

ARMAGEDDON AND THE NEW MILLENNIUM



**Armageddon: The
Final Battle**

**Preparing For Life In
The New Millennium**

**Living In The New
Millennium**

When Time Runs Out

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ARMAGEDDON AND THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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Introduction

This is the tenth in a series of twelve books in which we are opening the prophecies of the end-times revealed to the Apostle John and recorded in the book of Revelation.

In Chapters 1-11, the Apostle John received successive revelations of the final days of time. He viewed tremendous scenes of worship in Heaven, the opening of the book with seven seals, and the sounding of seven trumpets as God's judgment was poured out on this world.

In Revelation Chapters 12-14, John introduced seven important personages: the sun-clothed woman, representing Israel; the dragon, representing Satan; the man-child, representing Jesus Christ; Michael, representing the angels; the beast out of the sea, who is the world dictator; the beast out of the earth, a religious leader who is a false prophet and supports the world dictator; and the 144,000, representing the remnant saved out of the Tribulation.

In Revelation 14, we witnessed the outpouring of seven vials of God's wrath and heard warnings from three angels giving mankind an opportunity to worship the true God. The second of these three angels announced the coming fall of Babylon the Great, the apostate church:

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. (Revelation 14:8)

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As the seventh vial of God's wrath was outpoured, "... great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." (Revelation 16:19)

In our last study, we learned in Revelation 17 of the destruction of the apostate church (symbolized by the harlot woman) and the world economic and political system of the antichrist (symbolized by the beast upon which she sat).

This study will take us inside the portals of Heaven to witness what occurred there after the destruction of Babylon. We will then return to Earth to learn about the final battles that will be fought and about the millennial reign of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1

REJOICE OVER HER!

In Chapters Seventeen and Eighteen, we left John in the wilderness where the angel had shown him a harlot, drunk with the blood of the martyrs, sitting on a scarlet-colored beast. We identified this harlot as the promiscuous, unfaithful, end-time apostate church who—for a time—will support the antichrist and will accept his system. In the end, however, the ten-nation confederacy of the antichrist (represented by the beast upon which the woman is sitting) will change, and Babylon (the apostate church) will be destroyed.

All the people of the world mourn at the destruction of the apostate church and the economic and political system that supported her. Merchants, kings, ship-masters, sailors—everyone who profited through their evil alliances:

And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more... And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all

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that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. (Revelation 18:11, 14-19)

While the evils of this world are mourning, the saints in Heaven will be rejoicing because of God's righteous judgment:

And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our GOD: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. (Revelation 19:1-2)

The heavens, apostles, and prophets are all commanded to rejoice at the judgment of the apostate church:

Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for GOD hath avenged you on her. (Revelation 18:20)

In Chapter 19, the scene changes dramatically to a great celebration in Heaven:

And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the LORD our GOD: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped GOD that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. (Revelation 19:1-4)

This passage begins with "after these things." After what things?

... After the outpouring of the seven trumpet

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judgments.

... After the outpouring of the seven vials of God's wrath.

... After the testimony of the witnesses.

... After the destruction of Babylon.

Earlier in his vision, John had seen the souls of those who were martyred for their faith. They cried out, "... *How long, O LORD, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*" (Revelation 6:10) The time had now come! God had poured out His judgments on the wicked, destroyed the harlot church, and avenged the blood of the martyrs.

Suddenly, John hears the loud roar of a great multitude in Heaven shouting...

... Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants. (Revelation 19:1-2, NIV)

Joining this great multitude in praise and honor for God's righteous judgments are the twenty-four elders and the four cherubim who fall on their faces before God seated on His throne. They cry out, "Amen, Hallelujah!"

Now look closely at verse five:

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our GOD, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (Revelation 19:5)

The focus of the praise suddenly changes as John hears a voice coming from the throne of God. A universal call is made to "... *Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!*" (Revelation 19:5, NIV)

Again the heavens resound with the voices of a great multitude. Like the roar of crashing waves of the ocean and loud clashes of thunder, the voices shout, "'... Hallelujah! for our Lord God Almighty reigns... '" (Revelation 19:6, NIV).

