



The Voice Of Truth

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The Battle of Armageddon

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Many denominations teach that after the rapture (a false doctrine) the saints will return with Christ when He comes to destroy the forces of the Antichrist, and then He will establish His kingdom. The great battle of Armageddon will be fought. These false teachers of the pre-millennial doctrine are constantly talking about this great and terrible conflict. You can't go through the line at the grocery store without noticing the many magazines with headlines about this battle and the end of the world. They say it will be a bloody slaughter such as the world has never known.

The term "Armageddon" is found only once in the Bible. *"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon"* (**Revelation 16:16**). In keeping with the fashion of the book (apocalyptic language) the term Armageddon is used in a symbolic way. The apostle John is not alluding to a literal place. The use of geographical points to emphasize spiritual truths is a common Biblical event. For instance, the word "hell" (Greek Gehenna) relates to the Hebrew Ge Hinnom, which was the Valley of Hinnom just south of Jerusalem. In the Old Testament times, when the Jews became engrossed in idolatry, they offered their children as burnt sacrifices there (**2 Kings 16:3; 21:6**). Later, because of these dreadful pagan alliances, the valley became the city dump which was always burning. Thus, because of its connection with pain, weeping, and burning, Gehenna became a symbol for the final punishment of hell. Certainly it would be foolish to contend that on the Day of Judgment, the wicked will be cast into the valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem! John in the Revelation book often uses places as symbols for concepts. So Zion (**14:1**) and Jerusalem (**21:1**) are symbols of God's spiritual city the church; Egypt and Sodom (**11:8**) represent oppression and wickedness. And it is within such a reference frame that the mountain of Megiddo is used. The Holy Spirit profits on the meaning which this location possesses for those who would be familiar with Old Testament. In Hebrew, the term "Harmageddon" means "mountain (or hill) of Megiddo." Was there a hill of Megiddo? Yes! In fact, the Jews were only too familiar with this famous

battlefield and area. Many bloody encounters stained the soil of this region. It was here that Deborah and Barak defeated the Canaanites (**Judges 4:15**). Gideon was victorious over the Midianites in this region (**Judges 7**). In the battle against Sisera, Sisera had 900 chariots of **iron**, (**Judges 4:13**), but in Israel there was scarce a shield or spear among 40,000 (**Judges 5:8**). Israel's position was completely hopeless. But when the battle was joined, the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army, and Sisera fled away on his **feet** (**Judges 4:15**). This importance was then employed by the Holy Spirit to convey to struggling, persecuted Christians in the first century the sure outcome of the conflict then being waged between the forces of evil (Satan and Imperial Rome) and the forces of righteousness (God, Christ, and faithful saints who endure). These Christians were in dire need of assurance that Christ would come to their aid soon! They needed encouragement to hang on and remain steadfast in the face of cruel mistreatment! The symbol of Armageddon provided that assurance. Christians were given the comfort that soon the outcome of the battle would be realized. The enemies of God and his people would be punished while suffering saints would be comforted. Thus Armageddon is purely symbolic and indicates that the forces of good will prevail.

In **Revelation 16**, it records the pouring out of the seven bowls of God's wrath into the earth **verse 1**. The bowls of wrath are in form of plagues, reminiscent of the plagues in the book of Exodus. They point us to God's overthrow of all that is evil. In this connection John sees three unclean spirits, like frogs, coming from the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet **verse 13**. These spirits went forth unto the kings of the world, to gather them unto the war of the great day of God **verse 14**. They were said to be gathered into the place which is called Armageddon **verse 16**. Surely even the most childish person ought to be able to discern the figures of speech employed. Are literal frogs going to fight the battle of Armageddon? If one expects this to be a literal, material battle, he must expect the army to be headed by a committee of three frogs. Both figures are symbolical; neither is literal. There is no reason for making one literal and the other symbolical.

The pre-millennial view of the battle of Armageddon is totally false. It contains not the slightest support in the Scriptures. Such teaching must be rejected!

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17