col 1:20-21-note)

Jamieson - This final blow inflicted by Messiah and His armies (Rev 19:13–15-note) shall decide His claim to the kingdoms usurped by Satan (**Ed**: See Rev 5:4-7-note for the One Worthy to take the scroll, the title deed to the earth! - "A***purchase*** was made at the cross, and now the ***deed*** of that purchase is being claimed by its rightful owner."), and by the "beast," to whom Satan delegates his power. It will be a day of judgment to the hostile Gentiles, as His first coming was a day of judgment to the unbelieving Jews.

Even the ancient Jewish writings see an avenging Messiah when He comes (for believers His Second Coming) **Targum Pseudo-Jonathan** writing...

> How beautiful is the King Messiah who is destined to arise from the house of Judah! He has girded his loins and gone down to battle against his enemies, destroying kings and their power, and there is neither king nor power that can withstand him. He reddens the mountains with the blood of their slain. His garments are saturated with blood, like those of him who presses the grapes.

Winepress - The ancient wine press was a large, hollowed rock into which the grapes were put for the people to tread on them. The juice ran out a hole in the rock and was caught in vessels. As the people crushed the grapes, some of the juice would splash on their garments. Our Lord's garments were dyed with blood as the result of His trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." (Battle Hymn of the Republic). (**See Tony Garland's interesting discussion of Blood Stained Garments**)

In Revelation 14 **John** alludes to the figure of grape gathering writing...

> And another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle, and **gather the clusters from the vine of the earth**, because her **grapes are ripe**." (Rev 14:18)
>
> **Tony Garland comments**: God allows evil to have its full fruit for several reasons. First, He provides ample opportunity for the godless to repent and seek forgiveness and restoration. Secondly, He allows the depth of sin to have its full development in those who have forever turned their back on redemption. "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" (Gen. 15:16). Although His patience and mercy are abundant, He must eventually judge in order to vindicate His character: "The righteous shall rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked, so that men will say, 'Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely He is God who judges in the earth' " (Ps. 58:10-11). (Revelation 14 Commentary)
>
> And the wine press was trodden outside the city (Jerusalem), and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Rev 14:20)
>
> **Henry Morris (Revelation Record)**: As John looks forward in his vision toward the end of the tribulation period and sees all the nations being drawn like a magnet to the land of the chosen people, he must sense the enormity of the calamity that is soon to overwhelm them....Nothing less than the sudden spilling of the blood of all the unnumbered multitudes massed together in a great phalanx extending through the whole land of Israel is the terrible sight entrusted to him. The bloodshed is so massive and so quick that the only apt comparison is the spurting of the juice from tremendous clusters of ripe fruit beneath the feet of the grape-tramplers in a winepress. The hordes of soldiers and civilians, many riding horses, no doubt many on foot, perhaps others on vehicles of one sort and another, thronging together as in a great trough, unable to flee, their gaze transfixed on an amazing scene in the heavens, suddenly explode like bursting grapes, and the blood pours from a billion fountains. The bodies quickly are awash in their own blood, and will soon become carrion for the waiting flocks of vultures that darken the sky (Revelation 19:17, 18). Thus shall be the unspeakable end of those who worship the beast and receive his mark. This vat of blood will extend for sixteen hundred furlongs (Greek stadion, with each stadion the equivalent of about 607 feet), or a distance of approximately 180 miles....And when the blood suddenly bursts forth from the bodies of these multitudes, in addition to the blood of the horses on which they are mounted, the sea of humanity will become a sea of blood. The blood will drain toward the valley center, where it will literally reach to the horses' bridles. All of this will take place "without the city," so that the Holy City itself will not be polluted with this bath of blood. The armies will have besieged Jerusalem, and to some extent have plundered it (Zechariah 12:2, 3+; Zech 14:1–3+), but will be unable to occupy it and will withdraw toward their line down in the wilderness of Judaea and along the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, extending down into ancient Idumea, or Edom. The great phalanx will project deep into Edom, in fact, at least as far as the ancient Edomite stronghold of Bozrah, which is about twenty miles southeast of the southern tip of the Dead Sea. On the north it will extend to and beyond the great plains of Esdraelon, or the valley of Jezreel, near the town of Megiddo, a region known since ancient times by the foreboding name of Armageddon, "the mount of Megiddo." The center of the phalanx will be concentrated in the Judaean wilderness opposite Jerusalem, in a region where King Jehoshaphat once won a great victory over the

enemies of God's people (2 Chronicles 20:20–24) and thus later called in Scripture "the valley of Jehoshaphat."...It is this great valley in which the blood will, at its center, reach the bridles of the horses. "The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, … for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea" (Isaiah 34:6+, cp Isa 63:1-4)....The winepress thus extends from Bozrah in Edom on the south. In the north it reaches to Armageddon (Revelation 16:14–16). "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: … and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:13–15). Its center converges on the valley of Jehoshaphat. "Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great" (Joel 3:12, 13+). (The Revelation Record- A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Prophetic Book of the End of Times)

Then **John** amplifies Isaiah's description in chapter 63 with a more complete picture of Messiah's Triumphant Return in Revelation 19, in which He crushes all of His adversaries (cf the figure of Christ as the **Stone** that **crushes** in Da 2:34-35-**note**, Da 2:44-45-**note**)...

