

Great Battles in Prophecy

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As if there wasn't enough controversy in the wild world of religion, particularly among its prophecy buffs, a general concept seems to pervade most, having to do with "the-End-of-the-World". The greater consensus is that this world will come to a spectacularly catastrophic end, with all who have been 'converted' ('saved') having been 'taken' from earth to spend eternity up in Heaven. And, that's the explanation, so far as is foreseen of how this human experience here on earth will wind up.

But, the problem is, it isn't quite so simple as that, not that extinction of the human kind and the full end of life on earth is all that simple. But in it's oft-described 'simplicity', preachers and 'prophets' of varied persuasions (and even moviemakers) love to wax eloquent about the inescapable carnage and massive fiery destructions of all that exists, both of man and his environment.

Not So Fast!

What complicates the picture is the fact of, and the abundant biblical witness of, there being an age out beyond this present world order, one in which the returned Christ will rule the nations together with His Spirit Born Saints. Once we factor-in those clear biblical statements, we can see that the predictions of so many religious peoples are more than a little bit off base. In fact, correctly said, way off base!

What modern religion has missed is the amply supported fact of there being another 1000 years of civil society here on earth after the event they try to describe, but under a dramatically different administration. Among the Bible's clear prophesies we have accounts of a whole new world order, one ruled by the firm hand of Christ together with His Spirit Born Saints, who then comprise His Bride!

What we should be talking about is **not** the end of the world per se – that term in itself is misleading – but "the-end-of-the-age".¹ This is the end of the present age, ordered by mankind, and the beginning of the age ruled by God. Six thousand years are allotted to humanity to prove that man's ways don't really work, (ways that produces all kinds of repressions and conflicts) and a final thousand to show how to live the right way. Those final 1000 years define the era known biblically as "the Kingdom of God".

Further confounding the arena of understanding, modern religion typically misidentifies what is meant by the term, "Kingdom of God". Most expect that it refers to the church in this age, the kingdom of saints in the world, or something along that line. Rather, it refers to the actual Millennial Kingdom that will be present on earth for 1000 years. The Kingdom of God is that age in which Christ will rule over the nations (yes, there will still be nations in the post-Advent era)!

In Heaven or OF Heaven?

Just as a side note, the Gospel of Matthew uses the term "Kingdom of Heaven" where the rest of the Gospel writers and the New Testament uses the equivalent term "Kingdom of God". Now to some, the Kingdom of Heaven refers to the Heavenly Realm, people having gone TO Heaven. But, with some of these same people, the Kingdom of God means the component of the Church living within civil society,

¹ The Greek word, translated "world" is Strong's #2889, *kosmos* (world or world order) or #165, *aion* (age). It isn't the world that will end, but its present administrations will.

here and now on earth. (In other words, the living Church.) Even this apparent discrepancy doesn't seem to alert churchgoers to their casual mis-perceptions.

But we should be clear as to what the term means. We'll see why this is important as we get deeper into this subject.

Another problem area with regard to that "final battle" at "the End" is that people having interest in "the End-of-the-World" scenarios seem only to recognize there being ONE final great battle. From that approach, if they recognize only one, it's easy to understand how they could apply the many biblical accounts just to that one event. A primary objective of this topic is to address the common mis-applications of some prophecies that actually relate to other events.

How Many Battles?

There isn't just one! In fact, there are two major armed confrontations between God and the forces of evil, and those two are separated by 1000 years. Then a generation later, another amazing event will take place, one which religion in general seems to have little awareness of or too little comprehension of to explain. It's the purpose of this article to bring out this amazing story in full. Without it, we can't appreciate the account of how "the End" actually will occur, and what objectives will be achieved by those events.

Casual 'prophesarians' commonly refer to the cataclysmic 'end of the world' as "Armageddon". The term is used widely, without their being familiar with what it means. On the news recently, a newscaster, referring to a huge meteor explosion heard over Nevada and central California, assured the public that "this was not Armageddon"! Many times people refer to natural disasters "being of biblical proportions." From these we can see the general perceptions and the gross ignorance as to what the battle of Armageddon is in reality. The name has taken on a whole new meaning due to relative ignorance. It has come to express the idea that an angry God intends to blast humanity from existence in the end time. People are convinced that this is quite biblical.

