

Pentwater Bible Church

Revelation Message 35

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Belshazzar's Feast by Rembrandt Cir 1635-39

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Pentwater Bible Church

Revelation Message Thirty-Five

THE CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON PART V

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THE CAMPAIGN OF ARMAGEDDON

The Campaign of Armageddon is actually a multi-staged event. It is not just the invasion of Jerusalem.

The campaign of Armageddon involves eight stages. They are as follows:

- ~~1. The Assembling of the Allies of the Antichrist.~~
- ~~2. The Destruction of Babylon.~~
3. The Fall of Jerusalem.
4. The Armies of the Antichrist at Bozrah (Petra).
5. The National Regeneration of Israel (Zechariah 12)
6. The Second Coming of the Messiah.
7. The Place of the Second coming.
8. The Manner of the Second Coming.

The Battle from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

The Victory Ascent Up the Mount of Olives.

THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

The Fall of Jerusalem-The Third Stage of the Campaign of Armageddon:

The Antichrist will have all his allied forces with him in the Jezreel valley when he receives the news that the world capital, Babylon has fallen. He will not move eastward to counterattack his enemies. It is Satan who will be in control and it is his program to complete the destruction of the Jews. Being led by Satan the antichrist will move southwest to attack Jerusalem. Zechariah describes that third stage of the Campaign.

Zechariah 12:1-3

¹The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: ²behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. ³And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it (ASV 1901).

From the Valley of Jezreel the armies of the Antichrist will move south, and the armies of the nations will gather against Jerusalem. Once again, Jerusalem will fall into Gentile hands, and half the population will be taken into slavery while the other half (the residue) will be allowed to remain in the city to await a later fate. The capture of Jerusalem by the forces of the Antichrist will not come easily. God will greatly equip the Jews to withstand the attack to a great degree causing heavy losses to the Antichrist's armies. Zechariah 12:3 stated that all these nations that burden themselves with Jerusalem will be sorely wounded, and Jerusalem will become truly burdensome to them. Jewish forces that receive this Godly empowerment are again described in Zechariah.

Zechariah 12:4-9.

"⁴In that day, saith Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness."⁵And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. ⁶In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. ⁷Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah."⁸In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them." ⁹And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (ASV, 1901)

These verses describe how God deals with the events of the Campaign of Armageddon before the return of Jesus the Messiah. In the battle for Jerusalem, the Jewish military leaders will be so energized that they appear to strike down the enemy as quickly as a torch begins to burn up wood that is very dry. The feeble among the Jews take on the strength of David. The brave among the Jews take on the strength of the Angel of Jehovah. The meaning of God's saving the tents of Judah first, that is, before Jerusalem means that He saves the poor living outside the city walls first. This is one of the ways that God will begin destroying the nations that have come out against Jerusalem. The important concept to grasp is that all nations come against Israel not just a few. It has never happened in the history of the world yet. It will only occur during the future Campaign of Armageddon.

The supernatural godly strengthening of Israel is also discussed in Micah chapter four.

Micah 4:11-5:1

¹¹And now many nations are assembled against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. ¹²But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. ¹³Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron,

and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. 5 ¹Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek (ASV 1901).

The nations will be assembled against Jerusalem for the purpose of destroying it. But in the course of doing so, these nations will become like sheaves on the threshing floor. The Jewish forces will be able to thresh them completely. However, the battle will be lost and the Gentiles will capture Jerusalem and symbolize it by smiting, Jerusalem's leader on the cheek. After such heavy fighting and great losses, the soldiers of the Antichrist will plunder the Jewish homes of Jerusalem, and Jewish women will be subjected to massive raping. With this, the third stage comes to an end.

Zechariah 14:1-2

¹Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. ²For 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 (ASV 1901).

With the destruction of Jerusalem and victory in hand the Antichrist and his armies move to Bozrah.

THE ARMIES OF THE ANTICHRIST AT BOZRAH

The main concentration of Jews and their leaders will have fled Jerusalem and Israel. They will be at the sheepfold of Bozrah in the land of Edom or present-day south Jordan. This is known today as Petra. Since the main purpose of the Campaign of Armageddon is the annihilation of the Jews, the armies of the world will move southward from Jerusalem to Bozrah. Jeremiah chapter forty-nine describes this quite clearly.

Jeremiah 49:13-14

¹³For I have sworn by myself, saith Jehovah that Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. ¹⁴I have heard tidings from Jehovah, and an ambassador is sent among the nations, saying, Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle (ASV 1901).

The next place where the nations of the earth will gather is at Bozrah in order to destroy the Remnant of Israel that will be gathered there. With the completion of the fourth stage, the last three days before the Second Coming begins. However, before the Second Coming there is a national conversion of the State of Israel.

THE NATIONAL MOURNING BEGINS

Zechariah 12:10

¹⁰And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born (ASV 1901).

