

The Eight Stage Campaign of Armageddon

19: 19

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the Rider on the horse and His army (19:19). According to the Bible, great armies from the west and the east will gather and assemble on this plain in the Valley of Armageddon (Psalm 2:2; Joel 3:9-11). As the antichrist and his armies Tziyon approach, God will intervene and Jesus Christ will return to rescue His people Isra'el.

In a sense, Armageddon is a battle that never really takes place. That is, it does not take place in accordance with its original human intent. Its human purpose is to gather the armies of the world to execute the antichrist's "final solution" to the "Jewish problem." This is why Jesus Christ chooses this moment in history for His return to earth, to thwart the antichrist's attempted annihilation of the Jews and to destroy the armies of the world. It seems only fitting, in light of mankind's bloody legacy, that the return of Christ should be precipitated by a worldwide military conflict against Israel. Therefore, history is moving toward Armageddon.⁴¹⁹ Here, then, are the eight stages of this coming Campaign taken from Arnold Fruchtenbaum's landmark book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah*.⁴²⁰

1. The Gathering of the Armies of the Antichrist: With the outpouring of the sixth bowl of judgment, the Euphrates Rives will dry up (this is a summary, see Eg - **The Sixth Angel Poured out His Bowl and I Saw Three Evil Spirits That Looked Like Frogs** for a more detailed account).

This drying up process will be for the purpose of making it easier for the antichrist to assemble his forces for the Armageddon Campaign. Armageddon is a combination of two Hebrew words, *har Megiddo*, that mean, *the mountain of Megiddo, or the fortress of Megiddo*. The city of Megiddo was strategically located on the western end of the Valley of Jezreel (Joshua 17:16). The roads of the world lead through Isra'el, and within Isra'el, all roads lead through the Valley of Jezreel. The Bible nowhere refers to this valley as the Valley of Armageddon. Therefore, what is known as the Valley of Armageddon in Gentile circles is actually the biblical Valley of Jezreel. When Napoleon saw it he said it was the greatest battlefield on the earth. No fighting takes place there, it will be more like an execution. Here the armies of the world will gather for the purpose of destroying all the Jews still living at that time. This will be the program of the counterfeit trinity, but they will unwittingly accomplish the purpose of God.

2. The Destruction of Babylon: Today **Babylon** is in ruins. But one day it will be rebuilt and become the political, economic, and religious capital of the world (**Zechariah 5:5-11**). With the armies of the antichrist out of **Babylon**, the **sheep** Gentiles of the Tribulation (see **Fc - The Sheep and the Goats**) take the opportunity to destroy his capital city. Although there are many more scriptures, we will limit ourselves to several important passages in **Isaiah** and **Jeremiah** regarding the destruction of **Babylon**.

The prophecies of Isaiah 13 and 14, and of Jeremiah 50 and 51 regarding the destruction of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the manner required by the Bible. The **Babylon** of past history died out slowly and was inhabited again in other generations. But the **Babylon** of the Great Tribulation will suffer sudden destruction. The means of destruction is explained in **Isaiah 13:1-5**. **Isaiah** saw the gathering of many people in his prophecy against **Babylon**. The *first stage* saw the gathering of the forces loyal to the antichrist and **Babylon**; however, the *second stage* will see the gathering of those who wish to destroy **Babylon**. The details of this destruction are given in **Isaiah 13:6 to 14:23**. It is extremely important to realize that **Babylon** has never been destroyed in the manner described by in the Bible. For example, the context of **Isaiah 13:6-22** clearly puts the destruction of **Babylon** during the time of the Great Tribulation. In addition, **Babylon's** destruction is connected with the final redemption of **Isra'el** in **Isaiah 14:1-2**. **Babylon** will be like Sodom and Gomorrah in that it will be uninhabitable for any human (see **Er - Babylon Will Never Be Found Again**). In fact, unlike other nations, **Babylon** will have no surviving remnant.

Jeremiah 50 and 51 give both **near historical** and **far eschatological** prophecies concerning the **Babylon** of **Jeremiah's** day and the **Babylon** of the end times. **Jeremiah 50:9-10** tells of a gathering army and then in **11-16**, the graphic destruction of **Babylon**. Once again, this destruction is so final that **Babylon** will be uninhabitable for any human. According to **Jeremiah 50:39-40**, it will be like Sodom and Gomorrah. Once again in **Jeremiah 50:41-42**, the prophet speaks of gathering many people against **Babylon** and the chapter ends in **verses 45-46** with **God's** decree against **Babylon** and the **Gentile nations'** distress over the destruction of **their** world capital. An even more detailed description of the fall of **Babylon** occurs in **Jeremiah 51**. **Babylon's** negative influence on other nations will cause **ADONAI** to judge her according to **Jeremiah 51:7-9**, and judgment will be especially severe due to **Babylon's** persecution of the people of **Isra'el**. Because **Babylon** led the world to ruin, the **LORD** will now ruin her (**Jeremiah 51:25-26**). This will bring about rejoicing from the faithful remnant and will be viewed as **God's** vengeance against **Babylon** for her abuse of the Jews in **Jeremiah 51:48-49**. **Jeremiah's** destruction of **Babylon** closes with a summary of the destruction of **Babylon**.

