

Armageddon

The battle of Armageddon

The Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty: This covers (Rev. 19:7-21), which shows primarily Christ as the righteous Warrior, for we see Him coming to do battle with the host of Satan's armies in what is often called "**the battle of Armageddon**," but which in truth is a war, or campaign, of the great day of God Almighty. This war is necessitated by the fiendishly evil ambitions of humankind and their evil source of power, Satan.

Our Lord Himself tells when this battle will take place:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:29-31)

The Glorious Appearing will take place "Immediately after the tribulation of those days". That is, at the end of the Tribulation and before the Millennium. Our Lord will time His coming at the most dramatic point in all history. The Antichrist, the False Prophet, and Satan will inspire the armies of the world to invade Palestine in a gigantic effort to rid the world of the Jews and to fight against Christ.

This coming battle before Christ sets up His millennial kingdom is often called "the Battle of Armageddon." This is a misleading expression because Armageddon means "Mount of Slaughter" and refers to the beautiful valley to the east of Mount Megiddo. And the word "battle" here literally means "campaign" or "war". No war has ever been won by a single battle. In fact, it is possible to lose a battle and still win a war. The war of the great Day of God Almighty takes place in a single day, and the Battle of Armageddon will be just one of the battles of that war.

The Battle of Armageddon: This war will encompass more than just the Valley of Megiddo; as we will see, it covers practically all the land of Palestine. This conflict, when Christ defeats the armies of Antichrist, will be a series of at least 4 campaigns"; therefore, it is more properly called "the battle on the great day of God Almighty" (see **Armageddon**; Rev. 16:14). This last conflict between Satan and Christ until after the Millennium will find Satan making one more fiendish effort to destroy the promised seed. Satan will order his armies to destroy the entire city of Jerusalem, but Christ will come to deliver her at the last moment, as is clearly seen (in Zech. 12:1-9).

This is the word of the Lord concerning Israel: "The Lord, who stretches out the heaven, who lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him, declares:" "I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be

besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves. On that day I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness,” declares the Lord. “I will keep a watchful eye over the house of Judah, but I will blind all the horses of the nations (Zech. 12:1-4).

“Then the leaders of Judah will say in their hearts:” “The people of Jerusalem are strong, because the Lord Almighty is their God.” “On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place”. “The Lord will save the dwelling of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and of Jerusalem’s inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah”. “On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the Lord going before them. On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem” (Zech. 12:5-9).

The Battle of Jehoshaphat: “For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,” “I will gather all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there on behalf of My people and My inheritance, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations; and they have divided up My land” (Joel 3:1-2).

God dates this battle specifically. It takes place when Israel has been restored to the land.

The principals in this battle Hal Lindsey believes is the Israelis and the Palestinians who have attempted to usurp control over a city that holds no genuine significance for them and a land they never particularly wanted until the Jews occupied it again. God names the participants. “Moreover, what are you to Me, O Tyre, Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you rendering Me a recompense? But if you do recompense Me, swiftly and speedily I will return your recompense on your head” (Joel 3:4). Tyre, Sidon and the regions of Philistia are the ancestral areas of the modern-day Palestinians.

God also takes exception to the argument that they claim the city in the name of god (Allah) and points out that they were never part of His sworn covenant that deeded it to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob forever.

The Lord asks pointedly, “Moreover, what are you to Me”? The argument currently being put forth to justify Islam’s claim to the city of Jerusalem is that it is a holy city and that Islam’s aim in controlling the city is to ensure the “holy places” are respected. God hardly considers the claim. “Are you rendering Me a recompense?” God is plainly saying that He is quite capable of administering His city thank you very much. He rejects the offer and hurls it back contemptuously.

God brings to mind the destruction of His Temple, and more specifically, the arrogance and hatred of those who usurped its grounds to build a monument to another deity. After the Temple was destroyed, the Romans scattered the Jews to the far corners of the earth. It was during this

Diaspora that the city and the Temple Mount fell into the hands of Islam. “You have taken My silver and My gold, brought My precious treasures to your temples, and sold the sons of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their territory” (Joel 5:6-7).

God confirms that His prophecy to restore the Jews to the land of Promise has been fulfilled, and that it is from that place, the place He appointed them, that He would gather them to battle and that they would be the instruments of his recompense, or, in common vernacular, payback! “Behold, I am going to arouse them from the place where you have sold them, and return your recompense on your head” (Joel 3:7).

This is not the final battle of the War of Armageddon. The War of Armageddon involves the whole world in escalating waves of battles. But Joel sees those he can identify, the nations surrounding Israel. These were the same nations that were currently talking of peace and Oslo agreements, while preparing for war.