The original Greek word for *Almighty* literally means, "one who holds All Things in his control." Praise the Name of the living God! The all-powerful, supernatural One who holds ALL THINGS in His control is not an impersonal, detached Being up in the sky somewhere. He is the Lord of all! Our God is on the throne, and He alone is in control!

Once this truth—that God has a master plan and timetable and that all things are under His control—takes root deep within your spirit, you will be able to face every circumstance in your life from a strong position of KNOWING that will make you victorious. NOTHING is beyond God's control!

Chapter 2

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

The glorious praise and worship intensifies as all of Heaven focuses on the celebration of all celebrations the glorious event that the Church, the Bride of Christ, has long anticipated. The time has come for which Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Bridegroom, has patiently waited. A multitude of voices joyously proclaim that the marriage of the Lamb is at hand:

*Let us rejoice and shout for joy exulting and triumphant!
Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honor, for the
marriage of the Lamb [at last] has come and His bride has
prepared herself. (Revelation 19:7, TAB)*

The wedding referred to in these verses represents much more than our wedding ceremonies of today. The marriage of the Lamb refers to the full and complete union of Christ and His faithful Church. This union will enable us to enter into a new, unlimited relationship with Christ that is beyond our natural mind's conceptions.

As wonderful and precious as our personal relationship with Christ is today, it is limited. Although we are able to continually grow in the knowledge of Christ, we only know Him in part:

*Now we see but a poor reflection (as in a mirror); then we
shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know
fully, even as I am fully known. (I Corinthians 13:12, NIV)*

Even after years of serving Jesus, the cry of the Apostle Paul was, "That I may know him..." (Philippians 3:10)

On that glorious wedding day when we stand before

Christ, we will see Him face to face. WE WILL KNOW HIM IN HIS FULLNESS! We will enter a blessed communion with Him that will last throughout eternity.

Throughout the Word, marriage is used as an analogy to express the intimate relationship between God and His people. In the Old Testament, God said to Israel, "... I *will betroth thee unto me for ever....*" (Hosea 2:19). He said, "*For thy Maker is thine husband....*" (Isaiah 54:5). In the New Testament, Paul portrays Christ and the Church in terms of the intimacy of marriage:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. (Ephesians 5:25)

To the Corinthian church Paul said:

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. (II Corinthians 11:2)

God is calling His people today to rekindle the fire of their bridal love for Christ. Many Christians are just going through the motions—they are teaching Sunday School classes, praying for the sick, preaching, singing in the choir—but they have lost their first love and don't even realize it. These Christians have convinced themselves that the good works they are involved in prove their love for Christ.

How easy it is for God's people to fall into this trap! Many become so busy doing good works that they fail to build their personal relationship with Christ. The excitement—the driving hunger to know more about Christ, to know His Word, to be one with Him, the desire to tell everyone what Christ means to them—slowly dies like a fading flame.

The end-time Church today must have an intimate

bridal relationship with Christ before it can truly be a conquering Church...

... It is a fervent, undying love for Christ that will cause God's people to refuse to compromise with the world!

... It is a fervent, undying love for Christ that will enable God's people to say no to every temptation of the flesh!

... It is a fervent, undying love for Christ that will cause God's people to be willing to give themselves and everything they possess, if need be, for lost souls and to evangelize the world before Jesus comes!

... It is a fervent, undying love for Christ that will enable God's people to endure hardships, trials, and persecutions for the cause of Christ without wavering!

The final preparations are being made, and soon that great wedding procession will begin. Christ will descend from Heaven and gather His bride to meet Him in the air. We will enter into that home He has prepared for us, and then the doors will be forever closed.

One of the greatest illustrations of the return of our Heavenly Bridegroom was given by Jesus in the parable of the ten virgins:

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and

buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. (Matthew 25:1-13)

Some of the virgins were ready, others were not. It is time for the Bride of Christ to make herself ready! We must keep the oil of the Holy Spirit in our lamps. We must be prepared for the Bridegroom's return.

