

Armageddon

The term Armageddon, used in **Revelation 16:16**, has become proverbial for the scene of large scale and decisive conflicts. In recent history the Second World War ended with the total defeat of the Axis powers, while opening the way for the state of Israel to be re-established in the Holy Land. But the issues to be settled at Armageddon will be fundamental and universal in scale and consequences. After Jesus has returned he will restore king David's dynasty in Jerusalem and rule over the kingdom of God as representative of the Father, being (Strong 3841) *pantokrator* = the ruler of all = "the Almighty", because God has exalted His obedient Son - **Matthew 28:18** "*Then Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'*" As Paul put it to the **Philippians 2:9** "*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" It will only be after Armageddon that all mankind will accept the authority of Jesus.

At issue in that conflict will not only be authority civil and secular, but religious and ecclesiastical as well. At Jesus' first coming the religious authorities saw him as a threat to their privileged position of control over the Temple with the money to be made by it. The resulting conflict ended in Jesus' death. **Acts 13:30** "*But God raised him from the dead,*" and his disciples multiplied, one of which was Saul (later Paul) who had been associated with the group in control of the Temple. After his conversion he told the believers, **1 Corinthians 3:16** "*you are the temple of God,*" and **Ephesians 2:19** "*...you are ... members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord...*"

It was this Temple that Paul had in mind when he predicted the coming of the apostasy (defection from the teaching of Jesus and the apostles) when - **2 Thessalonians 2:1** "*the man of sin is revealed... 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God*" - in other words, the leadership of the apostasy would take control of the Christian church, with its promise of money to be made - see **2 Peter 2:3** "*By covetousness*" (seeing a good source of easy money) "*they* (false teachers, v. 1) *will exploit you*" - Strong 1710 *emporeuomai* - to use a person or a thing for gain - "*with deceptive words.*" Jesus cleansed the physical Temple at his first coming - **John 2:15** "*...He drove them all out of the temple... And He said... Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!*" And he will cleanse his spiritual Temple at his return.

Jesus, newly ascended to the throne in Jerusalem, will begin that cleansing by banishing these apostates from his territory and demolishing all their churches and the shrines which once attracted droves of paying pilgrims. In the ongoing expansion of Israel's borders under Christ, these **Revelation 18:11** "*merchants of the earth*" will see a great threat to their ancient and cosy trade in the **13** "*bodies and souls of men*" in the rest of the world, and will organize an international crusade to get rid of him by military force.

The apostle John foresaw events, shown in symbolic form - **Revelation 19:19** "*I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.*" In the plainer words of **Psalms 149:5** "*Let the saints ... 8 bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; 9 To execute on them the written judgment - This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!*"