

ARMAGEDDON

(Rev 16:16)

Armageddon is a symbolic name for a great battlefield. In Rev 16:16 it represents a gathering of the armies of the nations who will go and fight against Jerusalem. Satanically inspired, they will be anti-Christian, anti-Israeli, anti-God forces gathering for the battle on the great day of God (Ps 2:2-3, Rev 16:14).

Great numbers from the east and north will come to fight in Israel, but godless mankind will be slaughtered. Zech 12:1-9, 14:12-15 tells us that these armies will end up attacking one another in what appears to be part of a world war in which the world's mega-cities are destroyed by nuclear warfare and earthquakes.

Joel 2:2-5 also describes this war, saying that there has never been anything like it before, and there will never be one like it again. Before the armies come, the land is like the Garden of Eden; after they leave, there is only a barren wasteland. It will be a great army of cavalry and tanks and modern weapons of warfare.

At this time, there will be warnings in the heavens, and on the earth blood, fire, and columns of smoke. The sun will become dark, and the moon red, before the coming of the great and terrifying Day of the Lord. This is Armageddon. Joel continues his description of the judgment of the nations, which terminates in the coming of the Lord and victory for his people. There will be multitudes in the valley of judgment. Then the Lord will roar from Zion, and shout from Jerusalem, and give victory to Israel.

The Lord is calling all the nations to gather their armies and come to Israel for a time of judgment. But why are all the nations going there? Ezekiel 38-39 describes an invasion of a resettled Israel in the last days by an international leader called Gog, of the land of Magog. The Israelis who have returned from many nations will transform their promised land and live there securely. Then there will be an invasion from the north, possibly a coalition of Muslim countries supported by

Russia. The recent civil war in Syria has brought many of Israel's enemies closer to their northern border.

These nations will surround Jerusalem to exterminate the Jewish nation from the earth. God will allow Jerusalem to be entered and two-thirds of the people to be defeated, but at the climax of the battle, the Messiah will return to destroy the invading armies. At the same time, there will be a massive *earthquake* throughout the land of Israel. It will be the greatest earthquake that has ever occurred. Every living creature and all the peoples on the face of the Earth will quake in the Lord's presence. Mountains will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground. Every weapon of war will be turned against fellow soldiers. God will shower the vast armies with hailstones, fire, and sulfur. Everyone will come to know that the returning Messiah is Almighty God (Ezek 38:18-23).

The effects of this *earthquake* are graphically recorded after the sixth seal is broken: The sun will turn black, the moon will turn dark red, and the stars (meteorites) will fall to the earth. The sky will vanish as if being rolled up, and every mountain and island will move from its place. The world leaders and important people, the generals, the rich and powerful, the slave and free will conceal themselves in caves and among the rocks in the mountains trying to escape from God and his Messiah. It is the great day of their wrath and nobody can endure it, except the redeemed (Rev 6:12-17).

Then the seventh angel will throw the contents of his bowl across the sky, and the great city (Babylon) that has dominion over the kings of the earth will split into three parts, and all *the cities of the nations will collapse*. Every island will vanish, and the mountains will no longer be recognizable. Huge hailstones weighing 50 kg. will fall on people whose only response will be to curse God (Rev 16:17-21).

This great judgment on the day of the Lord is also described by the prophet Isaiah, who says that the entire inhabited earth will be turned into a desolation to annihilate the sinners in it. God will make people scarcer than pure gold (Isa 13:6-13).

Jesus confirmed the interpretation of these prophecies and added that all the tribes of the land will mourn when they see the Son of Man

coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Mt 24:29-30).

The prophet Zechariah's version emphasizes the siege made against Jerusalem and Judah by all the nations of the earth. He said the Lord would make Jerusalem an unstable cup for all the surrounding armies. It will be a heavy weight; everyone who burdens themselves with it will be crushed. The Lord will strike every horse with panic and every rider with insanity. He will protect Judah and destroy all the nations who come against Jerusalem (Zech 12:1-4, 9).

Zechariah adds that Jerusalem will be captured, the houses will be ransacked, the women raped, and half of the city will go into exile. The Lord will inflict all of the people who attack Jerusalem. He will cause their flesh to rot away, even while they're standing on their feet, their eyes to rot in their sockets, and their tongues to rot in their mouths. The armies will panic and attack each other (Zech 14:2, 12-15).

That is Armageddon! Let us, the redeemed, be thankful that we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken.