



THE BATTLE OF

Armageddon

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The Battle of Armageddon

Question: What is the Battle of Armageddon? What is its nature, its beginning and its ending?

Answer: Let us first consider the term “Armageddon” and its significance. In the dictionary *Armageddon* is defined as: “1. The scene of a final battle between the forces of good and evil, prophesied in the Bible to occur at the end of the world. Rev. 16:16. 2. Any decisive conflict. It is taken from the Hebrew word “har megiddon” referring to the mountain region of Megiddo, site of several great battles in the Old Testament.”

—Taken from the *American Heritage Dictionary*

Then the *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* in its article on Armageddon says the Greek is “Armageddon” but the Hebrew is “Har Magedon” (Mount Megiddo), a word found only in Rev. 16:16 for the final battle ground between the forces of good and evil. It says further, “The valley of Jezreel and the Plain of Esdraelon at the foot of Mount Megiddo were the scene of many decisive battles in the history of Israel.” It was here that Israel completely annihilated the armies of Sisera to the last man. (Judges 4:16 and 5:19-20). Here Gideon defeated the hosts of the Midianites. (Judges 6:33 and the entire 7th chapter of Judges.)

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We will here insert the text of Rev. 16:16 which is the only place in the New Testament where the word is found. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” The New Testament in this place gives the Greek rendering of the word “Armageddon.” The fact that it is mentioned, “Which is called in the Hebrew tongue,” indicates that Jesus wished here to connect up what He is saying with the Hebrew “Har magedon” (Mount Megiddo) in the history of Israel.

Israel after the flesh (natural Israel) was a type of Israel after the spirit (spiritual Israel). In Romans 2:28-29, Paul says, “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Here is the comparison of literal Israel and spiritual Israel. Therefore we conclude that “Armageddon” in the New Testament has the significance for the Church of God, the people of God in this gospel age of time, or spiritual Israel, as Mount Megiddo had for literal Israel in Old Testament times—a place of very great and decisive battles.

This is described as the “Battle of that great day of God Almighty.” I surely recognize that there has been a continual battle or warfare between good and evil, light and darkness, truth and error throughout this dispensation of time. This passage in Rev. 16:13-16 seems to be focusing right down on these closing days of this dispensation in which we are now living and to the final climactic battle which will terminate in “The great day of God Almighty”—the judgment day—Rev. 16:14.

Neither would we suppose this great battle to be confined to Mount Megiddo or Israel or Turkey or Russia or any particular

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geographical location because it is said in Rev. 16:14 that they went “forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle.” Again in Rev. 20:9 it says, “They went up on the breadth of the whole earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about. . . .” This features it as a general, worldwide, world-encompassing thing.

The kind of weapons and armour provided for the saints as described in Scripture and the general tenor of the Scriptures covering the whole scope of this subject precludes the idea of this being a carnal warfare or a battle fought with swords, spears, shot, shell, and bombs. The very nature of the Kingdom of God as described in the Holy Scriptures throughout preclude this idea also. Let us look at it a little.

In I Tim. 1:18-19, we read, “This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience, . . .” Here Timothy’s warfare was to be carried on by faith and a good conscience. These were his weapons of warfare. 1 Tim. 6:12 says, “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life . . .” In 2 Tim. 4:7 Paul said concerning himself, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” We have no record that Paul ever used physical violence or carnal weapons against any person in his whole Christian life. This was not the kind of fight he fought and that is not the kind of fight Christians fight today, nor will it ever be. He spells it out specifically in Eph. 6:12 that “we wrestle not against flesh and blood. . . .” Again in 2 Cor. 10:2b he spells it out, “We do not war after the flesh.” There is no indication in Scripture anywhere in the New Testament that this has ever changed or ever will.

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It says in 2 Cor. 10:4, 5, “For the weapons of our warfare are **NOT** carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” This text plainly states that our weapons are not carnal, and who would assume that carnal weapons could bring about what our weapons are described here as doing—casting down imaginations, bringing our thoughts into captivity and controlling our minds? The weapons which accomplish this are faith, love, and the power of the Holy Spirit, and this is what we fight our warfare with. Again Eph. 6:12 says, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” The same weapons outlined above accomplish this warfare and there is no place in the New Testament Scriptures which indicate this has ever changed.

