

Armageddon: What The Bible Says

Through the centuries, the human race has been fascinated with the concept of Armageddon. During that time, the word has been separated from its original biblical context. The true meaning of Armageddon has been replaced by the secular concept of humanity destroying itself. The word is now synonymous with nuclear war, natural disasters, impact from a comet or an asteroid, and any number of creatively conjured existential threats. Yet, the bible doesn't connect a single one of these events with Armageddon.

Even a majority of devout Christians hold erroneous beliefs about Armageddon. Many correctly view Armageddon as the gathering place of the Antichrist and his armies prior to the Glorious Appearing of Jesus Christ, but they misinterpret the motive of this gathering. A commonly held belief is that these armies gather together at or near Armageddon in order to do battle with each other, or to annihilate the Jewish people. Then, only through the physical intervention of Jesus Christ is humanity saved from either destroying all life or the Jewish people.

But neither of these motives is correct. The Bible clearly states why these armies gather together at Armageddon, and once we realize why, it's easy to see why most Christians find it difficult to believe.

What Does the Bible Say?

The biblical concept of Armageddon is first introduced by name in the Book of Revelation:

"And they gathered all the rulers and their armies to a place called Armageddon in Hebrew." Revelation 16:16 (NLT)

Armageddon is the Hebrew name of a geographical location in Israel known as Megiddo. Megiddo is a hill which overlooks the Jezreel valley. It is here where, in the last days, Satan and the Antichrist will gather the world's rulers for battle. As previously stated, a common misconception is that they gather together to make war against each other. But the passage never says this, and further examination of the context in which this event transpires will make it clear that this is not their motive.

Remember, in the last days, the Antichrist will be ruler over the entire globe:

"And he was given authority to rule over every tribe and people and language and nation." Revelation 13:7 (NLT)

The Antichrist will also be a popular ruler, worshipped for his awesome power:

"They worshiped the dragon for giving the beast such power, and they worshiped the beast. 'Is there anyone as great as the beast?' they exclaimed. 'Who is able to fight against him?'" Revelation 13:4 (NLT)

In addition, the Antichrist will have total control over the purchase and sale of all goods:

"He required everyone – great and small, rich and poor, slave and free – to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number representing his name." Revelation 13:16-17 (NLT)

With complete political, religious, and economic power, what army could or would gather for war against the Antichrist? In fact, Revelation 13:4 poses this very question: "Who is able to fight against him?" The bible is clear that the armies at Armageddon do not gather to fight each other. Instead, they are united against a common enemy.

If this is true, who do these armies gather against? The answer can be found throughout the scriptures, beginning with one of the most overlooked prophecies of the bible. Almost everyone can recount the story that led to this prophecy, yet very few remember the prophecy itself.

The Tower of Babel Prophecy

In Genesis Chapter 11, we learn the story of the Tower of Babel:

"At one time the whole world spoke a single language and used the same words. As the people migrated eastward, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there. They began to talk about construction projects. 'Come,' they said, 'let's make great piles of burnt brick and collect natural asphalt to use as mortar. Let's build a great city with a tower that reaches to the skies – a monument to our greatness! This will bring us together and

keep us from scattering all over the world.’

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. ‘Look!’ he said. ‘If they can accomplish this when they have just begun to take advantage of their common language and political unity, just think of what they will do later. Nothing will be impossible for them! Come, let’s go down and give them different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.’

In that way, the Lord scattered them all over the earth; and that ended the building of the city. That is why the city was called Babel, because it was there that the Lord confused the people by giving them many languages, thus scattering them across the earth.” Genesis 11:1-9 (NLT)

In the sixth verse, God specifically states his reason for scattering the human race and confusing them with different languages. He wants to avoid the inevitable disaster wrought by global government and a common language. Why do these things concern Him? Because if they continue unabated, in due time, “nothing will be impossible for them!” This should be viewed as more than a passing comment by God. It should be interpreted as a prophecy of things to come. And in the last days, mankind will fulfill all the requirements of this prophecy. They will have:

Political Unity

“And he was given authority to rule over every tribe and people and language and nation.” Revelation 13:7 (NLT)

United Purpose

“They worshiped the dragon for giving the beast such power, and they worshiped the beast.” Revelation 13:4 (NLT)

The global government featured in the Book of Revelation will unify humanity politically for the first time since the days of ancient Babylonia. Thousands of years after God put a stop to this act of monumental arrogance, humanity will once again establish a unified political structure under the rule of the Antichrist.

