

THE VOICE OF PROPHECY SPEAKS

WHAT BIBLE PROPHECY SAYS ABOUT YOUR FUTURE

Lesson #1 -ARMAGEDDON-

Tomahawk Cruise Missiles, Tanks, Harriers, B-52's, Stealth Bombers, Smart Bombs, once again portray "shock and awe" blitzkrieg over the middle east! People "cry out", what's next? The internet is *buzzing* with questions and suggests that you can find out by subscribing to the "**Left Behind**" Prophecy Club and the associated books that Tyndale House Publishing has spent over \$5 Million promoting.. One recent newspaper ad read as follows, "*This Spring, No One Will Escape Armageddon.*" People are concerned!

Even political leaders are concerned about the direction this world is heading!

- "*Two world wars, the Holocaust, the invention of nuclear weapons, and now global environmental crisis have led many of us to wonder if survival...is possible.*" Vice-President Al Gore, Earth in the Balance , 1992, p.366
- "*The world is unhappy because it doesn't know where it is going and it senses that, if it knew, it would discover that it was heading for disaster.*" President of France Giscard d'Estaing, (quoted in Reginald Stackhouse), The End of the World, 1997, p.viii

People are showing interest in Bible prophecy once again! But people have "played the Armageddon" card for many years. Winston Churchill, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower and Ronald Reagan did so!

In this study we want the Bible to be its own interpreter in order to receive "the blessing" promised in *Revelation 1:3*

The Bible **only** mentions the word Armageddon just **once!** Most of the many books written on this subject are merely opinions, so any confusion is **not** because of the Bible or Prophecies, but human speculations. The first chapter of Revelation tells us **we can** count on this Apocalyptic Book.

We begin by looking at Revelation 16's comment that the *Euphrates River*, a place headlined every night in the news, plays a role in the final events. *See: Revelation 16:12*

Then, many commentators suggest, modern armies will meet and cause massive destruction to fulfill *Revelation 9: 14,15!* **But** folks, it is very risky to take *different* parts of the Bible "Out of Context"! Especially parts that are highly symbolic! Revelation is a highly figurative book! *See: Revelation 16:13* for example. Is Armageddon a battle featuring **real frogs and real dragons?** These are *obviously symbols!*

Revelation 16:14 says that these symbols represent "spirits of demons." These are **evil** angels who with Satan, rebelled against God and tried to stage a coup in heaven itself! Their goal is to manipulate people to reject truth **about** God. *See: Revelation 16:14*

Scripture clearly states that the "Mother of all Battles" is a showdown between "**God Almighty**" and the "**spirits of Demons**" the ultimate "Star Wars!"

Now watch what *Revelation 16:14-16* makes crystal-clear:

- *The battle of Armageddon is called the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Vs 14. (WHAT this battle is called)*
- *The Battle of Armageddon occurs just before Jesus comes as a thief. Vs 15. (WHEN this battle occurs)*
- *The Bible says "They gathered together in a place in the Hebrew tongue called "Armageddon". Vs. 16 (WHERE this battle occurs)*

Now this is **important!** Do not overlook the immediate **context** of this verse found in the preceding verse 15, which is a prelude to **the coming** of Jesus. You see, Revelation turns the spotlight **on Jesus and His grace!**

- *Armageddon speaks of victory **not** victims.*
- *It speaks of deliverance not doom.*
- *It speaks of hope not hopelessness.*

- *It speaks of Satan's final attempts to unite all the forces of hell against God's people.*

What God is telling **us** here is that He's **not** someone to be afraid of; He's someone to be a friend of.

-WHEN and WHERE the WORLD GATHERS-

See: Revelation 16:16 "**Then...**" Armageddon is a showdown between God and Satan, just as Jesus Returns the 2nd time! It primarily a "spiritual" battle, not a literal battle between earth's military powers, although knowing human nature, we can expect fierce military carnage as the sands of time run out.

According to Jesus, military conflict between nations is "**not yet...**" the end. *See: Matthew 24:6-8* "Then..." is the answer to the question **WHEN**.

The answer to the "Where" question is found in *Revelation 16:16*. Now, there is **no** geographic place on the face of the earth called Armageddon. But, scripture gives a clue. The original Hebrew means "Mountains of Megiddo". This location is in Northern Israel, called the Plain of Esdraelon, but which Zechariah calls Megiddo. This is a small place hardly large enough for modern armies of "the kings of the **whole** world..." to assemble there!

Elijah confronted the priests of Baal in a spiritual showdown on Mt. Carmel – at Megiddo. A lot has happened at Megiddo – so much that it has come to stand for conflict and struggle. It has come to stand for great spiritual controversy in particular.

Right in the middle of this end time world crisis, listen to what Jesus says happens next: *See: Matthew 24:30; Revelation 19:11,14,16*. Jesus is coming to **deliver His** people from tribulation!

But, **before** this all happens, Jesus gives a **warning**. *See Matthew 24:4,24* Satan will instigate a great **false** spiritual revival in the religious world.

And, God does something until everyone has an opportunity to respond to His love and salvation. *See: Revelation 7:1-3* In mercy God says, "Hold on a little longer!" **until...** *See: Matthew 24:14*.

Never, in history has there been such overwhelming, globe-encircling proclamation of the Gospel as is happening **today!** Radio. Satellites, Internet, television...people **are serious** about the return of Jesus! *See: Matthew 24:42-44*

- At this very time “men’s hearts will fail them for **fear...**”
See: Luke 21:26
- God’s people react differently. *See: II Timothy 1:7*
- Jesus says, Don’t be overcome with fear, keep the faith!
See: Luke 19:13; 21:25-28; Matthew 24:13

-GOD HAS A PLAN-

“How long halt ye between two opinions?” (I Kings 18:21) This is the real issue at stake in Armageddon. We need to make a decision – which God will we serve? The god of self? The god of money? Or the God of Heaven?

John is using language in Revelation 16 to point us back to the showdown on Carmel. As earth’s history winds up, we need to be sure that we’re standing on the right side. Once and for all, the struggle between good and evil will come to a close.

When it seems that there’s no way out. No hope. No future. God has a plan of escape. It is in the Blessed Hope of the Coming of the Lord Jesus in power and great glory to rescue His people.

Indeed, **Revelation 16:20,21** describes those who are not ready for Christ to come. There’s no need to be among them. Tonight, how long halt ye between two opinions? The offer of eternal life is free – Christ has paid it all for you. Will you accept His gift and be found waiting for Him when He comes?