Rev. 12:11 says that the saints overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. The weapons here are described as faith in the all-atoning blood of Jesus and an open confession or witness of that.

In Matt. 26:51, 52 it says, “And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the High Priest’s and cut off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Peter told Jesus in John 13:37 that he would lay down his life for His sake and now he demonstrates his willingness to do that by drawing his sword and starting a fight. But Jesus quickly made it clear that that was not what He wanted and rebuked Peter for using his sword and told

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him to put it up because those who used it would perish with it. It was perhaps in the mind of Jesus to lay the foundation for this declaration of His will for His people when He instructed His apostles in Luke 22:36 to provide themselves with swords and they told Him in verse 38 that they had two swords and He told them that was enough. He probably knew that if they had a sword handy when trouble started someone would use it and He would have an opening then to pronounce His denunciation of the use of carnal weapons by His disciples.

In John 18:36, Jesus told Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” We read in Isaiah 9:5-7, “For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: . . . Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.” We see here that the kingdom of God is not established and maintained on the battlefield as other kingdoms of this world are. This was to be established by the giving of a Son, Jesus Christ, who was to assume the reins of government in His kingdom and the means of its establishment were to be burning and fuel of fire.

Accordingly, we have this only begotten Son of God, Jesus, appearing on the scene to set up and establish His kingdom, and John the Baptist bore witness of Him in Matt. 3:11, 12 saying, “. . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather

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the wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Here we have the burning and fuel of fire spoken of in Isa. 9:5. This was the operation of the Holy Ghost, and Paul said in Romans 14:17, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.” It is declared here that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink (not literal and material; not of this world as Jesus stated in John 18:36), but consists in the elements of the Holy Ghost. Consequently, on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came in the form of “cloven tongues like as of fire” (again we have here the burning and fuel of fire spoken of in Isa. 9:5) on all the disciples of Christ (about an 120 at that time), the kingdom of God was established and set in operation right then and has continued in operation until now, and is declared to be for ever in Isaiah 9:7. Then the very spiritual nature of the kingdom of God precludes any carnal warfare to establish it or to defend and maintain it.

The armour provided for soldiers of Jesus Christ also precludes any idea of carnal warfare. There is not one piece of it that would in any way be usable in carnal warfare. Let us look at it. Eph. 6:11 says, “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” We see here that the armour which God provides for His army equips us to stand against the war with the devil, not man.

Eph. 6:13-18 describes this armour piece by piece. “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the

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wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” There is not one thing mentioned here that would have any value at all in warring after the flesh. And note that the only offensive weapon supplied here is “The sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word of God.**”

1 Thess. 5:8 says, “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.” Nothing here for carnal warfare but contrariwise, “the breastplate of faith and love” would forevermore eliminate fighting carnally with men and seeking to destroy them. Romans 13:12 says, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.” Where would an armour of light have any place in a carnal warfare? But it is highly important in wrestling “against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places.” Eph. 6:12. In 2 Cor. 6:7, Paul speaks of “The armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.”

Now these Scriptures sum up in all of its entirety the armour provided for the soldiers of Jesus Christ and it is no where intimated in the entire New Testament that this has ever changed or ever will. This is still the armour for saints today and will ever be.

I will now come to the point of considering the specifics of the Battle of Armageddon. All that has been said up to now has dealt with what it is not. We turn now to what it is. In Rev. 16:13-14 and 16 we read, “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

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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. . . . And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Note: the principal agents in this operation are three unclean spirits which are called in verse 14, “The spirits of devils.” Verse 16 says “he” gathered them together etc. “He” in this case is the devil himself marshalling his forces for battle under the generalship of these three unclean spirits. This would identify this whole operation as a spiritual operation. We wrestle against the rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12). In John 14:30 Jesus referred to the devil as “The prince of this world.” In 2 Cor. 4:4, Paul refers to him as the “god of this world.” In Eph. 2:2 Paul spoke of him as “The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” [He is the one spoken of as “The rulers of the darkness of this world” in Eph. 6:12.] Also it is said in Eph. 6:12 that we wrestle against “spiritual wickedness in high places.” The marginal reading is “heavenly places.” It is evident on the face of it that “spiritual wickedness” would be connected with the spiritual realm. Heavenly (high) places here refers to the ecclesiastical, spiritual, religious or church heavens. Therefore it is entirely clear that a spiritual operation and battle are under consideration here. We read in the history of carnal warfare of any number of **religious** wars between different nations and kingdoms of men. But we have never read of one that could be classed as a **spiritual** war. That is just not the way that spiritual warfare is carried on. This warfare is in the spiritual realm.

