

ARMAGEDDON

By

Curtis Dickinson

The battle has begun. It is a fight to the finish and we already know who will win.

The word “Armageddon” is found only once in scripture: “and they gathered them together in the place which is called in Hebrew AR-MAGEDON” (Rev. 16:16). The plain of Megiddo derived its fame from the great battle fought by General Barak when Deborah ruled Israel as judge. Israel had failed to drive out the Canaanites as God commanded and before long found that they were surrounded by these hostile neighbors who were determined to destroy them.

To make matters worse, Israel had intermarried with these heathen and finally had begun serving their gods, the Baalim and the Asheroth (Judges 3:6–7). As a result of their continued disobedience God “sold them into the hand of Jaabin King of Canaan,” whose army boasted of 900 chariots of iron which made them a formidable foe. For 20 years Jabin oppressed the children of Israel until finally they cried out to God who then sent them the deliverer, Deborah. The battle was pitched “by the water of Magiddo” (Armageddon). General Barak and his forces were terribly outnumbered and unequipped with instruments of war such as chariots or even horses, yet were engaged in one of the most significant battles ever fought by Israel.

Their very existence was at stake. The revealed religion of God was at stake. The continuation of the tribe of Judah and hence the fulfillment of the promised savior was at stake. Every tribe was involved as was every major city, except the citizens of Meroz who fell under a curse “because they came not to the help of Jehovah against the mighty” (Judges 5:23).

UNIVERSAL BATTLE. Magiddo is a relatively small plain. The total forces involved in the battle there probably were no more than 20,000. The battlefield would be entirely inadequate for modern warfare involving tanks, planes, heavy artillery, and highly mobilized infantry.

In Revelation the battle of Armageddon involves the whole world. The Israel of God is no longer confined to a particular nation nor identified politically and geographically. All who are of faith in Christ are the seed of Abraham and are classified in the New Testament as God’s Israel (Gal 3:29). Thus modern Israel is scattered throughout the world as a minority who profess Christ over against enormous forces of those who deny Him. All the leaders of the world are involved, the Beast, the False Prophet and the dragon. All are marshaled against the church, the Israel of God. “And they went up over the breath of the earth, and encompassed the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them” (Rev. 20:9). Just as in the days of Deborah Israel was encompassed by the Canaanites, so in our day, wherever Christians exist, we are encompassed by unbelievers and those who would destroy the faith.

Christians living in one nation are of just as much concern to God as those living in another. He is no respecter of person with regard to nationality or race. “There can be neither Jew nor Greek...for you are all one man in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28). Paul’s letter

to the Galatians is written especially to correct a false belief that the Jews held a special place in God's economy. Salvation is by grace, not race. The battle is not race against race, and nation against nation, but rather the Kingdom of God (His chosen nation) embattled against all opposition.

SPIRITUAL WAR. When Israel was a political geographical nation its wars were fought by the sword. But now it is a worldwide kingdom "not of this world," neither bound by geographical lines nor by nationalities. The warfare is not for the purpose of defending boundaries nor of establishing worldly power but of redeeming men by Gospel power, "for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:3–6). Paul wrote that he had "fought the good fight," yet he had not engaged in fleshly war and had significantly turned the other cheek to his enemy. He exhorts us to "be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of HIS might" (Eph. 6:10). His power is in His word, by which He created the universe and by which it is held together (Heb. 1:3). Our warfare, according to Paul "is not against flesh and blood" (Eph. 6:12). Therefore our armor is not military hardware, but truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith and salvation, "and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:11–17).

When Christ appeared to John for his Revelation, "out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword" (Re. 1:16). Again in the 19th chapter, when Christ appeared as conquering King the same sharp sword proceeded from his mouth. The sword is not held in his hand as an instrument of carnal war, but proceeds from his mouth indicating that the battle is to be won by the word of Christ, for the sword proceeding from his mouth is noting less than His mighty word of truth. It was by His word that He created; it is by His word that He brings men to repentance and subjection; and it is by His word that He will destroy the wicked in the last day (II Pet. 3:5–7), and thus end the battle.