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He Who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges (cp "Day of Vengeance" in Isa 63:4) and wages war (see below for the famous words from The Battle Hymn of the Republic). 12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 And **He is clothed with a robe dipped** (**bapto** used in **Lxx** of Lev 4:6 also in context of blood) **in blood**; and His name is called The Word of God (cf Jn 1:1-2, 14). 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses (Dear believer this is YOU! Yes, angels will undoubtedly come, but primarily this refers to the redeemed of all ages. Cp parallel description of the "called, chosen and faithful" in Rev 17:14-note which clearly cannot apply to angels!). 15 And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and **He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty**. (cf Isa 63:3) 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:11-16-Read Tony Garland's detailed verse by verse discussion of this Messiah's Triumphant Return)

In **Lamentations** we read of God "trampling" His Chosen People because of their persistent disobedience...

The Lord has rejected all my strong men In my midst; He has called an appointed time against me to crush my young men; The Lord has trodden as in a **wine press** the virgin daughter of Judah. (Lam 1:15)

Comment: In context, Jeremiah is describing the vengeance that was meted out on Judah by the Babylonians, who sacked Jerusalem and burned the Temple in 586BC.

Joel prophesies of that awful future day of crushing of all of God's adversaries...

Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe (speaking metaphorically of wicked people as like ripe grapes). Come, **tread**, for the **wine press** is full (metaphorically speaking -- full of wicked men, the enemies of God and of Israel); The vats (winepresses) overflow, **for** (**term of explanation** - explains why the vats are filled to the brim with men waiting to be trampled by the Lord God Almighty) their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the **Day of the Lord** is near in the valley of decision." (Joel 3:13-14+)

Tony Garland comments: The reason that these vines will be trodden is that they are wild grapes. Like His chosen nation Israel, those on the earth had not born the fruit God intended (see Dt 32:32-33, Isaiah 5:1-5, especially Isaiah 5:5+)

HIS TRUTH IS MARCHING ON

The Battle Hymn of the Republic (Play Hymn) by American writer Julia Ward Howe depicts some of the events described by Isaiah and John at the Second Coming of Christ...

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;

He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;

He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:

His truth is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;

He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:

Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!

Our God is marching on.

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,

He is Wisdom to the mighty, He is Succour to the brave,

So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time His slave,

Our God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

Isaiah 63:3 "I have trodden the wine trough Alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I stained all My raiment.

MESSIAH'S
SECOND ANSWER
Isaiah 63:3-6

I have trodden the wine trough alone - In Lam 1:15 Jeremiah records that "the Lord has trodden as in a wine press the virgin daughter of Judah" alluding to His chastening of Judah by sending His "servant" Nebuchadnezzar (cp Jer 25:9, 27:6, 43:10). Even though armies (see comment below) will follow Messiah on white horses (Rev 19:14-note), it is the Messiah **ALONE** Who will wage war, trample down and crush His enemies (Rev 19:11ff-note). Even as one crushes grapes when they are ripe, Messiah will crush rebellious men when their iniquity is "ripe!"

> **David Levy expounds on who composes the armies following Christ**: The armies will include the **holy angels** (Matthew 25:31), **church saints** (Rev 19:8, cp Rev 17:14-note), **Old Testament believers** (Jude 14–15; Daniel 12:1–2), and **Tribulation saints** martyred for their faith (Rev 7:13–14; Rev 20:4). They will return with Christ in their glorified bodies. The “fine linen, clean and white” symbolizes Christ’s righteousness produced in the inner life and character of believers (Rev 19:8).

From the peoples there was no man with Me - Repeats that it is the Messiah Alone.

My anger...my wrath - While we love to ponder the attribute of God's love, we shy away from mention of His righteous anger and wrath. We forget that the Righteous One, the Son of God's love, took the full brunt of His Father's righteous anger and wrath which was the supreme act of love! God's great love balances and in the final analysis "trumps" His great wrath, but this is only realized for those who place their faith in the Messiah Who Alone was able to bear sin's burden and blow on the Cross!

Trod...trampled (all are past tense occurring before Isaiah sees the Messiah - In the Lxx or Greek **trampled** is in the aorist tense and represents the aorist proleptic which is used to emphasize the certainty of a future event as if already past) - These verbs give us a picture of Messiah completely crushing all His enemies, all who refuse to take hold of the "life preserver" of His Gospel which alone has the power to deliver from His anger and His wrath (Ro 1:16-18). We all deserve Hell, but the One Mighty to Save opens the way to Heaven...

> **Can I ask you dear reader -- Have you believed in the Gospel, the Messiah's death (in your place), His burial and His resurrection (giving us a living hope of eternal life with Him)? If not, today could be the day of your salvation, for today is the acceptable time! None of us can know for certain when we will breathe our last breath! Choose Life in Christ and live forever in Paradise.**

Messiah explains that His garments are stained red from the blood of those who have suffered His righteous judgment, a judgment meted out on "**the peoples**" who hated Him and rejected Him and were enemies of Israel.

Their lifeblood is sprinkled on my garments - **Lifeblood** (netsach) is "juice" (as of grapes); grape juice (only in Isa 63:3,6).

"Grape juice, as elsewhere in the Old Testament (cf. Dt. 32:14) and the New Testament, is a symbol of blood." (Baker) Louw-Nida adds that netsach refers to "the deep-red fluid of the body which is the essence of life, as the figurative extension of grape juice." There is somewhat a mixed metaphor of a blood stained warrior returning from battle and one who tramples grapes coming out from the wine press. The **NET** translation picks up on this picture

> I have stomped grapes in the winepress all by myself; no one from the nations joined me. I stomped on them in my anger; I trampled them down in my rage. Their juice splashed on my garments, and stained all my clothes.

Devotional thoughts on Isaiah 63:3 - God's anger isn't like our anger. - Rich Cathers

> I think one of the difficult things to understand about God's anger, or wrath, is the confusion we can make with our own anger. When God gets angry, it's ALWAYS for the right reasons. (Ro 1:18-19, Ro 2:5) It is possible to have anger and not sin. (Eph 4:26) But the problem we have is that often our "wrath" is mixed in with other things that are not right, and so we are told to put anger away from us. (Eph 4:31) Notice all the other things that get mixed into our "wrath". Our anger can go beyond what is proper. Simeon and Levi received a curse from their father Jacob because their anger went too far. When their sister Dinah was raped (Gen. 34), they killed all the men of an entire city in revenge. (Ge 49:5-7) James tells us that man's kind of anger does not produce things that are pleasing to God. (James 1:19-20) Sometimes our anger just makes us look foolish.
>
> **Illustration** - During the final days at Denver's old Stapleton airport, a crowded United flight was cancelled. A single agent was rebooking a long line of inconvenienced travelers. Suddenly an angry passenger pushed his way to the desk. He slapped his ticket down on the counter and said, "I HAVE to be on this flight and it has to be first class." The agent replied, "I'm sorry, sir. I'll be happy to try to help you, but I've got to help these folks first, and I'm sure we'll be able to work something out." The passenger was unimpressed. He asked loudly, so that the passengers behind him could hear, "Do you have any idea who I am?" Without hesitating, the gate agent smiled and grabbed her public address microphone. "May I have your attention please?" she began, her voice bellowing throughout the terminal. "We have a passenger here at the gate WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHO HE IS. If anyone can help him find his identity, please come to the gate." With the folks behind him in line laughing hysterically, the man glared at the United agent, gritted his teeth and retreated as the people in the terminal applauded loudly. Although the flight was cancelled and people were late, they were no longer angry at United Airlines. (Pr 14:29NLT)

Isaiah 63:4 "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and My year of redemption has come.

Isa 34:8, 35:4, 61:2 Jer 51:6 Zec 3:8 Lk 21:22 Rev 6:9-17, 11:13 Rev 18:20

THE DAY OF VENGEANCE IS
THE YEAR OF REDEMPTION

For - **term of explanation** - Messiah is explaining why He had trodden "**the wine trough"** and **"the peoples**." It is not because He is some "heavenly tyrant gone berserk!" (Oswalt). And so for some His Second Coming will accomplish divine vengeance. For others it will accomplish divine deliverance (redemption), with primary application to the beleaguered nation of Israel in the last days as the Antichrist unleashes his satanic inspired fury on God's chosen people (cf Rev 12:13-17 where the "**woman**" is not a literal woman but in context is clearly the nation of Israel - **see explanation of "woman" in Revelation 12**).

Day of vengeance - This phrase is found 5 times in the OT - Pr 6:34, Isa 34:8, 61:2, 63:4 and Jer 46:10. This day reflects to a large degree the consummation of the **Day of the Lord**, described in so many OT passages, such as Zephaniah...