In Rev. 20:7-8 we read, “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

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and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” Note: This power was to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. This corresponds with what was said in Rev. 16:14 of the three unclean spirits like frogs which went forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world. Yes, it is the same power in both texts marshalling its forces for the same purpose—to do battle. It also names the principal agents in this operation as Gog and Magog and says their numbers are as the sand of the sea. Gog, the land of Magog, is mentioned in Ezek. 38:2 as the enemies of ancient Israel (read the entire chapter), and in verse 9 it says, “Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy band, and many people with thee.” Here the enemies of Israel had “many people” with them. Their modern counterparts in Rev. 20:8 had numbers “as the sand of the sea” with them. As has already been observed, ancient, literal Israel was a type of spiritual Israel. Just as Gog and Magog were the enemies of ancient Israel; so here the same names are used to identify the entire combine of the enemies of the people of God and of His truth.

Adam Clarke in his commentary on Rev. 20:8 under Gog and Magog says, “Under these names the enemies of God’s truth are generally intended.” The *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* says in its article of Magog, “Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:8) means all the ungodly nations of the earth who oppose the people of God.” F. G. Smith in his book, *The Revelation Explained*, is more specific in identifying them and says, “The original signification of the terms Gog and Magog is difficult to ascertain, as all known accounts are conflicting. The terms occur in Ezek. 38 and 39. In the Revelation, however, it is clear that these terms are applied to Romanism and Protestantism, and under the special leadership of

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this spirit of antichrist they are gathered together to battle against the saints of the most High.”

This great combine of antichrist consists of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. According to Rev. 12:3, 4 the dragon was the first formidable foe of Christianity. He was in existence when Jesus Christ appeared on the scene and viciously opposed the Christian religion throughout the morning time of the Christian era. This was Pagan Rome, heathenism, idolatrous worship which was the prevailing religion throughout the world at that time. Through the power of the Word of God and the bright shining light of the gospel, the saints of the most High were finally able to expose his deceptiveness and overcome him and cast him down and bind him. (Rev. 12:8, 9 and Rev. 20:1-3).

Then following the dragon came the beast of Rev. 13 which had the same identifying marks as the dragon before him, “seven heads and ten horns.” He occupied the same territory and possessed the same power as the dragon—the Roman Empire. The universal religion that followed paganism was papalism; Roman Catholicism. This was the second great opposer and persecutor of true Christianity. This was a false, apostate institution.

Then in Rev. 13:11 there is a second beast introduced and he had all of the power of the first beast before him (verse 12), and he caused his followers to make an image to the first beast (verse 14), etc. It was a universal religious system like the beast before it (Catholicism), and was a human system with human headship, human organization, etc., just like the first beast and in this was made an image to the beast. This was the third religious system which opposed the truth and the true people of God. They set up human creeds and disciplines instead of accepting the whole Word of God as the true people of God do. This was Protestantism.

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These three major universal systems of false religions have been on the scene, one at a time, throughout the history of the Church of God in this Christian era. As we approach the time of the end and the final conflict and climactic battle of all, we see all three of them on the stage of action at the same time and forming one great combine, the number of which is as the sand of the sea, to go up on the breadth of the earth and compass the camp of the saints, and the beloved city (Rev. 20:9)—“The city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the first born which are written in heaven.” Heb. 12:22, 23.

There is a world-wide ecumenical movement gathering momentum in the world today and it is making great strides toward combining all the world’s religions, including so-called Christianity with its multiplicity of churches and movements, into a general world church—Gog and Magog. Much could be said on this, but space will not permit here. I will make this observation here. When the first world’s Parliament of Religions met in Chicago in 1893, including all the heathen religions of the world and Catholics and Protestants in all their varied forms, creeds and denominations, the President of this Parliament said in his opening address, “For when the religious faiths of the world recognize each other as brothers, children of one Father, whom all profess to love and serve, then, and not until then, will the nations of the earth yield to the spirit of concord and learn war no more. We meet on the mountain of absolute respect for the religious convictions of each other. This day the sun of a new era of religious peace and progress arises over the world, dispelling the dark clouds of sectarian strife. It is the brotherhood of religions.” The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet had met in “mutual confidence and respect, a brotherhood of religions.” Other similar congresses have been held since that time, and in recent years there have been

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different ecumenical councils held which are all beating the march right on down that same road—gathering Gog and Magog and an innumerable company with them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

While this is all going on, Christ is also marshalling His forces (army) and maneuvering them into position for this gigantic and climactic conflict which is to terminate in the great day of God Almighty. We read in Rev. 19:11-16, “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 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.”

