

# ARMAGEDDON

## *As Taught Today by Seventh Day Adventists.*

The following extracts taken from our recently published denominational publications should enable loyal Seventh-day Adventists to become acquainted with the present denominational teaching on this important subject.

### *The meaning of "Armageddon":*

*"The word a Symbol.* Various place names are used in the book of Revelation, such as—Babylon, Egypt, Ephesus, Euphrates, Holy City, Laodicea, Pergamos, Philadelphia, Sardis, Sodom, Smyrna, Thyatira. It will, I feel sure, be readily conceded that these names are used as symbols, and although they are all actual locations, some of them at least, in their prophetic application, refer to altogether different geographical centres. A case in point is that of 'Sodom and Egypt, where . . . our Lord was crucified'. Rev. II: 8.

"Even though Armageddon seems to be a made name and has no actual geographical location, as do the names just mentioned, would it not be consistent to regard this name also as symbolic?"

Pastor W. E. Read, who presented these thoughts at the Bible Conference held in Washington, September 1-13, 1952 (he was chairman of a committee which investigated presentations on this subject), in furthering the belief that Armageddon is to be understood as a symbolic word, says:

"If we consider *Har* as 'mountain', and the remainder of the word, *ageddon*, the same as the '*Megiddo*' of the Old Testament, we have the meaning—'mountain of Megiddo'. But was there such a mountain? We do find in the Old Testament writings reference to:

“. . . The *plain* of Megiddo (Zech. 12: 11,LXX) . . . The *valley* of Megiddo (2 Chron. 35: 22); The *field* of Megiddo (2 Chron. 35: 22 Duoyay).

“But there was no hill or mountain bearing that name. This is recognised by many students of prophecy, as the excerpts show. This being the case, we are forced to think of this word in a symbolic sense, and to consider it as a name given by the Lord to express not so much a limited geographical area as the world-wide nature of the last great battle of the day of the Lord.—”

“*Our Firm Foundation*,” Vol. 2, pp. 289-292. Published by our Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

### *The Location and the Nature of “Armageddon”:*—

“*The Location of Armageddon*.” In the light of the foregoing one will recognise that Armageddon is used in a symbolic sense in the Bible rather than indicating a definite geographical location on earth. . . .

#### “*The Nature of Armageddon*:

“. . . The war of Armageddon is a term used in the Bible to designate the final conflict between the powers of darkness and the forces of light. It is the last great struggle in the great controversy between Christ and Satan”—W. E. Read in *The Signs of the Times* (Australian), October 1, 1956.

In condemning the teaching that Armageddon refers to a military war in Palestine, Pastor Paul K. Freiwirth in his “*Valleys of the Bible*”, pp. 86, 87, published by “The Voice of Prophecy” (U.S.A.), says:—

“In the Biblical sense, however, this word [Armageddon] does not refer to any such event [i.e., ‘to the universally expected conflict among men’]. Instead it has to do with puny man’s attempt to declare war against his Maker . . . The fact that the term ‘Armageddon’ is symbolical of the final clash between mankind and God was believed by God’s people anciently . . . It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that hasty and careless thinking should have given such a distorted picture of Armageddon’s meaning.”

Rev. 16: 14-16 describes the powers of earth united to destroy God's people: Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 4, p. 230:—

“As God's indignation was upon the Assyrian armies that attacked Jerusalem, so also would it be upon all forces of evil that array themselves against His people, compare Joel 3: 2; Zech. 12: 2-9; 14: 2; Rev. 16: 14, 16; 17: 14; 19: 11-19.”

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“In the last days also there will be, on the part of all hosts of evil, a united, but unsuccessful, effort for the destruction of the saints (see Rev. 16: 14-16; 19: 11-21).”

The drying up of the Waters of the Euphrates (Rev. 16: 12) refers to the doom of Babylon: S.D.A. Commentary, vol. 4, p. 265 (see also pages 272, 523, 524, etc.).

“Jeremiah made similar predictions concerning the fall of Babylon, comparing it to the drying up of the river Euphrates (see on Jer. 50: 38; 51: 36; cf. Rev. 16: 12.”

The King of the North, attacking the Holy City (Dan. 11: 40-45) depicts the Papal-led assault of world forces against God's people:

“Report on the Eleventh Chapter of Daniel” (The Ministry, March, 1954):

“The study group [appointed by the General Conference Committee] presented to the full committee the following report as their considered judgment and conclusion pertaining to the problems presented in reference to the interpretation of Daniel II, verses 36-45, in its relationship to the historical Seventh-day Adventist position regarding these verses. . . .

Daniel II: 36-39 . . . The pioneers of this movement were for the first twenty-five or thirty years of our history unanimous in stating that Papal Rome is the power referred to by the prophet Daniel in these verses. No other conclusion could be reached after a careful study of the literature of the church during this period. . . .

Therefore, from the foregoing, we conclude that verses 36-39 of Daniel II accurately set forth in prophetic language the work and history of papal Rome. . . .

Daniel II: 40-45 . . . Without doubt the Papacy, if it is the power of Daniel II: 36-39, must also play a part in the historical fulfilment of these verses, for the pronoun 'him' in verse 40 must refer to the power brought to view in verses 36-39."

We quote from "*The Greatest of the Prophets*" (George McCready Price—Pacific Press Publishing Association):—

"Elder James White and some others of the Adventist pioneers applied the last part of this [11th] chapter to the career of the papacy . . . He asks: 'Does the eleventh chapter of the prophecy of Daniel cover the ground measured by chapters 2, 7, and 8? If so, then the last power mentioned in that chapter is Rome' (p. 322).

"This final life-and-death conflict between the church and all the powers of earth, in which the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet combine in the attempt to obliterate the very name of Christ's true church, must surely be given some place in this book of Daniel" (p. 313).

"Since all the rest of the language here used employs the highly symbolic terms of ancient Oriental life, it seems to me unreasonable to try to find a literal or geographical meaning for the locality here specified, *between the sea and the glorious holy mountain* . . . between the Mediterranean and the hill of Zion in Jerusalem, for the Mediterranean is often used in Hebrew as a poetic plural. In the days of the Israelites this would mean about the centre of the land of Judah. The evident meaning of the whole statement is that this power *takes a strongly strategic position for a direct attack upon the Holy City*—the latter, of course, meaning the true church of Christ in the last hours of time. One more move on its part, and the church would supposedly be overwhelmed. . . .

If we adopt the more figurative or symbolic interpretation, it would seem that we have here in these last verses of Daniel II a parallel to the many passages in the book of Revelation and elsewhere which speak of the final 'war' of all the powers of earth against the true church of God" (p. 318).

After quoting Rev. 12: 17; 17: 14; 19: 19; 16: 13, 14, we read:

“In all these instances the combined powers of all the world are led on by the same leaders; they try to *make war* against the same apparently helpless church of Christ; but in each case the King of kings intervenes at the critical moment, and the trusting followers of Jesus are gloriously delivered. All these descriptions deal with the same final stage of the age-long controversy between Christ and Satan, the latter in this instance employing as his tools the united powers of a confederated world. It is this union of all the world against God in the person of His people that makes it essential for Jehovah to intervene” (pp. 318, 319).

*The tremendous significance of this recent change of denominational teaching on this subject.*

This reverting to our original denominational interpretation on these related subjects is of the utmost significance to all Seventh-day Adventists, particularly those who are striving after holiness in view of the close of human probation. The very essence of the Lord's message concerning Armageddon (Rev. 16: 12-16) is a call for God's people to be ready for the close of probation—this is the significance of Rev. 16: 15. Most important of all, this message reveals the secret of power and victory; power to vanquish foes within and without through the application of the principles of righteousness by faith. True, the slaughter of the unsaved which is symbolized by that word “Armageddon”—meaning “the mountain of slaughter”—occurs during the outpouring of the 6th and 7th plagues, but the Lord in Rev. 16: 15 employs the personal pronoun “I” as a message of love to His remnant people *to get ready for the close of probation*. By comparing Rev. 16: 15 with Rev. 3: 18, and other parallel passages, we know that Rev. 16: 12-16 describes “the final conflict” involving God's people and their keeping of God's Sabbath, the “sign” of righteousness. As “the destiny of the church” is said to depend upon its acceptance of the message of Rev. 3: 18 (E.W. p. 270), and as *Rev. 16: 15 repeats that message*, then the acceptance or rejection of the Lord's Armageddon message is a life-and-death matter.

It is because His Armageddon message is of the *greatest*

importance that our Lord speaks solemnly in the personal pronoun "I": "Behold, *I* come as a thief [He thus comes out of the Sanctuary in heaven at the close of probation—see 2T. 190-192. Rev. 16: 15 is quoted in C.O.L. 319 and D.A. 635, 636 in connection with the close of probation]. Blessed is he that watcheth [*now*, before probation closes], and keepeth his garments [the garments obtained and retained while Jesus is still in the Sanctuary imparting His righteousness], lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. 16: 15)—when the plagues fall upon the unready and when those professors of the truth receive the plagues are thus shown in their unprepared condition.