There are two indications, both in **Jeremiah**, that the antichrist will not be present in **Babylon** when it is destroyed (**Jeremiah 50:43** and **51:32**). The very fact that he will have to be told that **Babylon** is destroyed, points to the conclusion that he will not be there when it falls. Otherwise, he would not need to be told. Then, where is he? While he was gathering with the armies of the world in **the Valley of Jezreel**, his enemies took the opportunity to destroy his capital city.

Before **Babylon** is destroyed, **ADONAI** will give five warnings to the Jews still living in **Babylon** to flee the city before it is too late. All the warnings are in the book of **Jeremiah**. The first is in **Jeremiah 50:6-8**, and the second is in **Jeremiah 50:28**. Those Jews who escape from **Babylon** will run away to Bozrah. The destruction of **Babylon** will be **God's** vengeance on **Babylon** for their abuse of **His** people and **His** Temple. As the **fugitives and refugees** arrive from **Babylon**, they announce the destruction to the Jews living there (**Jeremiah 50:10** and **Jeremiah 51:45**). These are the third and fourth warnings. The fifth and last warning is **Jeremiah 51:50**. Therefore, the Jews living in **Babylon** will be given warning to flee. They will fervently make their way to **Jerusalem**. The unexpected devastation of the world's political, economic, and religious capital of the world will cause great anguish on the earth, but not in heaven (**18:9-24**). For when **Babylon** is destroyed, it means that the Second Coming of **Jesus Christ** is close at hand, and along with it, the regeneration and restoration of **Isra'el**.

3. The Fall of Jerusalem: Although his entire army is intact when he receives the news that **Babylon** has fallen, the antichrist does not move east to demolish his enemies. At this point Satan controls him, and he is fixated on the annihilation of **the Jews**; the final solution that Hitler was unable to accomplish. So, instead of moving east, the beast and his army move south against **Jerusalem** from **the Valley of Jezreel** (**Zechariah 12:2-3, 14:1-2**). All the armies of the world will converge against **Jerusalem**. Once again the City will fall into the hands of **Gentiles**. Half of **the Jews** will be made slaves and the other half will remain in the city to await **their** fate (**Zechariah 14:2-4**).

Because **the LORD** will greatly energize **the Jews** defending **Jerusalem**, the antichrist and his army will not have an easy time of it. His army will suffer heavy losses. **God will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.** The temporary empowerment of the Jews is described in **Zechariah 12:4-9** and **the battle** is further described in **Micah 4:11-13**. Although the **Jewish forces** prove very formidable, the antichrist, his army, and the armies of the world will prevail. After their victory, his soldiers will ransack the houses and rape the women of **Jerusalem** (**Zechariah 14:2**). With this, the third stage ends.

4. The Armies of the Antichrist Descend on Bozrah: The main concentration of **Jews** will be in **Bozrah**, in the land of Edom, in what today is Jordan. Satan continues to control the antichrist and as far as he is concerned, the main objective of the Campaign of **Armageddon** is to eradicate the **Jews**; the armies of the world move from **Jerusalem** to **Bozrah** as recorded in **Jeremiah 49:13-14**. "I swear by Myself," declares the LORD, "that **Bozrah** will become a ruin and an object of horror, of reproach and of cursing; and all its towns will be in ruins forever." I have heard a message from **ADONAI**: An envoy was sent to the nations to say, "Assemble yourselves to attack it! Rise up for battle!" So the nations of the world gather at **Bozrah** to destroy the remnant of Israel that will be gathered there (**Micah 2:12**). With the completion of the fourth stage, the last three days of the Campaign of **Armageddon** and the Great Tribulation will begin.

5. The Regeneration of Isra'el: Because of the rejection of the messiahship of **Jesus Christ** by the nation of **Isra'el**, there is a condition that must be met **before Christ** will return to establish His kingdom. **The Jews and the Jewish leaders must ask Him to come back. There must be a national regeneration and acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ.** For this to happen, two conditions must be met. First, there must be a confession of **Isra'el's** national sin (**Leviticus 26:40-42; Jeremiah 3:11-18; Hosea 5:15**), and secondly, a pleading for **Messiah** to return (**Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 23:37-39**).

First, there must be a confession of Israel's national sin. With the armies of the antichrist surrounding the city of **Bozrah**, the Campaign of **Armageddon** will begin its last three days according to **Hosea** the prophet: **Come, and let us return to ADONAI; He has torn us to pieces but He will heal us; He has injured us but He will bind up our wounds. After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will restore us, that we may live in His presence. Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge Him. As surely as the sun rises, He will appear; He will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth (Hosea 6:1-3).** It is at that time that the leaders of **Isra'el** will finally recognize the reason why the Great Tribulation had come upon them. Whether this will be done by the study of the Scriptures, or by the preaching of **the 144,000 (7:1-8)**, or by **the two witnesses (11:1-3)** is not clearly stated. In reality, it will probably be a combination of these things. But the leaders will come to a realization of their national sin in some way. Just as the **Jewish leaders** once led the nation to the rejection of the messiahship of **Jesus (Mt 12:24; Mk 3:22; Lk 11:15-16; John 7:20, 8:49, 10:20)**, they will then lead the nation to the acceptance of **His** messiahship. The national confession of **Isra'el** is given with its actual words in **Psalm 79 and 80; Isaiah 53:1-9, 63:7 to 64:12.**

The second facet leading to the Second Coming is the pleading of Isra'el for Messiah to return and save them from their predicament of having the world's armies, intent on their destruction, gathered outside of Bozrah. The pleading of the Jews for their Messiah to save them is described in Zechariah 12:10 to 13:1. This pleading will not be confined to the Jews of Bozrah but will include the Jews still in Jerusalem. It will begin with the confession of their national sin, and then they will plead for His return to save them from their plight. They plead for the One they have pierced. This will be the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28-32). Regeneration is the work of the Ruach HaKodesh, and here the nation of Isra'el will be regenerated, creating some dramatic manifestations in their midst (Joel 2:28-29). This will be accompanied by wonders in the heavens as well (Joel 2:30-32). The result of all this is that the Jews of Jerusalem will be delivered and escape, as well as the remnant of Bozrah (Isaiah 64:1-12; Psalm 79:1-13; 80:1-19). In conclusion, during the fifth stage, Isra'el, as a nation, will be regenerated and saved after two days of the national confession of sin. On the third day (Hosea 6:1-3) they will plead for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

6. The Second Coming of Christ to Bozrah: Yeshua will return at the Jewish request for Him to do so. The initial place of His return will not be the Mount of Olives as is traditionally thought, but the place known as Bozrah (see Isaiah 34:1-7, 63:1-6; Habakkuk 3:3; Micah 2:12-13). Zechariah 12:7 declares that: ADONAI will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. With His return to the Jewish remnant at Bozrah, Yeshua will save the tents of Judah first before saving the Jews of Jerusalem. The term tents points to temporary dwelling places rather than permanent housing. The fact that Judah is living in tents shows that her home is temporarily elsewhere. The elsewhere is Bozrah. Rev 19:11-16 describes the manner of His return.

7. The End of the Fighting at the Valley of Jehoshaphat: Today the world is uncomfortable with Jesus Christ being a righteous warrior. That is why Christmas is more popular than Easter. At Christmas we see a little helpless baby in a manger, but at Easter we are forced to look at the God-man dying for our sins. Before the fall of Jericho, Joshua had an encounter with a theophany, or the preincarnate Jesus Christ. Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of Him with a drawn sword in His hand. Joshua went up to Him and asked, "Are you for us or our enemies?" "Neither," He replied, "but as Commander of the Army of the LORD I have now come." Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked Him, "What message does my LORD have for His servant. The Commander of the LORD's army replied, "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so

(Joshua 5:13-15). The fact is that **Jesus is the Commander of the army of the LORD**. He had the **Israelites** walk around **Jericho** seven times, while **ADONAI** fought the battle alone. The same will be true when the **Arm of the LORD** (51:9, 52:10, 53:1 and 59:1), **Jesus Christ Himself**, will defeat the armies of the world alone.