The rider on this white horse could not possibly be identified as any other than the Lord Jesus Himself. No one in all Holy Writ has borne the names mentioned here but He Himself. And let us note that He had only one weapon which was a “sharp sword” which came out of his mouth. Surely, we would all recognize that men of war (carnal) do not carry their swords in their mouths. “But the Word of God is quick and powerful; sharper than any two-edged sword.” Heb. 4:12. It is by the Word of God and the power of the Spirit that Jesus carries on His warfare. The Word of God is called “the sword of the Spirit” in Eph. 6:17. It is by the Word of

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God that sin is exposed and people are convicted of sin and through obedience to the Word they are saved; and those who fail to obey the Word are destroyed (slain). Rev. 19:21. This same Jesus appeared riding on a white horse in the beginning of this gospel age of time. (Rev. 6:2). In that case He had a bow which was equivalent of the rainbow God placed in the sky to confirm His promise of mercy to humankind in Noah's time. The bow in this case is significant of God's promise of mercy and salvation to the human family in Jesus Christ. Now He appears again in the closing out of the age on the same white horse and riding at the head of a great army. This army is composed of an innumerable multitude out of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (Rev. 7:9), representing the redeemed of the gospel era. They followed Him on white horses and they were clothed in fine linen, white and clean. This fine linen is declared to be the "righteousness of saints" in Rev. 19:8. The innumerable company of Rev. 7:9 are said to be clothed in "white robes" (verse 13), and verse 14 says they had "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The armies that followed Him, then, are the bloodwashed throng who have been redeemed through faith in the all-atoning blood of the Lamb.

Note in this case that instead of having a bow representing His promise of mercy, pardon, and redemption, He has a sharp sword in this instance, signifying that He is on a mission of judgment and vengeance against sinful men and false and apostate religions this time.

In Rev. 18:1-2 and 4, we read, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is

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become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

The angel coming down from heaven and lighting the earth with his glory seems to me to be a fitting symbol of the “Evening Light” Ministry which restored the full light of the gospel which had not shown in its fullness since the time of the apostasy of the morning church about 270 A.D. Ministers are referred to as angels sometimes in God’s Word. In the 2nd and 3rd chapters of Revelation, we find recorded the messages of Jesus Christ to the seven churches in Asia; the minister in charge or overseer of each church is addressed as “the angel of the church which is at,” etc. Here an angel represents a body of ministers rather than just an individual minister.

The fall of Babylon is mentioned in connection with the preaching of the “Evening Light” Ministry. This last particular phase of Babylon (Protestantism—denominationalism) had not always been fallen. In its time it was much used of God, and God worked mightily with them producing great revivals in which multitudes of souls were saved. Now the time had come that God wanted to restore the Body of Christ as a visible, unified, operating body in the earth as it was in the morning time of this gospel era, free from human rule and government, with Christ as its Head and it being operated through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This was the message of the “Evening Light” Reformation—the unity of God’s people and the one true church divine. It was by rejecting this message and holding on to their human institutions and creeds

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that the Protestantism phase of Babylon fell and went into darkness.

Then followed the call to God's people in verse 4, "Come out of her, my people," and they came. In John 10:27, Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, . . . and they follow me." In John 10:16 He said, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Those who were truly saved and knew God in sectism; when the "Evening Light" Message began to sound forth under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, heard the voice of the true Shepherd and recognized it and followed it, forsaking the human sects and creeds they were in and coming to the one true Body of Christ. Thus, Christ has been gathering together in one the true people of God and maneuvering them into position for the great and final conflict. The gathering began when the "Evening Light" Reformation broke in 1880 and has continued on and will continue until the final end of time. So we see that just as Gog and Magog, consisting of the dragon, the beast, and false prophet, are all being gathered together under the spirit of antichrist; so the true people of God are being called out and gathered together under the Spirit of God to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

I would like to point out now some definite things taking place in this massive, religious combine of false religions and some of the avenues of deception which are prominent within it. The major thrust of the whole operation is DECEPTION. Referring again to Rev. 20:7-9, "And when the thousand years [long period of time] are expired, Satan [the Dragon-verse 2, 3] 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

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to battle [the battle of the great day of God Almighty—Rev. 16:14]: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth. . . .”

