

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 186

THE BATTLE AT ARMAGEDDON (continued)

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which *go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*” (Rev. 16:13-14).

“And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are *the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth*” (Rev. 5:6).

You will understand a great mystery when you see that in the book of Revelation we are shown two sets of *spirits* which are sent forth into the same areas and seek to control the same territory — the “seven spirits of God” and the “three spirits of devils”! Right here lies the *cause* of the great battle within! The seven spirits of God signify the *fullness of the spirit of the Lord* raised up within God’s people. This seven-fold spirit is raised up to subdue, reconcile, and redeem the whole man — spirit, soul, and body. Thus we read that the seven spirits are “sent forth into *all the earth*” — truly into all the earth that *we are*, as well as into all the *earth-realm* where the Lord’s people dwell!

But now there is *another spirit* — three unclean spirits like frogs — and this three-fold spirit is likewise sent forth “*unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world.*” This three-fold *unclean* spirit seeks to dominate and control the same territory of our lives where the seven-fold *holy* spirit has come to live and reign. The message is clear — WAR is about to break out in the “earth” of God! These spirits “go forth unto the kings (inner dominions) of the earth (carnal Christians) and of the whole world (of our beings), TO GATHER THEM TO THE BATTLE OF THAT GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!” Can you not see the mystery? The seven-fold spirit (of the perfection of God) comes into active conflict with the three-fold spirit (complete power of the flesh, the world, and the devil) of man’s carnal, natural life. This three-fold spirit may also be characterized as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, for these spirits go forth unto the “whole world,” and the apostle John informs us that “ALL THAT IS IN THE WORLD IS the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life!”

There are three things: (1) The lust of the flesh (2) The lust of the eyes (3) The pride of life.

That’s *all there is* in the WHOLE WORLD!

Those three are what “THE WORLD” consists of!

Therefore, the “kings” of the “whole world” signify the ruling principles and powers of fleshly desire that influence, dominate, and control the natural and soulical religious life of man! We need to note that Armageddon is a battle among kings. The spirits of devils go forth unto “*the kings*” of the earth-realm and of the whole world — and that is the end of those kings!

Can we not see by this that the battle is between the *flesh* and the *spirit*, for Paul tells us plainly that “The *flesh* *wareth* against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...” (Gal. 5:17). Right there, my friend, you have your battleground — ARMAGEDDON!

So, you say — I would never be deceived by the doctrines of the three frogs going forth to gather the kings of the earth. Don’t be too sure! If you still have kings in YOUR earth, or flesh life, kings of pride, jealousy, resentment, criticism, condemnation, judging, presumptuousness, desire for recognition, authority or control, carnal reasonings, vain imaginations, doubts, false doctrines, fears, anger, frustration, lusts, worldliness, or any one of a hundred more, somewhere deep within you are hearing the croaking of the three ugly frogs and there is that within you which leads to turmoil and conflict. So many people are caught up in viewing Armageddon as an external battle between nations that they completely overlook the possibility of these kings actually existing in their very own flesh life.

There have been within all of us many usurping kings, possessed of the bestial spirit of this world, who are very subtle, very powerful warriors, and very acute disputants. Each of us is like a huge, elaborate palace just full of these kings! Beloved! Examine yourself — do you not find this to be true? What mighty, powerful, persuasive, unwearied rulerships and dominions exercise their authorities within the courts of our bodies and souls, what strange, strong, and subtle reasonings are there? Insomuch that the old Adamic man carries all before him, and these lusts, these desires, these emotions, these imaginations, these habits, these religious inclinations, these selfish and self-serving tendencies, these ruling kings of flesh bear away the day of it, and tread down all that stands in their way; by their false logic, their cunning sophistry, and their powerful affection they ride rough-shod over the voice of the spirit, over the word of God, over the ways of righteousness, and right over the revealed will of the Lord. And this you know is, and has been of old, and shall be, my beloved, until Jesus Christ be revealed, until He be pleased, with His almighty power to arise within the soul and command obedience, and that He will now manifest Himself, and comes forth with regal, conquering power, else our lusts and thoughts and emotions make such a noise, such a blustering, such a clamoring in the soul until Christ cannot be heard. But when the *King of kings* commands all the kings to gather on the field of battle He marches forth to command them all, to put them all to silence, answering, convicting, and banishing every fleshly lust and every soulical sentiment, with every vestige of self-will, and then great Babylon falls, the captivity of the spirit is ended, and then His kingdom comes in great power and glory, and He reigns in soul and body, becoming the King of the life! Great is the mystery!

With keen spiritual insight Ray Prinzing wrote: “How we desire that He REIGN IN US until every fragment of that which would rise up against the truth is subdued, until every desire in us is wholly purified, until every root that would defile us has been burned out — yes, until He shall have thoroughly dealt with all of our ‘*internal enemies*.’ It is not the man on the street, the raging nations around us, but our own INTERNAL REALM that needs to be fully subdued. The *kings within us* that war against His will. Yes, until we are brought to that place where we can say with Jesus our Lord, ‘*the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me*’ (Jn. 14:30). Praise God! Then He shall be able to look upon us, and declare — not just from a prophetic point of view, but from our experiential position in Him, ‘*He hath not beheld iniquity in this vessel*.’

“We read that, ‘*There was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker*’ (II Sam. 3:1). David prefigures in type the spiritual man of the new creation within; while all the kings, and the house of Saul, stand in type for the carnal realm of the flesh. ‘*The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: for these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things ye would*’ (Gal. 5:17). There has been a *long war within us*, but, praise God, the Christ life waxes stronger and stronger, to overcome the carnal nature and bring it to an end.

“Another example of a *long war* — ‘*Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: all other they took in battle. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them...*’ (Josh. 11:18-20). Significant that as Joshua, and the warriors of Israel, came up to a city, instead of that city seeking a peaceful surrender, THE LORD WOULD HARDEN THEIR

HEARTS, they would insist on doing battle, and would be destroyed. I have experienced betimes that God will **harden** 'a king' within us, our own self-will crystallizes into a firm rebellion, that He might draw out that which is within us, until He has purged us, and IS LORD OF ALL WITHIN. All of this serves as a parable for our spiritual walk with God. It's amazing the 'nations' and the 'kings' that have been resident in us, which He now draws out into the battle, to conquer. For, WE BECOME OVERCOMERS IN CHRIST TO THE DEGREE THAT WE ARE OVERCOME BY CHRIST. Thank God, *'In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever'* (Dan. 2:44).

"There are those who search the newspapers to see how the kings of earth are lining up, and how 'they think' prophecy is being fulfilled. But there is an **internal working** that transcends all of that, and it is this **war within us**. The kings of self, the passions and lusts of the flesh, the rudiments of the old Adamic nature — all of these must be **dealt with by His cross**. Paul wrote of this internal warfare, *'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord'* (Rom. 7:24-25). And HE, THE SON, *'must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet'* (I Cor. 15:25). Yes, there will be a universal fulfillment of this! The outreaches thereof stagger the imagination. But there is also an individual inworking, as He now wages **this long war** in us, riding within, *'conquering and to conquer'* (Rev. 6:2). Praise God, the victory is HIS, reigning supreme until He is Lord of all within us!" — end quote.

Concerning these hidden, internal kings the Lord says in type and shadow: *"Moreover the Lord thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed. Thou shalt not be frightened of them: for the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible. And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee...the Lord thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed. And He shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them"* (Deut. 7:20-24).

Have you ever been attacked by a hornet? If a fly buzzes around we may get annoyed but we usually just swat at it to chase it away. But it only takes one hornet to get us stirred up and running! Well, in the spiritual meaning of the word, the Lord says He will send the hornet among us until all the kings that are left in our lives, and have hidden themselves from us, run right out into the open and are destroyed. It is my conviction that these hornets portray the same great truth and serve the same divine purpose as the "three unclean spirits like frogs" which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty! Oh, yes, these hornets, these spirits, will stir these kings out of their hiding places! These stirrings will cause fiery trials in the lives of the Lord's people, and great commotions of battle. Every child of God will be touched in depths within their beings which before were unknown to them. They will feel that they are being torn asunder and the pain and anguish will be great. It is difficult to imagine how much pain there will be when the hornets begin to stir the kings out of their hiding places! "War is hell!" it has been said.

Why is such a drastic dealing necessary? Because God is dealing with man's self-life, man's fleshly nature and ways, man's Babylonian religiosity, and man's utter deception and delusion. He is striking at the root of our desires, our opinions, our pride, and our self-confidence and self-will. Have your "kings" been stirred by hornets lately? If you have received the call to sonship to God, then whatever is hidden within your being is going to be stirred in this great and terrible day of the Lord! God will expose the kings that rule in your land so that you can see them. When the hornet stings they will rush out into the open, into plain manifestation! The battle, my beloved, is for the identifying of these kings so that you can see them, recognize them for what they are, and destroy them from your life. At this battle of the great day of God Almighty the Lord has ordered the slaying and destruction of all that would rise up against the truth and against the righteousness of HIS KINGDOM WITHIN!

More than a hundred years ago Harry Emerson Fosdick penned these perceptive and inspired words: *"Prayer is a battlefield*. When a man, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, calls God into alliance, he does so because he has a fight on his hands. He may have set his heart in dominant desire on godliness, but

that desire meets enemies that must be beaten. ‘No man ever became a saint in his sleep.’ From without, the influences of the world assail his best ambitions; from within, the perverse inclinations of his own heart make war on his right resolutions. A fight is on in every aspiring life. Sometimes like the captain of a ship in mid-sea with a tempest raging and his own crew in rebellion, a man must at once steady his course amid outward temptations, and hold a pointed pistol at the head of his own mutinous desires. No one in earnest about godliness has ever succeeded in describing the achievement of godliness except in terms of a *fight!* ‘The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,’ says Paul. ‘I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage.’