You will note in this parable that there is a third group of people that is not often mentioned. SOMEONE was awake enough, alert enough, and ready enough to sound the alarm... "The bridegroom is coming! " This is the group we should want to belong to...

... Not those who slumber with empty vessels.

... Not even those with full vessels who are sleeping.

... But the ones who are sounding the alarm... "The bridegroom is coming! Wake up!"

Although John does not describe the actual wedding feast in his vision, Jesus referred to a time when people from the east and west will take their places at the feast in the Kingdom of God:

And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 8:11)

He told His disciples of a day when He would drink the fruit of the vine with them in the Kingdom of His Father:

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you

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in my Father's kingdom. (Matthew 26:29)

What a glorious wedding day that will be! In my mind, I can see a great multitude gathered together, stretching as far as the eye can see in every direction. They are clothed in white, shimmering robes that reflect the light of Jesus. He is in the center of the vast multitude, and His loving Presence is so great that each person feels as if He is seated next to them. Spread out before them is a great banquet table filled with an abundance of everything ever needed or desired. The table extends as far as the eye can see...

Beloved, it is time for the Bride of Christ to make herself ready for that great day. The cry will soon ring out, "*Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him.*" Are you ready?

Chapter 3

PREPARING FOR THE WEDDING

Every bride prepares for her wedding day – no matter what culture or ethnic background she is from. There are traditional ceremonies, ancient rituals to be observed, special wedding garments, and a host of other preparations that must be made.

We are now in the period of preparation for the greatest wedding of all time: the marriage between Jesus Christ and His Bride, the Church. Here is how you can get ready for this great wedding...

1. You must put on the wedding garment.

Good works are insufficient. They are like filthy rags in God's eyes. When you confess your sins and are born again, all the sins and stains of your past are washed away. You are clothed in His righteousness. There are no substitutes for this wedding garment. No one will enter the marriage supper of the Lamb without it.

2. You must keep your wedding garment unspotted from the world.

In Jesus' message to the seven churches, He spoke of the few in Sardis who were worthy to walk with Him in white, who had not defiled their garments.

Peter admonished the Church concerning Christ's second coming:

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. (II Peter 3:14)

Jesus said,

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. (Revelation 16:15)

As you prepare for the return of the Bridegroom, you must be diligent and make every effort to separate yourself from the world and the lusts of the flesh – "*Abstain from all appearance of evil*" (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Ask the Holy Spirit to create in you an overwhelming desire for holiness and purity. Turn to the Lord with your whole heart and allow Him to purge and purify you.

3. You must be continually cleansed through the Word.

The Word of God is alive. It is more than a book—it is the written and living Word of Almighty God. As you read and apply it to your life, the Word will come alive within your spirit. It will reveal and convict you of sin in your life. As you confess your sin and repent, Christ—the Living Word—will cleanse you. This is why it is so vital that you spend time in the Word daily.

4. You must rekindle the fire of your bridal love for Christ.

Get alone with the Lord. Lay aside your own desires and self-centered plans. Repent of your selfishness and give yourself unreservedly to Christ. Put the development of your relationship with Him before everything else.

5. You must fulfill your spiritual responsibilities.

We are saved to serve. We have a commission to reach others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has equipped us with power and gifts equal to the task.

Right after He told the parable of the ten virgins, Jesus told another important parable related to His return:

Preparing for the Wedding

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. (Matthew 25:14-15)

Jesus is our Master Who has gone to the far country of Heaven. Prior to His departure, He gave us gifts to use and responsibilities to fulfill in His absence.

Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His Lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away

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even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 25:16-30)

Beloved, we must use our spiritual and material resources wisely for the purpose they were given—the advancement of the Kingdom of God. We must not hoard them. We must not hide them. We cannot ignore them. We must fulfill our God-given destiny so that we will be ready for the marriage supper of the Lamb!

Chapter 4

THE MIGHTY WARRIOR OF GOD

One of the important themes in the Book of Revelation is the unveiling of Jesus Christ in all His power and glory.

- In Chapter One, we saw the glorified Christ, the Alpha and Omega.
- In Chapters Two and Three, we saw Him as the Head of the Church.
- In Chapter Five, we saw Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah and as the Lamb of God Who is worthy to open the seals.
- In Chapter Seven, we saw the great multitude of the redeemed in Heaven worshiping Christ, the Lamb.
- At the end of Chapter Seven, Christ the Lamb becomes our Shepherd Who leads us to fountains of living water.
- In Chapter Fourteen, we see Christ the Lamb standing on the Heavenly Mount Zion as the redeemed sing a new song of praise.
- At that great final harvest of the Earth, we see Him as the Lord of the harvest.

Now, in Chapter Nineteen, Christ is unveiled as the mighty, conquering, warrior Messiah:

And I saw heaven opened, 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. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was

clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of GOD. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 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. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11-16)

In these verses, John sees the Heavens opened... the billowing clouds roll back like a gigantic scroll, and Christ descends on a beautiful white horse.

His eyes are as a flame of fire, piercing and penetrating the hearts of the wicked. Nothing is hidden from His gaze.

On His head are many diadems symbolizing His unlimited power and sovereignty. On His crown, a name is written that no man knows but He Himself.

The garment He is wearing has been dipped in blood, which symbolizes His victory in the coming battle of Armageddon as well as the blood shed on Calvary. His name is called the Word of God, which identifies this great warrior as Jesus, the living Word. Following Him are the armies of Heaven, riding white horses and clothed in white, fine linen, which is symbolic of righteousness.

Pictured here is not the meek and mild Lamb of God Who as a sheep was led to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7). He is a mighty Warrior prepared for battle.

When Christ returns, there will be no more mercy for the wicked, only the fierceness of God's wrath. The tribes of the Earth will mourn:

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. (Matthew 24:30)

The wicked will run in terror and try to hide:

And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. (Isaiah 2:19)

Look closely at Revelation 19:15

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.

When Christ returns as the mighty conquering, warring Messiah, there are divine purposes He will fulfill:

1. Jesus will come to smite the nations.

John saw a sharp sword proceeding out of Christ's mouth. This sharp sword is not a literal sword but is symbolic of the powerful force of the words that come forth from His mouth. The all-powerful, conquering Christ will not need man-made weapons. With the same powerful force that He used to speak the Heavens and the Earth into existence, He will bring death and destruction upon the wicked. Isaiah prophesied concerning Christ:

... he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. (Isaiah 11:4)

2. Jesus will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

This reference to ruling with a rod of iron speaks again of destruction. To rule with a rod of iron means to destroy. Christ will be strong and unyielding in His judgments upon the wicked.

3. Jesus will tread the winepress of God's wrath.

Throughout the Word, the treading of grapes was symbolic of divine wrath upon God's enemies. Isaiah

prophesied of the Day of the Lord when God's wrath will be poured out:

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. (Isaiah 13:9)

4. Jesus will fight the war of Armageddon.

Jesus and His heavenly army will return for the greatest battles of all time—the ultimate conflict between good and evil—the battle of Armageddon. Because of the importance of this battle, we need to know the details about it as well as the other end-time battles that will be fought on Earth.

Chapter 5

GOD'S END-TIME BATTLE PLAN

There has never been a time on Earth when some type of war was not being fought. Throughout the ages, there have been innumerable wars fought since the first war between good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Wars will continue until the end of time.

There are three major end-time wars that God has planned to take place in the closing hours of time.

War #1: The end-time invasion of Israel.

War #2: The battle of Armageddon.

War #3: The final rebellion and destruction of Satan.

Jesus prophesied that one of the signs of His coming would be "*wars and rumors of wars*" (Matthew 24:6). In Revelation 6:4, when the second seal is broken, a rider on a red horse, symbolizing war, is sent forth with a great sword to take peace from the Earth. During these three final end-time wars, the death and destruction will be far greater than anything that has ever occurred before upon the Earth.

These three major wars are not determined by man but have been planned by God to fulfill His purposes. In each of these three end-time battles, God is in control. He is directing the outcome and will use these wars to fulfill His end-time plan. We will study each of these in terms of the prophetic Scriptures, opposing forces, purpose, battlefield, timing, major events, and outcome.

End-Time War #1: The End-Time Invasion

of Israel.

Prophetic Scriptures: Ezekiel 38-39

Opposing Forces: An alliance of nations will come against Israel:

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. (Ezekiel 38:1-6)

Led by Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, the following nations will come against Israel: Persia (Jewish commentaries or Ezekiel describe Persia as modern-day Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan), Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer (Eastern Europe, Germany, Poland), and Togarmah (Turkey).

The nations listed in Ezekiel 38 who come against Israel are descended from the sons and grandsons of Noah. Most of them are descendants of Japheth, one of Noah's three sons. The leader of this attack against Israel is Gog, who is identified as "the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal." Many prophecy teachers believe this refers to the leader of Moscow and Tobolsk in Russian Siberia. Magog is the nation that will lead this attack. This was the name of a grandson of Noah, who settled in present-day Russia.

Purpose: The purpose of this war is...

God's End-Time Battle Plan

To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land. (Ezekiel 38:12)

These allied forces will attack Israel in an attempt to annihilate the Jewish people from the Earth. Their purpose will be to "take a spoil" of the wealth of Israel. God will supernaturally intervene on Israel's behalf as an end-time witness to the world and position Israel for the fulfillment of their end-time spiritual destiny.

Battlefield: This battle will be fought on the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 38:8).

Timing: This battle will occur after Israel has been restored as a nation. This event occurred on May 15, 1948. On September 13, 1993, the historic Israel-PLO Peace Accord was signed, which ushered in a short-lived peace in Israel and the Middle East. Everything is falling into place, and the stage is now being set for this end-time war against Israel.

Don't confuse this war with the War of Armageddon. This war against Israel will happen some time before the Great Tribulation. The Battle of Armageddon will be fought when Christ returns, and He will fight against the antichrist and his allies to destroy them.

Major events: Major events in this war include:

- A great earthquake will occur in Israel (Ezekiel 38:18-20).
- God will send pestilence, rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone upon Gog and his allies (Ezekiel 38:21-22).
- God will send fire upon the land of Magog and those dwelling securely in the coast lands (Ezekiel

39:6).

Outcome: God will supernaturally intervene on Israel's behalf and destroy Gog and the invading armies (Ezekiel 39:2-5).

Israel will burn the weapons of their enemies for seven years (Ezekiel 39:9-10). The destruction of their enemies will be so complete that it will take seven months to bury the dead. There will be a burial ground called the "*Valley of Hamongog*" for Gog and the multitude of those slain (Ezekiel 39:11).

As a result of God's miraculous intervention during this battle, from that day forward, Israel will once again recognize God as their God and know beyond any doubt that He has delivered them. This great victory will be a great end-time witness to Israel and the world of His power on behalf of His people.

End-Time War #2: The War of Armageddon

Prophetic Scriptures: Revelation 19:11-21; Revelation 16:12-16.

Opposing forces: The antichrist, the false prophet and their allied forces, including the army of two hundred million from the East, will war against Christ and His army of saints from Heaven:

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. 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. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed

God's End-Time Battle Plan

is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. (Revelation 16:12-16)

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. (Revelation 19:19)

This war is not fought between earthly kings and nations of the world. Evil spirits are sent forth from Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet to seduce and draw the allied nations together to fight against Christ and the saints who are with Him.

The Greek word *polemos*, in the King James version, is translated, "battle." The word actually means, "war." This is not an isolated skirmish ... it involves all the nations of the world that have aligned themselves with the antichrist. It is not a man-made war; it is the *POLEMOS... THE WAR OF THE GREAT DAY OF THE ALMIGHTY GOD!*

God will gather the nations together against Jerusalem. Christ will return with His saints to bring judgment upon the wicked and destroy the antichrist and all his allies (Revelation 19:11-21).

