

Revelation's HOPE

Lesson 15: Armageddon and You

I. Introduction

“Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.... they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon” (Revelation 16:13-16).

- General Douglas MacArthur announced at the signing of the Japanese peace treaty ending World War II, “Military alliances, balance of power, League of Nations, all in turn have failed. We have had our last chance. If we do not devise some greater, more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door.”
- General Eisenhower, commenting in the Ft. Worth Press, Sep. 17, 1961, “Looming in the background is a grim reality. Nuclear missiles place all of us, even in Chicago, within 30 minutes of Armageddon.”
- Can the irresponsible act of a deranged lunatic pressing buttons ignite the fuse of Armageddon?
- Are recent events in the Middle East edging us ever closer to Earth’s last war?
- What is Armageddon?
- We have learned a principle: let Scripture Interpret Scripture

II. “Armageddon” occurs one time.

A. Context of Armageddon

“The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.¹³ Then I saw three impure spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet.¹⁴ They are demonic spirits that perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.¹⁵ ‘Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed’ . . .” (Revelation 16:12-15, NIV).

- Armageddon found in the 6th of the 7 last plagues
- 6th plague prepares the world for this BATTLE

B. Events in Armageddon

¹⁶ Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.¹⁷ The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘It is done!’¹⁸ Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.¹⁹ The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath” (Rev 16:16-19, NIV).

- Armageddon involves the destruction of Babylon.
- How did this take place? Read verse 12 again→
- “The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East” (**Revelation 16:12**).
- Visualize it. The destruction of Babylon comes after the waters of the Euphrates have been dried up, and it is this drying of the Euphrates that prepares the way for the kings from the East, who must be the destroyers of Babylon. What is the significance of the drying up of the great river Euphrates, and who are the kings from the East? Watch how the Bible explains itself!
- Revelation 17 tells us more→

C. Fall of Babylon – In Revelation 17

- In **Revelation 17:1** we read, “One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, ‘Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.’”
- And then he says, “The woman” (the harlot) “you saw is the great city” (vs. 18). What city? In verse 5 John sees the harlot with this name written upon her forehead, “Mystery, Babylon the Great.” So let’s put it all together. The woman is therefore symbolic of the great city named Babylon, and Babylon is sitting upon many waters, the Euphrates.
- Babylon is the City in the OT that opposes God. It sits on “many waters” (See **Jeremiah 51**). We need to go to the OT to find out how Babylon fell and if it involved kings from the East. **ARMAGEDDON INVOLVES THE FALL OF BABYLON**→

D. Fall of Babylon in Daniel

- “In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god” (**Daniel 1:1,2**).
- Focal point of this REAL war = holy cups / worship. What if the holy is profaned?→
- **Ezekiel 22:26**. “Her priests do violence to my law and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy and the common.”
- God does not approve of HIS priests doing this let alone Babylon!
- We see the cups again later in the book of Daniel and we will also find the kings from the East→

“King Belshazzar gave a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles and drank wine with them. ² While Belshazzar was drinking his wine, he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them. ³ So they brought in the gold goblets that had been taken from the temple of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines drank from them. ⁴ As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. ⁵ Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on

the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. ⁶ His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking" (Dan 5:1-6 NIV). "You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways." ²⁴ Therefore he sent the hand that wrote the inscription. ²⁵ 'This is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, PARSIN' ²⁶ 'Here is what these words mean: Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end. ²⁷ Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting. ²⁸ Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians' " (Dan 5:1-24 NIV).

- "That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom, at the age of 62" (**Daniel 5:30, 31**).
- Morally they had fallen as Daniel uttered the words in the previous verses. They still did not repent but continued their New Year's festival to their Sun god Marduk. As they were partying the Euphrates River was diverted and the armies of Cyrus and Darius came into the city. Picture it→

E. Who was Cyrus?

- Isaiah **41:25**: "I have stirred up one from the north, and he comes - one from the rising sun (the East) who calls on my name".
- Then in **Isa 42:1**, "Here is my servant, whom I uphold,"
- In **Isaiah 44** beginning in verse 27, "who says to the watery deep, 'Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,' who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, 'Let it be rebuilt,' This is what the Lord says to His anointed, to Cyrus" (vss. 44:27, 28 and 45:1). "I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free" (45:13).
- When Cyrus came into the city of Babylon after Darius secured it, they put palm branches down and waved them before him.
- He returned the "gods" to their homelands and allowed the Israelites to rebuild the temple.
- The TRUE worship of God was restored! Cyrus was a "type" of Christ→

F. True KING from the East

- **Key thoughts:** servant, shepherd anointed, I will make all his ways straight
- Who else is called Servant (**Isaiah 52-53**), Shepherd and Anointed One? Who else has the path before Him prepared so that many will receive Him? JESUS
- He will restore true worship at the end of time by destroying spiritual Babylon and establishing New Jerusalem!
- Cyrus and Darius, the literal kings from the East pointed us to a greater reality: JESUS WILL COME AND DELIVER HIS PEOPLE!
- **Eze 43:2**, "and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east."
- "For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man" (**Matt 24:27**).