> "Therefore, wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up to the prey. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations (=goyim = Gentiles), to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them My indignation (intense anger), all My burning anger (nose, nostril, and anger); For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal. (Zeph 3:8-note)

The **day of vengeance** was promised earlier in Isaiah's prophecy describing Isaiah 34 describing judgment described the "**LORD'S indignation...against all the nations...a day of vengeance**" (Isa 34:2, 8 - see discussion of Isa 34:1-10 under Isa 63:6) following in Isaiah 35 by a description of God's salvation...

> "Say to those with anxious heart, "Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God (He is speaking to Judah/Israel)

will come with **vengeance**. The recompense of God will come, **but** (this is an important contrast) He will **save** you (cf "mighty to save" Isa 63:1. The "**you**" refers to the **believing remnant** in Isaiah's day but more fully to those Jews in the last days [**Great Tribulation** = the ultimate **day of vengeance**] who place their faith in Messiah = **believing remnant of Israel**). 5 Then (**When?** When the Redeemer returns and saves) the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped (cp Jesus' first "sermon" in Lk 4:17-21 based on the text of Isa 61:1-2a). 6 Then (**When is then?** When Messiah returns as described here in Isaiah 63:1-6) the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy (cf the concept of the **Year of Jubilee** discussed below). For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the **Arabah** (The topography will change when Messiah returns to defeat His enemies and establish His **Millennial Kingdom-see description**). 7 And the scorched land will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; In the haunt of jackals, its resting place, Grass becomes reeds and rushes. 8 And a highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the **Highway of Holiness** (leading the redeemed to the Holy City and Messiah's Holy Temple, cp Mal 3:1-4-**note**). The unclean will not travel on it, but it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it. (Isa 35:4-8)

> **Comment**: Remember the context. Isaiah is speaking to Judah and Jerusalem. Those who walk on the **Highway of Holiness** will be "the redeemed" (Isa 35:9), "the ransomed of the LORD" (Isa 35:10), in short, the **believing Jewish remnant. J Vernon McGee** adds that the redeemed refers not just to Israel but "will include the (Gentile) redeemed who enter the Millennium upon the earth. In Zechariah 14:16-note we read, “Then it will come about that any who are left (the Gentile "remnant") of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths.”

In His first coming, Jesus did not emphasize the day of vengeance, a truth dramatically illustrated by His quotation of Isaiah 61:1-2 in what appears to be His first "sermon" in the synagogue. Luke records...

And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Lk 4:17-21-commentary)

Here is the passage in Isaiah which Jesus quoted...

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD and **the day of vengeance** of our God; To comfort all who mourn (Isaiah 61:1-2)

Notice that Jesus only quoted the first half of Isaiah 61:2 in His First Coming but not "the **day of vengeance** of our God" because the latter prophecy was to be fulfilled at His Second Coming. His first advent was to die as the perfect Sacrificial Lamb (Heb 9:28), a day of grace, "the year of the LORD's favor," but His return will be for judgment (2Ti 4:1, Ro 2:16). His first coming was to bear God's wrath on the Cross. His Second Coming will be to carry out God's wrath on all who reject the gift of His grace (Ro 3:23-24). This truth should be ample motivation for His brethren to passionately share His Gospel with all who are yet dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1)! God's response to sin is judgment (vengeance) for persistent men's unceasing rebellion, but His opposite response is redemption is for all who abandon their pride, self-trust and fling themselves on Christ, depending wholly on His righteousness for their standing before the Thrice Holy God.

Have you shared the Gospel with anyone this week? Why not? Would you consider praying that God's Spirit gives you opportunities to share the way, the truth and the life with someone who is not yet born again? When He comes again there are only two prospects - destruction or deliverance, hailing Him as King or wailing because He is Judge!

Vengeance (05359)(**naqam** from the verb form **naqam** = to avenge or take vengeance) is the act of taking revenge (harming someone in retaliation for something harmful that they have done). It refers to punishment inflicted or retribution exacted for an injury or wrong and can refer to punishment beyond what is physical.

Naqam in this case is punishment for every sinner's repeated rejection of and rebellion against Jehovah. The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **naqam** with the Greek noun **antapodomis** (see related word - antapodidomi) which means "that which is given to someone in exchange for what has been done." (BDAG) It is a retribution, a paying back, a "reward", a requiting, a repayment. It can sometimes signify a positive reward (Col 3:24-note) but in the present context signifies a negative "reward" (cp Ro 2:5-note).

