

## BOWL #6 - REV. 16:12-16

### 1) Aim = Defeat to Satan/Triumph to Christ

“The time has come for the fighting of that final war of the age, the name of which has become a byword among men since John first wrote it down--Armageddon! The Holy Land has been chosen by God as the stage upon which two crucial events take place, one on a mountain, and one on a plain. Mount Calvary and the Plain of Megiddo are the two altars of sacrifice that dominate the history of the world.

- On Mount Calvary grace redeemed the world by the sacrifice of God’s Son;
- on the plains of Megiddo vengeance offers up the armies of the world in a sacrifice of doom.
- Both are blood baths:
- both are the descent of wrath upon sin;
- both are brought about by God’s bitterest foes who work out, despite themselves, God’s perfect and sovereign will.
- Across both can be written the words of Peter, “The Gentiles, and peoples of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever they hand and thy counsel determined before to be done” (Acts 4:27-28). / From each proceeds a supper: one a feast of remembrance for the people of God, and the other a feast of retribution for the carrion.
- At Calvary there rang up to the gates of heaven a victorious cry, “It is finished!”
- And at Armageddon there rings down to earth an answering cry from the temple gates in glory, “It is done!”

We are told three things about the armies which now begin their fateful march toward Megiddo. (1) We are told where those armies are delayed. John says, “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.” Babylon and all it stands for is about to be overthrown. History repeats itself in a way, for ancient Babylon was overthrown when the armies of Cyrus the Persian diverted the waters of the Euphrates to expedite their march into the city. But here is a suggestion of delay. Before the armies of the east can converge on the capital of the beast, a hindrance must be removed. That hindrance is described as “the great river Euphrates.” They drying up of the Euphrates could be literal, for the river is indeed a great river. It is eighteen hundred miles long and in places it is thirty-six hundred feet wide and thirty feet deep. In ancient times it was a formidable barrier to an invading force from the east, and for centuries it has been the dividing line between east and west. A literal interpretation of the text is likely enough, but that does not seem to exhaust the meaning of the text.”<sup>1</sup>

“In the judgment of the sixth bowl of wrath, the judgment upon the Euphrates is again depicted as a prelude to ultimate war. As the bowl is poured out, the river dries up, preparing the way for invading armies of the “kings of the East”--that is, from nations which possibly include China, India, Japan, and other Asian countries.

“We have seen in recent years that some of these countries have risen to great prosperity and military power. The transformation of Japan from a humiliated and devastated nation in 1945 to one of the most powerful economic forces of the late twentieth century is nothing less than amazing. The transformation of China from a backward agrarian economy to near-superpower status is equally amazing. We can be virtually certain that these historical changes have been in preparation for the day of judgment that is coming at the end of this age.

<sup>1</sup> John Phillips, Exploring Revelation

“People are fond of quoting Rudyard Kipling’s line, “Ease is Ease, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.” But that’s not the entire quotation:

“Oh, East is East, and West is West, and  
never the twain shall meet.  
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at  
God’s great Judgment Seat.

“Kipling knew! There is a time coming when East and West *shall* come together. It will happen in a place called Armageddon!

“The Euphrates River will be dried up, and the barrier to invasion from the East will be removed. You may remember from news reports of the 1991 Gulf War how the Euphrates River formed an impassable barrier to the armies of Saddam Hussein as they attempted to retreat from U.N. forces. They were bottled up with the armies of 30 countries before them and the Euphrates at their backs. But in the day of the sixth bowl of judgment, invading armies will roll across the cracked, dry riverbed of the Euphrates--right into the jaws of World War III!

“Here we are given insight into the way nations are moved by unseen forces. Leaders of nations think that they control events, when it is actually *they* who are controlled by events--and by unseen spiritual forces. In this passage we see three evil spirits in the appearance of frogs which proceed out of the mouths of the satanic trinity--the red dragon, the scarlet beast, and the false prophet. With demonic miracles they deceive the nations, manipulating and maneuvering them into launching the final war of human history.