In Ezek. 38:9, Gog and Magog were spoken of as a great “cloud to cover the land.” That was the land of Israel. Now in the end of the world we have Gog and Magog showing up again but this time their objective reaches beyond “The land” to the “Breadth of the earth” (Rev. 20:9), and “The whole world” (Rev. 16:14), and they compass the camp of the saints (Spiritual land of Israel) this time.

Note in Rev. 20:8 that the mission of the released Dragon (Satan) is to DECEIVE the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. The anti-Christ spirit of the Dragon (Paganism, Heathenism) is the spirit that permeates and dominates the whole combine.

The Dragon system as it was during the time of the Roman Empire and in the days of Christ and His Apostles and some time before was characterized by the worship of a multiplicity of Gods (Heathenism). It was customary with the Romans to recognize any new god anybody brought in as long as it was set up by the side of their gods and their gods recognized right along with it. It was the exclusiveness of Christ and His truth and not recognizing their gods but rather denouncing them as no gods which brought the severe persecutions of Paganism against the followers of Jesus.

The modern counterpart of this under the released and restored Dragon power is the idea and teaching that every person is entitled to his own opinion and belief and that it does not make any difference what one believes just as long as he is sincere in it; that all beliefs should be respected; that any one can just join the church of his choice because one church is just as good as another

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and are all headed for the same place, etc.—the whole package of ideas along this line. This is the sectarian thinking which permeates the whole combine. Allow me to affirm that it does make a difference and a big difference what a person believes. We are to believe the truth as set forth in God's Word and no where in the whole New Testament does God teach us any such thing as this. If Jesus would have come and set up His Church alongside all the others and recognized them and said, "Now you folks have some very fine churches here and a lot of fine people in them, and I want to set mine up now along with yours and just let every one have his choice," He and His church would have gone over big. When He came proclaiming His truth to the exclusion of all human creeds and doctrines; His church to the exclusion of all human institutions called churches—one fold under one Shepherd, one body, one Church of God kept in His Name, one divine institution organized by Jesus Christ Himself and supervised and presided over by the Holy Spirit only, He brought the wrath of this whole religious conglomerate down on Him and His followers and this has resulted in severe persecution and opposition against the true disciples of Christ. In this we see the same principle of deception working under and through the revived Dragon power as characterized it in those ancient times but just in a different way. Nearly the whole world is caught up in this deception.

Jesus warned us very faithfully about this time in which we are living and said in Matt. 24:24 that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. Again God's Word warns us in 2 Tim. 3:13 that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. As this Battle of Armageddon roars on toward it's climactic conclusion we see this coming to pass right before our eyes.

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Some time back I was visiting a missionary in a hospital in Simi, California. While I was there a friend of his came in and we all three talked together for a while. This man who had come in said in the conversation that in the church where he worshipped (a large, fashionable church in the San Fernando Valley) their minister had not read a passage from the Bible nor referred to any verse in the Bible in more than two years. That was real shocking and I said, “Well, what does he preach?” He answered that he preached about history, science, world happenings, and things of social interest. I can dare to say there was no salvation in that church because salvation only comes through the gospel of Christ and the only thing God’s ministers are instructed to do is to “Preach the Word.”

A party told me that he had read where one of the leading denominations of this country was stopping all preaching about the blood of Christ and had revised their hymnal, striking out all of the songs about the blood and declared that they were tired of that “slaughter house” religion. Their people wanted something more refined. The Bible still says that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ and “without the shedding of blood there is no remission” and “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

I read an article in a periodical by a minister of a modern church in Washington, D.C. He discussed the thought of the resurrection of Jesus and intimated that he did not believe that, but said he would not waste his time arguing the matter. He said if the old timers wanted to believe that, it was all right, but the up-to-date, educated, and refined minister of our day had more important things to preach than that; and it was really no concern to them as to whether a particular tomb was empty or occupied nearly two thousand years ago. The Bible still says that if Christ be not raised

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then our preaching is vain and our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins. Again in Romans 4:25, “[Jesus] was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Without His resurrection there could be no justification and no hope of eternal life and without Christ ascending back to heaven to appear in the presence of God for us, to make intercession for us, we could have had no access to God. It is all through Him.