God is said "**to take vengeance**" (Isa 47:3), "**to return vengeance**" (Dt32:41, 43) "**to do (execute) vengeance**" (Mic 5:14), "**to come with vengeance**" (Isa 35:4), "**to give out (execute) this vengeance**" (Ezek 25:14). The concept of divine vengeance must be understood in the light of OT teaching about the holiness and justice of God and its effect on man as a sinner. Liberal theologians presumptuously label such a God of vengeance as unchristian and unethical! When one truly considers and understands the full orb of Biblical revelation, noting especially how the mercy of God balances the vengeance of God, then one can accept that divine vengeance is a necessary component of the history of redemption. A proper understanding of God's vengeance has been a mighty instrument of the Spirit for piercing hard, rebellious hearts of sinful men. Witness Jonathan Edwards' sermon (**Listen to his 48 minute message**) (**an abbreviated 25 minute version by Max Maclean**) Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God based on Deut 32:35 where God declares "Vengeance is Mine, and retribution. In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them." The Spirit of God used Edwards' sermon to set in motion a revival which we know as the **First Great Awakening**!

> **Partial quote from Jonathan Edwards' sermon presents an almost too vivid portrayal of Messiah trampling out His wrath**: "If you cry to God to pity you, He will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favour, that instead of that, He will only tread you under foot. And though He will know that you cannot bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet He will not regard that, but He will crush you under His feet without mercy; He will crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on His garments, so as to stain all His raiment. He will not only hate you, but He will have you in the utmost contempt: no place shall be thought fit for you, but under His feet to be trodden down as the mire of the streets." **WOE!** (**Reference**)

THE REDEEMER IS A BLOOD AVENGER

Redemption (01350)(**goel/ga'al**) describe the act of one who not only delivered but who effected restoration to an original, sometimes ideal, state. The Goel is to do the part of a kinsman and thus to redeem one's kin from difficulty or danger by the payment of a price. The word **goel/ga'al** also includes the idea of the **Blood Avenger** (Dt 19:6, Nu 35:19, 21, 24, 27 35:12) which describes the individual who had the duty to execute the murderer of his relative. Apparently the idea is that the next of kin must "effect the payment" (recompense) of life for life. As a house is repurchased or a slave redeemed by payment, so the lost life of the relative must be paid for by the equivalent life of the murderer. The kinsman is the **avenger of blood**. Jesus is Israel's Goel, their Kinsman-Redeemer, and indeed is the Goel of all who are blood bought and heaven bound, whether Jew or Gentile!

NET Note: A **go'el** or "kinsman-redeemer" was responsible for protecting the extended family's interests, often by redeeming property that had been sold outside the family. However, the responsibilities of a **go'el** extended beyond financial concerns. He was also responsible for avenging the shed blood of a family member (see Nu 35:19-27; Dt 19:6-12). In Isa 63:4, where vengeance is a prominent theme (note the previous line - "day of vengeance"), it is probably this function of the family protector that is in view. The Lord pictures Himself as a **Blood Avenger** Who waits for the day of vengeance to arrive and then springs into action.

Why did Isaiah switch from "day" to "year" -- from "day of vengeance" to "year of redemption?" It would appear that the **day** motif continues the OT description of the **Day of the LORD**. The **year** motif may refer to the "**Year of Jubilee**" described in detail in Leviticus 25. For example in Lev 25:54 Moses records that "Even if he is not **redeemed** (**See study of ga'al**) by these means, he shall still go out in the **year of jubilee**, he and his sons with him." And so we see the concept of **redemption** associated with the the **Year of Jubilee**. Indeed Jubilee is depicted by a "joyful shout" and/or the sounding of a ram's horn or trumpet, which proclaimed liberty throughout Israel on the 10th day of the Seventh Month, the Day of Atonement (the OT feast fulfilled in Messiah's sacrificial death on the Cross, which made redemption possible for sinful Jews and Gentiles). How fitting that the **day of vengeance** for the Messiah rejecting sinful world will be balanced by the **year of redemption** for the nation of Israel (the **remnant**)! And while the primary interpretation of this passage deals with Israel (specifically the **believing remnant of Israel**), the return of Christ will be the year of redemption for every Gentile who has place their faith in His fully atoning sacrifice!

Guzik has an excellent comment on **day** and **year** - In this, Isaiah prophetically explains why the Messiah can say, “vengeance is in My heart.” It isn’t because God loves punishing sinners; but He does love vindicating His redeemed. Notice also the comparison: it is a mere **day** of vengeance, but an entire **year** of My redeemed. Each phrase is simply a poetic way of saying “**time**,” but God fittingly uses the picture of a **day** in communicating His vengeance, and a **year** in expressing His grace.

Jamieson adds - here, as in Is 34:8; 61:2, the time of "**vengeance**" is described as a "**day**"; that of grace and of "**recompense**" to the "**redeemed**," as a "**year**." (**Ed**: Amazing grace indeed!)

Isaiah 63:5 "I looked, and there was no one to help, and I was astonished and there was no one to uphold. So My own arm brought salvation to Me, and My wrath upheld Me.