“It is a time of terror and unparalleled destruction. All the nuclear arsenals of the world will be unleashed. The armies of the world--200 million warriors--will gather into Palestine to bathe the Holy Land in blood.”<sup>2</sup>

**Why? To who Jesus Christ is ultimate conqueror, King of Kings, Lord of Lords!**

(2) The Battle of Armageddon is often described in the Scriptures.

The Holy Spirit of God has chosen five capable authors to describe for us in clear and chilling language that most famous of all battles -- Armageddon! The five authors include David, Isaiah, Joel, Zechariah, and John.<sup>3</sup>

Ps. 2:1-5, 9: “What do the nations rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his great displeasure. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel”

Is. 34:1-6: “Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye peoples; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth from it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stench shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig

<sup>2</sup> Ray Steadman

<sup>3</sup> Harold Wilmington, The King is Coming, p. 167-178.

tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood; it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bizrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom.”

Is. 63:3, 4, 6: “I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the peoples there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. Any I will tread down the peoples in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.”

Joel 3:2, 9-16: “I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will judge them there for my people and for my heritage, Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land....Proclaim them among the Gentiles, Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up; beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye nations, and gather yourselves together round about; there cause they mighty ones to come down, O lord. Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.”

Zech. 12:2: “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege against Judah and against Jerusalem”

Zech. 14:2, 3, 12: “I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle....And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will smite all the peoples that have fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their month”

Rev. 14:14-20: “And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in they sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire, and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in they sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 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”

Rev. 16:16: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon”

Rev. 19:11-21: “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.

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

“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. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh”

In his little booklet entitled *Profiles of Prophecy*, Dr. S. Franklin Logsdon writes,

“A former president of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences, helped by historians from Britain, Egypt, Germany and India, and using a computer, has found that since 3600 B.C. the world has known only 292 years of peace. In this period of more than 55 centuries that have been 14,531 wars, large and small, in which more than 3.6 billion people were killed. Since 650 B.C., there have been 1,656 arms races, all except 16 ending in war, and those 16 ended in economic collapse for the countries concerned.”<sup>1</sup>

By this coming War of Armageddon will be by far the biggest, boldest, bloodiest, most brazen, and most blasphemous of all times! We shall now consider the negative and positive elements of this war.

Why? To show Jesus Christ as King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Conquerors - 2 Cor. 2:14.

#### NEGATIVE:

A. Armageddon is not the same as the Russian invasion of Ezekiel 38. Note the differences:

- (1) Russia invades from the north, but at Armageddon the nations come from all directions.
- (2) Russia invades to capture Israel's wealth, but this invasion is to destroy the Lamb and his people.
- (3) Gog leads the Russian invasion, but the antichrist leads this one.

B. Armageddon is not the final war in the Bible -- the final war occurs after the millennium (Rev. 20:7-9). Armageddon takes place at the end of the Tribulation.

<sup>1</sup> Franklin Logsdon, *Profiles in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), p. 54. Used by permission.

*POSITIVE:*

A. The location of the battle Dr. Herman A. Hoyt describes the location:

“The staggering dimensions of this conflict can scarcely be conceived by man. The battlefield will stretch from Megiddo on the north (Zech. 12:11; Rev. 16:16) to Edom on the south (Is. 34:5, 6; 63:1), a distance of sixteen hundred furlongs -- approximately two hundred miles. It will reach from the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the hills of Moab on the east, a distance of almost one hundred miles. It will include the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12) and the Plains of Esdraelon. At the center of the entire area will be the city of Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1, 2). Into this area the multiplied millions of men, doubtless approaching 400 million, will be crowded for the final holocaust of humanity. The kings with their armies will come from the north and the south, from the east and from the west....In the most dramatic sense this will be the ‘Valley of decision’ for humanity (Joel 3:14) and the great winepress into which will be poured the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God (Rev. 19:15).”<sup>2</sup>

Thus there would seem to be at least four important names involved in the battle of Armageddon:

- (1) The Valley of Jehoshaphat -- a valley situated just east of Jerusalem, between the Holy City and the Mount of Olives. See Joel 3:2, 12.
- (2) The Valley of Esdraelon -- a valley twenty miles long and fourteen miles wide, situated north and west of Jerusalem between the Holy City and the Mediterranean Sea.
- (3) Megiddo -- a flat plain located in the Valley of Esdraelon (Zech. 12:11).
- (4) Bozrah -- a city in Edom, east of the Jordan River and near Petra, the capital of Edom. These two cities will play an important role during the second coming of our Lord. See Isaiah 34:6 and 63:1.