First the Lord will plan to execute judgment against all the Gentile nations that come against the apple of His eye, Israel. Then the Lord in His everlasting grace toward humankind and His chosen, the Israelites pours out His spirit of grace and of supplication which causes the Jews to realize that it was them who persecuted Jesus and had Him nailed to the cross at Calvary. The Lord in the first person (me) begins to describe the mourning process the Jews will go through when they finally realize that it was the body He entered to live and die for them as Jesus the Messiah. The degree of mourning is unparalleled in the lives of humans. He draws an analogy to one losing a child. In order to cite this event of losing a child with the greatest pain one can experience. He says it is like the loss of a parent's only male child. Then He further defines the situation as one who loses their first-born child. Our first-born children are the ones wherein we learn parenting and spend the most time and effort attending to their care. We usually invest more of ourselves into the first-born child than we do to any other. A loss of this child will give us an immense amount of pain that will never leave us while we are still on this earth. This is the extent of pain the nation Israel will experience when they finally realize what they have done to their Messiah Jesus.

EXAMPLE OF PREVIOUS MOURNING

Zechariah 12:11

¹¹In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon (ASV 1901).

Hadadrimmon was a city near Jezreel. It was in the plains of Megiddon, where Pharaoh Necho II fatally wounded the good king Josiah. The extent of the mourning that the Jews will have over their treatment of Jesus is likened to the mourning the nation had when Josiah died.

King Josiah was a wonderful king of Judah (southern kingdom). He started to reign when he was only eight years old and reigned for thirty-one years in Jerusalem. At the age of sixteen he began to pray earnestly seeking the Lord God. As a result of his relationship with God he began to remove the occultists from Jerusalem and their symbols and forbade their sexual sins. At the age of twenty-six he sent several of his advisors and confidants to the Temple to repair it which they did. He then started worship services again when the books of Moses (first five books of the Bible) were found. When he read them, he expressed deep sorrow and realized how angry God was with the nation Israel for not keeping God's Word. Josiah removed all the abominations in the nation Israel and caused all the children to turn to their God. His death and the national mourning are recorded in II Chronicles.

II Chronicles 35:20-25

²⁰After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Neco king of Egypt went up to fight against Carchemish by the Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. ²¹But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war; and God hath commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. ²²Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Neco from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. ²³And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. ²⁴So his servants took him out of the chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had, and brought him to Jerusalem; and he died, and was buried in the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. ²⁵And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations unto this day; and they made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations (ASV 1901).

BATTLE OF CARCHEMISH

When the Assyrian capital Nineveh was overrun by the Babylonians in 612 BC the Assyrians moved their capital to Harran. When Harran was captured by the Babylonians in 610 BC the capital was once again moved, this time to Carchemish, on the Euphrates river. Egypt was allied with the Assyrian king Ashur-uballit II, and marched in 609 BC to his aid against the Babylonians.

The Egyptian army of Pharaoh Necho II was delayed at Megiddo by the forces of King Josiah of Judah. Josiah was killed in his thirty-ninth year and his army was defeated at the battle of Megiddo. The dead body of Josiah was delivered to Jerusalem immediately and buried according to the customs of Judah's kings, near the grave of King David.¹ The Israelites crowned Jehoahaz Josiah's son king. But after only three months Necho replaced Jehoahaz with Eliakim who was evil and forced the Israelites to pay taxes to Necho.

The Egyptians and Assyrians together crossed the Euphrates and laid siege to Harran, which they failed to take. They then retreated to northern Syria. The Egyptians met the full might of the Babylonian army led by Nebuchadnezzar II at Carchemish where the combined Egyptian and Assyrian forces were soundly destroyed (Cir. 605 B.C.). Assyria ceased to exist as an independent power, and Egypt retreated and was no longer a significant force in the Ancient Near East. Babylonia reached its economic peak after 605 BC. This is the same year the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem for the first time. The Nebuchadnezzar Chronicle, now housed in the British Museum, claims that

¹ King, Philip J., 1993 *Jeremiah: An Archaeological Companion*, Westminster/John Knox Press p.22

“Nebuchadnezzar "crossed the river to go against the Egyptian army which lay in Karchemiš. They fought with each other and the Egyptian army withdrew before him. He accomplished their defeat and beat them to non-existence. As for the rest of the Egyptian army, which had escaped from the defeat so quickly that no weapon had reached them, in the district of Hamath the Babylonian troops overtook and defeated them so that not a single man escaped to his own country. At that time Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole area of Hamath.”²

The battle at Carchemish is described in Jeremiah 46:3-12, II Chronicles 35:20-24, II Kings 23:29-30, in the apocryphal book of I Esdras, and in Josephus. This battle caused the Babylonians to replace Egypt as the preeminent nation of the world. It thrust out Babylon as a new world power and changed the course of history as Egypt began to lose their status. It started the Times of the Gentiles. Jeremiah lamented over the great king Josiah’s death because Jeremiah received his prophecies starting in the thirteenth year of Josiah’s reign when the king was twenty-one years old. He lived to lament Josiah’s death and succeeding bad kings of Judah. He also saw the three Jerusalem invasions of Babylon including the last in 586 B.C.

