

Wars and Rumors of War

Mat. 24, Gen. 18, Rev. 14-16, Dan. 11, Eze. 38

INTRODUCTION: When God was preparing to Judge Sodom and Gomorrah he said: **Genesis 18:17–18 (ESV)** ¹⁷ The Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, ¹⁸ seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?”

Abraham was called God’s friend and God shows His friends what He intends to do. You are God’s friend and He is showing you what His intentions are.

That was the subject of a conversation Jesus had with the disciples just before his death, burial and resurrection.

CONTEXT: Remember, He had just finished speaking his final sermon to the Jewish leaders where he made an audacious state...

Matthew 23:38–39 (ESV) ³⁸ See, your house is left to you desolate.

Later that day **Matthew 24:3 (ESV)** the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

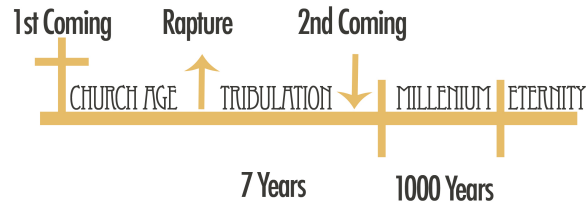
The word, “coming” there in the Greek is the word **Parousia**. It means coming in fullness. NOW REMEMBER - They didn’t separate a 1st and 2nd coming. So they are not anticipating Jesus leaving for thousands of years. They are expecting Jesus to give them an answer like, within a couple of months, or weeks, or days. **Parousia** means, when will you unveil your deity and take over?

Matthew 24-25 Jesus describes in detail **the generation** that will witness His Parousia...

Matthew 24:4–8 (ESV)

⁴ And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.”

Now one question that we must answer is - what difference does it make to us, if the church will be removed? Well these signs will begin prior to the removal of the church and could last as long as an entire generation or 100 years.



1. Preparation of the Battlefield

Rev. 16

¹ Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

● **First Bowl - Sores on unbelieving Humanity**

² So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

Does that bother your view of God? A God that sends pain on people?

Our Generation are victims of an over simplistic view of Christ - He is not at all simple, he is amazingly complex. We want to see Jesus as a gentle, mild, shepherd who always does the nice thing, the sweet thing, the kind thing... but friend WWJD, what would Jesus do is not always easy to answer.

- Yes, Jesus healed, but he also destroyed.
- Yes, Jesus spoke words of kindness and grace, but on another occasion when a woman asked for a healing for her daughter, Jesus said, "it is not proper to take the children's food and feed it to dogs."

What would you do if Jesus called you a dog? Might I suggest, "bark"?

Our world is upside down.

- Sometimes - People can look very beautiful on the outside and be very ugly on the inside.
- Sometimes - People can look very ugly on the outside and be beautiful on the inside.

From time to time, God steps in and sets that right.

These people are worshipping the Anti Christ and that's ugly in God's eyes... now he's showing the world what it looks like to Him.

● **Second Bowl - Salt water becomes like blood**

³ The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.

Notice that said the sea becomes like the blood of a corpse... what is that? Deep, dark, crimson....

Imagine the view from your favorite spot on the beach as a world wide red tide comes in.

● **Third Bowl - 1/3 of Fresh Water Become Blood**

⁴ The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, "Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments.

Now the liberal media will tell you that all of these signs are due to environmental effects of factories and man's effect on creation... but notice what this angel says is the root cause of these environmental disasters.

⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!"

Persecution of God's people. Doesn't that seem bizarre if you are inundated with popular media that looks for a secular cause and effect scenario... friend we are told here environmental catastrophes, sometimes have spiritual causes.

● **Fourth Bowl- Heat (Global Warming)**

⁸ The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. ⁹ They were scorched by the fierce heat,

Don't be too quick to deny Global Warming... the question is who is doing the warming??? Now the day will come when they will begin to see that God is causing these things... Now you would think they would get the hint and repent... but notice....

9b. and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

● **Fifth Bowl - Darkness**

¹⁰ The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness.

Typically heat and light go together, but here its incredibly HOT and incredibly DARK.

People gnawed their tongues in anguish ¹¹ and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

2. The Participants in the Battle

● Sixth Bowl - War

¹⁶ And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.



The Hebrew Word – Harmageddon means, “The Mount of Megiddo”. Har – mount, Megiddo means slaughter; so Armageddon means the, “Mount of Slaughter”.

The word Armageddon is mentioned only one time in the Bible, but the mount Megiddo is rich in Biblical history.

AT Meggido:

- Deborah and Barak defeated the Canaanites (Judges 4-5)
- Gideon defeated the Midianites (Judges 7)
- Saul was slain during a war with the Philistines (1 Sam. 31)
- Ahaziah was slain by Jehu (2 Kings 9)
- Josiah slain by the Egyptians (2 Kings 23)

History has seen battles involving The Crusaders, the Egyptians, the Persians, the Druze, the Greeks, the Turks, and the Arabs all in this valley.