“In this spiritual battle, as in every other, *the decisive part of the engagement is not public and ostentatious; it is in secret.* Long before the armies clash in the open field, there has been a conflict in the general’s office, where pro met con, and the determinations were reached that controlled each movement of the outward war. Even in law, ‘Cases are won in chambers.’ So, in the achievement of divine nature and spiritual character there is a hidden battlefield on which the decisive conflicts of the kingdom of God are waged. Behind the Master’s public ministry, through which He moved with such amazing steadfastness, not to be deflected by bribes, nor halted by fear of man or devil, nor discouraged by weariness, lay the battles in the wilderness where He fought out in fasting and prayer the controlling principles of His life. Behind His patience in Pilate’s Court, and His fidelity on Calvary, lay the battle in Gethsemane, where the whole problem was fought through and the issue settled before the face of God. All public consequences go back to secret conflicts. Napoleon sat for hours in silent thought before he ordered the Russian Campaign. Washington, praying at Valley Forge, was settling questions on which the independence of his country hung. We are deceived by the garish stage-settings of big scenes in history. The really great scenes are rarely evident. *The decisive battles of the world are hidden, and all the outward conflicts are but the echo and reverberation of that more real and inward war.*

“George Adam Smith suggested that no one had so frankly revealed the use of prayer as a *battlefield for the conquest of the soul* as ‘Chinese’ Gordon. A search of his letters to his sister reveals the truth of this. ‘I can say for my part,’ writes Gordon, ‘that backbiting and envy were my delight, and even now often lead me astray, but by dint of perseverance in prayer, God has given me the mastery to a great degree. I did not wish to give it up, so I *besought Him* to put that wish within me; He did so, and then I had the promise of His fulfillment.’ Even more vividly does Gordon put his use of prayer when he speaks of *Agag* — his figure for his own selfish ambitions and pride: ‘My constant prayer is against *Agag*, who, of course, is here, and as insinuating as ever — I had a terrible struggle this morning with *Agag* — I had a terrible half-hour this morning, hewing *Agag* in pieces before the Lord.’

“Who can fail to see what Gordon meant? Some impurity was in him and he hauled it before the face of God and slew it there; some selfish ambition, counter to the will of God, he dragged up into the light and hewed in pieces before the Lord. Day by day he returned to cast down unholy passions and selfish aims and to confirm every true ambition of the spirit in the sight of God. The very fountains of his life, the springs from which all action comes, were cleansed. He obtained the victory!” — end quote.

ARMAGEDDON!

“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. *Behold, I come as a thief.* Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together *into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon*” (Rev. 16:14-16).

God’s people are still prone to think with *carnal minds*. When they read in the prophecies of the Bible about the gathering of kings unto battle, and the fighting of great wars, immediately their attention is focused on *world events* rather than on the *things of God*. This fallacy-ridden practice has given rise to what has been rightly termed “newspaper eschatology” — studying current events in the arena of “this present evil world” rather than searching the mind of the Spirit for the wisdom and understanding God gives of the *true thing* He is doing in the earth by His Spirit! The *work of God* is not currently outside of us, not out there in the world of darkness with all of its plans and efforts and shamefully fleshly activities and wicked

schemes. The work of God is *within His people!* “For it is God which *worketh in you* both to will and to do of His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Sons of God do not derive their theology from the newspapers nor the television news casts. What you read and hear there is *not* what God is doing! Nor is it what God *is talking about!* That is not where God’s work is seen! Nor is that what God is concerned with! The Holy Spirit of God has not come within us to show us what the world system is up to — He has come to “take the *things of Christ* and show them unto us!”

When the Holy Spirit gives us revelation it is not to bless us with juicy tidbits of information about the intentions, activities and movements of the government or military machine of the United States, Russia, Iraq, Iran, Israel, the European Union, Al Queda, the Taliban, or any other of the nations of earth or national and world leaders! Let us seek to *abandon all such side issues* and seek diligently to concentrate on Christ and spiritual things! Those who will possess the mind of Christ will find *in Him* the source and substance of all reality and the culmination of all purpose. We hear a great deal today about many wonderful things. As we draw nearer to the manifestation of the sons of God, and the full light of God’s new day sends its illuminating rays upon our waiting souls, there will be an ever-increasing flood of light and revelation. This we must certainly expect and accept, for every new day brings new things, and new dispensations are sent to flood the world with greater light and greater experience in God. But the “new things” are *God’s things* — not the world’s things! The “things that must shortly come to pass” are *spiritual things, divine things, heavenly things, supernatural things* — not the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil! “As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that *God hath prepared* for them that love Him. But God *hath revealed them unto us* by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the *deep things of God*” (I Cor. 2:9-10). The spirit within us is not searching out the intentions and movements of Russia, China, Israel, or Europe — oh, no! His revelation to John the beloved — and to you and me, my friend — concerns the DEEP THINGS OF GOD! Isn’t it wonderful!

The book of Revelation is a message from heaven about something that is taking place which cannot be seen *except in the spirit, and by revelation*. It is an *apocalypse*. It’s not what men call an apocalypse, as though somehow the destruction of the world would make it a better place. As though millions of people running in fear for their lives from giant scorpions and swarming locusts out of the abyss, crouching in fear from one-hundred pound hailstones falling out of the sky, drinking the blood of dead men from their faucets, being burned to a crisp by the heat of the sun, one-third of the human race being blown into eternity by atomic warfare — as though all this and many more unspeakable horrors are somehow an appropriate climax to this great story of the Bible. Such crude, perverted ideas are so very sad! They are so disgustingly sadistic! It is remarkable, to say the least, that *literal* events such as these, should be represented by supposedly spiritual men as THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! Such distorted “logic” reminds me of the little story I heard some years ago which went like this — One bright day in the middle of the night two dead soldiers got up to fight. Back to back they faced each other, drew their swords and shot one another. If you don’t believe this story is true, ask the blind man — he saw it too!

Get beyond the outer, natural, carnal understanding, my beloved brethren, and look into the spirit, into the heart of our heavenly Father, and see that the revelation of Jesus Christ is not something you can see with the natural eye or touch with physical hands, for it must be revealed *in you*. Paul understood this when he wrote, “...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to *reveal His Son in me*” (Gal. 1:15-16). If you can understand that premise, that when John saw these scenes he was *in the spirit*, you will perceive the mystery of the Revelation, for John beheld all these things from a *spiritual perspective*.

There are words and phrases, signs and symbols in the Revelation that have held and still hold a place in Christian thought out of all proportion to their importance to the overall vision John saw on Patmos. For some reason they stand out like snow-capped peaks in a mountain range. Barrels of midnight oil have been burned by zealous students trying to unravel the riddle of “666,” “Antichrist,” “Armageddon,” or the “Millennium.” Not because of the over-riding importance of these things in the visions of the Revelation, but because of their prominence in Christian thought and current literature they merit special attention as we pass through the mysteries of this book. The fact is, the term “Antichrist” is altogether foreign to the book of Revelation — it never appears anywhere, not even once! And yet we constantly hear from preachers things

about a supposed “Antichrist” in the book of Revelation! And “Armageddon” appears only one time in the whole book, here in our present text. The term “Armageddon” awakens in many minds a kind of superstitious dread of some awful crisis, they hardly know what, but a dreadful day that will make all other crises in history pale into insignificance.

This line of thought is expressed so vividly in a letter I received from a dear sister some years ago. She wrote: “I read the article you sent me. I must say that I am dumbfounded, amazed, speechless, blown-away or any other word that you can find that describes my utter shock. I’ve never heard anything like it before in my life! I must say that I am a product of conventional Christianity. All of my conceptions of end-time events leave me absolutely frozen with fear. I saw David Wilkerson’s movie of his end-time revelation when I was 10. I have been living with this kind of death threat hanging over my head all these years. I become absolutely terrified when contemplating the end. I envision an Orwellian Big Brother world laced with famine, disease, crime, untold suffering, and people being martyred for their Christian faith. My heart almost fails me for fear! But this is what I have been taught. I only hope it is not true. If your article is any indication then I believe that you probably have an entirely different outlook on things. I have often questioned God and asked Him why did He choose for me to live in this time when there is absolutely no hope. All is bleakness. I have often asked would it not have been better for me to have been a serf governed by a feudal overlord, been an Irish peasant during 1845 and 46 when the potatoes rotted in the field. Would I not have been better off to have died in the Great Plague of London in 1665, been in Pompeii when Vesuvius blew. Any of these fates seem preferable to me than living through the end-time. I have wrung my hands in anguish asking God why. But maybe there is hope. Your article seems to imply that there is. Maybe everything I have heard is just man’s carnal mind attempting to interpret the spiritual mind. I hope that is so! But if these things are to come to pass as I have imagined them then I have asked the Lord to be merciful and let me and my family die before they take place” — end quote.

Today, more than ever before, shelves of all our Christian bookstores are loaded with new books on eschatology, the second coming of the Lord, the rapture of the church, the coming antichrist, the great tribulation, the battle of Armageddon, and the millennial kingdom. The names of the authors of all these works differ as do their theories on end-time events. I am neither a news analyst, nor a prognosticator of world events. Recently I turned on the television and began to watch what appeared to be a regular news broadcast. The announcer was armed with statistics about the balance of power in the Middle East, with very refined information about armies, missiles, and nuclear weapons. I listened to him with some interest, thinking I was listening to some kind of news analyst, until after about ten minutes he said, “All of this agrees with prophecy,” and he commenced to try to tie all of these pieces of news into the prophecies of the Bible. Well, I don’t see that it was a Bible lesson at all — it was *newspaper exegesis!*

I have no time to waste anymore even listening to such things. My time would be better spent watching “I Love Lucy” — at least I would derive some humor and relaxation from it! I listened and read after such for many years. I discovered their projections and predictions never come to pass. Their game-plan changes with the years as technology advances and the world power-blocks shift with the sands of history. It is all speculation, based on a false premise, with faulty information, erroneous conclusions, and outright lies. Such are ministers of *delusion*, deceiving God’s people. God has given them a working of delusion to believe the lie. They know not the purpose of God nor the outcome. They are taught by the serpent, that man-instructing snake of Eden who traduces or translates the scriptures for them, but gives them only dusty revelations and carnal interpretations, for that is all the carnal mind can receive. And the greater mark of their error is that there is NO LIFE IN THEM — as the letter quoted above reveals, there is only fear and bondage.

Now let us return to our subject of the battle at Armageddon. The book of Revelation is the fighting book of the New Testament. In its brief twenty-two chapters the words “to war” and “to make war” are used fifteen times! The words are found in all the rest of the New Testament but fourteen times. It reveals a great significance when we see that two hundred and thirty-eight New Testament chapters use the words fourteen times, while twenty-two chapters of the Revelation employ them fifteen times. This certainly indicates a purpose deeper than the mere incidents of literary expression. None of these words appear in the four Gospels or in the Epistles of John. And yet the author of the Epistles of John also wrote the book of

Revelation! This certainly identifies the theme of the Revelation as one of *warfare!* And once we know that “though we walk in the flesh, we do not *war* after the flesh: for the weapons of *our warfare* are *not carnal*, but *mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to *the obedience of Christ*,” — once we understand the *nature* of this warfare as *spiritual warfare* all the carnal, traditional interpretations of the book of Revelation are turned upside-down!

Other basic words in the vocabulary of conflict also appear in it. The two New Testament (Greek) words for “sword” appear in the Revelation. Luke is the only other writer to employ both of them. Omitting duplications, the words for “sword” appear twenty times in all the rest of the New Testament and eleven times in the Revelation. Two words for “chariot” are used in the New Testament and both appear in the Revelation. “Chief Captains,” who are military leaders, are mentioned twice in the Revelation. The fighting Parthians tied up the tails of their war horses in compact, pointed fashion until they looked like serpents. In one of John’s visions he sees in type just such a picture — two hundred million war horses with tails like serpents charge across the stage of this drama. The shape of the locusts was said to be “like horses prepared for war.” The sound of their wings was like the sound of many horses and chariots rushing to war. But the greatest warrior of all in the book of Revelation is none other than God’s Christ! Surely no one thinks that HE makes war with tanks and guns and missiles and bombs! “*These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful*” (Rev. 17:14). “*And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war*” (Rev. 19:11).

What one word most frequently describes a massive conflict ending in catastrophe? **ARMAGEDDON!** Students of theology have for generations been gripped in their imagination by the word “Armageddon.” Many these days talk about that great “Battle of Armageddon” which is mentioned only *one time* in the whole Bible! They suppose this to be the final “World War,” using the customary instruments of warfare, which will some day pit God and all His heavenly forces against Satan and all his evil hosts in a particular spot in the land of Israel. Most of us have been taught to view it as the war to end all wars. Some even view it as the end of the world!

But is Armageddon really a superpower confrontation? Is it a war between the United States and Russia, or between Russia, Europe, and Israel? Or some other such scenario? Statesmen, scientists, and generals have long warned of a “nuclear Armageddon” that could annihilate mankind from the face of the earth. Many believed that World War I — and later World War II — would end with Armageddon. Some today believe that Armageddon will be the last battle between the democratic nations and the communist block. But did you know that *nowhere* in the Bible — from Genesis to Revelation — is there any mention of a “battle *of* Armageddon”? After all, it’s only mentioned *one time* in the entire Bible! “*And he gathered them together into a place called... Armageddon.*” We see here that Armageddon is described as a *place*, not an *event*. It is the place of *gathering* in preparation for battle. But that is not the *name* of the battle! It is not the battle “of” Armageddon, but “*the battle OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY!*” Oh, yes! It is GOD’S BATTLE — THE BATTLE OF GOD’S GREAT DAY! And that is how we can know that this is a **SPIRITUAL BATTLE!**

To be consistent, if one takes the reference to Armageddon literally, then he ought also to take the reference to the three slick, slimy frogs literally. Both references appear in the same passage! Yet no one ever suggests that there will be three creatures resembling frogs literally going about over the earth, landing at airports, conferring with the heads of state of many nations, seeking allies and recruits for this battle. In order to follow the path of consistency as witnessed again and again throughout the book of Revelation, we must look upon this reference to Armageddon as symbolic imagery, as with the reference to frogs. These are not descriptions of national and world events, but of the outworkings of the mighty spiritual purposes of God!

The word Armageddon, as pointed out, appears but *once* in scripture. People often pick out other scripture passages and claim that they refer to this “battle of Armageddon,” but that is unwarranted and

without any evidence or foundation whatever. Armageddon means merely “the mount of Megiddo” — that is, the fortified hill of Megiddo. In olden times many a battle was fought near the ancient city of Megiddo. When the people of Israel heard that an enemy was approaching from the east, they tried to reach Megiddo first. Whoever held the city held command of the mountain pass of Megiddo and had a better opportunity to win the battle. The University of Chicago many years ago excavated the mound of Megiddo. There is evidence that the city antedated the time of Abraham. The word *mege*d from which part of the word Megiddo is derived means, among other things, “a fruitful place” or “pleasant things” and the city of Armageddon (the fortified Megiddo) was in this way associated with the fruits of victory. Another aspect of its meaning is “rendezvous” from a root indicating a “pressing in” or “assembling.” It was the place of the assembling of armies, and thus the Spirit says of Armageddon, “*And he gathered them (the kings of the earth and of the whole world) together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*”

Thus, in Armageddon we see both the positive and negative aspects. It is a gathering together unto slaughter on the one hand, and victory and glory on the other hand. It is death *and* life. It is defeat *and* triumph. It is the DAY OF THE LORD! It is the GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY! Not the day of the beast, not the day of the Antichrist, not the day of Satan, not the day of the flesh, not the day of world, or of sin, darkness, and death. But beloved, this is the long-awaited day when the LORD arises upon His people and HIS GLORY IS SEEN. It is the day when the dragon in the sea is slain, when the false prophet is cast into the lake of fire, when the great city Babylon falls to rise no more, when deception, struggle, sorrow, sighing, sin, darkness, and death all pass away and Christ becomes all-in-all! Oh, yes!

Jesus has already passed His Armageddon! He passed it when in the garden, in agony of soul, sweating great drops of blood, He said, “Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but Thine be done” (Lk. 22:42). He passed through His darkest hour of battle and arose on the other side *victorious* over death, hell, and the grave! “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same; that through death *He might destroy him* that had the power of death, that is, *the devil*” (Heb. 2:14). “And having *spoiled principalities and powers*, He made a show of them openly, *triumphing over them* in it” (Col. 2:15). “That ye may know...the mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, *far above all principality and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named...and hath PUT ALL THINGS UNDER HIS FEET*” (Eph. 1:18-21).

Christ met all the forces of sin and evil on His own personal battlefield of Armageddon. And Christ is VICTOR! He REIGNS — NOW! He has already overcome EVERY ENEMY! He has conquered them. They are all already under His feet. They have no more power over Him! He is above them all. Jesus doesn’t get sick, because He overcame all sickness. He can’t die anymore, for He arose victor over death. He can’t sin, for He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Satan has no power over Him for Jesus has already had His “bout” with Satan and now holds the *Universal Championship* over him! He overcame the world. He overcame the flesh. He overcame the devils. He met the kings of the earth and of the whole world and conquered them all. He spoiled principalities and powers and might and dominions. Oh, yes, my friend, THAT IS ARMAGEDDON! Jesus doesn’t have any more battles to fight, any more enemies to subjugate, for the last enemy that anyone, anywhere, ever has to destroy is *death* and He has already conquered His LAST ENEMY! An Armageddon for Jesus? There won’t be any, for His is already past. He has entered His kingdom, possessed His possessions, and now reigns over all in the higher than all heavens. Hallelujah to the Lamb!

The Armageddon in chapter sixteen of the Revelation is not for Jesus. It is for all those whom Jesus invites to come and experientially *share His victory*. It is for us and it is for all of God’s precious people. It is first of all for that “firstfruit company” of overcomers who are first to follow the Lamb *all the way* and stand with Him upon the holy hill of Zion, redeemed from the earth, from earthiness, from the soulical and religious, with no guile or deceitful doctrines in their mouths, the glorious mind of the Father impressed upon their foreheads, singing that song that only those can learn who stand with Christ under the open heavens. These are the *firstfruits* unto God and the Lamb. These are the *first*, after Jesus, to experientially appropriate the fullness of HIS DIVINE LIFE, NATURE, AND VICTORY! There must be a people that accomplishes this. The book of Revelation reveals the outworking of it. This victory shall eventually be

ministered to **all** the Lord's people and finally to all the peoples of the earth. But it involves a **battle**. All the way. There is never any victory without a battle! And in our text it is particularly the Lord's people who have long been held in the bondage of religious Babylon — unto whom the battle comes!

The magnitude of the victory is determined by the magnitude of the battle. The greatest battle shall give way to the greatest victory. Be not alarmed, child of God, if the battles are becoming fiercer, hotter, for **this is the day of the Lord!** The battle of the great day of God is upon us! Armageddon is here! And this great day of the Lord is described first of all as “*a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness*” (Joel 2:2). Ah, yes, Gethsemane! Travail. Sweat. Blood. Tears. Prayers. Sorrow. Struggle. Death. But, thank God, the prophet continues, “*as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like...and the Lord shall utter His voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for He is strong that executeth His word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can abide it?*”

Armageddon is the most exciting battle in all the word of God! There must come a time when the truth is revealed to us that Armageddon is not a battle fought in the so-called Holy Land in the Middle East. Well, it's a lot closer than that! Rather it is a battle fought within that Holy Land **which we are**. God's people have been so duped with religious junk food that they have missed the whole point. It's when this stronghold of our earth-life gets attacked by all the power of God to conquer God's people and make them what He has redeemed them to be! What a gathering it is when we are gathered to our Armageddon! Hear now what the scripture says about this gathering. “*And He gathered them into...*” not a *place*, as we have it in the King James Bible, but “*into the place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*” There is the definite article in the Greek which designates it as **the place** of Armageddon. Furthermore, the word *place* is the Greek word *topos* from which we get our English word topography. The Holy Spirit anointed John to write it exactly that way because in the natural there is no such topographical place called “Armageddon.” So what is the Lord saying here? He's speaking a spiritual language to cause us to understand that those unclean spirits like frogs that God's people have listened to through unclean doctrine have lifted up a mountain, which is a man-made kingdom and God is making war against every man-made mountain and stronghold and He's going to abase it and destroy it in what He spiritually calls Armageddon, the mount of Megiddo. For that is the place where God in the Old Testament judged the enemies of Israel when they walked in obedience to Him, and He in turn judged Israel there for their transgression and idolatry. So God today is raising up an army of sons of God to administer the word and dealings of God, making war against the stronghold of the mountain or kingdom of the flesh. It doesn't exist geographically. But there is a huge mountain of Babylon that God is erasing! Great is the mystery!

In closing, let us remember and be instructed by the following facts. The Bible nowhere identifies a specific place bearing the name Armageddon. The name does not appear in any ancient geographical or historical writing. The Armageddon of the Revelation has no location on the geographical map of the world. The place of Armageddon is nowhere, and it is everywhere. Furthermore, the term “Battle of Armageddon” is not used in reference to the **place**; rather, it is called the “battle of the great day of God Almighty.” So much more than simply a geographical location is meant! Symbolically, as a PLACE of assemblage, Armageddon represents an array of *circumstances*, a state of *affairs*; it typifies a *condition* that exists within the life of every child of God, which also will be extant throughout the whole church world as God moves to bring the destruction of Babylon. That battlefield is in all the people of God in the world, and it is also deep in the soul of each man. Some of us today may be in the midst of our Armageddon. The field of battle has been in progress throughout the ages, but in the purpose of God and by the power of God it moves toward a final climax and culmination. John in vision sees the consummation of the conflict and calls it Armageddon.

We find that the kings of the earth are gathered together at this Armageddon, but the battle is not said to be fought in the Middle East with horses, tanks, soldiers, swords, guns, airplanes, missiles, or bombs. The battle is against the authority, way, and will of God, and it is the BATTLE OF GOD'S GREAT DAY! God doesn't fight His battles with carnal weapons, God only fights with the *sword of the spirit* which is the (living) word of God! And the weapons of *our warfare* are *not carnal* either, but are “MIGHTY THROUGH GOD!” For indeed, “*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph.

6:12). Let us read this from the Amplified Bible: “*For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood — contending only with physical opponents — but against the despotisms, against the powers, against the master spirits who are the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly sphere.*” The Phillips translation says, “*For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual.*” In the light of the history of man for the past 6,000 years, with its endless struggle and conflict against evil and wickedness, “The Great Day of God Almighty” signifies the climax of that struggle in men’s lives, in which the powers of sin, the satanic realm, and death are completely and permanently broken. The thing that makes that day “great” is not the battle! The battle simply ushers in the “great day.” When God finishes and consummates all His redemptive and restorative work in His people, raising up in the earth the *man in the image and likeness of God* — **WHAT A GREAT DAY THAT IS!**

Armageddon is a spiritual battle, an on-going campaign between the forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the forces of Christ and His kingdom rule within. It’s a battle between the old man and the new man, between the idols of the soul and the living reality of Christ in the spirit. The chief battleground is the mind. This is the battle in which the light of the Spirit meets the darkness of the carnal mind. This is a battle against the kings of carnality and flesh, a battle waged by the pure, holy nature of the Lamb. This is the battle of the great day of God Almighty! And only God’s “almightiness” can win this battle! There is a tremendous struggle within our consciousness, within our experience, within our state of being. Armageddon is both an individual and corporate process. It affects the world within us as well as the outer world we walk in. This is the battle of the power of the kingdom of God in the manifest sons of God against the entrenched kings of the earth, the rulers of the darkness of this present world, including the religious leaders. The glory of Christ risen as the noonday sun upon the body of Christ is the atomic weapon that destroys the adversaries!

