

Armageddon

F. T. Wright

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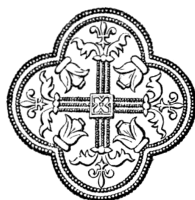
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Introduction

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, April 1975

Original title: A Word from the Editor

FOR six thousand years the great struggle has been going on without the final resolution of it all. Throughout the whole of that time, the true Christian has looked and longed for the day when the Lord shall return. But that day cannot come until the last great battle has been fought, the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

Armageddon is that battle. There have been varying ideas of what that battle will be. The time is when it is essential that the correct understanding of what that struggle will be must be possessed by those who will pass successfully through the closing scenes of history.

It is for this purpose that in this issue of the *Messenger*, there begins a series of studies on this subject. In this the principles of Bible interpretation will be faithfully adhered to.

1. A Parallel

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, April 1975

Original title: Introduction

THE very mention of this word, Armageddon, is sufficient to excite immediate interest. It is a word which has fallen from the lips of generals, statesmen, strategists, preachers, and others of less renown. It is a word which appears most frequently whenever there is the grim prospect of another world war, especially if that war is springing from problems involving nations in the Middle East.

While the expectations of what Armageddon is to be have certain variations, the general concept is much the same. It is the picture of a final and gigantic confrontation between the super powers of the earth which will bring the world as it now is to an end. Those whose belief is more directly Bible based see the gathering of all the eastern powers of China, Japan and India, together with the lesser nations of the area, against all the western powers of Europe and the United States.

The stage for this fearful struggle will be the plains of Esdraelon in Palestine. It will be a battle, so it is believed by such, in which the whole world will be involved and from which there will emerge no winners. It will be virtually mankind's self-destruction. It will immediately precede the second coming of Christ.

Because there is the fixed certainty that this battle is coming, and coming soon, there is the natural desire to know more about it. While there is held some satisfaction as to what the battle will be, and where it will be fought, there is the feeling that there is much more yet to be learned about this struggle, with the result that, whenever another presentation of the theme is offered, it will quicken the interest at once.

The situation today finds its counterpart in the days of Christ when there was the universal expectation among the Jews that the Messiah was about to appear as the one great solution to the problem of the Roman oppression. Everyone was sure that He

would come in the form of a political giant who would sweep the Romans from the field and re-establish the glorious days of David and Solomon.

Armageddon was a word which had not, at that time as yet, appeared in the Holy Scriptures. The pulse-quickenning word then was the kingdom. Because there was the certainty that the kingdom was coming and that it was coming soon, there was the constant desire to know more about it.

So it was that the interest of the people was immediately captured.

Mark 1

¹⁴ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

¹⁵ And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe the gospel.

Here was a Messenger of outstanding ability and power who came proclaiming that the kingdom was about to be established. The attention of the multitudes was arrested, their hopes quickened, their expectations heightened and their interest intensified. As the weeks went by and Jesus added the witness of miracles to His work, the certainty gained ground that this was the Messiah in Person.

It was this which led up to that great gathering of the expectant people to whom Jesus addressed that which has become known as the Sermon on the Mount.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 4:

Besides the usual crowd from the Galilean towns, there were great numbers from Judea, and from Jerusalem itself; from Perea, and from the half-heathen population of Decapolis; from Idumea, away to the south of Judea, and from Tyre and Sidon, the Phoenician cities on the shore of the Mediterranean.

Mark 3 [RV]

³⁸ ...hearing what great things He did,

Luke 6 [RV]

¹⁷ ...[they] came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases;

¹⁹ And...power came forth from Him, and healed them all.

They came to hear a declaration of what the kingdom was going to be. This was the great subject on every mind and it was that of which Christ had been preaching.

The previous activities of Christ, His emphasis on the fact that the kingdom of God was at hand, His power in working miracles such as no other had ever worked, and the presence of so great a multitude of hearers from so wide a geographical distribution, and so varied in class from the Pharisee down to the lowly peasant, all served to heighten and to intensify the expectation that the time had come for Christ to outline exactly how, and when, and where, the kingdom was to be set up.

Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 4-5:

With a feeling that something more than usual might be expected, the disciples had pressed about their Master. From the events of the morning they gathered assurance that some announcement was about to be made in regard to the kingdom which, as they fondly hoped, He was soon to establish. A feeling of expectancy pervaded the multitude also, and eager faces gave evidence of the deep interest.

As they sat upon the green hillside, awaiting the words of the divine Teacher, their hearts were filled with thoughts of future glory. There were scribes and Pharisees who looked forward to the day when they should have dominion over the hated Romans and possess the riches and splendor of the world's great empire. The poor peasants and fishermen hoped to hear the assurance that their wretched hovels, the scanty food, the life of toil, and fear of want, were to be exchanged for mansions of plenty and days of ease. In place of the one coarse garment which was their covering by day and their blanket at night, they hoped that Christ would give them the rich and costly robes of their conquerors.

All hearts thrilled with the proud hope that Israel was soon to be honored before the nations as the chosen of the Lord, and Jerusalem exalted as the head of a universal kingdom.

Jesus knew exactly what they had come expecting to hear and wanted to hear. He knew that He alone had an accurate and correct understanding of what the kingdom was going to be. He knew that His position on this subject was so strongly at variance with the concepts as held and cherished by the people of the day. He knew, too, that He could become indeed a very popular preacher should He preach what the people wished to hear.

But, instead, He presented the kingdom of God as it was, and is and ever will be—a kingdom which is not built upon force in any sense of the word at all, but on the great principles of love, humility and self-sacrificing service.

The principles of the kingdom which they expected were:

- If your neighbor strikes you on the cheek, hit him back but so much harder that he will not be able to hit you again, or at least will be terrified to;
- Love your neighbor, but hate your enemy;
- Do good to them that do good to you, but be sure to render evil back to those who render evil to you.

How unbelievably strange and unexpected must the words of Christ have been to them when He enunciated principles so much the opposite from theirs:

Matthew 5

³⁹ But I say unto you, That you resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰ And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also.

⁴¹ And whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him twain.

⁴² Give to him that asks you, and from him that would borrow of you turn not away.

⁴³ You have heard that it has been said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

⁴⁵ That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

⁴⁶ For if you love them which love you, what reward have you? do not even the publicans the same?

⁴⁷ And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so?

⁴⁸ Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

There was not a person from the highest to the lowest, from the most closely associated to the most removed from Him, who heard what they expected to hear. They came with their concepts of what the kingdom was to be. They heard instead the true concept of what it would be.

How many of those people rejected the kingdom of God then and there because it did not agree with what they had been taught to expect and with what they wanted it to be. In doing so they cut themselves off from any possibility of being a part of the kingdom of God and thus of gaining eternal life.

What a tragedy for them and a lesson for all who follow. With thoughtful care they should have searched to see if these things were really so. Their quest should have established the correct principles of interpretation so that they had the certainty that they were reading the Word of God as it should be read.

For Us Today

So it is that today there are certain very definite similarities between the situation as it was then and now. Then, there was a universal belief among the Scripture-reading Jews of that day in regard to the coming of the kingdom of God and the role of the Messiah in the establishment of that kingdom. Today, among the Bible-reading Christians, there is a universally-held concept in regard to the nature of the battle of Armageddon.

Back then, there was much to stimulate the expectation that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. So likewise there is much today to suggest that the great battle of Armageddon, as

that battle is understood to be, is about to break out at any time. As this is being written, Israel is a focal point of world trouble. The great oil producers of the world each look upon Israel as the center of their troubles, while the super powers are taking the one side or the other. Everything suggests that soon Israel will be the battleground to which the world will come for the last and finishing struggle of the ages.

It is to be expected then that the appearance of this series of studies on the battle of Armageddon, coming out at such a time as this when the Middle East and the world generally are in a ferment, will excite some interest on the part of those who first catch sight of the caption. The average such person will open these pages with the expectation of finding therein some further information proving that China and Japan are soon to unite and march against the forces of the western nations assembled in the plains of Esdraelon.

It is fair to warn that if this is the expectation, then it will be as disappointing as were the expectations of the Jews on the mount when they heard Jesus set forth the principles of the kingdom as that kingdom was to be.

It will be equally fair to plead that no reader lose interest in this series at the very outset because the interpretation of Armageddon herein presented does not conform to the popular understandings of this subject. Let not the lessons from the past be lost or ignored. In those lessons is to be read the result of believing the popular theory on the one hand, and on the other of being prepared to investigate the truth as that truth was presented by the Author of all truth.

For those who were prepared to study the truth as it came from the lips of the Master Teacher, there were days of struggle and difficulty as the old concepts warred for the mastery, but gradually the light overcame the darkness and great was the glory of understanding as it opened to their minds. Then, they knew what saving truth was and realized the imperfection and danger of the old way of thinking.

As this series progresses, the fallacy of the popular understanding will be shown in the inconsistency of its principles of interpretation or the absence of principles altogether, while the truth will be shown to adhere to the most consistent and soundly-proven principles of interpretation.

No attempt will be made to understand anything about the battle of Armageddon without firstly determining what the rules of interpretation are and proving them by careful testing from the Word of God. The search will be, not to find that which will be a pleasing doctrine well suited to the tastes of the flesh, but to find the truth as the truth is, no matter what the personal sacrifice to ourselves may be.

It is urged that the greatest care be taken on the part of all who read these studies to see that the principles of interpretation set forth in the early part of these studies are indeed sound and reliable. Study them so closely and prayerfully that the conviction of their truthfulness becomes woven into the very fiber of the thinking.

Then, as the great topic before us is studied in detail, these principles, so soundly committed to the mind, will prove to be a guide and a protection from error and falsehood, and will make it so much easier to overcome the prejudices of old ideas and opinions.

All Will Be Involved

When the true nature of the battle of Armageddon is understood, it will be seen with startling clarity that there will not be a man, woman or child upon the face of the entire earth who will not be involved in that struggle when it comes. That it is coming is beyond doubt. Furthermore it is coming very soon.

When it comes it will try to the uttermost the characters of each. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that all thoroughly understand this topic so that the correct preparations can be made for the struggle when it does come.

As then, the entry is made into the study of this theme, it is with the prayer that all who join in this study shall be richly blessed unto eternal salvation.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field.



2. The Language of Symbols

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, May 1975

Original title: The Language of Symbols No. 1

INASMUCH as Armageddon is a battle of the future, there is but one place to find information regarding it and that is in the Scriptures of truth. It is a battle of prophecy and not yet of history.

In the Scriptures of truth, the information regarding it is given in symbolic language. Therefore, that language must be interpreted. In other words, it is necessary to match the reality with the symbol so that the understanding is gained of what the symbol means. In doing so, one may have the wrong interpretation or he may have the correct one. Obviously to have the wrong interpretation would be most unfortunate for then he would be deceived as to the true nature of the struggle and fail to come through it successfully.

The question may well be asked at this very point as to why the Lord of heaven has seen fit to set forth this information in symbolic form when it could just as easily have been written in direct language leaving none to misunderstand the true nature and import of that struggle?

The answer lies in the very nature of the subject itself. The subject is war. Throughout the whole of the Scriptures, we are being given a view of the great controversy between Christ and Satan and, therefore, between the followers of Christ and the followers of Satan, too. This is a very real war indeed. It is not a game. It is a life and death struggle, the consequences of which are for eternity.

On the one side, God and Christ are the generals of their forces. These they commit to the battle when and where strategy best indicates. On the other side, Satan is the general of his forces which he commits to the battle according to his best wisdom and the cooperation of his forces.

In order for an army to successfully do its work, it must be informed of the plans and purposes of the general and must obey those orders to the very letter. It is equally important that the enemy be kept in ignorance of what the plans and intentions of the general are. So it is that, in earthly struggles, communications sent from the general to the army are in code or symbolic language. It is planned that the only ones who will be able to understand these symbols are those for whom the message is intended. This is especially necessary if there is any danger at all that the communications will fall into the hands of the enemy on the way through to those for whom they are really intended.

God's communications to His soldiers are contained in the Bible. In this book is laid out the battle plan with the revelations of just what God will do as we move progressively down to the end of time and the consummation of the battle. It is intended that His people most thoroughly and clearly understand these communications so that they will be able to take their place in the struggle and come through it victoriously.

But, because the people of God are not found in one compact company all together, but rather are scattered throughout the whole of the earth, and because, too, it is not so difficult under the circumstances for the devil to infiltrate his agents into the camp of the Lord, the messages of God are freely available to all in both camps.

A further reason for God allowing His messages to be available to all, is that He desires any who are in the camp of the enemy to come over to His side and be saved from the great destruction. To find this salvation, they must, of course, have access to the messages of truth as they are to be found in the Bible and thus be converted by them.

So it is of necessity that certain parts of the Bible at least be written in symbolic or code language. It is that the people of God, who learn from the Bible under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit the correct principles of interpretation, may understand just what the

plans and purposes of God are, while the enemies of the truth find them all a mystery.

Yet the Bible is written in a code of such masterful skill, that while for those who are under the training of the Holy Spirit, it is astonishingly simple, for the rest it is undecipherable. Yet more than this, they will gather from it all an interpretation which will be quite wide of the mark and yet will satisfy them into believing that they do have the answers to what the Lord intends to do.

The better the system of prophetic symbolism is understood, the more the learner will admire the skill of the Great General of the armies of heaven in setting out the messages in the way in which He has. It is perfectly safe to say that there is not a single person, whose mind is not worked by the Holy Spirit, who has any hope of truly understanding the prophecies as the Lord intended that they should be understood. Only the true people of the Lord can possibly understand what those messages were intended to convey. For all the rest it is impossible.

There has been a tendency on the part of the children of the Lord to be distressed because there are so many diverse interpretations of the Scriptures in the world today. It is felt that if there was but the one clear interpretation versus the claims of the sinful world, there would be less occasion for the scoffer and the critic to make charges against the God of heaven. But we need to rejoice at the marvelous success of the Lord in providing a message in a code such as to lead so many to come out with mistaken understandings of the Scriptures.

It must never be felt that these interpretations spring forth because people are misled by the way in which the symbols are set out. Not at all is this so. They are misled because they are in the camp of the enemy and do not have the guidance of the one Teacher who could and would make all things clear to them.

Thus then it is clear that we are dealing with a message which has been delivered to us in a code and, as such, must be solved or interpreted. Because the most cleverly-constructed codes provide the possibility of several interpretations being taken from them, it

is essential that we do find the one true message which this code is intended to convey. There is no code which has been more skillfully constructed than the prophetic symbolism. Therefore there is no code which provides for more possibilities of erroneous interpretations, and therefore requires the most careful testing to see that we do have the message as God intended that we should have it.

To have this certainty it is necessary to start with the laying down of the principles of interpretation and the testing of those principles to see if they can consistently be used throughout the whole of the Word of God.

Consistency

This word, consistency, cannot be overstressed for its importance. The success of any secret code depends upon the consistency with which the interpreter of it knows that certain symbols always and without exception stand for the same things. So it must be that in the investigation of the Bible codes, the symbols must always stand for the same things and nothing else but that. If it is found that a certain interpretation is accepted for a symbol which later cannot be applied to a given text of Scripture, then at once the interpretation must be suspect and fresh search made for an understanding which will be consistent all the way through.

In many cases the Bible itself states in plain language what the symbol represents. In this case there is no difficulty, provided that the symbols are always understood to represent the same things. Clear instances of this are as follows. In *Daniel* seven, the prophet is given a vision of four great beasts which come up out of waters to stand upon the earth. Obviously the beasts are symbols, but the question is of what are they symbols? The Bible plainly gives the answer.

Daniel 7

¹⁷ These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

Beasts again appear in *Daniel* 8, and *Revelation* 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20. With marvelous consistency it will be seen that in every case each of these beasts are the symbol of a king as stated back there in *Daniel* 7:17.

In like manner horns are the symbol of kings which are a part of a greater empire, waters symbolize people and winds symbolize strife, commotion, bloodshed and the like. See *Daniel* 7:24, *Revelation* 17:15 and *Revelation* 7:1-3.

As these are the simpler and more easily-understood symbols of *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, we will not spend much time on them here. Where we do need to spend a little time is in those areas which are not so directly stated in the Scriptures, and where some careful observation is required to understand the system used.

One such is the necessity to distinguish between the symbol and the explanation of the symbol. The symbols are revealed in visions, after which the Lord then sends His angel to give the explanation of the symbols revealed in the vision already given.

