

Hartford Bible Students

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THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

What is Armageddon?

Armageddon is a Hebrew word signifying the Hill of Megiddo, or the Mount of Destruction. Literally, Megiddo is a Plain in Israel where many great battles took place. These battles are illustrations of the future battle to take place which is spoken of in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 16:16, *“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**...(verse 14) to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”* The future battle of Armageddon will be the final controversy between Truth and Error, right and wrong, which will then usher in Christ’s glorious earthly kingdom.

Truth Hidden

When we consider the Scriptures in Revelation regarding Armageddon, we are not to necessarily expect a literal gathering of people to Megiddo. The Bible uses the word “Armageddon” in a spiritual sense. We all know that the book of Revelation is full of symbols. God seems to have placed this book last in the Bible with the intent of covering up great and important truths.

God purposely has for a time hid certain features of His truth from the world in general. Why would God wish to have His truth misunderstood? Mark 4:11-12, *“Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.”*

The truths recorded in Revelation are not for the world, nor for the merely curious, but for the church - the body of Christ, fully consecrated Christians. It is to these footstep followers of Christ that this knowledge of divine truths will be *“meat in due season”* (Matt. 24:45). Eventually, Christ and his Church will spread God’s Truth to all mankind.

Who will fight in the Battle?

The Scriptures abound with allusions to Armageddon. Jesus calls it *“great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall*

be” (Matt 24:21). The Prophet Daniel describes it as *“a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time”* (Daniel 12:1). Daniel also said that at this time God’s representative, *“Michael, shall stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people.”* The word “Michael” signifies “He who is like God.” This can be none other than his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who will stand up for the salvation of God’s people - first the deliverance of Israel and, subsequently, the deliverance of all mankind from every trace of the bondage of sin and death.

Revelation 16:13-16 describes three agencies connected with the gathering of the hosts to the battle of Armageddon. *“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the **dragon**, and out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*

We suggest that the three agencies - the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet - represent three tools Satan will use in the battle against Truth.

The **dragon** represents the civil power in the world. The **beast** represents a religious government, particularly the Papal system. And the **false prophet**, elsewhere called “the image of the beast” (Rev. 13:14), represents the Protestant system, which is an image of the Papal system.

The civil government, including the financial and political systems, as well as the false religious systems, will be gathered together into one great coalition. For a brief time these combined forces of Armageddon will seem to triumph, until a great social explosion described symbolically in Revelation 16 as an earthquake. Rev 16:18, *“And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.”*

The Nation of Israel Invaded

During this time of the greatest trouble upon the earth, we are also told of particular trouble that will come upon the nation of Israel. Ezekiel 38 describes this scene. Speaking to the armies that will invade Israel, God says, in Ezekiel 38:16, *“And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land: it shall be in the latter days...”*

At this juncture the Scriptures indicate that Christ, as God’s representative, will assume authority and take control. Zechariah 12:8, *“In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem...and it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”* Zech. 14:3, *“Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.”*

The Victory of Battle

The fierce battle of Armageddon is described further in Revelation 19. Rev. 19:19, *“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against **him that sat on the horse, and against his army.**”* Who is this evil army preparing to fight against? It is none other than Jesus. *“And behold a white horse; and **he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True,** and in righteousness he doth judge and make war...and his name is called **The Word** (messenger) **of God...**and out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he*

treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

The end result of this battle is described in Rev. 19:20, *“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”* It should be noted that just as the *dragon*, the *beast*, and the *false prophet* are symbols, so is the *lake of fire* a symbol. Fire represents destruction. The false religious systems and the selfish earthly governments will be destroyed once and for all (not people, but systems!) And in their place Christ will establish his righteous kingdom. Rev. 21:1, *“And I saw a new heaven (religious system) and a new earth (social arrangement): for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.”*

What should be the Christian’s attitude as we watch the storm clouds of trouble coming on the earth? Luke 21:26, 28: *“Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...and when these things begin to come to pass, then **look up, and lift up your heads;** for your deliverance draweth nigh.”*

The people of God should make provision for the great storm that is coming and keep very quiet amid the controversy, resting in the knowledge that the Lord is on the side of the people. He it is that will fight the Armageddon battle - and He will win!

Send to: Hartford Bible Students

P.O. Box 493 * Manchester, CT

E-Mail: bibletruthkeys@gmail.com