- **Looked**: Isa 63:3, 41:28, 50:2, 59:16, Jn 16:32
- **My own**: Isa 40:10, 51:9, 52:10 Ps 44:3, 98:1 Ho 1:7 1Co 1:24 Heb 2:14,15
- **My wrath**: Isa 59:16-18

Messiah testifies that "**there was no one to help**" Him in the grand work of redemption of men and creation from the ravages of sin. In context, Messiah alone was able to accomplish redemption of the nation of Israel based upon the fact that "through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal **redemption**." (Heb 9:12-note, cp Heb 9:26-note)

I was astonished and there was no one to uphold...**So My Own arm brought salvation to Me** - Here Messiah refers to His first coming, which culminated in His crucifixion, burial and resurrection which brought salvation to all who would believe (cf Titus 2:11-note). Isaiah had previously alluded to Messiah's **own arm** accomplishing **salvation**..

> And He (Messiah) saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede. Then His **own arm brought salvation** to Him; and His righteousness upheld Him. (Isa 59:16)
>
> **Comment**: Note the parallel - "My own arm brought salvation to Me, and My **wrath** upheld Me" (Isa 63:5) and "His own arm brought salvation to Him; and His **righteousness** upheld Him." (Isa 59:16) In one passage His **wrath**, in the other passage His **righteousness**. Both are available to every human being ever created (cf 1Ti 2:4, 2Pe 3:9-note) . **This is every one's personal choice - we must choose either Christ's wrath or Christ's righteousness! Have you chosen dear reader?**

Isaiah 63:6 "I trod down the peoples in My anger and made them drunk in My wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- **Make**: Isa 63:2,3, 49:26, 51:21-23, Job 21:20 Ps 60:3, 75:8 Jer 25:16,17,26,27 La 3:15 Rev 14:10, Rev 16:6,19, Rev 18:3-6
- **I poured**: Isa 25:10-12, 26:5,6 Rev 18:21

Trod down - Exactly how this occurs is not clear. What is clear is that Messiah will defeat all the enemies of God and His garment will be splattered with their blood.

Trod (0947) (**bus**) is a relatively uncommon verb used 12x in the OT with 4 uses by Isaiah (Isa 14:19, 25, Isa 63:6, Isa 63:18). Here are three encouraging passages (using "*bus*") for all of God's children who in this life feel downtrodden by adversaries...

> Psalm 44:5 Through You we will push back our adversaries; Through Your name we will **trample down** (Heb = bus; Lxx = exouthenoo = disdain, set at, cp exoutheneo = despise someone on basis of being worthless or of no value) those who rise up against us.
>
> Psalm 60:12 (repeated in Ps 108:13) Through God we shall do valiantly, and it is He who will **tread down** (Heb = bus; Lxx = exoudenoo in future tense = will disdain, utterly despise, treat as of no account!) our adversaries

The peoples - The Gentile nations opposed to God and to His chosen people, Israel.

Oswalt - If it is true (**Ed**: Indeed it is!) that the Servant/Messiah will one day tread the wine press of earth and pour out the lifeblood of earth's rebels on the ground (cf. Rev. 14:17-20), we must never forget that before that, he is the same one who "poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12) for their sakes. Their death is only the result of refusing to avail themselves of his death.

Proposed Sequence of Events
Campaign of Armageddon - Arnold Fruchtenbaum
(Click map to enlarge)

Isaiah describes this same final and terrifying day of judgment **against all nations** which will take place beginning in Bozrah (see **map** above for Arnold Fruchtenbaum's proposed sequence of events associated with the Triumphal Return of the Messiah - see **another proposed sequence**), in the land of Edom. Many associate these events **Armageddon**, a name which is more accurately descriptive of the initial gathering of the nations at Armageddon (See **map**) (Rev 16:16-**note**).