Today we are engaged in the battle of Armageddon. We would be grossly mistaken to think that the prophecy would be fulfilled, as some suggest, by the United States engaging in war against Russia, to defend the counterfeit State of Israel. Who knows but that there are as many Christians in Russia today as there are in the United States. A political war involving nation against nation would by no means answer the symbols of the prophecy. The battle involves God's people on the one side against all the wicked forces of the world on the other side. The weapons of the enemy are not those of physical battle but are described by John as "coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet." John identifies these as "spirits of demons" (Rev. 16:13–14).

The battleground is everywhere — in the churches, in the pulpits, in the media, in the schools, in the shop and in the home. For 75 years some of the major denominations have downgraded God's word. They now come forth with new Bibles, some of which also present a new unchristian doctrine. In seminaries and great pulpits men have denied the incarnation and the resurrection. Now there are thousands of "fundamentalists" who are reducing the Christian faith to mere subjective feelings, eliminating the necessity of Christ's death and the atonement made therein. Great crusades are staged, utilizing every known trick of psychology to generate the desired feelings and deceive thousands into thinking they are saved without obedience to the gospel. The sword of the spirit has been

laid aside and instead the Pied Piper's flute of emotionalism has become the tool of deception, becoming a kind of fifth column, opposing the word of truth.

The battle is in the schools and in the media. Wherever the doctrine of humanism is taught — whether in the public school classroom, on television, or through other means — it is a blow against Christ. Wherever the Gospel is preached in its fullness it is a blow against Christ's enemies. When the conversation during the coffee break turns to ESP, Women's Lib, astrology, or any question of right and wrong, the battle is engaged. The Christian soldier has his orders — to uphold the truth of Christ, His commandments, His promises and His person. If you do not think it means war, just try to uphold the basic commandments of Christ in opposition to some social welfare program which supports illegitimacy, abortion, slothfulness, and unjust taxation. If you want to get into the battle, begin to speak up against the many voices of government and higher education which promote the false doctrine of evolution over against God's truth of creation. Let any elected official openly speak up in the name of Christ and he will find himself in the heat of battle. The inaugural address of President Carter had not ceased to echo until Jews were lifting their voices in opposition to the mention of Christ. For a good look at the enemy just turn on TV most any hour of the day and hear the "stars" blaspheme the name of God and promote Satan's religion.

Whether or not we will be engulfed in total war (the signs are very strong that it will not be long), such wars among nations will not fulfill the prophecy concerning Armageddon. There is not nation which officially uphold Christian truth. Certainly the imposter-nation Israel is atheistic and anti-Christ and in no way can be seen as God's nation. Any war between nations on either side of Israel would involve Christian against Christian and atheist against atheist.

NO NEUTRALITY. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30). Jude writes that we are to "contend earnestly for the faith once and for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). There is only one Christian faith, and when we confess Jesus as Lord we enlist in the warfare, the battle of Armageddon. It is significant of the weakness of so much that is called faith, that churches are filled with those who refuse to get involved in upholding the truth against all the false doctrine of today. There are many patriots who were loudly critical of those men who felt we should not be involved in the Vietnam war, a war which our government did not intend to win. But what of all those who will not lift a finger in the battle of Armageddon for the Lord?

After General Barak and Deborah returned from defeating the Canaanites Deborah sang the song of victory in Judges Chapter 5. "From heaven fought the stars," she sang, giving glory to God for delivering Israel and bringing victory. Then she added "Cure you, Meroz...because they came not to the help of Jehovah against the mighty" (Judges 5:20, 23). Ours is the winning side but there is a curse reserved for those who come not to the help of Jehovah.

We are in total war, and of the lukewarm who prefer to compromise with Canaanites around us, Jesus said, "I will spew you out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:16).

Our task, beloved brothers in the Lord, is not to be anxious over the possibility of future worldly warfare, but to feed on God's Word, to be permeated with His truth, to take up the "sword of the spirit" and not only live by it but to enter into the spiritual conflict now raging in which we are to be "seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life."

.....
Copyright © Curtis Dickinson. Formatted and Posted by Ken Fortier Ministries.
Permission is hereby granted by Mrs. Regina Dickinson to reproduce and distribute
Curtis' articles to as many as possible. This statement is to remain attached to this article
for permission to be valid. Vol. XVII, Number 2.
.....