Three Major Prophesied Events

The "Battle of Armageddon" is the event with the widest awareness. But there's another great battle, plainly prophesied, that few know of or can explain in its proper timeframe. When we include this other event, we are forced into an awareness of a number of clear Biblical Truths that many churchgoers haven't heard about. They being: the Millennial Kingdom with its many generations of humans who'll live in a world free of war and oppression. A world free of religious deception and free of the evil spiritual element that drives this world, AND a distinct and separate time period beyond that in which peoples from ancient to modern times will be raised and will live together in a righteous society like their millennial predecessors did.

This other great battle is Satan's rebellion after the 1000 years. Satan will be bound during Christ's reign on earth, but will, for an important reason, be released briefly toward the end of the 1000 years. This fantastic allegation is revealed in Revelation 20.² What makes it so fantastic is the fact that from among the final generations of the millennial age, Satan will find so many whom he can deceive to such extent that they will willingly join with him, being a part of his army, to encircle and attempt to 'take' the millennial Capitol, Jerusalem!

² Request the article "*Why MUST Satan be Released*" for a full explanation of this event.

*“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**. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city:...” (Rev. 20:7-9)*

You would think that living in a righteously administered society would produce universal conversion. Apparently, there’s something to learn about human nature and the conversion process. There will always be a segment of the population that is quietly resentful and harbors rebellion against God and His Way! It only takes a special situation to bring that out!

But the enigmatic thing about this realization is that the ‘infamous’ battle of Armageddon **is not** the final battle of all time, as so many uninformed ‘believers’ allege! It does not represent the “end-of-the-world” as is commonly assumed.

Of these two great confrontations against God that we’ve discussed this far, neither represents the end-of-the-world! Rather, they mark major turning points where a new age (*aion*), a whole new world order, will begin. After Armageddon will be the 1000 year Millennial Kingdom of God, populated by the survivors and their descendants. Peace and prosperity will abound like never before, thru some 40 generations, due to God’s righteous administration, with humanity finally living God’s Way. It isn’t a matter of vengeful wrath, but a confrontation that marks the end of one administration (world order) and the beginning of another.

Then after Satan’s rebellion will be the general resurrection (Rev. 20:5) where ‘the rest of the dead’ will arise to have the opportunity their previous lifetimes never provided them. This is the era Christ referred to in places such as Matthew 12:41-42 (& 11:20-24) and Luke 11:31-32 (& 10:13-14). That age referred to as “the Great White Throne Judgment”. Having rejected the doctrines of the resurrections and of the millennial Kingdom, religion is greatly impeded in understanding.

Yet a Third Event?

While we have considered **two** clear and distinct armed engagements with Christ, one at His return and another after the millennial age is concluded, there is yet another. It’s this third event that is the envisioned end-of-the-world in reality.

But before we consider this third event, and the reason for it, let’s first review the prior two.

Those with a serious interest in this area of prophecy are familiar with where the battle of Armageddon is to occur and where it gets its name. It is from that region in the land of Israel, (also known as the Levant) some 55 miles north of Jerusalem, called the Plains of Megiddo, near the town bearing the same name. It is a vast flat area near the Mediterranean coast, providing adequate space for a huge army to assemble and maneuver. It was the battleground for many armed incursions into the region in the ancient past.

The army that will assemble there to oppose the returning Christ will be those of “**The Beast**”, a consortium of Ten Kings who will have merged their powers and interests, coalescing into a great Super Power. Places such as Revelation 13 and Daniel 7:19-27 describe The Beast in great detail. It is based in Europe, ridden upon by the predominant European religion (and the spirit power that gained preeminence over it (in Rev. 13:11, called **the Dragon**)).

The army of the Beast will be of **European** origin, having recently defeated the forces of ‘the king of the South’. (Dan. 11:29-45) This is that seventh head (restoration) of the fourth Empire (Rome), as prophesied in Daniel 2. Upon this seventh head are ten contemporary ‘crowns’ (old monarchies). The defeat of this armed force will be nothing less than uniquely spectacular. We read of that in Zechariah 14:12-15. No army is presented in opposition, only the force of Almighty God. Their flesh consumes while they stand, and extreme panic causes them to fight among themselves.

This is the last battle of the age of man. But notice, the force is European, with religious under-support.