Revelation 19:17-20 deals with **Messiah** as the righteous warrior, for we see **Him** defeating Satan's armies in what is often called "**the Battle of Armageddon**," but in reality is **the War of The Great Day of the LORD of heaven's angelic armies (19:14 CJB)**. **Armageddon** means *Mount of Slaughter*. This war will take place in a single day, and the **battle of Armageddon** will be just one of the battles of that war. Actually, this **war** will encompass more than just **the Valley of Megiddo (Jezreel)**, but as we shall see, it will cover practically all of the land of Palestine. **The battle** starts at **Bozrah** and will continue all the way back to the eastern walls of **Jerusalem** which overlook the **Kidron Valley**, also known as **the Valley of Jehoshaphat**.

Among the very first casualties of **the battle** will be the antichrist himself. Having ruled the world with great power and spoken against the true Son of **God**, the counterfeit son will be powerless before **Christ (Habakkuk 3:13-14)**. The ease with which **Messiah** will slay the antichrist is described by Paul in **Second Thessalonians 2:8**, **And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming**. The one who has claimed to be **God**, the one who has been able to perform all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, the one who exercised all authority of Satan as he ruled the world, will be quickly dispensed with by the word of the righteous warrior. The arrival of the antichrist into hell is described in **Isaiah 14:3-11**. And later the prophet describes the fate of his dead body on the earth in **Isaiah 14:16-21**. The antichrist and the false prophet will spend a thousand years in **the lake of fire (20:14-15)** together before the end of the Millennium. The unsaved that die prior to this time are cast into Hades, a place of torment, but not into **the lake of fire**, which is reserved for those who have rejected **Jesus Christ**. The rest of the wicked dead will be judged at the **Great White Throne Judgment** (see **Fo - The Great White Throne Judgment**) and follow the antichrist, the false prophet, and Satan into this eternal torment.

After the death of the antichrist, the slaughter of his army will continue. There actually is no fighting per se. It is really an execution. **The Commander of the LORD's army** will continue marching through **the Land** in indignation, as if treading the winepress of **His** wrath, causing blood to be sprinkled on **His** garments. **Zechariah 14:12-15** describes the manner in which this massive army will be destroyed. This carnage will continue all the way back to **Jerusalem**, coming to an end in **the Valley of Jehoshaphat** as **Joel 3:12-13** states. **The nations** that have gathered against the Jews (**Joel 3:9-11**) will now find themselves being

slaughtered by **the King of the Jews**. The blood from this encounter with the living **God** will run about one mile wide and one hundred and eighty miles long, from **the Valley of Jezreel** in the north of **Isra'el**, to **Bozrah** in the south and will literally reach to **the horses' bridles (Revelation 14:20)**. A sea of humanity will become a sea of blood. It will practically cover the length of **Isra'el**, and when this battle comes to an end in **the Valley of Jehoshaphat**, so does the seventh stage of the Campaign of **Armageddon**.

8. The Victory Ascent Upon the Mount of Olives: After the actual "fighting" is completed, there will be a victory ascent on **the Mount of Olives** described in **Zechariah 14:3-4a**. Then **the LORD** will go forth and fight against those nations as **He fights in the day of battle**. And in that day **His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east**. Here **the LORD** is seen fighting against the nations that had gathered against **the Jews**. It is only *after* the "fighting" that **His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives**.

Along with this victory ascent, a number of cataclysmic events will occur as the Great Tribulation comes to an end. These cataclysmic events will be a result of the seventh bowl of judgment described in **Revelation 16:17-21**, and the fact that **Christ** will physically place **His feet upon the Mount of Olives**. With the seventh bowl, a voice cries out, **It is done!** because the seventh bowl brings the Great Tribulation to a definite end. This declaration will be followed by convulsions of nature including the greatest earthquake ever to occur in the history of the earth (**Zechariah 14:4b-5**). This will cause the city of **Jerusalem** to split into three divisions, while the city of **Babylon** will suffer the full wrath of **God**. Many geographical changes will take place and hail will fall weighing about 100 pounds each. Not only will **Jerusalem** be split into three divisions, but **the Mount of Olives** will be split into two parts creating **a valley** running east and west. This newly formed **valley** will provide a way of escape for the **Jewish** inhabitants of **Jerusalem** from the earthquake that will destroy the city. In this way **the Jews of Jerusalem** will be rescued following the deliverance of **the Jews in Bozrah**.

Another cataclysmic event that will take place at this time is the blackout described in **Matthew 24:29**. The earthquake and the blackout are both described in **Joel 3:14-17**. All this will happen on the same day, the multitudes slaughtered in **the Day of the LORD** in **the Valley of Jehoshaphat**, the blackout, and the earthquake. But a refuge will be provided for **the Jews** to escape, by means of **the valley** cutting through **the Mount of Olives** spoken of by **Zechariah**. With these cataclysmic events, the Great Tribulation and the Campaign of **Armageddon** will come to an end.