- **Rev 7:2**, John “saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God.”
- **Revelation 19:**, “I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.... The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (vss. 11, 14, 16)

G. Summary So Far

- So you see, the kings that come from the east are Jesus Christ and His host of angels coming out of heaven from God, prepared for war. Jesus is the King from the east.
- Jesus takes His rightful place in the center of the prophecy.

III. Applying the Hebrew Scriptures to Revelation 16

“Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. ‘Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.’ Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon” (**Rev. 16:13-16**).

A. HAR-Mageddon

- Another group of Kings! Who will they battle against? We will find out soon enough.
- The location? HEBREW it is HAR-Mageddon→
- Do we let others tell us where this might be? Or do we allow the Scriptures?
- Har = Mountain; Megiddon = “place of crowds” or in Greek OT (LXX), “to be cut down”.
- Where do we find a mountain where crowds of people were “cut down” / slaughtered?
- Mt. Carmel with the false prophets standing against Elijah.

B. One other place where enemies of Israel are “cut down”→

- In **Judges 4:16** we read of Barak leading God’s people in war and all the troops of the enemy were destroyed. “Not a man was left.” Deborah the prophetess sang of this great triumph of God and said, “Kings came, they fought; the kings of Canaan fought...by the waters of Megiddo” (**Judges 5:19**).
- Who fought for Israel?
- “From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera” (**Jdg 5:20 NIV**).
- So, Mt. Megiddo, or the Mountain of Slaughter, is symbolic of the total destruction of the enemies of God’s people.

- Who do the Kings of the World make war against at the end of time?

C. Back to Revelation →

- “They will make war against the Lamb,...and with Him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers” (**Revelation 17:14**).
- Where do God’s people gather? With the Lamb. Where is the Lamb?
- “I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mt. Zion, and with Him 144,000.... They follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (**Rev 14:1,4**). The lamb is Jesus Christ, and the 144,000 are true Israelites, Christians, those who are totally committed to God.

D. Two gatherings / mountains

- You see, the kings of the world are gathered to Armageddon, the Mountain of Slaughter, to make war against Jesus Christ, the King from the east, and His faithful followers, His church. The picture should be coming into sharper focus.
- There are two mountains representing two gatherings: Mt. Zion, and Armageddon - the Mountain of Slaughter. One worships God, the other, the beast. We have also discovered that true worship involves obedience to the commandments of God (See **Romans 6:16 & Matthew 15:3-9**).
Characteristics →

E. Characteristics of Gatherings

- The distinguishing characteristic between the two groups then is obedience to all of God’s commandments, including the Sabbath. “This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God’s commandments and remain faithful to Jesus” (**Rev 14:12**). This dividing line will be universal →
- **Revelation 13:8**, “All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast” —all except those who worship the Lamb.
- In other words, the time is coming when the entire world will be visibly gathered into two groups, those on Mt. Zion and those in Babylon. One group is obedient to the commandments of God, the other, to the traditions of man.
- Summary of the groups →

| Mt Zion | Mt of Slaughter |
|---|---|
| God raises up a people to preach the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14 to the entire world. | Babylon does not worship God, but the <u>beast</u> . |
| God’s people called out of Babylon and are seen as being on Mt. Zion. | Those who remain will receive the mark of the beast and will be seen as being gathered to Mt. of Slaughter. |

| | |
|---|---|
| True worship system | False worship system: comes from Rome during dark ages. |
| Keeps God's commandments including the Sabbath. | Keeps its traditions and tries to enforce them on the entire world. |

IV. Rome's Power

- A. How could Rome ever force the world to worship its way:
- “The woman you saw [more later] is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth” (**Rev 17:18**).
 - In other words, there will be a merger between church and state. The Church of Rome will control the political powers of the world.
 - “With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries” (**Rev 17:2**).
 - The Church of Rome is portrayed as a harlot because she has committed adultery, she was unfaithful to God and His commandments. Together with the kings of the world, they force the inhabitants of the earth to drink the wine of her unfaithfulness, which is her false doctrine - including Sunday worship.
- B. Coming Super Church
- In **Rev 17:5** Babylon is “the mother of prostitutes.” Now the prophecy shows her Protestant daughters joining with the Church of Rome in her Sabbath desecration.
 - Still more, “She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit” (**Rev. 18:2**). And “by [her] magic spell all the nations were led astray” (**Rev. 18:23**).
 - We can now see a three-fold union between **Protestantism, Catholicism, and Spiritism**, forming a super-church, which deceives the world by her miracles. This is described in Rev 13, when the two-horned beast, Protestant America (**13:11**), orders the world to erect an image (Sunday) in honor of the first beast (Rome) and “cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed” (vs. 15).
- C. Why Death?
- We shouldn't be surprised, it's happened before.
 - Cain murdered his own brother Abel, “Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you” (**1 John 3:12, 13**).
 - The world will hate God's obedient people. “Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed” (**John 3:20**).
- D. Events will Lead up to This

- The Bible clearly outlines the events leading up to this time. Jesus said that in the last days there will be famines, earthquakes and wars (**Matt. 24:7**).
- Isaiah also speaks of this time when he says, “The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth languish. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant” (**Isaiah 24:4, 5**).

E. One Ancient Quote

- Couple the natural disasters with another factor, the inevitable political and social upheavals built into the fabric of a sinful human society. The old Greek philosopher, Plato, said it eloquently almost 2400 years ago.

“All forms of government destroy themselves by carrying their basic principles to excess. The first form is monarchy, whose principle is unity of rule. Carried to excess the rule is too unified. A monarch takes too much power. The Aristocracy rebel and establish an aristocracy whose main principle is that selected families rule. The principle of selection is carried to excess, somewhat large numbers of able men are left out, the middle class join them in rebellion and they establish democracy whose principle is liberty. . . This principle, too, is carried to excess in the course of time. The democracies become too free, in politics and economics, in morals, even in literature and art, until at last, even the puppy dogs in our homes rise on their hind legs and demand their rights. Disorder grows to such a point that a society will then abandon all its liberties to anyone who can restore order. And, then, comes the fourth form of government, tyranny (dictatorship). And the monarchy may be restored and the process begins all over again [Plato, The Republic, Book VII, p. 563 (372 BC)].

- Satan will bring disease, disasters, famine and distress, and they will become more and more frequent. Can you see it today? There’s more to consider→

F. Progression

- Satan will persuade men that it is those who are truly serving God who are causing the evil. In other words, the wicked ones will blame the righteous ones for provoking God’s anger, just as Ahab blamed Elijah for the 3 1/2 years of famine.
- “ ‘Is that you, you troubler of Israel?’ ‘I have not made trouble for Israel,’ Elijah replied, ‘but you and your father’s family have. You have abandoned the LORD’s commands’ ” (**1 Kings 18:17, 18**).
- Some main events lead up to this atmosphere of persecution.

G. Main Events

- The “false prophet,” protestant America, will proclaim to the world that men are offending God by violating the “Lord’s Day” (Sunday) and that this sin has brought calamities that will not end until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced.
- Then “Protestant America” will perform miraculous signs and wonders to prove her message is from God. Demon spirits unleash all of the powers of spiritism.

- Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejecters of Sunday of their error.
- Disguised as a professed zeal for God, Satan begins his last frenzied attempt to overthrow God's government, as he gathers the kings of the world for battle at Armageddon.
- The Sabbath becomes more and more the special focal point of the conflict, and the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to popular demands will make them the objects of universal wrath. It will be urged that the few who stand opposed to Babylon should be destroyed. Then two sides begin to emerge→

H. Two Sides Emerge

- Try to picture the scene in your mind. The three angels' messages are sounding to the entire world, calling the world to worship God, the Creator, and to keep holy His Sabbath day. At the same time all of the powers of hell break loose in one last effort to deceive the world into worshipping the beast. Do you see it?
- There are two mountains, two gatherings and two claiming to be God. Those gathered to Mt. Zion have the seal of God, the Sabbath, while those on the Mountain of Slaughter have the Mark of the Beast, Sunday.
- Satan pushes the issue, not the followers of God. God in mercy reveals this to us ahead of time.
- The masquerade takes place putting the world in check mate→

I. Check-mate

- The arguments sound convincing. The miracles are overwhelming.
- Satan himself appears as an angel of light (**2 Cor. 11:14**), claiming to be Christ. With warmth, love and compassion, he quotes scripture and his words are driven home with magnetic power. Everything inside of you will be saying, "He must be right."
- He explains that he has changed the Sabbath to Sunday and as soon as the world recognizes his day, the disasters and troubles will cease. He pleads with tears in his eyes for you to stop transgressing Sunday. He points to scripture and explains how those in the past who persisted in disobedience were destroyed. He urges, "Don't be so foolish as to give up your life."
- A Saying Rings out

J. Almost All Fall into Line

- Jews who have been looking for a Messiah and want to keep the Sabbath perfectly accept Him.
- Muslims looking for a coming Imam accept Him.
- Buddhists looking for a coming Buddha accept Him.
- Those engaged in witchcraft and communicating with the dead will be told to accept this.
- Professed Christians will go along with it – though the sincere ones unite against the deception.
- WHICH GROUP WILL YOU BE IN?

- Satan will have a ministry in the Holy Region (geos) and will eventually try to win the world over, but some will not go along with it (**Matthew 24**).
- Then the death decree of **Revelation 13** happens→

V. Death

A. The clinching arguments in favor of death

- “It is better for them to die than for the whole world to perish.”
- This same argument was heard 2000 years ago against Christ, “it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish” (**John 11:50**). Thus, the death decree sounds forth, Anyone who refuses to worship the beast will be killed (**Rev 13:15**).
- Stand now in times of ease or it will be harder later this is what Jesus did!→

B. Days of Jesus

| Jesus’ Day | Last Days |
|---|--|
| John shared the Elijah message to prepare the way for Jesus | The Elijah message “will come” and prepare the way for Jesus to return |
| John’s ministry lasted about 3 years | Duration not clearly defined: 1,260 days can be taken prophetically |
| John killed for his preaching | Two witnesses killed for their message |
| Elijah message continued through Jesus | Elijah message continues through those converted by Jesus |

C. Begin Taking a Stand NOW

- It will take every ounce of faith that you can muster to say “No” to the beast, to say “No” to everything that your eyes and ears are telling you is right, and to stand on the Word of God. That’s why we must prepare now. We must care for our bodies so that they will be strong, and our minds so they can be clear and alert, learning to trust Him *now*.
- That’s the real reason for our emphasis on health. We must feed our minds on the Word of God daily and stand now for what we know is right and true. If we don’t stand for truth now, we can be sure that we won’t be able to stand then.
- Jesus will be the only assurance then because it gets worse→

D. The Seven Last Plagues

- All decisions have been made. Everyone has received either the seal of God or the mark of the beast.
- Christ stands in the sanctuary in heaven and says, “He which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still” (**Rev 22:11**, KJV).
- God has done all that He can to save the human race and He knows that if time went on to eternity, no one would change their mind. Human

probation is ended, and God is about to pour out the seven last plagues upon Babylon.

E. WHY SEND PLAGUES?

- Remember, His people are on Mt. Zion, (the church), are surrounded by the forces of Babylon who are attempting to destroy them. God delivers His people by means of the seven last plagues, just as He used the plagues to free His people from Egypt so many years ago.
- This will be our source of hope. He delivered Israel then, He can deliver us now.
- In other words, the seven last plagues are God's means of beating back the floodwaters of persecution. Why persecute?→

F. 7 Trumpets & 7 Plagues

- 7 Trumpets represent a judgment on mankind that is mingled with mercy 1/3. Yet it is very destructive.
- Remember how the Trumpets paralleled the Plagues?
- Could it be that the disasters Jesus talked about in **Matthew 24 & Luke 21** are parallel to the Trumpets and lead up to the plagues?
- Therefore, they are birth pains and lead the world to try to stop further disasters from happening.
- Remember that the 7 Trumpets Cover From Christ to end with focus on Medieval times. Since Medieval Church has recovered, same methods of Jesus will be used again: some warfare amongst themselves holds evil at bay; disasters also help.

G. WHY The Seven Last Plagues?

- The important thing is that this persecution is done in the name of God, disguised as a professed zeal for God. This is the delusion of the antichrist. To those who refuse to love the truth, "God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie" (**2 Thess 2:11**).
- Therefore, God must somehow reveal the true Satanic character of Babylon to the on-looking universe and to those who have been deceived. They must be brought to the realization that in turning their backs on the law of God, they have given their allegiance to the beast.

H. Summary of main events

- Worldwide preaching of the gospel
- Disasters abound
- All choices are made
- Mark of the Beast is enforced while God's people obey Him
- Plagues poured out
- Christ Delivers His people
- JESUS DESTROYS THE WICKED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS APPEARING AND RESCUES HIS PEOPLE AT THE PLACE THAT IN HEBREW IS CALLED ARMAGEDDON!
- So, FOLLOW THE LAMB!