The antichrist will be attacked by the "king of the South" and the "king of the North." He will then enter those countries and defeat them. Many nations will be overthrown by the antichrist (Daniel 11:40-41). The phrase, "king of the South, " refers to Egypt and its African allies. The "king of the North" identifies nations to the north of Israel. The antichrist will hear news from the East and North, and he will assemble his forces together in Israel to meet the coming onslaught of the kings of the East.

Purpose: During this war, Christ's purpose will be to destroy the antichrist and the false prophet and pour out

God's wrath in judgment upon the wicked who have refused to repent. Christ is coming to tread the "*winepress of God's wrath*" (Revelation 19:15). This war will usher in the thousand year reign of Christ and His saints upon the Earth.

Battlefield: This war of Almighty God will be fought "*into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon*" (Revelation 16:16). The Greek word for *Armageddon* is *harmagedon*, which means, "the mountain of Megiddo."

This area has been the site of more battles than any other place on Earth. It was here that Joshua conquered thirty-one kings (Joshua 12:24); God gave Gideon a great victory (Judges 7); Deborah and Barak destroyed and eliminated the army of Sisera "*by the waters of Megiddo*" (Judges 5:19); and many other battles were fought between Israel and its enemies.

The city of Megiddo was situated on the main road linking Egypt and Syria. Due to its location, it was the most strategic city in Israel.

The Old Testament name of the entire valley separating Samaria from Galilee is Jezreel. It is the major corridor through the rugged Palestinian hills and was a key military site.

The western part of this valley is the Plain of Esdraelon, located about fifty-five miles north of Jerusalem. It is a triangular plain approximately fifteen by fifteen by twenty miles, bounded along the southwest by the Carmel mountain range and on the north by the hills of Nazareth.

The exact location where this war will be fought is unknown, but the Word of God clearly reveals that it will be fought somewhere within this vast valley.

Timing: I believe this war will occur after the Great

Tribulation when Christ returns with His saints (Revelation 19:11-19).

Major Events:

- A great earthquake in Israel. When Christ sets His foot down on the Mount of Olives, the ground will split, creating a crevice extending from the Dead Sea through the mountain to the Mediterranean (Zechariah 14:3-5).
- The Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem with a plague (Zechariah 14:12).
- The Euphrates River will dry up, preparing the way for the "Kings of the East" to cross and enter into Israel. In order to reach northern Israel, the two hundred million man army of the "Kings of the East" (Revelation 16:12) must cross the Euphrates River.

Outcome: Christ Himself will personally lead His Heavenly forces against the antichrist and his armies. He will descend with His saints from Heaven to destroy the antichrist, the false prophet, and all those gathered together to war against Him (Revelation 19:11-19).

The fierceness of God's wrath will be poured out upon the wicked. There will be such desolation that a river of blood will flow for two hundred miles, up to the bridles of the horses (Revelation 14:20). Isaiah prophesied this coming day, when Christ will tread the winepress of God's wrath upon the wicked (Isaiah 63:1-6). With swift judgment, the antichrist and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20).

The remnant of those aligned with the antichrist will be slain and their bodies given to the birds of prey (Revelation 19:17-18, 21). Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit for one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3).

End-Time War #3: Final Rebellion and Destruction of Satan

Prophetic Scriptures: Revelation 20

Opposing Forces: Satan, leading a great multitude from the nations of the Earth, will surround the "beloved city."

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. (Revelation 20:7-8)

This war is not the same "war of Gog and Magog" as described in Ezekiel 38-39. In Ezekiel, Gog refers to the leader of Magog—Russia—who leads a confederation of nations from the north to attack Israel. The name "Gog and Magog" in Revelation 20 is used symbolically to refer to the nations throughout the Earth who are in rebellion against God.

After the thousand year reign of the saints with Christ upon the Earth, Satan will be loosed and will go into the nations to deceive and lead them in one final rebellion against God.

Purpose: God's purpose for this final rebellion is to completely eradicate every trace of sin and disobedience from the Earth. Even during the millennial reign of Christ with the saints, there will be those who will be deceived and will rebel against God. After leading this final rebellion, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire forever.