War they want, and war they are certainly going to get. “Hasten and come, all your surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down, O Lord,” “Thy mighty ones. Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.” “Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the winepress is full; the vats overflow, for 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 3:11-14).

Note again that the Battle of Jehoshaphat is not the final battle. The Lord gives a gracious promise to sustain the believing remnant who are caught in the middle of the worst conflict of history:

“The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars lose their brightness.” “And the Lord roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the Lord is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel” (Joel 3:15-16).

Even in the midst of this horrible carnage, where all that is familiar is being destroyed, God assures the remnant that this will never happen again: “Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, and strangers will pass through it no more” (Joel 3:17).

Each of the surviving powers in the final global conflict has land armies that have arrived in the area by this time. Most of the Russian and Muslim troops have been annihilated on the mountains of Israel (Ezek. 39-2). Jerusalem was first besieged by an onslaught of the Russian led Muslim alliance, which included units from North and Black Africa. The Gog-Magog attack took the world leader by surprise, and it took him some time to muster the Western armies under his direct command for a counterattack.

“And at the end time the King of the south will collide with him, and the King of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen, and its many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them, and pass through” (Dan. 11:40).

The scene is devastating. Nuclear and neutron weapons have done serious damage to command and control, supply lines, lines of communication, and entire divisions no longer exist anywhere but on maps. In the confusion, the Bible seems to indicate Jerusalem is captured, recaptured, and captured again, but no one unit can hold it. Evidently, either by treaty with the Jordanians, or by God's providential protection of the Israelis who fled to the caves at Petra (Matt. 24:16). Edom, Moab, and the sons of Ammon (modern Jordan), are spared the wrath of the Antichrist's military forces.

The battles grow so fierce, so destructive, and so wanton is the carnage that God sends Michael the archangel in on Israel's side. Remember, here we are in the middle of the greatest war in history, and Israel is right in the middle. Nuclear weapons, uncounted millions of invaders, the full force of the wrath of Satan is directed against the Jewish people. "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued" (Dan. 12:1).

Not every Jew will survive the war. God says that two thirds of the Jews will perish.

"And it will come about in all the land," declares the Lord, "that two parts in it will be cut off and perish; but the third will be left in it. And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people, and they will say, 'The Lord is my God' (Zech. 13:8-9).

That remnant who are "refined as silver is refined" and "tested as gold is tested" will indeed call on the Lord. There is nothing more powerful than prayer.

"But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness." "Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts," A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the Lord of hosts, their God." "In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem" (Zech. 12:4b-6).

So, that is the military situation as it stands, as the entire Middle East becomes the most heavily contested battlefield in human history.

The Battle of Jerusalem: Once begun, the battles are fast and furious. As the Battle of Jehoshaphat draws to an end the Battle of Jerusalem begins. Why should such a little city command such attention? Especially when you consider the fact that only a couple of generations ago, most people in the developed world thought Jerusalem was a mythical city, or a lost city from the Bible. Today it's the centerpiece of the world.

"Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah" (Zech. 12:2).

According to the ancient prophets, the battle for the city of Jerusalem will involve forces from every nation on the face of the earth.

“And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it” (Zech. 12:3).

It is during the battle for Jerusalem that the national redemption of Israel is accomplished. Every promise of God is true, and the covenant God made with Abraham is redeemed. The absolute Biblical proof that destroys the argument of the Dominionists and the Kingdom Now Movement is declared in no uncertain terms.

“And it will come about in that day,” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land” (Zech. 13:2).

There will be no atheists left among the children of Abraham on that day. The Antichrist’s claims to Messiahship will be forever and unconditionally discredited, and Israel will see, recognize, and mourn the Son that their fathers in their blindness “cut off from the earth” (Dan. 9:26).

“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first born” (Zech. 12:10).

The Battle of the Jordan Valley: As the battles rage in Jerusalem and the Valley of Jehoshaphat, what is left of the divisions of the northern army defeated on the mountains of Israel withdraw to regroup. They head down the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea.

“But I will remove the northern army far from you, and I will drive it into a parched and desolate land, and its vanguard into the eastern sea (Joel 2:20).

The Jordan Valley runs some 200 miles from the North Sea of Galilee to Eilat. Into this valley streams the remaining hordes from the East, to meet in battle with what remains of both the Russian/Muslim alliance and the armies of the Antichrist.

The Battle of Armageddon: This is the valley of decision spoken of by the prophet Joel. All the nations of the world will be represented at this battle. The Jordan Valley will one day contain an army numbering in the hundreds of millions of men. Plus, equipment, weapons, artillery pieces, vehicles, the works! All these last battles happen almost simultaneously. There are elements in each battle scene like the Russian/Muslim alliance that play key roles throughout. The overall end of the Gog and Magog alliance is annihilation (see Gog and Magog), but they can be found in each scenario.