According to Alan Johnson, “More that 200 battles have been fought at or near there”.

1799, Napoleon stood at Megiddo before the battle that ended his quest to conquer the East and rebuild the Roman Empire and said, “*All the armies of the world could maneuver their forces on this vast plain... there is no place in the world more suited for war than this... it is the most natural battleground on planet earth*”.

You have probably heard of the Battle of Armageddon - it's actually a series of campaigns rather than a single battle.

HERE IS HOW IT PROGRESSES:

1. KING FROM THE WEST - ANTICHRIST

Daniel 11:36 (ESV)

³⁶ “And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.

This is in reference to who John calls, “AntiChrist”

- Daniel - Desolator, Willful King, Little Horn
- Paul - man of sin, son of perdition, man of lawlessness
- Zechariah - Worthless Shepherd
- Revelation - The Beast

Daniel 7 explains that this amazing leader will re-unify the West - Europe which will be in effect a resurrected Roman Empire with Anti-Christ at the head.

Now he will not be called anti-christ. He may be a King, a President, a Prime Minister, but he will somehow bring Europe together.

NOW - all of Europe desires access to the land of Israel. It is positioned as a powerful port nation. Anti-Christ will make a peace treaty with Israel in exchange (likely) for right of passage.

Following this 2 Coalitions go against him

Daniel 11:40 (ESV)

⁴⁰ “At the time of the end, the **king of the south** shall attack him, but the **king of the north** shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through.

Who are the King of the North and King of the South?

2. THE KING FROM THE SOUTH

He is Identified in Ezekiel 38 as Egypt remember it's south from Israel - gathered with a coalition of Persians (Iran) and Arabs.

Ezekiel 38:5–6 (ESV)

⁵ Persia (Iran), Cush (Ethiopia), and Put (Lybia) are with them, all of them with shield and helmet;

Now today you think of those countries as North African but in Bible times Ethiopia and Libya were Arab nations.

This same coalition formed against Israel in 1948 during the Israeli war of independence. Arab, Persian and Egyptian The Arabs, the Persians and the Egyptians have fought for 1000's of years. The only time they can agree is in their hatred of Israel.

3. THE KING FROM THE NORTH

Ezekiel 38:2 2. “Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog.

Gen 10. Noah had 3 sons.

- Japheth - Father of the Indo European Peoples
- Hamite - Father of the Black, Oriental, Egyptian
- Semmite - Father of the Arab, Jewish peoples

Japheth had three sons - Magog, tubal, mesheth
Historically these boys went north and settled **Russia**.

Magog – from everything I have read seems to be the nations that make up the former Soviet Union – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and possibly Afghanistan.

ILLUSTRATION: Did you notice as things would happen in Syria and Egypt everyone was looking to Russia for permission to intervene. The same with the Arab spring.

NOW - The army from the North and the South are defeated and look what happens. At that point Anti-Christ will come into Jerusalem and make it his capital city.

Matthew 24:15–28 (ESV)

¹⁵“So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, ¹⁸and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁹And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! ²⁰Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. ²¹For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.

There will be a transport of ethnic Israel into the wilderness...

Revelation 12:6 (ESV) describes it this way...

⁶ and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

Revelation 12:13–14 (ESV)

¹³ And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given **the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness**, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.

I believe that could be the only place our great nation is spoken of in Scripture. Since our inception - the United States has been known as a friend to Israel.

- Their nation born out of the prophetic utterance.
- Our nation born in an attempt to preserve religious liberty.

This great Judeo-Christian coalition has stood for generations. The USA could be the great Eagle who preserves and protects Israel in the final days.

4. THE KING FROM THE EAST

Revelation 16:12 (ESV)

12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east.

So all the invaders are there - The remainder of the Russian army, the Egyptian coalition, the Asian army in one immense battle for Jerusalem.

Revelation 14:20 (ESV)

20 And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

So imagine Jerusalem covered in blood, the entire city.

3. The Point of the Battle

● **Seventh Angel -**

17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. 21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

INVITATION: Remember when God was about to Judge Sodom and Gomorrah he showed his friend Abraham what he planned to do. That compelled Abraham to pray for his friends and family that they be spared AND to do all he could to deliver them from the wrath that was to come.

Now - God has shown you what he intends to do. How will you respond?

NOW you are going to see the Holy Spirit slow down the commentary to describe the Judgement of Babylon and the False Prophet. We will see that next time. Then in **Rev. 19:11** we see a rider on a white horse.

BTW, the Romans had a practice of the conquering general would leave a battle on a white horse. Jesus arrives on one.