This minister went on to say that they were fast moving toward eliminating prayer out of their services. He said that out of consideration for some of the old school still among them who believed in prayer, they observed a form of prayer but it would not be far in the future until all prayer would be eliminated from their services.

Many modern ministers do not believe at all in the virgin birth of Christ and many more make no point of it. But this is a cardinal, basic doctrine of the plan of salvation. If Jesus Christ was not begotten of God Himself and born of a virgin; if He had an earthly father and came by natural means; then He would have been a partaker of the native depravity as all other mortals are and His sacrifice would not have been acceptable to make atonement for sin because that sacrifice had to be perfect and without blemish. God’s Word says in 1 John 4:3, “And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of anti-christ, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” I affirm that there is no salvation outside of believing that Jesus Christ is God’s only begotten Son and born of a virgin. There is no salvation through the modernistic ministry who denies this.

Many modern ministers do not believe that there will be a judgment day and many do not believe in Christ being the Saviour

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of the world at all, and in many other respects they deny and discount God's Word.

This is just a miniature cross section view of the deceptive powers which permeate modern Christendom today and under this influence the whole of modern Christendom is moving on toward the formation of a world church which will encompass the camp of the saints and hedge them in on every side. Already a bill has been introduced in one of our state legislatures at least twice, to prohibit any minister from conducting public services or working in hospitals or jails unless he is a member of the ministerial union or endorsed by them, but this bill has been defeated. It may pass some day when the present trend progresses a little farther. Also a bill has been introduced in the U.S. Congress to prohibit the passing of religious literature through the mails, so I have been told, but has been defeated. This, too, will likely pass some day. We can expect this world church combine to zero in on those who are standing for the whole truth of God's Word because the Bible says they will (Rev. 20:9). When this happens "Then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28. Rev. 20:9 goes on to say that "Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Let us rest assured that this great conflict between good and evil, light and darkness, truth and error must end with victory for Him to whom all triumph belongs.

Modern Christendom, the nominal church of our day, presents a sad and shocking picture comparable to a Thyatira situation as set forth in Rev. 2:18-29. There they had what I suppose to be a symbolic woman or proverbial character who was called Jezebel and she was teaching and seducing the servants of God to commit fornication (I suppose this to be symbolic phraseology) and to eat things sacrificed to idols. This woman manifested the spirit of the

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ancient Queen Jezebel, the heathen wife of King Ahab (1 Kings 16:32), who had been brought up a zealous worshipper of Baal and continued her idolatrous worship in the land of Israel. Through her, Ahab also became a worshipper of Baal and had a house and altar built for Baal in Samaria (1 Kings 16:32). Jezebel had 450 prophets of Baal to eat at her table (1 Kings 18:19). She had all the prophets of God that she could apprehend slain (1 Kings 18:4, 13). Through her, the altar of the true God was thrown down. This woman Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess in Thyatira, seemed to be one of considerable influence and introduced strange and corrupt teachings and practices in the church there and seduced the servants of God and induced them to follow them. This was an exact counterpart of that ancient Queen Jezebel.

We have a close parallel of this situation in the nominal church of today. The modern ministry has thrown down the stones of the altar of the true God—those fundamental, cardinal basic doctrines of the gospel and the plan of salvation; the virgin birth of Christ, atonement for sin through the blood of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus and His present intercessory ministry in our behalf, the headship of Christ in the church and the government of the Holy Spirit in the church. They have erected a house to Baal (figuratively) and built their own altar in that house with their own stones—worldly wisdom, human reasoning, a human organization with human government, doctrines and creeds of purely human origin, etc. It all sums up to a worldly, human system and the substitution of the form for the fact of godliness.