Careful study of the Scriptures will soon reveal that strict rules apply in the construction of these presentations. In the first case, the vision or the presentation of the symbols, is never mixed with the explanation of those symbols. Firstly, the Lord gives the symbolic presentation until it is complete, at least so far as this particular revelation is concerned, after which He then gives the explanation to the symbols already revealed.

Reference to the chapters of *Daniel* and the *Revelation* show the consistency of this pattern and method of working. In *Daniel* 2:31-35 is given the first vision which is the great image with its various parts of different metals from gold down to iron and clay. Search as you might, and you will find no explanation in these verses whatsoever. They contain only the presentation of the vision, all in symbolic form.

Then, this complete, the explanation is given in verses 36-45. Likewise, the most careful study of this reveals that no symbols

are introduced here. Instead, each of the symbols given in the previous vision are explained in their exact order.

The same pattern is repeated in the next vision of Daniel. In *Daniel* 7:1-4, the message is given in the form of a vision. Symbols of beasts, waters, horns and winds are all introduced with no attempt to explain any of them. Not even the prophet was able to understand them:

Daniel 7

¹⁵ I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

Being thus unable to understand what the message was, he sought the answer as is recorded in the next verse.

¹⁶ I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

In response, the interpretation was given to him in verses 17-28. Again a careful study of these verses show that there are no symbols introduced in this explanation, but only interpretations of the symbols.

It must be noted with emphasis, that no symbol ever appears in the vision except that there is an explanation given for it in the interpretation and, likewise, there is never an explanation given but that there was a symbol for it in the vision. This may seem a relatively obvious and perhaps unimportant point, but it is all too often overlooked, and it is a most important point indeed. Awareness of it, and adherence to the principle of it in searching for the interpretation of the visions, makes a very great difference in the understanding of *Daniel* 8 and 9 in particular. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that this point be kept very clearly in mind.

In *Daniel* 8, the vision occupies the first fourteen verses. The explanation occupies the rest of the chapter but is left incomplete because Daniel evidently could not stand the physical strain of the revelations given to him.

The rule is that there never can be a symbol given except that there be an explanation for it so, therefore, it is to be expected that, when Daniel had had time to recover from the ordeal, the Lord would send the rest of the explanation to him. So it is that *Daniel* 9:24-27 is an explanation only and covers the unexplained portion of *Daniel* 8. *Daniel* 11 and 12 are not visions but explanations and it is found therein that the symbols already given in the previous chapters are further explained.

Throughout the *Revelation* the same system is continued and it is important that this be kept in mind so that no mistake be made in the understanding of the messages contained therein. These principles are most important. At the very outset they must be established in the mind and kept there as a continual guide in the study of these great prophetic books.



3. The Bible: Its Own Interpreter

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, June 1975

Original title: The Bible—Its Own Interpreter No. 2

THUS far in the approach to the study of this subject, we have been looking only at principles of interpretation. For those who are anxious to get into the subject itself, this may seem tedious and perhaps unnecessary. However, this is not so and cannot be so, for only if the correct principles of Bible interpretation are accepted, will the subject itself be understood.

We want it to be known at the very outset that the positions to be presented in the forthcoming chapters of this series, will be strictly consistent with the Biblical principles of interpretation. There will be the most careful avoidance of any form of human interpretation for,

1 Peter 1

²⁰ Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation.

In setting forth positions which are arrived at by the most careful adherence to the true Biblical principles of interpretation, we will find ourselves in direct opposition to the thoughts and beliefs of many who have over the years developed their own interpretation of these Scriptures. There are popular concepts of what the battle of Armageddon will be, but we will show how that those popular concepts are the result of private, and not Scriptural interpretations of the Scriptures.

We know all too well from experience the power of old concepts. They are by no means easy to dislodge and replace with the truth. There is a tendency to cling to that which father taught me and which in turn I have gone on record as believing and teaching for years. Then there are other pressures as well.

Some fifteen years ago, a prominent evangelist sought me out for assistance in research on a topic on which he had been asked to preach at a coming conference. This established a confidence between us. A little later I went to his campaign meeting and

heard him preaching on the battle of Armageddon. His presentation was in line with the popular concept that it would be a titanic struggle between the western and the eastern nations on the plains of Esdraelon in Palestine.

The next time we were together, I opened the subject to him, outlining the principles of interpretation, and showing him how unscriptural were his beliefs on this question. He listened attentively to all I had to say. When I was finished he said to me quite sincerely,

“You are right. Armageddon is not what I have been preaching it as being. But if I change to the positions you have outlined here I will lose the strongest attraction to bring folk out to listen.”

He went his way and I mine, for we never had any further working contact with each other. To this day he is still preaching in evangelistic campaigns and his biggest attraction is still the presentation of the subject which he knows is erroneous. But it draws the crowds and that is more important to him than to be a preacher of truth.

We hope and we pray that each of the readers of this series will have more nobility of character than this man, that each will search and see if these things are really so and if they are, will frankly acknowledge the errors of the past and teach the truth and the truth alone.

It is a bad thing indeed to fall into sin either secret or open, but it is much worse to reject the truth which the Lord sends to us. This distinction of great and greater guilt was made clear by the Saviour himself in these words:

Mark 6

¹¹ And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when you depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

In comment upon this verse, these words are written,

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 3, p. 380:

Jesus declares to us that there is a greater sin than that which caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is the sin of those who have the great light of truth in these days and are not moved to repentance.

We know the terrible sins of which Sodom and Gomorrah were guilty. Yet here is a greater sin and that is the rejection of the light of truth. Therefore, it is most essential that we who present those truths be sure that the interpretations given are in the strictest harmony with the Biblical principles of interpretation, and that those who read are careful to see that they understand and apply those principles in their questing after truth.

We ask that should you, as you study this theme, find that which is counter to your long held concepts on the battle of Armageddon, that you do not measure what you read by that which you have always believed, but rather by what the Scriptures say when they are interpreted according to the Scriptural principles of interpretation. Then, if what you read does not tally with those principles, by all means reject it, but if it does, then, no matter what the cost may be to you personally, reject the old long-held concepts in favor of the truth as it is in Jesus. This is the only way of safety in this quest for eternal life.

Private or Biblical

When it comes to the interpretation of the Word of God, the issue really is as to whether that interpretation shall be private or human on the one hand or Scriptural on the other. When we as human beings use words, we mean, in a given age and in a given locality, certain things by those words. When we read a message sent to us as is the case with Bible reading, we tend very strongly to interpret the words we read as meaning what we would mean if we used those words ourselves.

To do this is to ignore the fact that the Bible has been written over a period of several thousand years, during which time language has changed in meaning so that an expression which conveyed a certain thought at a given time in the past may convey

quite a different thought today. A very simple example of this is found in *1 Thessalonians* 4:15 where the word “prevent” is used in the sentence,

1 Thessalonians 4

¹⁵ ...we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

Today this word has quite another meaning from what it had when this translation was made. Then it meant what “precedes” now means, so that the true meaning of the verse is, “we...shall not precede them which are asleep.”

We are to understand what the Lord meant when He used certain expressions in the Bible, not what we would mean if we used the same expressions ourselves. How we shall obtain that divine interpretation of the Word of God? The answer is very simple. It was one discovered and used by William Miller in his search for the truth. It is the fact that the Bible is its own interpreter.

The God of heaven, foreseeing the difficulties which would be experienced by the many different minds, in many different lands, in many different periods of earth’s history, in understanding just what the Word of God is actually saying, has provided in the Bible itself the explanations needed to show just what is meant by certain expressions. So it was written of William Miller,

The Great Controversy, p. 320:

When he found anything obscure, it was his custom to compare it with every other text which seemed to have any reference to the matter under consideration. Every word was permitted to have its proper bearing upon the subject of the text, and if his view of it harmonized with every collateral passage, it ceased to be a difficulty. Thus whenever he met with a passage hard to be understood, he found an explanation in some other portion of the Scriptures.

Every truth in the Bible then is explained by some other part of the Word of God. The Bible is its own interpreter. There is no room for any private interpretation which is both the most common and the most dangerous form of interpretation. This is true

in the study of the battle of Armageddon as it is in every other truth in the Scriptures.

Seeking the Spirit

It would be well to sound here a warning against another method of arriving at the meaning of a difficult passage of Scripture. It is a method which has been used by many people, and into contact with which I have frequently come in every part of the world. It is one on which those who use it place the greatest of reliance, yet, unfortunately it is misleading and deceptive. It is the method of going to the Lord in prayer to ask Him to give through the Holy Spirit, a direct interpretation of the Scripture under question.

Again and again, folk have testified to the fact that the Lord has opened their minds to understand what the Scriptures mean in this particular area they are studying. Because they believe that it is the Lord who has spoken directly to them, they cling to that interpretation with the greatest of tenacity, fearing that to surrender it is to deny the Lord himself.

What folk have failed to realize is that...

Selected Messages, vol. 1, p. 43:

Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God.

This has always been the principle of God's true people:

Isaiah 8

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Therefore, any message which purports to be from the Lord as an explanation of any part of the Scriptures, must be tested by the Word of God before it can be accepted as the truth. This means that if I kneel and ask the Holy Spirit to clarify the Word of God to me, and in response, I receive a very clear and definite understanding of what that Scripture means, I cannot accept that as being the truth unless I first of all test it by the Word of God. This is essential for there is another spirit which will come as if in an-

swer to our prayers, so that we will tend to think that the real Spirit has given us the answer, when it is the work of another Spirit.

You may recoil from such a possibility happening to you because you are a true child of God who has protection from the power of the evil one. It is true that, as a true child of God, you have protection from the power of the evil one but this does not mean that the Lord prevents the devil from speaking his temptations to you. That is another thing.

The clearest warning of this danger comes to us from the experience of the greatest Christian of all—Jesus. On the mountain of temptation, He was most earnestly seeking the Lord for answers to his situation. Satan heard those prayers and he came with an answer before the Lord did.

The Desire of Ages, p. 118:

There came to the Saviour, as if in answer to His prayers, one in the guise of an angel from heaven.

Had the Saviour accepted this apparent message from heaven, which in fact was a message from that other spirit, the devil, without carefully testing it by the Word of God, He would have been defeated there and then and we would all have been lost eternally.

But He did test the words of Satan. He did test what appeared to be a most genuine answer to His prayer and He and we were saved from disaster. He brought those words of Satan, that apparent message direct from heaven, to the test of the Word. Satan sought to deceive Him,

Matthew 4

⁴ But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall...live...by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Now it must be abundantly clear that if the devil could bring to Jesus Christ that which had every appearance of being a message direct from heaven, he can certainly do the same thing for you.

He will come as you pray with answers which seem to be from heaven, but which are his own deceptions.

Therefore, when you pray for the Spirit of God to give to you an explanation of what the Scriptures have to say, then test the answers which you get by the Word to see if it was the Spirit of God who answered the prayer, or if it was the spirit of Satan. Let the experience of Christ be a warning forever of the danger we are in in this connection.

How well I learned this lesson in a far off land when I once met a man who was determined to proclaim that the Lord would return in October 1964. I pointed him to the words of Scripture warning against time setting for the return of the Lord. Whereupon he solemnly told me that the Lord had told him in plain language in response to his prayer that Christ would return at that time.