Marvin Vincent writes concerning Armageddon and its location,

“Megiddo was in the plain of Esdraelon, which has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in Palestine from the days of...Assyria unto the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria, Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian Crusaders, and anti-Christian Frenchmen; Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs, warriors of every nation that is under heaven, have pitched their tents on the plains of Esdraelon, and have beheld the banners of their nation wet with the dews of Mt. Tabor and Mt. Hermon.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition to church history, a number of battles took place in this area, as reported by the Old Testament:

- (1) It was here that Deborah and Barak defeated the Canaanites (Judges 4, 5).
- (2) It was here that Gideon defeated the Midianites (Judges 7).
- (3) It was here that the Philistines defeated and killed Saul (1 Sam. 31).
- (4) It was here that David defeated Goliath (1 Sam. 17).
- (5) It was here that an Egyptian king killed Josiah (2 Kings 23).

b. The reasons for the battle:

What will draw all the nations of the world into the area of Armageddon? They will gather themselves there for perhaps various reasons. It would seem that the following are three of the more important reasons:

<sup>2</sup> Herman A. Hoyt, *The End Time* (Chicago: Moody, 1969), p. 163. Used by permission.

<sup>3</sup> Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 542, 543. Quoted by Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 341.

- i) Because of the sovereignty of God. In at least five distinct passages we are told that God himself will gather the nations here:
- “...he hath delivered them to the slaughter” (Is. 34:2).  
 “I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat...” (Joel 3:2).  
 “For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle...” (Zech. 114:2).  
 “...For my determination is to gather the nations....to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger...” (Zeph. 3:8).  
 “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Rev. 16:16).
- ii) Because of the deception of Satan (Rev. 16:13, 14). In this passage we are told that three special unclean spirits will trick the nations into gathering at Armageddon.
- iii) Because of the hatred of the nations for Christ.
- a) A number of passages tell us of this devilish hatred (Ps. 2:1-3; Rev. 11:18).
  - b) The nations, led by the antichrist, will doubtless realize the imminent return of Christ (Rev. 11:15; 12:12).
  - c) They will also be aware of his touching down on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:9-12).
  - d) Thus it is not unreasonable to assume they will gather in that area to destroy him at the moment of his return to earth!

c. The chronology of the battle:

(1) The drying up of the Euphrates Rive (Rev. 16:12).

Dr. Donald Barnhouse quotes Seiss in describing this:

“From time immemorial the Euphrates with its tributaries has been a great and formidable boundary between the peoples east of it and those west of it. It runs a distance of 1,800 miles, and is scarcely fordable anywhere or at any time. It is from three to twelve hundred yards wide, and from ten to thirty feet in depth; and most of the time it is still deeper and wider. It was the boundary of the dominion of Solomon, and is repeatedly spoken of as the northeast limit of the lands promised to Israel....History frequently refers to the great hindrance the Euphrates has been to military movements; and it has always been a line of separation between the peoples living east of it and those living west of it.”<sup>4</sup>

Thus, when this watery barrier is removed tens of millions of soldiers from China, India, and other Asian powers will march straight for Armageddon and destruction!

(2) The destruction of Jerusalem:

<sup>4</sup> Barnhouse, *Revelation*, p. 301.

Perhaps the saddest event during the Tribulation will be the siege and destruction of the Holy City. This will be the 47th and last take-over of the beloved city of David. The following passages bear this out:

“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege...” (Zech. 12:2).

“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half the city shall go forth into captivity...” (Zech. 14:2).

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh” (Luke 21:20).

When these two events transpire, both the angels in paradise and the demons in perdition will surely hold their breath. The reason for their suspense will be discussed in the next major section.

1. Their end is inescapable
2. Their defeat is ultimate
3. Our King is unconquerable

Are you triumphing?  
2 Cor. 2:14

- We are more than conquerors.
- Victory in Jesus.