The Russians will launch their attack on Israel at the same time as the Kings of the South (the pan-Arab confederation), make their push. The Russians will capture key ports, like the one at Haifa that will lead directly into the valley of decision, arriving from the west. Meanwhile the Kings of the East (the red Chinese alliance), are arriving from the east into this same valley. The Kings of the South are already there. And the Antichrist and his forces, including the whole of the Western world (sadly, that will include America), will be on the march to repel the invaders.

This happens on the heels of multiple nuclear attacks, chemical and biological warfare, and the almost certain loss of sophisticated communications technology like satellites, global positioning systems, television, and telephones, etc. Nobody really knows what they're up against until they square off!

Undoubtedly, each believes that he is leading an overwhelming force against an enemy in disarray. The Antichrist's forces are simply repelling an Arab invasion and retaliating against a nuclear attack. The Kings of the East are planning to take the Middle East and its oil for themselves. With 200 million men, they certainly believe they have the advantage. Russia thinks it has the advantage of surprise.

And suddenly, there they are! The whole world in a single, massive confrontation, Awesome! Picture the scene as prophet Joel saw it. "A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness. As the dawn is spread over the mountains, so there is a great and mighty people; there has never been anything like it, nor will there be again after it to the years of many generations" (Joel 2:2).

Joel captures, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the madness, the hopelessness, and the insanity of the moment. Ordinary soldiers, led by demoniacs who have assured them of victory, looking back toward home and country, now under the shadow of the mushroom cloud. And in front, more war, more devastation. "A fire consumes before them, and behind them a flame burns" (Joel 2:3a).

The common perception of the soldiers of the armies assembled at Armageddon is somehow inhuman. Nuclear war has robbed them of everything. Their only hope for a continued existence is to find someplace untouched by the devastation. Like Israel. "The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, but a desolate wilderness behind them, and nothing at all escapes them" (Joel 2:3b).

The Return of Christ: This is the most dramatic moment in world history! After winning four successive battles, Christ will set His feet on the Mount of Olives.

"A day of the Lord is coming when your plunder will be divided among you." "I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city." "Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle." "On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south" (Zech. 14:1-4).

“And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee” (Zech. 14:5).

When Christ consumes all before Him through the earthquakes, lightnings, and the sword that proceeds out of His mouth, not only will the Holy Land be destroyed but the entire country will be literally bathed in the blood of unregenerate, God hating, Christ opposing people. It is hard to envision the hordes of troops from all over the world that will oppose Christ. Who can conceive of a time when the blood of Slain men will flow as high as the horses’ bridles by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs? That is just about the length of the entire land of Palestine!

Naturally many skeptics and those who do not take the book of Revelation literally find it difficult to believe that so much blood could be shed. A point to be kept in mind is that part of the destruction of the troops around Jerusalem will include a hailstorm.

“From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible” (Rev. 16:21).

Millions of pieces of ice will fall to the earth weighing a hundred plus pounds each, melting in the torrid heat of Palestine, and mingling with the blood of those slain until the land of Palestine will be literally bathed in a bloody liquid that is almost too horrible to describe. What a price human beings will pay for rejecting Christ!

When Jesus returns to our planet, His feet will touch down on the Mount of Olives, and it will split in two. Geological reports indicate there is a fault under the Mount; the touch of our Lord’s feet upon the ground will cause that fault to split the mountain wide open, yet another powerful announcement of His coming. But what of His “fight against those nations”? The apostle John gives dramatic details of this one-of-a-kind future event in Revelation 19.

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God,” “so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great.” “Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.” “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.” “The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh” (Rev. 19:17-21).

Several Bible passages indicate that the “battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Rev. 16:14), actually consists of at least four “campaigns” and spreads over almost all the land of Palestine:

1. The Lord first goes to Edom to rescue Israel from the hand of the Antichrist; here He soils His clothing in the blood of His enemies (Isaiah 63:1-6).

2. The Lord then goes to the Valley of Megiddo, where He defeats many of the armies of the world (Rev. 16:12-16).
3. Next the Lord defeats most of the remainder of the world's evil forces in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:1-2, 9-17; Rev. 14:14-20).
4. Last, the Lord will come to Jerusalem to defeat the advance guard of the Antichrist, who will attempt to wipe out the Holy City (Zech. 12:1-9; Rev. 16:17-21).

On the great day of His return, Christ will defeat all His enemies, capture alive the Antichrist and the false prophet, and cast them into the lake of fire, where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Rev. 20:1-3).