I know that a spirit did speak to him in response to his prayer. That spirit did tell him that the Lord would come at that time. I also know that he did not take the words of that spirit to the Word of God to test its truthfulness. If he had, then he would have found that what that spirit told him is not what is written, after which he would have rejected this explanation of the Scriptures as being false and of the devil. Needless to say, the Lord did not come in 1964, thus confirming forever the falsity of both his method of interpretation and the spirit which spoke to him.

Heed the Principles

There are the literalists who read the Bible and immediately assume that the words mean what they would mean if they used them. Then there are those who understand the principles which underlie God's government. These are forever reading the Word of God in the light of these principles. If the understanding of a Bible statement is in collision with the principles, then the student knows that he must search the Word of God to find what the Lord is really saying in the statement.

Here for instance is an excellent example of this. Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh. Aaron casts down the rod and it becomes a serpent. The record of it reads as follows:

Exodus 7

¹⁰ And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

The language is plain enough and we are quite sure that the rod of Aaron did become a serpent in actual fact. It was no make-believe reptile which performed before Pharaoh. But now we will continue.

¹¹ Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

¹² For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents.

We ask each reader at this point, as an exercise in learning the way of true Bible interpretation, to tell to himself or to a person reading with him, just what he understands by the reading of those words. Most likely he will find himself understanding those words to say that the magicians also made their rods to become living serpents for they did in like manner as did Aaron. I say this because I have conducted this experiment with live audiences and this is the answer which usually comes back to me.

But there is a principle which denies that they did. This principle contradicts any idea that the rods of the magicians actually became serpents as this verse appears to say they did. Certainly, if we used the words, "Their rods became serpents," we would mean by those words that they did actually become serpents. But that would be a private interpretation to interpret the words in that fashion.

What then is the principle with which each mind should be so aware that its presence would serve as a safeguard against an erroneous understanding of this verse? It is the fact that the devil has no power to create life. God can and did take a handful of dust and from it He made a living human being, Adam. Satan cannot do this and has never done it. God can and did take a rod

from a tree and from it made a living, breathing, wriggling serpent. Satan cannot and did not do this. This is an impossibility.

So then we have a statement which declares that the magicians did just as Aaron did. He cast down his rod and it became a serpent and they cast their rods and they became serpents. On the other hand we have a principle which denies that the magicians' rods could possibly become serpents. We know that they did not have the power of God with them. What they did was by the power of Satan.

The statement, rightly understood, and the principle must speak the same message. Therefore, our understanding of the statement, or the principle must change. At once we recognize that the principle cannot change for it is an eternal truth that God alone can create life. Nothing can ever change that. Therefore it follows, as is the usual case, that our understanding of the statement must change.

What shall guide that change so that the correct understanding is obtained? Shall we sit down and try to think it out for ourselves? To do this would be only to provide a further private interpretation which would be a variation of the first private interpretation of the verses. There is only one safe way and it is to search in the Word of God until the answer is found. In other words we must find the Bible interpretation of these words.

This is not difficult to find. Throughout the Bible it is revealed that the devil is a master counterfeiter. He is able to appear in any form he chooses as the Scriptures declare:

2 Corinthians 11

¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Satan is not an angel of light nor ever can be. Yet he is able to appear as one, so that all who see him would conclude that he is an angel of light, unless they understood the divine principles by which he is exposed for what he is in reality.

He is able to make it appear that he can do the works of God because...

2 Thessalonians 2

⁹ ...the working of Satan [is] with all power and signs and lying wonders.

Therefore, in the court of Pharaoh, the magicians' rods did become serpents exactly as the Bible says but they were not living serpents. They were counterfeit ones which looked like the real, and moved like the real, but they had no life in themselves. They did not breathe, they were not flesh and blood.

Confirmation of this is given to us in the following statement. It is recommended that the whole passage be read, though we will quote but a part here.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 696-697:

Moses, by the power of God, had changed the rod to a living serpent. Satan, through the magicians, *counterfeited* this miracle. He could not produce living serpents, for he has not the power to create or to give life. This power belongs to God alone. But all that Satan could do he did—he produced a *counterfeit*. By his power, working through his magicians, he caused the rods to assume the appearance of serpents.

The statement that they did become serpents, simply means that they were such in appearance; such they were believed to be by Pharaoh and his court. There was nothing in their appearance to distinguish them from the serpent produced by Moses and Aaron; but while one was real, the other was spurious. [Emphasis original]

Thus we have the statement which appears to read a certain way. Then we have the principle which denies our understanding of the statement. Then, in the Word of God itself is the explanation of what really happened at that time. This is the way in which the Word of God is to interpret the Word of God and this is the method of interpretation which we shall very strictly follow throughout the study of this great question of Armageddon.

We could give quite a number of other illustrations from the word of God to further establish this point but space forbids this.

As an exercise though we could recommend that *Luke* 14:23 be read and the word “compel” in this verse be given the meaning you would intend to convey if you used the word in everyday conversation. Clearly the idea of forcing would be involved.

Consider then the principles outlined in the Word of God which deny this interpretation. It is the principle of freewill as expounded in *John* 3:16, *Isaiah* 55:1, *Revelation* 22:17 and:

The Desire of Ages, p. 466:

In the work of redemption there is no compulsion.

Then search the Scriptures to find the answer to this problem, to find where, in the Scriptures the explanation is given to what the Lord meant by those words when He spoke them long ago. *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 235 is one place where such an explanation will be found.