ALL THE FAMILIES IN ISRAEL MOURN FOR JESUS

Zechariah 12:12-14

¹²And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; ¹³the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; ¹⁴all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart (ASV 1901).

The text before us continues to describe the extent of the mourning that will take place in Israel when the Jews realize it was them that rejected Jesus and it was them for whom He died. This text describes every family from the leaders of the government and Temple to the general population. All will mourn in national repentance for the way they rejected the Lord Jesus when He came the first time. This is like Psalm 51 wherein David mourned over his sin with Bathsheba only on a national scale.

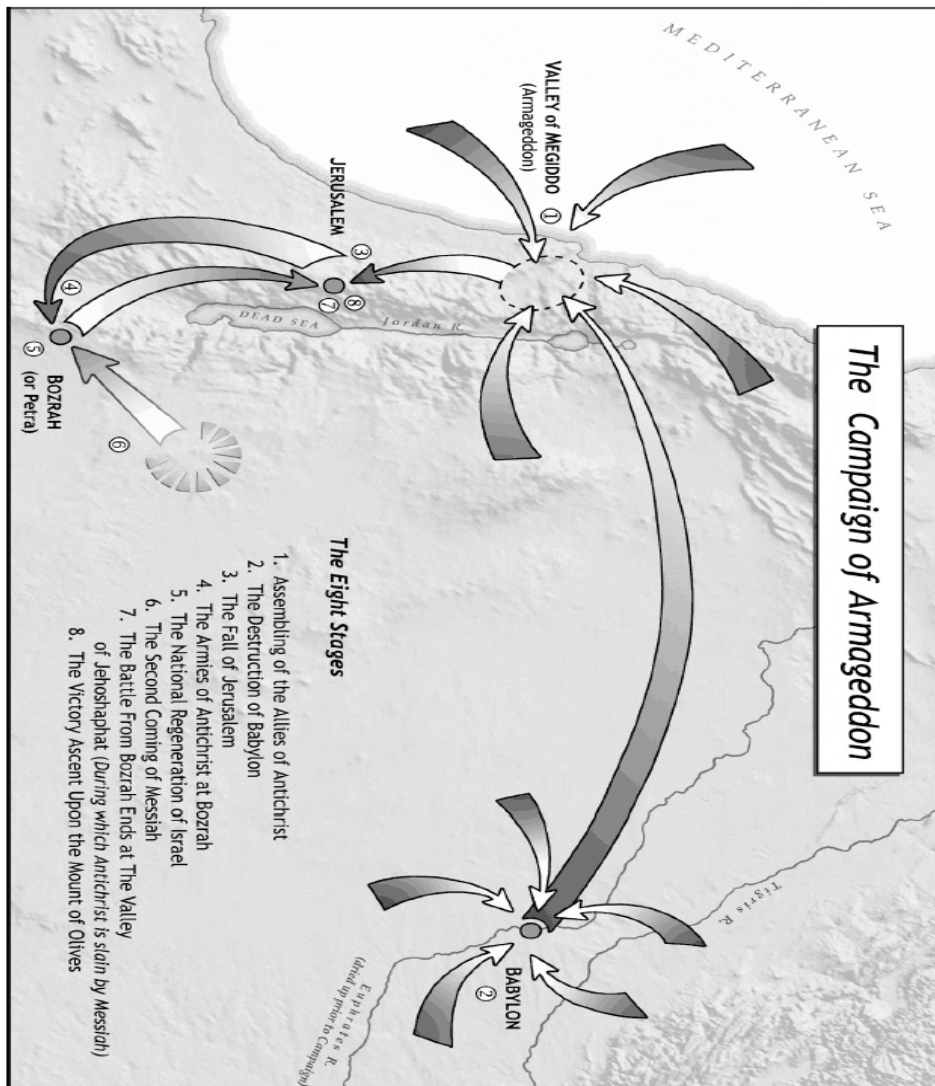
Psalm 51:1–19

¹Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.² Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin.³ For I know my transgressions; And my sin is ever before me.⁴ Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, And done that which is evil in thy sight; That thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, And be clear when thou judgest.⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me.⁶ Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; And in the hidden part thou wilt make me to know wisdom.⁷ Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: Wash

² Chronicle Concerning the Early Years of Nebuchadnezzar. Accessed November 23, 2013 <http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/abc5/jerusalem.html>

me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Make me to hear joy and gladness, That the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. ⁹ Hide thy face from my sins, And blot out all mine iniquities. ¹⁰ Create ⁱⁿ me a clean heart, O God; And renew a ^{right} spirit within me. ¹¹ Cast me not away from thy presence; And take not thy holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; And uphold me with a willing spirit. ¹³ Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; And sinners shall be converted unto thee. ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. ¹⁵ O Lord, open thou my lips; And my mouth shall show forth thy praise. ¹⁶ For thou delightest not in sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. ¹⁸ Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: Build thou the walls of Jerusalem. ¹⁹ Then wilt thou delight in the sacrifices of righteousness, In burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering: Then will they offer bullocks upon thine altar (ASV 1901).

by Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum



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NEXT WEEK: REVELATION MSG. XXXVI

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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