

Rev. 16:12-21 “Armageddon”

For the Children: If you fight all the time, people will fight you back. And if you fight against God, He will fight you back too. People who hate God fight against His church. But He will use their fighting-spirit to turn them against each other. He will also use their fighting-spirit as evidence of how just His punishment is, when He puts an end to all opposition on the Day of Judgement. In these ways the Lord prevents the unbelieving world from destroying His people. **Questions:** When is it wrong for God’s children to fight against others? When is it right? .Why does the Bible talk about the end of the world as a kind of “Last Battle”?

Introduction:

First Point: The Preparation for Armageddon

- 1) The Last Two Bowls: The first 5 Bowls had to do with world-wide judgements in history, due to an increase in hard-heartedness at certain times in this present age. The 6th Bowl looks at the “big picture” of opposition to God and His people, from the whole world-system.” It shows how God prepares His enemies for the final judgement. The 7th Bowl then goes on to depict that final judgement.
- 2) Satan’s Mustering: The Euphrates River is envisioned as the site for a gathering of the armies of the “kings of the east” against God’s people – as it often was the area from which attacks came upon God’s people in the OT. Many take this vision literally. However, it appears to be an allusion to Cyrus, an OT “king from the east,” diverting the Euphrates to attack Babylon. It is about the symbolic Babylon, the whole world-system, all the nations (16:14; 17:1-2), in their collective opposition to God. The Dragon, Beast and False Prophet send out 3 unclean spirits – depicted as unclean frogs. Here all the forces Satan can muster are lumped together – the demonic, the power of secular government and false religion – to indicate Satan’s strongest efforts to destroy the Church while he can
- 3) Sinful Man’s Fighting-Spirit: God uses Satan’s marshalling of his forces to gather the opposition for defeat. This has happened throughout history (e.g. 1 Kgs. 22), and will continue up to the end, even when all the world seems against the Church. Sometimes that fighting-spirit is even used by God to break up opposition by in-fighting among God’s enemies
- 4) Preparation for Judgement: The picture of opposition being gathered for battle represents God’s use of Satan’s marshalling of his forces to show the justice of His final judgement against the nations. Satan’s strongest opposition only serves God’s purposes. The nations will come to the “stand” on Judgement Day, with their fists raised, showing how just is God’s sentence

Second Point: The Battle of Armageddon

- 1) The Site of Har-Megedon: The 7th Bowl is poured out when the nations gather in opposition at “Har-Megedon” – the Hill of Megiddo. This was another site of famous OT battles, where God’s people were delivered against great odds. See Judg. 4-5. This location is not literal either: the “Last Battle” is also seen as taking place outside *Jerusalem* (14:20, 20:9). The point is not the actual location, but the way the Lord uses the final judgement – to deliver His people against great odds
- 2) Judgement Consummated: The final judgement of Armageddon is introduced by Sinai-like signs of God’s power & holiness – lightning, thunder and earthquakes. God has the right and ability to judge. This judgement is put in terms of extreme plagues – again like those upon Egypt. There are huge hailstones, earthquakes, cosmic upheaval and dissolution, upon those who are still standing in defiance against the Lord. Babylon and the cities of the world are destroyed. The cry, “It is done!” reminds of Christ’s cry on the cross at the completion of His work of salvation. This cry speaks of the consummation of His work of judgement
- 3) Be Ready: The exhortation to remain awake and clothed (v. 15) shows that the final judgement is in view in this passage – for the language is so close to 2 Pet. 3:10. The believer’s response to the marshalling of Satan’s opposition against the Church is not despair, but readiness in Christ

Conclusion: