

10-22-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Israel, War, and Armageddon...Watching, Ready, and Eager

Purpose: Proclaim a Biblical history of Israel, discuss the current war and the coming battle of Armageddon; Provoke people to be watching, ready and eager as events unfold in the last days.

Truth for Today: Our best life is lived watching, ready, and eager for the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ.

Text: Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 13:14-18

Topic: Israel, War, Middle East, Hamas, Armageddon, Promised Land

Series Title: "Your Best Life Now" ...is found by following God's ways!

Series purpose: Provoke people to embrace the path of Biblical truth to have a blessed life now and rewards in eternity.

Israel, War, and Armageddon...Watching, Ready, and Eager

I. Introduction

A. Video Pastor Israel Procter, Rocket attack from Gaza, 1.04

B. Today we're going to talk about the war in Israel, and what the Bible describes as the battle of Armageddon. I'll begin with the history of Israel and the Promised Land and conclude with how we should live our best life considering end time events.

C. We're continuing the series, Pic "Your Best Life, Now". Our best life is lived watching, ready and eager for the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ.

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E. I am not an expert on the sequence of the timing of end time events, but I will tell you what's coming and how to be ready. Prayer

II. CAMERA History and background of Israel and the Promised Land

A. [Ge. 12:1–3 (NLT) The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country...and **go to the land** that I will show you...³ **I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.**"] [Ge. 13:14–18 (NLT)...the Lord said to Abram, "Look as far as you can see in every direction...¹⁵ I am giving all this land...**to you and your descendants as a permanent possession.**] Pic maps¹⁰⁻¹¹ The Promised Land was originally 100's of 1000's of square miles (They claimed only 30k sq. miles) stretching from Egypt to Iraq and Turkey, from The Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River. Today the nation of Israel is smaller than New Jersey 8,729 vs. 8,533 sq. miles.^{3,4,5,6} and has 8.7 million people.

- B. The origin of the Israeli vs. Arab conflict; Abraham gave birth to 2 sons: (1) Isaac the son of promise; Jacob/ Israel/ Esau, 12 sons/ tribes; Judah through whom was born Jesus the Messiah. (2) Ishmael was sent away and is the father of Muslims, Palestinians, and Arabs. They were in conflict then, throughout history, and today.
- C. Moses divided the Promised Land among 12 tribes of Israel. King David and Solomon made Israel one of the greatest nations on earth. David made Jerusalem his capital. Because of sin the kingdom was divided. Later, God judged Israel by sending them into captivity under foreign control: Assyrians, Babylonians, and later Romans. The 2nd Jewish temple was destroyed in 70 AD and Jerusalem ransacked.
- D. The British government in 1917, made a promise for a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine. In 1948 the UN carved out land for Israel and Palestinians, the 6-day war started, Israel won and declared itself an independent state. The territory was divided into three parts, Israel, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.¹²

III. Today's war and the war to end all wars, the battle of Armageddon

- A. On Oct. 7, in an unprovoked, sneak attack with thousands of missiles rained down on Israel, thousands of Hamas soldiers crossed security fences, stormed beaches, and attacked with paragliders killing and wounding thousands of Israelis. Now Israel has stated they will destroy Hamas and nations are choosing sides, sending weapons and soldiers. When will it end? How will the world respond? Could this lead to the war of Armageddon prophesied in the Book of Revelation?
 - 1. Hamas was founded in 1987 as an Islamic fundamentalist party. The preamble of the Hamas charter reads: "Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it."² Franklin Graham says Christianity is included.
 - 2. Pic¹³ Ismail Haniyeh, Chairman of Hamas's Political Bureau, on Thursday, 10-19, called for Arabs and Muslims to engage in "general mobilization" across the globe on Friday and urged for sympathizers of the terror organization in nearby countries to march toward Israel's borders, according to the *Jerusalem Post*.
- B. Context: In Revelation 16, 7 "bowls of God's wrath/ judgment are poured out on the earth. Chronologically, the battle of Armageddon is during the Great Tribulation, after the antichrist appears and after people receive the mark of the beast. [Rev. 16:1–16 (NLT) Then I heard a mighty voice...say

to the seven angels, “Go your ways and pour out on the earth the **seven bowls containing God’s wrath.**”...¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great **Euphrates River**, and it dried up so that the **kings from the east could march their armies toward the west** without hindrance.¹³ And I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs leap from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.¹⁴ They are demonic spirits who work miracles and go out to **all the rulers of the world to gather them for battle against the Lord on that great judgment day** of God the Almighty.¹⁵ “Look, **I will come as unexpectedly as a thief!** Blessed are all who are **watching for me...**”¹⁶ And the demonic spirits gathered all the rulers and their armies to a place with the Hebrew name **Armageddon.**] This appears to be the final conflict between good and evil.⁹ Armageddon is not Bruce Willis and an asteroid.

1. *Armageddon*: this is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew *harmegiddo* “the hill of Megiddo.” The Plain of Megiddo in northern Palestine was the scene of some important battles in Israelite history.⁸ The battle conveys the idea that swift and overwhelming destruction shall overtake all who gather themselves together against the Lord”⁹ Ezekiel ch. 39 predicts this. Rev. 19:19-21 allude to this battle. Paraphrase “The kings assembled their armies for ‘Operation Armageddon.’”¹⁴

- C. Who is fighting in this war? I believe Jews who have become followers of Jesus the Messiah will be in this battle. CAMERA Jews have a special place in end time theology. [Rev. 7:3–4 (NIV) “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.”⁴ Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the **tribes of Israel.**] Context: Gentiles “grafted in” as God’s people after the Jews rejected Jesus. [Romans 11:25–27 (NIV) **Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in,**²⁶ and in this way **all Israel will be saved.** As it is written (Is. 59:20-21): “The deliverer will come from **Zion (NLT Jerusalem)** ; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.²⁷ And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”
- D. Is the current war the beginning of the final war of Armageddon or one step closer like the 1948 war? Only God knows but we need to be watching, ready and eager.