Now, the great battle that develops next, after the 1000 years, is a different ethnicity altogether. None of these nations mentioned are European. Rather, they are predominantly Asian, allied with certain Middle Eastern ethnicities. Read of them in Ezekiel 38. Persia (Iran), Ethiopia (Cush), and Libya (Put), are the southern allies of Gog and Magog along with Gomer and Togarmah! This force is regionally and ethnically different from that of the former army of the Beast Power. Nor is organized religion a factor with these. The Dragon himself ‘inspires’ this unnumberable army.

Revelation 20 describes Satan’s final rebellion, and places it in its proper timeframe. This is clearly after the millennial age. And notice, the objective of Satan’s forces, drawn primarily from the lands of the far north (Ezek. 38:11-13) are more economically motivated: To gain **great spoils** from the ‘undefended’ world Headquarters: representing a socialist “sharing the wealth” mentality!?

Their defeat will also differ from the former battle. They also will fight among themselves, but will be blasted from above with flooding rain, great hail-stones, fire and brimstone. (Ezek. 38:21-22) These forces and their remains will be scattered throughout the land, even east of the Dead Sea. It will take seven months to bury all of the scattered dead, as Ezekiel 39:12-15 explains, again in detail, and years to salvage all of their weaponry (v.9).

These are two distinctly different battle scenarios. We need to be careful to distinguish between the two. They don’t describe the same event. Not all are careful!

Is All Life to End?

Now, an important question we should be asking ourselves at this point is, do these battles represent the extinction of all of mankind?

As to the Battle of Armageddon, we must conclude that, **no**, only the combatant armies are destroyed, there in the Middle East. Surviving generations will succeed them, living on into the Millennial Age.

After the battle after Satan’s release, other raised generations will be around for years, burying these dead and ‘gathering up’ their arms. So, again, **no!**

The Truth is different, isn’t it?

The Sixth Trumpet Sounds

Now, the Seven Vials and the Trumpet Plagues from within the sixth vial, as found in Revelation chapters 6, 8, 9 & 11, may offer some explanation of the conceptions religious people have regarding end-time events. But these are not the two battles described to this point. They are plagues from God upon rebellious and evil humanity overall, directed by angels. Their intent is to entice some degree of

repentance from God-opposing humanity. This apparently will not elicit a lot of positive response! (Rev. 9:21) As it says, in spite of these plagues, they will NOT repent of their murders, drugs, (pharmaceuticals) sexual sins or thefts. (The sins of our generation exactly!) A major population reduction (against the evil – destroyers of earth and society) will be a necessary step in preparing the earth for God’s Kingdom. (Rev. 9:15) Yet, those ‘sealed’ by God’s angels against such wrath are ‘protected’. Again, this is not human extinction!

An END Will Come!

Though we have assurance that there’ll be a world beyond this present age, there will be an ‘end’ of physical humanity, but not occurring at the time or in the way it’s conceived by people today.

The battle of Armageddon transitions between the age of man and the Millennial Kingdom of God. The battle at Satan’s release transitions between the Millennial Age and the Great White Throne Judgment period, when the ‘rest of the dead’ are raised to complete their lifetimes, then having the opportunity for salvation that their first lifetimes didn’t provide them. (Rev. 20:5 & Ezek. 37:12-14)

But, once these redemption opportunities are concluded, and there is no more likelihood of any further spiritual development, the ‘harvest’ of souls will be declared ‘fully ripe’. At which time God will begin the harvest He has long awaited (Jas. 5:7) This is that **third event** mentioned earlier.

Christ said that in the fullness of time, He will gather all nations, alive, and will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (Matt. 25:31-46) At **that** time, there will be the Final Sentencing event. Christ, sitting on a White Cloud, will harvest His late era Saints, those who became converted during the millennial and post-millennial ages, then two angels will ‘harvest’ the rest for destruction as we read in Revelation 14:14-20. The unconverted will pay the penalty for their own sins with their own blood, and then be consigned to the Lake of Fire.

These are just some of the basic parameters that “end-of-the-world” prophets fail to explain to their fascinated audiences. Why does any of this matter?

What we can see from this is that the world’s religions and society in general has wrapped itself in a cloak of false perceptions of what’ll happen in the near future. In the process, it also represents a false picture of God and His Plan for redeeming mankind. God’s wrath is against the forces of evil, to wrest power from them, but not to destroy all life on earth. Man’s false perceptions expose a full ignorance of the resurrections (plural) of the dead and the millennial Kingdom of God on earth. Once these inadequacies are corrected, a completely different picture of “the End” emerges.

And then, what’s beyond that? Stay tuned! 