Many who study this glorious Revelation are more interested in finding possible references to modern implements of war — tanks, airplanes, missiles, lasers, and nuclear weapons — than in discovering the deep inworkings and mighty dealings of the Holy Spirit in the lives of those who are becoming God’s Christ. According to John’s own witness, “The testimony of *Jesus* is the spirit of *this prophecy!*” To ignore Jesus in favor of a war in Israel or atomic blasts is a perversion of the spirit of Truth. It is a *prophecy* to the church — God’s called out elect! As a prophecy, it is to the Lord’s *spiritual people*, the *body of Christ*, the *ransomed of the Lord!* There is not a chance that the apostle John, standing in the blinding glory of Christ’s majestic presence, would have thought it important to prophesy about Cobra helicopters, space shuttles, computers, laser tattoos, or a war on the plains of Megiddo. Nor would he have been interested in foretelling to the saints of that day about the future of the United States of America, Russia, China, the Moslem nations, or the European Community. Not that such things are not important on some level, but the sons of God are concerned with God’s SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT in relation to the nations, not the carnal warfare of man’s invention! The Revelation is concerned with matters of far greater importance and consequences than satisfying our curiosity about the future of communism, the western nations, Islam, terrorism, or the Illuminati. **It was written to show us what the Father has done and shall do to save and transform His people, to glorify Himself through His sons, and to deliver and restore all creation unto Himself!**

You will not read the fulfillment of its prophecies on the pages of *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, or *USA Today*, but you will see them manifest in the lives of men and women! The word of the Lord in its spiritual meaning does not describe for us the carnal warfare between nations. For what have wars between nations to do with the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God does not come by the sword nor as a result of it, so of what importance in the outworking of God’s kingdom on earth are the conflicts between nations and empires? They have no meaning whatsoever! The weapons of our warfare are *not carnal*, but are *mighty through God!* The battles beheld in spirit by the eagle-eyed seer of Patmos signify spiritual combats, combats between light and darkness, between spirit and flesh, between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the precious mind of Christ and the vile carnal mind, between life and death. A man must experience this combat within himself to become a spiritual conqueror and gain the crown of life! A war in the Middle East has absolutely *nothing* to do with this! Our Lord, in the days of His flesh, carried on such spiritual warfare in an infinitely greater way than others, overcoming the compounded powers of the world, the flesh, the devil — and finally *death itself!* What a warfare! What a

victory! How the mighty battles of the Roman Empire pale in contrast with this! The first and second World Wars accomplished essentially nothing for humanity compared with what Jesus won! He has opened up the way to victory and triumph over every enemy of sin, sorrow, limitation, and death for all who are willing to follow Him into the power of the kingdom of God! Our Lord is a **spiritual conqueror!** And the book of Revelation is addressed to “**him that overcometh!**” That is a military term! “Him that overcometh” does so at ARMAGEDDON! That should settle in every heart what kind of warfare the book presents!

Brother Paul Mueller hit the nail squarely on the head when he wrote: “The truth is, the Adamic nature is responsible for all the wars from the beginning of time. What the world needs is not another literal war, but a spiritual war that will end all wars! God knows this better than we do! His omniscient wisdom is far superior to the ideas and opinions of the religious theologians. He has set forth a plan by which the present warfare, which we are now engaged in, shall destroy the man of sin and bind Satan for the age. This is indeed a war that shall end all wars and violence in the world for the duration of the kingdom of God on earth!”

Every nation has had war and destruction. The terrorist attacks on our nation and on other nations in recent decades have been indeed horrible, yet not even to be compared to the horrors visited upon Europe and Japan in the Second World War. Great empires have risen and fallen throughout history, and none of them heralded the end of time. Plagues, pestilence, earthquakes, storms, and disasters of many kinds have killed millions of people in hundreds of nations and devastated whole civilizations, but none of them brought the end of the world. All of those things have been happening out there in the external world since the beginning of time, but let me tell you, none of them have anything whatever to do with the coming of the kingdom of God! Only the nature of the Father formed in His elect, only the full measure of the stature of Christ formed in God’s New Creation Man, only the power of God upon His people, only the glory of God in His manifested sons, will bring the battle into the world that will overthrow sin, strife, error, sickness, sorrow, and death within mankind, delivering creation from the bondage of corruption and signaling the hour of transition into the greater glory of the kingdom of God upon the nations of earth! Ah, ARMAGEDDON!

To be continued...

J. PRESTON EBY