Then there is the Scripture which states that God hardened Pharaoh's heart: *Exodus* 7:13. Again let the reader interpret these words according to the way he would use them. Such an interpretation would rob the king of any choice in the matter. The great principles of the gospel deny this kind of interpretation. Once again the Scriptures must be searched to find the Scriptural interpretation of this statement. In those Scriptures it will be found that the real effort of God was to soften the heart of Pharaoh, but the effect was to harden it.

Summary

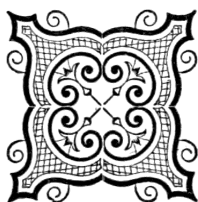
At the very outset of this series of studies then, it is of the utmost importance that these principles of search and discovery be rigidly applied throughout the entire investigation so that the conclusions arrived at, at all times, are Bible interpretations of the Bible, and not human interpretations of it.

2 Peter 1

²⁰ Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation.

Anyone who is not confirmed on these principles will find himself in very definite disagreement with the positions to be set forth in the coming chapters. This is certain and unfortunate.

Therefore we appeal to all to understand and to accept the only safe way of Bible study so that we shall understand what God is trying to say to us and not what we think He is saying.



4. The Bible: Its Own Interpreter, part 2

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, July 1975
Original title: The Bible—Its Own Interpreter No. 3

THERE is only one place in the whole of the Scriptures where the word “Armageddon” appears. This is *Revelation* 16:16. Does this mean that this is the sole source of information available to us on this important subject? No! It most certainly does not!

We will find that there is a tremendous amount of information on this topic throughout the Scriptures. We are not going to find a label attached to each place where this material is given, but once we understand the correct principles of interpretation, we shall be surprised at how full the Bible is of the coming struggle of the ages.

The natural place to begin though is with the reference in which the word “Armageddon” appears, which, as mentioned above, is *Revelation* 16:16. This is the final verse in the description of the sixth plague. Therefore, we do well to read the whole of this description as context.

Revelation 16

¹² And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

The question with which all are now confronted is this: What is the message of God to us in these verses? It is not a matter of

what we think those verses mean, nor of what we would be trying to convey if we had spoken those words. It is only a matter of understanding what God is saying when He inspired His prophet to set down in human language what he saw in the vision.

Without a doubt it is possible to draw from this more than one conclusion. There are those who have concluded that the literal river itself would be dried up in order to allow the passage of the eastern kings. Others, realizing that a mere river is no barrier to modern armies, have rejected this conclusion in favor of the waters of the river being symbolic of the nations which surround the river. They have seen in the drying up of the river the withering of the power of such nations so that the eastern powers could advance unhindered to the west.

Now both of these are private interpretations for they are based upon the understanding of the words as meaning what we would mean if we used them. For instance, if we spoke of the kings of the east, we would be definitely referring to China, Japan and so on. So it is that the average reader of this passage simply assumes that this expression, along with the reference to the river Euphrates and the place called Armageddon, means just what he would mean if he used them. Then, without any checking of the principles of Bible interpretation, he proceeds from there to build his theology of the battle of Armageddon.

We have made it very clear that we will not interpret the Scriptures according to any such private interpretation. Rather we shall search out the divine principles. We shall discover from the Bible itself what the Lord intended to say when these words were written and this we shall believe.

Geographical System

The system of interpretation which leads the student to understand the expression, "the kings of the east" to mean the powers of the eastern nations of China, Japan, India and so on, is one which we shall term the geographical system of interpretation. In this system, the kings of the east are those which are geographi-

cally to the east of the River Euphrates. The River itself refers to the geographical area surrounding it and “the place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon,” is a geographical location which is usually pinpointed on the map as being the plains of Esdraelon in Palestine.

Now, while we have said above that we will not interpret the Scriptures according to any private interpretation, and while we have said above that the conclusions which designate the battle of Armageddon to be fought on a geographical location are the result of private interpretation, we do not discount the possibility that the conclusion could be true nonetheless.

What we shall rather do is to apply the test of the Scriptures to these positions. Admittedly they look logical enough. There are those who will insist that we must take the Bible exactly as it reads so that, when it says the kings from the east, it means the kings of the east. Inasmuch as even a school child knows who the kings of the east are, the matter is settled. So some will argue. When we insist that the Bible system of interpretation be applied before we accept such theories, they will charge us with making the Scriptures say other than they do say.

But no matter how severely the charges may be pressed, we will still insist on subjecting every interpretation which is offered to us to the law and to the testimony and, if they speak not according to this word, we will reject them as having no light in them at all.

So we have before us the statement of Scripture telling us of the drying up of the Euphrates and of the coming of the kings of the east and of the gathering of the kings to the place called Armageddon. There is the statement. The next step is to find the underlying principle to the whole question.

To find that principle, there is the necessity first of all to establish a certain fact and it is that the whole of the book of *Revelation* is the presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The fact of this is stated in the very first verse of the book. Here we are told what *Revelation* is. It is “the *Revelation* of Jesus Christ...” Jesus

Christ is the gospel, the living power of God to save from sin. Therefore the book of *Revelation* is a presentation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The fact of this is further verified by this statement,

Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 175:

Our lesson for the present time is, How may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the Isle of Patmos—the gospel that is termed,

Revelation 1

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.

Now this statement did not say that the gospel is to be found in the *Revelation*. Had it said that, we could be justified in concluding that a part of the book contains the gospel, and the rest is devoted to the history of struggles down here on this earth. But when it states in such clear language that the book of *Revelation* is the presentation of the gospel of Christ, then we can know that every word in that book is the presentation of that gospel.

Therefore, when we are reading the description of the sixth plague, wherein the Euphrates is dried up, the way of the kings of the east prepared and the gathering to the place called Armageddon for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, then we are reading the gospel story as surely as we do when we read the story of the cross, or the book of *Romans*.