THE DAY OF VENGEANCE
FOR EDOM & THE WORLD
Isaiah 34:1-10+

> Draw near, O nations (= goyim = Gentiles), to hear; and listen, O peoples! Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it. (Clearly this description is not of just a local battle but is against all the nations those who oppose Messiah and have gathered at Armageddon and marched south sacking Jerusalem and coming to Edom to attack the remnant of Jews who have fled to the wilderness - presumably Petra) 2 **For** (**term of explanation** - explains why the nations of the world are being summoned) the **Lord's indignation** (= a short outburst of anger) **is against all the nations** (= Goyim = Gentiles. So not just against Edom, but all who have hated and despised God - Guzik = "In the immediate context, Isaiah continues the thought of the coming judgment against the Assyrians. But in the larger context, we can see this passage as an announcement of the judgment of come upon the nations during the **Great Tribulation**."), and His wrath (= a more abiding, smoldering type of anger) against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter (Notice that this future event [the fact that it is against "all nations" calls for a future event, as this has never occurred in world history] is so certain to transpire as described that the prophet uses the **past tense**!). 3 So their slain will be thrown out, and their corpses will give off their stench, and the mountains will be drenched with their blood (This description could be figurative, but could just as easily be taken literally - in either event it is a vivid description of the result of Messiah's triumph over His foes as described in Rev 14:17-20 [see below], Isaiah 63:1-6 and Rev 19:11-21+). 4 And all the host of heaven will wear away, And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; All their hosts will also wither away As a leaf withers from the vine, Or as one withers from the fig tree (cf John's description Rev 6:12-14+). 5 For My sword is satiated in heaven, Behold it shall descend for judgment upon **Edom** (Edom was the "prototype" and representative of all Gentile nations that hated and persecuted Israel) and upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction (NET = "annihilate in judgment."). 6 The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, It is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. **For the Lord has a sacrifice in** (the city of) **Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom**. 7 Wild oxen will also fall with them And young bulls with strong ones; Thus their land will be soaked with blood, And their dust become greasy with fat. 8 **For the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.** (Notice that the slaughter is for the cause or sake of Zion which symbolizes the nation of Israel [not a popular concept in most circles today] = God will Himself defend the nation of Israel in this last great battle!) 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, And its loose earth into brimstone, And its land will become burning pitch. 10 It will not be quenched night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever (This description which recalls to mind the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah also supports that the events are yet future to our day). (Isa. 34:1-10)

The apostle **John** dramatically describes this event in the Revelation...

> And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." 19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles. (Revelation 14:17-20+**;** See discussion of Campaign of Armageddon; compare description of the slaughter with Isaiah 34:3. See description of the "Divine Vintner" in Isaiah 63:3)

My anger...my wrath (Repetition suggests emphasis - cf Isa 63:3) - If you have ever seen a tomato ripening and left on the vine too long (especially when dehydration occurs), you have noticed that it finally begins to crack. This is a picture of the righteous (and fully justified) anger and wrath of God which He has been accumulating (and patiently holding back for millennia), but which like that ripened tomato, finally breaks out on His **day of vengeance** (cp Isa 26:20, Rev 15:1+, Rev 16:17+)

The peoples (the nations) - These are the Gentiles gathered together (cf Rev 16:16+) against Israel, the Kingdom of God and the

King, Jesus. The method by which the nations are to be conquered by the King at His Second Coming is too often thought to be a peaceful missionary conquest; on the contrary, He breaks them with a rod of iron and dashes them in pieces like a potter's vessel. This violent subduing of the nations by the returning King is many times pictured in the predictions of God's Word. None of these is more vividly stated than Isaiah 63:1–6.

Made them drunk in My wrath (cp Isa 49:26, Rev 16:6+) - Isaiah modifies the winepress metaphor slightly, here referring to the related image of the wine cup full of God's wrath, which sinners are given to drink down to the dregs (the sediment at the bottom, the last part, the least desirable portion)!

CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON
ANOTHER PROPOSED SEQUENCE

Here is another proposed sequence of events related to the **Campaign of Har-Magedon**. While this sequence can be "authenticated" from Scripture, it is merely a proposal and not a meant to be a definitive description of the cataclysmic end times events.

1). As the result of pouring out of the Sixth Bowl of God's Wrath, we see a gathering of the nations (Gentiles) in the valley of Megiddo, north of Jerusalem. (Rev 16:12-14, 16+) There is no evidence that an actual battle occurs here even though everyone refers to the Battle of Armageddon.

2). Babylon is destroyed (Rev 18:1-24+)

3). The armies in #1 invade and conquer Jerusalem, but they know that there are still a remnant of Jews that have fled into the wilderness (Rev 12:6, 13-17+ "woman" = Israel). (Zechariah 12:1-14:21+ describes the capturing of Jerusalem, but then describes the liberation of Jerusalem by Messiah.).

4). After conquering Jerusalem, the Antichrist moves with his armies south towards Edom seeking the Jewish remnant that had fled Jerusalem (cp Jesus' warning - Mt 24:15-21+, describing the Great Tribulation, the last three and one half years when Antichrist rules the world seeking especially to destroy Israel.)

5). John describes Jesus' triumphant return in Rev 19:11-16+. But to where does the Lord return? Isaiah 63:1-6 supports the premise that Messiah returns first to the area of Edom whose capital city was Bozrah, which is near where the Jews have been sheltered for 3.5 years. Some feel Bozrah could also be Petra.

6). As Christ returns to Bozrah in Edom, the Antichrist's armies come south from Jerusalem. The Messiah victoriously treads down His foes and marches straight through them northward, His garments becoming soaked with their blood that rises as high as the bridle on the horses for 200 miles (Rev 14:20).

Note that several passages support the premise that when Christ returns, He first comes to the region of Edom.

