

#### 46. Armageddon (Judgment Day)

- The word Har-Magedon (Armageddon) is only used once in the Bible (Revelation 16:16). It is made up of two words in Hebrew: Har (mountain) and Megiddo (a city in the northern part of ancient Israel). The ancient city of Megiddo, southwest of the Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberias in Israel), was built on a hill, and it is therefore called the mountain of Megiddo; Armageddon. The city of Megiddo overlooks a beautiful, large valley known as the Plain of Esdraelon (Jezreel Valley), the scene of many Old Testament battles (Judges 4, 7). This plain is 32 kilometers (20 miles) long and 23 kilometers (14 miles) wide and could accommodate a vast army.

- Armageddon can be described as a war or campaign because it involves more than a single battle at one location. Armageddon is the final war of the Great Tribulation, which ends when Jesus Christ returns to rescue His people, to judge the wicked and to rule His earthly kingdom. The campaign of Armageddon begins when three unclean spirits come out of the mouths of the unholy (satanic) trinity of Satan, the beast and the false prophet (Revelation 16:13). These spirits of demons go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty, to the place called Armageddon (Revelation 16:14-16). Why will the kings and their armies be summoned to Israel? They want to make war against God and His army (Revelation 19:19), and they want to once and for all eradicate the Jewish people and thwart the promises of God.

- Apparently while the beast (antichrist) is battling the king of the North, the king of the South and others (Daniel 11:40-45), some Jews will return to Jerusalem and will inhabit it once again (Zechariah 12:3-10). When the beast realizes that the Jews have returned to Jerusalem, it appears that he will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion in the Jezreel Valley (Daniel 11:45; Armageddon) and will summon the nations of the world to join him there. These nations will be gathered against Jerusalem to battle (Zechariah 12:3, 14:2). God will defend the Jews in Jerusalem and will give them supernatural strength (Zechariah 12:8). Eventually, "the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south" (Zechariah 14:2-4). The split in the Mount of Olives will travel toward Jerusalem's Old City. The Jewish remnant will flee into the newly created valley and will be protected by the Messiah.

- The war of Armageddon is not limited to the battle for Jerusalem. Apparently there is also a battle in Edom (modern Jordan). Isaiah describes the war of Armageddon in graphic detail and explains that all the nations and all their armies will be utterly destroyed as a result of God's wrath. He then says, "the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom... thus their land will be soaked with blood... For the LORD has a day of vengeance... and its land will become burning pitch... its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate (Isaiah 34:6-10). Why does God single out Bozrah and Edom for judgment

among all the nations of the world? Bozrah is located in the ancient land of Edom (southeast of Israel, in modern Jordan). Bozrah and the surrounding region may be the location of the safe haven God provides for the Jewish remnant during the second half of the Tribulation. It appears that this will be the site of one of the battles of Armageddon, where the nations of the world attempt to wipe out the Jewish people. For more information about the safe haven that God will prepare for the Jewish remnant during the second half of the Tribulation, refer to the following verses: Revelation 12:6, 14; Isaiah 63:1-6; Obadiah 1:15-21; Zechariah 13:7-9; Micah 2:12-13; Daniel 11:41; Matthew 24:15-21; Mark 13:14-19; and Luke 21:20-24. In another passage, Isaiah appears to be describing Christ's second coming and Armageddon (Isaiah 63:1-6). Jesus is depicted as coming from Edom and Bozrah and His garments are sprinkled and stained red with blood. He trampled the people in His wrath and poured out their lifeblood on the earth. When Jesus Christ appears in the sky at His second coming, riding a white horse, He will be clothed in a robe dipped in blood (Revelation 19:11-13). It is possible that Jesus will go to Edom in addition to Jerusalem at His second coming. God's judgment will result in a 325 kilometer (200 mile) long river of blood (Revelation 14:19-20). This may indicate that the battles of Armageddon will span the territories between Bozrah (Edom) and the Jezreel Valley, which is almost 325 kilometers (200 miles).

- When Jesus Christ returns, riding on a white horse, the Jews will recognize Him as their Messiah and will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son (Zechariah 12:10-12; Revelation 19:11). He will be accompanied by an army of angels on white horses (Revelation 19:14; Matthew 16:27, 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8). The armies of the nations will be defeated and thrown into the great wine press of the wrath of God. The wine press will be trodden outside the city, which is probably a reference to Jerusalem (Revelation 14:19-20). The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire and the rest will be killed with the sword which comes from the mouth of Jesus (Revelation 19:20-21). God's wrath will not be limited to the armies in Israel for "those slain by the LORD on that day will be from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be lamented, gathered or buried; they will be like dung on the face of the ground" (Jeremiah 25:33). The final war (Armageddon) of the Great Tribulation is described in many places in the Bible: Revelation 14:14-20, 16:13-21, 19:11-21; Zechariah 12:1-14, 14:1-15; Isaiah 34:1-17, 63:1-6; Jeremiah 25:12-38; Joel 3:1-17; Obadiah 1:15-21; Zephaniah 1:18, 3:8; Malachi 4:1-6; and 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9.