- IV. Conclusion: CAMERA How should we live our best life in light of end time events? Watching, Ready, and Eager
- A. [Mt. 24: 3–14 (NLT) ...His disciples...said... **What sign will signal your return and the end of the world?**”⁴ Jesus told them, **“Don’t let anyone mislead you (*ESV lead you astray, NIV mislead you*),⁵ for many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah. (*Savior, deliverer, leader*)’** They will deceive many.⁶ **And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic....**⁹ **“Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers.**¹⁰ **And many will turn away from me... (NCV)**¹² **There will be more and more evil in the world, so most people will stop showing their love for each other.**¹³ **But the one who endures to the end will be saved.**¹⁴ **And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world...and then the end will come.]**
1. Guard against deception through knowing the truth of God’s Word.
 2. Don’t panic at world events.
 3. Expect and endure persecution.
 4. Keep on loving people despite the evil they do.
 5. Reach as many souls as possible before it’s eternally too late.
 6. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and bless the nation of Israel any way you can. [Psalm 122:6 (NCV) **Pray for peace in Jerusalem:** “May those who **love her be safe.**] God to Abram [Gen. 12:3 (NIV) **I will bless those who bless you...**] Paul acted on this and received an offering for Jerusalem in famine.
 7. Be watchful, ready, and eagerly awaiting the 2nd coming of Christ. [Mt. 24:36–51 (NLT)..no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen...⁴⁴ You also must **be ready all the time**, for the Son of Man will come when least expected.] [Rev. 22:20 (NCV) Jesus... **“Yes, I am coming soon.”** Amen. **Come, Lord Jesus!**]

V. Response

- A. Prayer: Are you ready for the events of the last days and the 2nd coming of Christ? (1) Christians: Are you serving the Lord; Are you reaching people for Jesus with your time, talent, and treasure? Is your relationship with Jesus growing, falling back or at a plateau? (2) You’re not a believer and committed follower of Jesus Christ. Receive Jesus as your Savior and follow Him.

VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

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VII. Supplemental Material

- A. The battle of Armageddon is associated with God’s wrath and judgment in Rev 16 The outpouring of God’s wrath is separated into seven distinct events initiated by angels who pour out their respective bowls of wrath (Rev 15:7–16:1). The sixth outpouring dries up the Euphrates River (Rev

16:12) “to prepare the way for the kings from the east” (ESV). In addition, the author of Revelation (identified as “John” in Rev 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8) writes that the dragon, beast, and false prophet send demonic spirits to gather the kings of the world for battle on the “great day of God the Almighty” (Rev 16:14). Revelation 16:16 then identifies the place where the kings gather as Armageddon (ESV, KJV, NIV) or HarMagedon (NAS, NRSV) in Hebrew.¹

- B. **I will set your bounds** refers to the “borders” (23:31 te¹v), or boundary lines marking the extent of Israel’s territory. re²b has “I will establish your frontiers.” **Your** is singular. **From the Red Sea**, literally “from the Sea of Reeds,” refers to what is now called “the Gulf of Aqaba” (23:31 te³v), not to the area where the Israelites had crossed in their escape from Egypt. (See the discussion at 10:19. See also 1 Kgs 9:26.) **To the sea of the Philistines** is obviously “the Mediterranean Sea” (23:31 te⁴v). This marks the distance from the southeast to the northwest. **And from the wilderness** refers to the Sinai “desert” to the southwest of Palestine, and **to the Euphrates** marks the distance to “the Euphrates River” (23:31 te⁵v) in the northeast. The Hebrew simply has “the river,” which in 1:22 refers to the Nile River in Egypt. But after the Israelites settled in Palestine, reference to “the River” (23:31 ni⁶v and others) meant the great Euphrates river northeast of Palestine, which flows into the Persian Gulf.³
- C. II A boundaries of the promised land, Ge. 15:18-19, Ex. 23:28-31 Nu. 34:1-13, Josh 1:4
- D. The Bowls of God’s Anger.” Other possibilities are “The seven last manifestations of God’s anger,” “The seven last punishments.” After the preparation described in chapter 15, seven angels pour out on humankind the seven last punishments (“plagues”) sent by God before the Final Judgment.⁸
- E. *Armageddon*: this is the transliteration (in Greek) of the Hebrew *harmegiddo* “the hill of Megiddo.” The name itself does not appear in the Old Testament. The Plain of Megiddo in northern Palestine was the scene of some important battles in Israelite history ⁸

¹TEV Today’s English Version

²REB REVISED ENGLISH BIBLE

³TEV Today’s English Version

⁴TEV Today’s English Version

⁵TEV Today’s English Version

⁶NIV NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

F. “Bounded as it is by the hills of Palestine on both north and south, it would naturally become the arena of war between the lowlanders who trusted in their chariots, and the Israelite highlanders of the neighboring heights. To this cause mainly it owes its celebrity, as the battle-field of the world, which has, through its adoption into the language of the Apocalypse,⁹ Megiddo was in the plain of Esdraëlon, “which has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in Palestine from the days of Nabuchodonozor king of Assyria, unto the disastrous march of Napoleon Buonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian crusaders, and anti-Christian Frenchmen; Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs, warriors of every nation that is under heaven, have pitched their tents on the plain of Esdraëlon⁹ “The word, like *Euphrates*, is the expression of an idea; the idea that swift and overwhelming destruction shall overtake all who gather themselves together against the Lord” (Milligan)⁹