Battlefield: This final war will take place in Israel, as Satan and this vast multitude surround the "beloved city" of Jerusalem where Christ has established His throne during the millennial reign:

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And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. (Revelation 20:9)

Timing: After the millennial reign of Christ with His saints upon Earth and before the great white throne of judgment, Satan will be loosed to lead this final rebellion.

Major Events:

- The saints will not have to fight during this war. God will supernaturally intervene.
- God will rain down fire from Heaven, defeating all enemies!

Outcome: The great multitude who have rebelled against God and have gathered together against the saints will be devoured by the fire from Heaven. This will be Satan's final overthrow! He will be cast into the lake of fire with the antichrist and the false prophet. This is Satan's final destination where he will be tormented day and night throughout eternity:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

Chapter 6

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

The thousand year period described in Revelation 10 when Satan and his evil forces are bound and cast into the bottomless pit is known as the New Millennium:

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. (Revelation 10:1-3)

Verses 4-6 of this chapter describe the first resurrection, which occurs at this time (we will learn more about the resurrections and the time of final judgment in the next book in this series). Other than these verses, details of the millennial kingdom are not discussed in John's vision, except that it is clear that it will begin with the second coming of Christ and will end with judgment on the world and the creation of the new Heaven and new Earth.

Other passages in the Bible provide additional information about the millennial kingdom, however. According to the Old Testament, Jerusalem will be the capital of the millennial kingdom, and war will cease:

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the

Armageddon and the New Millennium

nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Isaiah 2:3-4)

The millennial kingdom will be characterized by righteousness, peace, and tranquility, and there will be justice for all the oppressed:

And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. (Isaiah 11:3-5)

Even the ferocity of beasts will be tamed:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9)

(Additional passages describing this period include Isaiah 11:11- 16; Jeremiah 23:3-4, 8; 30:3-9; 31:3-14.)

Psalms 72 provides a prophetic picture of the future millennium. It is described as flourishing, having a righteous government and abundant peace. Christ's rule extends from sea to sea, and the Earth is filled with the glory of God.

Many passages in the Old Testament emphasize the

fact that Israel will have a prominent place in the millennial kingdom. According to Ezekiel 20:33-38, at the time of the Second Coming, Israel will experience a purging judgment, and only the righteous, Godly remnant will be allowed to enter the kingdom. Israel, pictured in the Old Testament as being an untrue wife, will then be rejoined to Christ in the symbol of marriage and experience the love of Christ:

Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. (Hosea 1:10-11)

As we have noted, at the end of this thousand years, Satan will be loosed for a season:

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. (Revelation 20:7)

People have sometimes asked why this would be allowed. This event is in keeping with God's purpose to demonstrate that man left to his own devices will—even in a perfect environment—sin against God. Man's evil heart is revealed in the fact that people reject Christ and follow Satan when he is once again loosed.

Satan's release also demonstrates his unregenerate wickedness because even one thousand years in confinement does not change him or his evil forces.

Finally, Satan and his forces are cast into the lake of fire where they will dwell for eternity:

And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are,

*and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.
(Revelation 20:10)*

You will note that the beast and the false prophet, who were thrown into the lake of fire one thousand years before, are still there, demonstrating that this is not annihilation but continued punishment.

As we close this segment of our study, I want to emphasize again what I have told you from the beginning of our journey through the Book of Revelation. The purpose of prophecy is not to scare but to prepare. We have seen some wonderful things in this lesson (the final return of Jesus, the establishing of the millennial kingdom, etc.), but we have also looked into the future to view some frightful scenes.

Remember: God has given us this revelation knowledge to prepare us...

... For the future.

... For His return.

... For eternity.

... To accomplish the task He has given us to reach a waiting world with the good news of the Gospel.

As Jesus said, we must declare, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).

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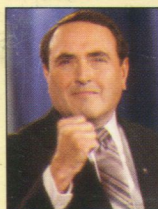
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