This kind of doctrine and teaching and seduction of the people of God is referred to in Rev. 2:24 as the “depths of Satan.” There could be nothing more dastardly than to corrupt the pure gospel of Christ and seduce people into strange doctrines and practices. All

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through the Old Testament for the children of Israel to go away from the true God and worship other gods and do sacrifice to them (idolatry) was classed as adultery (spiritual). In this case as we have it today, for ministers to corrupt the pure gospel and teach for doctrine the commandments of men and introduce the world and worldly spirit and ways into the church, it is classed the same. In James 4:4, the friendship of the world is referred to as adultery (spiritual). This is the “depths of Satan” to corrupt the pure gospel and get the world into the church. God’s strong wrath was upon this in Thyatira and severe judgment was pronounced upon it in Rev. 2:22, 23. I am bold to affirm that His attitude is the same today toward the corrupting of His gospel. A clear picture of this is drawn in 2 Tim. 3:1-5 as pertaining to these last days in which we are now living and God’s true people are instructed here in verse 5 to turn away from all such.

This is the spirit of deception that saturates and permeates this whole religious combine of Gog and Magog (the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet). It surely means much for God’s people to stand true to Him and firm for truth against the strong tide and pressures of these deceptive influences. We have the promise of Jesus that all who will endure to the end shall be saved. Matt. 24:13.

The Battle of Armageddon is going on now and has been throughout this gospel dispensation, but more particularly in this period incorporated in the “Evening Light” Reformation time when the gathering of forces on both sides is going on in dead earnest, but it will wax hotter and hotter as we approach nearer to the end, and the forces and kinds of deception multiply and abound more and more. The Bible says, “Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” 2 Tim. 3:13.

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Dear brethren, this is no time to play around. We are in this time right now and the powers of deception are increasing and the kinds of deception are multiplying and many are being deceived who once knew God and enjoyed His blessings in their lives, and the love of many who were once fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, is waxing cold today. Let us all fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life and follow the Captain of the Lord's host into the battle wherever He may lead.

I want to discuss one more thing as we come to the close. In Rev. 14:18-20 we have described the harvest of the world which could cover the same period of time I have been discussing, only by different symbols. In verse 20 it says, "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." A tremendous thing is described here and it would be a gruesome thing indeed to think of it in literal terms. It could not possibly refer to anything literal because all of the four billion plus people that are in the world today do not have that much blood in their bodies. Then what does it mean?

In Ezek. 33:1-6 we have set forth the matter of an enemy coming against the land of Israel and the duties of the watchman who has been set by the people. He was to sound the trumpet and warn the people. It is said that if he sounded the warning and they failed to take heed and perished, their blood would be upon themselves. Also, if he failed to sound the warning and the enemy came upon them and destroyed them, their blood would be required at the watchman's hand. Then in verses 7-9 this same thing is carried over and applied to God-called prophets which He sets as watchmen for the people's souls; which would also apply to God-called, God-sent ministers and overseers in this gospel age.

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Heb. 13:17, speaking of overseers of congregations, says, “For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.” This also would apply in a way to any minister of God who deals with the souls of men. Paul said in Acts 20:26, 27, “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”

Now what this all sums up to is the situation we are face to face with today. On the one hand, we have many ministers in Christendom today who are so compromising and fail to tell the people the consequences of the things they are doing and excusing things in people’s lives which are destroying their souls and are failing to declare the full counsel of God to the people so that the blood of many souls is on their hands. On the other hand, we are in a time which is characterized by free thinking and everybody thinking for themselves, and when ministers of God are faithful to declare the full counsel of God and deal pointedly with souls about the things they are doing which will destroy their souls; many times they just pass it off and say, “I don’t see it that way. I have my way the same as he has his, and I have just as much right to see it my way as he does to see it his way.” So they just go on their merry way, failing to give heed and to measure up and be doers of the Word, and become deceived. Their blood is on their own hands because they were faithfully warned by the minister God had given them.

But in either case, whether it is on the people’s part or the minister’s part, there is a great failing today and the blood of souls is running real deep right now. We are in the vortex of the Battle of Armageddon and much soul blood is being shed right before our eyes. This Scripture in Rev. 14:20 gives us an idea of how tremendous this thing is now and it’s getting worse. So, let us fear

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God and keep His commandments and walk humbly before Him, lest our soul blood be mingled with the soul blood of the multitudes who are failing of the grace of God. Let us be assured that this great conflict is going to end in “victory for him to whom all triumph belongs” and if we continue faithful unto death we shall be saved eternally.

—Ostis B. Wilson