(a) Isaiah 34:1-7+ (see also discussion below)

(b) Isaiah 63:1-6

(c) Habakkuk 3:3+ - God comes from Teman (Edom), and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor covers the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise.

In addition Messiah makes a Highway of holiness (Isaiah 35:8) on which the redeemed follow Him in His triumph.

7). Christ comes up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Valley of Decision), where the nations have been gathered (Joel 3:2, 12-14+) and He walks up to the Mount of Olives and stands on the Mount (Zechariah 14:1-4+) as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS AND VERY GOD OF VERY GOD. And when He does all the nations that are in the Valley of Jehoshaphat are judged by Christ, Who separates the sheep from the goats. All of those who have not received the MARK OF THE BEAST and have taken care of His brethren, the Jews, will enter into His kingdom, but the goats who have not will be cast directly, immediately into the Lake of Fire.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum suggests the following sequence: (click map)

1. The Assembling of the Allies of Antichrist - When the sixth bowl is poured out, the Euphrates river is dried up and the kings of the earth are gathered to the valley of Jezreel (Rev. 16:12-16+; Joel 3:9-11+).

2 The Destruction of Babylon - Babylon has been rebuilt on the banks of the Euphrates and is the world economic capital (cf Zec. 5:5-11+). While the Antichrist is away at Megiddo, Babylon undergoes catastrophic

destruction (Isa. 13+, Isaiah 14+; Jer. 50, 51; Rev. 15:8+; Rev 17:18+; Rev 18:1ff+; Rev 19:2+). (ED: IN MY OPINION THIS DOES NOT FIT WITH THE FACT THAT THE ANTICHRIST AND 10 KINGS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON IN Rev 17:16-17+)

3. The Fall of Jerusalem - The Antichrist receives news that his capital city has been destroyed and moves south against Jerusalem (Zec. 12:1-3+; Zech 14:1-9+; Micah 4:11-5:1+). The Jews will put up a mighty defense, but Jerusalem will eventually fall (Zec. 14:2+).

4. The Armies of the Antichrist at Bozrah - The Jewish remnant flees to the mountains (Mt 24:15+) and then to the wilderness in Edom (see Sheep in Bozrah). The armies under Antichrist will move against the Jews in Bozrah (Micah 2:12+).

5. The National Regeneration of Israel - The Jews confess their national sin, the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah Jesus (Lev. 26:40-42+; Jer. 3:11-18; Hos. 5:15). They then plead for His return (Ps. 79:1-13; Isa. 64:1-12; Hos. 6:1-3; Zec. 12:10-13:1+; Zech 13:7-9+; Mt. 23:39).

6. The Second Coming of Messiah - Christ returns to Bozrah, where the remnant have been preserved (Isa. 34:1-7+; Isa. 63:1-6; Mic. 2:12-13+; Hab. 3:1-19+; Zec. 12:7+; Rev. 19:11-18+).

7. The Battle from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat - Christ fights the forces of Antichrist from Bozrah continuing all the way back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem, which overlook a section of the Kidron Valley, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Antichrist is destroyed. (Joel 3:2, 12-13+; 2Th. 2:8+; Zec. 14:12-15+; Rev. 14:19-20+; Rev 19:20+).

8. The Victory Ascent Up the Mount of Olives - This is not the initial return of Christ, for He will save the tents of Judah first (Zec. 12:7+). Nor will his initial return be to the same place He ascended, the Mount of Olives, but merely in the same manner (Acts 1:11 = "will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven"). His ascent to the Mount is attended by cataclysmic events associated with the seventh bowl judgment (M 24:29+; Zec 14:4-5+; Rev. 16:17-21+).

Dwight Pentecost suggests a less detailed sequence of events as follows focusing more on the prophecies in Daniel:

1. Covenant with Antichrist - Prince of Roman empire [the Antichrist] makes a covenant with Israel for a seven year period (Da 9:26-27+). (Although this covenant is broken three and one-half years later.) See Events of the 70th Week of Daniel.

2. Invasion of Palestine - The King of the North and the King of the South invade Palestine (Da 11:40+).

3. Antichrist Responds - Because of his covenant with Israel, the Antichrist will come to Israel's defense (Da 11:40-45+).

4. News from East and North - News from the east and the north troubles the Antichrist (Da 11:44+). Perhaps it is the approach of the kings of the east (Rev. 16:12+). (The troubling news may be the destruction of Babylon, although Pentecost does not mention this.)

5.Headquarters in Palestine - The Antichrist moves his headquarters into the land of Palestine and assembles his armies there (Da 11:45+).

6. Christ Returns - Before he can engage the kings from the east, Christ returns. All the armies combine to fight against God (Rev. 19:19+).

7. Antichrist and Armies Overthrown - The armies and the Antichrist are destroyed without human means (Da 9:25+; Da 11:45+; Rev. 19:20+e).