So what does this mean? What will happen as a result of this global government? Something so bad, God put a stop to it the moment He saw it happening. The human race will directly challenge God. After all, what was the motive in building the Tower of Babel?

“Let’s build a great city with a tower that reaches to the skies – a monument to our greatness!” Genesis 11:4 (NLT)

The people wanted to build a monument to their own greatness, exalting themselves above God and extending their tower far into heaven with the intent of usurping God’s glory and authority. This desire of the human race did not end with the Tower of Babel. It continues to this day, and it will culminate in one final attempt to usurp the authority of God. This great rebellion will be launched from a place called Armageddon.

The Word of God and Armageddon

The scriptures are clear when it comes to the purpose of Armageddon. The human race will gather its armies at Armageddon in order to do battle with God Almighty:

“These miracle-working demons caused all the rulers of the world to gather for battle against the Lord on that great judgment day of God Almighty.” Revelation 16:14 (NLT)

Three chapters later, we learn more about this gathering:

“Then I saw the beast gathering the kings of the earth and their armies in order to fight against the one sitting on the horse and his army.” Revelation 19:19 (NLT)

The gathering at Armageddon is preparation for a war, a war the kings of the earth are plotting against “the one sitting on the horse and his army.” Who is the “one sitting on the horse”? The one sitting on the horse is Jesus Christ.

The armies of the world do not gather to fight each other or to destroy the Jews (although destruction of the Jews is a primary aim of Satan and the Antichrist). Rather, the ultimate purpose of Armageddon is to emancipate the human race from God’s authority. Psalm 2 describes this futile plan:

“Why do the nations rage? Why do the people waste their time with futile plans? The kings of the earth prepare for battle; the rulers plot together against the Lord and against His Anointed One. ‘Let us break their chains,’ they cry. ‘And free ourselves from this slavery.’ But the one who rules in heaven laughs. The Lord scoffs at them.” Psalm 2:1-4 (NLT)

Notice who the rulers plot against. They don’t plot against each other or Israel. They plot against “the Lord and His Anointed One.” Who is “His Anointed One”? Jesus Christ. The armies of the world actually plot against the Prince of Peace Himself.

In describing the Antichrist, the Book of Daniel confirms this plot:

“From one of the prominent horns came a small horn whose power grew very great. It extended toward the south and east and toward the glorious land of Israel. His power reached to the heavens where it attacked the heavenly armies, throwing some of the heavenly beings and stars to the ground and trampling them. He even challenged the Commander of heaven’s armies by canceling the daily sacrifices offered to him and by destroying his Temple.” Daniel 8:9-11 (NLT)

Jesus Christ is the Commander of heaven’s armies, and the Antichrist will have the brazen audacity to challenge Him. This concept is reiterated later in the same chapter:

“At the end of their rule, when their sin is at its height, a fierce king, a master of intrigue, will rise to power. He will become very strong, but not by his own power. He will cause a shocking amount of destruction and succeed in everything he does. He will destroy powerful leaders and devastate the holy people. He will be a master of deception, defeating many by catching them off guard. Without warning he will destroy them. He will even take on the Prince of princes in battle, but he will be broken, though not by human power.” Daniel 8:23-25 (NLT)

This master of intrigue, the Antichrist, will take on the Prince of princes in battle. Like the Tower of Babel generation, his arrogance will extend all the way into the heavens, where he will attempt to usurp the glory and authority of God Himself. Note that the last verse of this passage states that the power of the Antichrist will not be broken by humans. This illustrates once again that the Antichrist will be the undisputed world power of his time. No one will be able to make war against him. At least no human will be able to make war against him. When the Antichrist engages the Lord Jesus Christ in battle, he will be utterly destroyed.

Conclusion

Armageddon is a reminder of what the human race is like without Christ. Burdened by our sinful nature, God gave the free gift of salvation through His Son Jesus Christ. All we have to do is accept this gift. But those who reject it will become slaves to sin, and their degeneracy will one day culminate in outright physical rebellion against God Himself.

Armageddon isn’t about asteroids or comets. It’s not about nuclear annihilation or war between nations. It’s about mankind’s fruitless rebellion against God. In a pop culture which has managed to skew and blur the truth about Armageddon, Christians have a prime opportunity to set the record straight. So the next time someone you know mentions Armageddon, ask them what they mean. If it’s not in line with what the bible says, take the time to share the scriptural account with them. But more importantly, tell them about the wonderful gift of Jesus Christ.

About the Author

Britt Gillette is author of BrittGillette.Com, a website studying the links between bible prophecy and advanced technology. To learn more about bible prophecy and armageddon, visit his site.

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