

The Commencement of Eternity
“THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON”
Revelation 19:17-21

Theme: The victory of Jesus Christ at Armageddon will be absolute!

I. THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ARMIES – 19:17-19

A. *The Preparation for Hostilities* – vv. 17-18

1. We are given the ability to step back and take another look at what the text has just sped past – the glorious coming of Christ Jesus.
2. The vision that John is having is interrupted by another angel making a pronouncement – *“Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice ...”*
3. This angel takes his place in a position where he either eclipses the sun or outshines it – either way it is for the purpose of getting universal attention.
4. In a gesture that anticipates the total slaughter of the godless, the angel calls out *“... saying to all the birds which fly in mid-heaven, ‘Come, assemble for the great supper of God,’”*
5. The utter defeat and slaughter of the wicked is so determined in the plan of God that it is as good as done – so the angel calls for *“the birds”* to *“assemble”* – to enjoy a feast so attributable to God’s work that the banquet is called *“the great supper of God.”*
6. This is in stark contrast to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” – provided for the church in glory – **vv. 7-10**
7. The birds are promised that they will be able to gorge themselves – *“... so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses, and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.”*
8. This demonstrates that not only the localized armies that gather themselves at Armageddon will be destroyed by Christ, but all of the ungodly everywhere – cp. **Jude 14-15.**

B. *The Preference of the Hostiles* – v. 19

1. Regardless of the certain carnage that would result from their opposition to Christ Jesus, the Antichrist will have manipulated the nations of the world into a final movement against Israel in an attempt to prevent the possibility of the Millennium.

2. We are told that *“I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.”*
3. Satan will drive all of these forces – the accumulated power of the world – into one place – Armageddon – cp. *Revelation 16:13-16*
4. His manipulations will include four major world powers that will exist at that time:
 - a. The Revived Roman Empire (The Army of the West) – a ten nation confederacy out of which will come the Antichrist who establishes the Covenant of Peace with Israel – cp. *Revelation 17:12-14; Daniel 9:27*
 - b. The Army of the North – an alliance between Russia (“Rosh”), Iran (“Persia”), Ethiopia (“Cush”), Lybia (“Put”), and Germany (“Gomer”) - which will challenge the authority of the Antichrist by invading Israel with whom he has a Covenant of Peace – cp. *Ezekiel 38:1-6*
 - c. The Army of the South – at the end of the Tribulation, Egypt & the Arab States will attack the Antichrist and when he turns to fight, a regathered King of the North will attack, but the Antichrist will prevail – cp. *Daniel 11:40*
 - d. The Army of the East – will attack while the Antichrist is in Egypt gaining all their wealth – cp. *Daniel 11:44-45* – this army will most likely be the Chinese.
5. As the Antichrist is vanquishing all of these enemies, Jesus Christ will arrive to deliver Israel from the Antichrist’s purpose of exterminating them – cp. *Revelation 19:11-16*
6. Now all of the ungodly forces that were bickering and fighting for supremacy – in rebellion against the Antichrist – will unite for the purpose of defending themselves against the Son of God – *Psalms 2:2-3*.

II. THE ARREST OF THE ANTAGONISTS – 19:20

A. *The Charges Against the Arrested – v. 20a*

1. Immediately upon arrival, Jesus commands that Antichrist & the False Prophet be arrested – *“And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image ...”*
2. These two hooligans who perpetrated such horrendous deception among the people are singled out for immediate and merciless judgment
3. They are charged with three things:
 - a. **Deceptions through Miracles** – *“performed the signs in his presence ...”*

- b. **Devising the Mark** – *“deceived those who received the mark of the beast ...”*
- c. **Demanding the Monolatry** [the worship of only one god although other gods are recognized as existing] – *“... those who worshiped his image”*.

B. *The Condemnation of the Arrested – v. 20b*

1. We are told that *“... these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.”*
2. The sentence is passed quickly with the Antichrist and false prophet being taken alive and dealt with as harshly as possible.
3. Whereas the righteous are taken alive in the rapture for the purpose of glorification for eternal life, these two are taken alive in judgment for the purpose of eternal condemnation.
4. The fact that they *“were thrown alive into the lake of fire”* – emphasizes that they are forever to experience their torment even as the righteous will forever experience the blessings of Heaven.
5. Since they are described as still living when Satan is ultimately thrown in with them indicates that there is no credibility whatsoever to annihilation – cp. ***Revelation 20:10***
6. This is the first reference in Scripture to *“the lake of fire which burns with brimstone”* – a difference place than Hades, which is the temporary place of torment as the ungodly await judgment – cp. ***Matthew 16:18; Luke 16:23; Acts 2:27***
7. The *“lake of fire”* is God's chosen place for those who die in their sins and must pay for those sins in an eternity separated from Him – cp. ***Revelation 20:11-15***.
8. It is needful to realize that this is a literal reference – but even if it were a figure of speech, figures always fall short of reality – not exceed reality!
9. So, before the Battle of Armageddon even has a chance to begin, Satan's leaders are captured and executed without any effort.

III. THE ANNIHILATION OF THE ARMIES – 19:21

A. *The Details of the Annihilation – v. 21a*

1. Much to the chagrin of many who love the spectacular – there will not be a great struggle as the ungodly “go down in a blaze of glory.”
2. There will be no heroism, chivalry, or glory – only slaughter as the King kills the ungodly by edict or fiat – the word that proceeds from His mouth – *“And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse”*

An Exposition of The Revelation

3. Notice that Jesus doesn't even dismount – “*...of Him who sat on the horse.*”
4. This is the point when the judgment of the Sheep and the Goats will take place – cp. *Matthew 25:31-33*
5. The deaths of the ungodly will be sudden & painful – cp. *Zechariah 14:1-3, 9, 12-13.*

B. *The Disposal of the Annihilated – v. 21b*

1. Since this annihilation through judgment had been anticipated by means of the angel calling together all of the birds of the air for the feast, “*...all the birds were filled with their flesh.*”
2. The scavenger birds swarm the battlefield and devour the bodies of those judged – indicating that there was no honor or dignity shown to them as part of their humiliating judgment.
3. God informs us of the purpose of this carnage – cp. *Ezekiel 39:17-29.*
4. These sobering truths serve as a gracious warning by God to unbelievers that they must repent – cp. *2 Peter 3:9*
5. In addition, these things must stimulate us to godly living – cp. *2 Peter 3:11.*