Reader, do you want to be ready when probation closes? Then, our Lord in His Armageddon message warns us of the urgent necessity of wearing the garment of righteousness *now*—or of being destroyed with all the unsaved. It is a matter of life or death. Do not heed Satan's confusing lie that the Lord's Armageddon message is not important, that Armageddon occurs after probation closes and therefore you do not need to study the significance of this urgent message from the Judge Himself. Be not deceived in this matter. No one who rejects the Lord's Armageddon message of getting ready now for the close of probation will pass through the seven last plagues and enter into the everlasting kingdom. Christ has given us an urgent message. He cannot bless those who, lightly regarding it or ignoring it, decide for themselves that it is not of much consequence. The Lord has waited for His people to be ready for the close of probation and the way to get ready for that solemn hour is by heeding His Armageddon message. "God's unwillingness to have His people perish, has been the reason of so long delay" (2T., p. 194).

When Satan introduced among us the interpretation that Rev. 16: 12-16 and parallel passages refer to a Palestinian, military Armageddon he delayed the completion of the work of God on earth.

For years I have been presenting the interpretation concerning Armageddon which is now the denominational teaching. Years ago I declared that the end could not come until the people of God accepted the true meaning of the Lord's personal message concerning Armageddon. And it is my belief that now that this

true understanding is being scattered in our denominational publications and thus the light is spreading throughout the rank and file of the Movement, we are nearing the close of probation. God is preparing His people as they understand better the true meaning of His Armageddon message. And the more God's people grasp all that is involved—and *so much is involved in its understanding*—the purer will become their lives and the more will the Holy Spirit be poured out until the latter rain will come in its fulness.

Before Pentecost the disciples were confused in their understanding of the prophecies concerning Jerusalem and the land of Israel. But when they sought earnestly to put away from them those things that offended God, then more careful study of the prophecies convinced the disciples that these prophecies were not to be fulfilled in relation to the literal land and city of national Israel, but would be fulfilled in relation to the church—Messiah's spiritual kingdom. Then, the way was clear for the Holy Spirit to honour their correct interpretation. By their true understanding of these prophecies they were able to claim *the power promised in these prophecies*. Thus it will be in these last days. The true understanding of all that is involved in the Lord's urgent Armageddon message reveals the secret of how to apply the principles of righteousness by faith and thus be ready for "the final conflict". As stated by the Spirit of Prophecy: "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict" (PK. 725). That is, when God's people learn the Saviour's Armageddon message concerning our being "clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness"—which no one could scripturally deny is the import of Rev. 16: 15—"the church" will then "enter upon her final conflict"—"The church's struggle with the powers of evil" (PK. 725) which the quotations from our own denominational books say is described in the Armageddon message.

As further consideration of this most important subject is beyond the scope of this brief outline giving the present denominational teaching concerning Armageddon, the reader is urged to read the following books which show how the positions now held by our denomination are founded upon definite Bible principles of interpretation and give more complete consideration of the prophecies involved.

## List of Publications :

Price

The Woman and the Resurrected Beast : Why is the Seventh Head numbered Eight ? The Mysteries of Revelation 17 Solved	15/0
The King of the North at Jerusalem . . . . .	5/0
Before Probation Closes . . . . .	5/0
God Speaks — and Israel Triumphs . . . . .	5/0
The Fall of Babylon in Type and Antitype . . . . .	7/6
In the Light of His Word. Answers to Questions Concerning Prophetic Interpretation and Armageddon	5/0
Europe and Armageddon . . . . .	5/6
The Moral Purpose of Prophecy . . . . .	4/0
Armageddon, the Battle of that Great Day of God Almighty	1/6
The Trials and Triumphs of Truth. My Reply to Misrepresentation . . . . .	5/0
The Kings That Come From The Sunrising... ..	5/0
Armageddon—The Time of Spiritual Israel's Deliverance... ..	2/0
Christ's Last Message to His Remnant ... ..	3/0
Facts Australian Adventists Should Know ... ..	3/0
The Torch of False Prophecy in Our Pulpits	3/0
The Life Triumphant . . . . .	2/0
How to Pray Effectual Prayers . . . . .	2/0
Individual Responsibility in the Church ... ..	6d
Christ's Message of Victory. How to be Clad with Armor for the Final Conflict ... ..	6d
The Spirit of Prophecy and Armageddon	6d
Armageddon and the Advent ... ..	6d
<b>FUTURE PUBLICATIONS (when funds are available):</b>	
The Future Unveiled by God's Love. Why God Gives Understanding of Prophecies Before They Are Fulfilled	16/6
Advent Sermons That Delay The Advent . . . . .	5/0

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