

God's Eternal Plan #29
The Battle of Armageddon
Revelation 19:11-21

When the disciples asked our Lord, "What shall be the sign of your coming, and of the end of the age?" Jesus answered, "You shall hear of wars and rumors of wars..." And the strife that has characterized the nations down through the ages, according to Christ's own words, will continue until the "Prince of Peace" comes to this earth to bring us His eternal peace.

Our Lord, in His Word, indicated that as we approach the time of His coming again, wars would become more frequent, that they will engulf a greater portion of the earth, and that they will increase in their intensity. And during that seven-year period, after the rapture of the Church into glory, that we call the "Tribulation Period," the world will be divided by wars such as have never existed previously in human history. Describing this time, Jesus said this in Matthew 24:21, "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

And this great final conflict between nations is referred to in the Word of God as the "Battle of Armageddon." The Battle of Armageddon, the War of Megiddo, is the scene in which the great God and Savior Jesus Christ appear intervening in human history.

The first verses of chapter 19 of the Revelation recount the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is preceded by the marriage of the Son of God to His bride (the Church), who has made herself ready (at the Judgment Seat of Christ). And immediately after the marriage of the Lamb and after the *Wedding Reception*, the gates of heaven burst open in the triumph of the hosts of glory. Jude verses 14-15 describes the event this way, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all..." Notice that history does not quietly and gradually merge into the kingdom of our Messiah. The end comes violently; it comes in fury. The whole earth is bathed in blood, in the judgment of the great day of God Almighty.

This great battle called Armageddon has been described several times previously in the book of Revelation. For example, in Revelation 11:15 we read, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" Then follows a description of His reign: "And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty... Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry... (because the time has come when God) should destroy those who destroy the earth." These last words refer to that great

and final battle. The conflict is mentioned again in Revelation 14:17-20, "Then another angel came out of the temple... And another angel came out ... to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out." (Notice that grapes thrown into a winepress is the figure, but when the grapes are trodden in the wrath and judgment of God, blood pours out) "... and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs." **A furlong is an eighth of a mile. Divide eight into sixteen hundred and the result is two hundred miles.** Blood up to the bridles of the horses for two hundred miles! **It is virtually impossible to imagine such carnage.** There is another reference to this last conflict in Revelation 16:12-16. "Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared." **They are coming from the north, the south, the east, and the west by the millions.** "Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty... And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon." Revelation 9:16 describes the army of one of the kings, "Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them." **These passages in the book of Revelation simply solidify what the Old Testament prophets had already foretold.**

Now, let us look at the text more closely. We begin with the Rider on the white horse, as seen in verse 11, "Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war."

In chapter 6:2 we saw another "White Horse Rider," "And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer." We know that rider to be the Antichrist, but this "Rider" "...was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God."

Notice that we have been told, "His name is called The Word of God." **This is simply His pronounceable name; this is His communicable name; this is the**

name by which we who are mortal know Him. We have this insight in John 1:1 & 14, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." **This Rider is "The Word of God," the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Now don't allow the fact that He is riding on a "white horse" confuse you. Go back with me to the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 where the prophet, speaking of the First Coming of Christ, said, "Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey." **While on this earth He rode on a lowly donkey, but when He comes in glory He will ride a magnificent white charger – the sign of authority.**

Look again at verse 12, "He had a name written that no one knew except Himself." **That refers to His essential deity, the incommunicable, unpronounceable, unknowable name of God.** No man can know God. Finite as we are, restricted as we are, the essential deity of God is something a man cannot enter into. **It is the very Lord God who is coming, for Christ Jesus is God of this universe.** In the Old Testament He is called Jehovah, and in the New Testament, the incarnate Son of the living God is called Jesus, the Prince of heaven, who is coming. "He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood (that is the blood of His enemies)... (and) He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God (against His enemies)."

We read again in verse 15, "Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations." **He does not need to strike. He speaks and the thing is done.** Christ's power and authority is not just in His *person* but also in His *Word*. **A good example of this is when the Romans soldiers came to arrest Him, as seen in John 18.** The Lord asked, "Whom are you seeking? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said to them, I am He. Now when He said to them, I am He, they drew back and fell to the ground." **The armed guard of the Romans and of the Sanhedrin and of the temple could not stand in His presence.** If the voice of Christ had that much power while He was on this earth, think what it will be when He comes in glory with the hosts of heaven!

Verse 15 continues, "... He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." **This is the Day of Judgment.** "On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." We will remember when the Magi came from the East, they said, "Where is he that is born king?" When Pilate nailed Him to a cross, they put an inscription above Him, saying, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, a king." **Whether He is born in a manger or whether He is nailed to a cross or whether He is coming in power with the clouds of heaven, He is the King.**

Verse 14 describes the saints that come with Him, "And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses." We have already been introduced to these saints in Revelation 19:6-8, "And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." **This great host who ride with the King of kings is the Church, the Bride of the living Lord.** The white linen in which they are clothed represents the righteousness of the saints. God's tried, chosen, and faithful people follow their Lord out of heaven.

As the Tribulation Period intensifies there is an unbelievable development on the earth. Instead of receiving the message of the 144,000 and the testimony of the Witnesses, the armies of the world have come together to war against the Lord of glory. In verse 19 John describes the armies that are warring against the Lord Christ, "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, ...and the false prophet, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army." This trio – the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the earth, are leading the armies of the world in opposition to the Lord God.

It is astonishing that all of these vast multitudes of armies are in Palestine. How were they brought together? You would not ordinarily find that great concourse of people in any one country. **How do they get there?** The answer is found in Revelation 16:13-14 & 16, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon." That gathering would not ordinarily happen.

Now, lets very quickly look at our invincible warrior, Christ, and His triumphant victory. The war is over instantly but look at how it is fought. Verse 20, "Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone."

Christ simply went down to earth snatched up the beast and the false prophet and threw them into the lake of fire.