Those then who have seen little or nothing of the gospel in *Revelation*, and yet, at the same time, have been very sure that the battle of Armageddon is a political struggle to be fought in a geographical battle ground in Palestine, need to recognize that they have fallen far short of seeing what *Revelation* is all about. They have seen something other in that book than what the Lord of heaven has been seeking to say to them.

Having then established the clear fact from the Scriptures that the book of *Revelation* is the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are pre-

pared to lay down the principles of interpretation which denies the geographical method entirely.

In the geographical interpretation, identification depends on where you are. In the gospel, this principle has no place. It is not a question of who you are, or of where you are, but of what you are. Geography counts for nothing at all. This is not what changes the man or the nation.

Think of this in relation to yourself. While you are where you are at this moment, you are a certain kind of person. Should you leave where you are and travel to the other end of the world, so that your geographical location is changed as much as it possibly can be, would that in itself change you from what you are to some other kind of person? Assuredly it would not. You would still be you.

So then we have in *Revelation* a statement which, as generally understood according to the system of human interpretation, applies the principle of identification according to where the subject is.

We have also the gospel principle that where you are, is not a factor in identification at all. Identification must be according to what you are, not where you are.

These two, the statement and the principle, are in opposition to each other. Each insists on an understanding of the sixth plague contrary to the understanding of the other. Therefore, the one or the other of the two must change.

But the principle of the gospel cannot change. Never! Therefore, the understanding of the meaning of the expressions, the kings of the east, Euphrates and the place which is called Armageddon must change. How will this be changed? Only by seeking in the Scriptures themselves for the explanation of these things.

Consistency

Before we do go further into this to find the Scriptural explanations of what the apparently geographical expressions mean, it would be advisable to bring forward further evidence to show the

falsity of the geographical interpretation so that there will be totally erased from the mind any further tendency to interpret the scriptures according to this method.

Whatever method of interpretation is used it must be consistent. This is to say, it must not be that the method will work in—one part of the Word of God, but be impossible to application in another part of the Scriptures. Should it be found that it is thus inconsistent, then it must be discarded as a decidedly wrong method of interpretation.

We will now show that the geographical method is inconsistent. We will show that it does allow an interpretation in one part of the Scriptures, but is impossible of application in other parts. What is more, the very people who use it, find themselves forced to use other principles in other parts of the Word of God.

Here is a fine example of this. In his book, *Daniel and the Revelation*, Uriah Smith comes to the place where he is seeking to identify the king of the north in *Daniel* 11:40. His approach to the subject indicates that his method of identification is to look to and see what power in his day occupied the same geographical territory occupied by the king of the north when he previously appeared in the prophecy. No one, in reading the following quotations, will have the least difficulty in seeing that this method of interpretation is geographical.

Verse 40. And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and overflow and pass over.

Kings of the South and North Again in Conflict.—After a long interval, the king of the south and the king of the north again appear on the stage of action. We have met with nothing to indicate that we are to look to a location for these powers other than those which shortly after the death of Alexander constituted respectively the southern and the northern divisions of his empire.

The king of the south was at that time Egypt, and the king of the north was Syria, including Thrace and Asia Minor. Egypt continued to rule in the territory designated as belonging to the king of the south, and Turkey for more than four hundred years ruled over the territory which first constituted the domain of the king of the north...But if Turkey, now occupying the territory which constituted the northern division of Alexander's empire, is not the king of the north of this prophecy, then we are left without any principle to guide us in the interpretation.¹

The argument employed here is simply this. In order to identify who the king of the north and of the south are at this time, we have but to look to whatever powers today occupy the territory wherein was to be found the kings of the north and the south when they appeared earlier in the prophecy. If this is not true,

...then we are left without any principle to guide us in the interpretation.

That is the argument and it is clearly the geographical method of interpretation. Now it would not be so bad if the same author adhered to this method throughout the entire book, but he does not. The simple reason as to why he does not is because he cannot.

We turn again to the book to read this time something of his comments on *Revelation* 14:8 which speaks of the fall of Babylon. He writes as follows:

The inquiries therefore follow: What is meant by the term "Babylon"? What is her fall? How does it take place? As to the meaning of the word, we learn something from the marginal readings of *Genesis* 10:10 and *Genesis* 11:9. The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel, or Babylon. The place was called Babylon, meaning "confusion," because God there confounded the language of the builders of the tower. The name is here used figuratively to designate the great symbolic city of the book of *Revelation*, probably with special reference to the significance of the term and the circumstances from which it originated. It applies to

¹ Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, p. 289, 295 (1944 Edition).

something on which, as specifying its chief characteristics, may be written the word “confusion.”²

He then goes on to show how that the great apostate religious system, including the papacy and the fallen Protestant Churches, have these characteristics and are therefore the Babylon of these last days. Now the question which he has asked and answered in the identification of Babylon, was not where she is geographically, but what she is in character.

You will notice that not one word has been said about looking to the geographical location of the ancient kingdom of Babylon to see what powers might be reigning there at the present time. This method of identification is totally ignored in this part of the prophecy. Yet back in *Daniel* 11:40, he stated that the only possible principle of interpretation was to see what powers today are in occupation of the territory previously occupied by the kings of the north and the south.

This is inconsistency. Here are two different and in fact opposite methods of interpretation. This cannot be either the one or the other has to be discarded. The one which must be discarded will be the geographical method for the other is the one in harmony with the gospel.

Why is it that Uriah Smith did not consistently apply the geographical interpretation to the situation? It is because he could not. Had he asked the question:

“What power today occupies the territory once occupied by the king of Babylon?”

—he would have had to reply,

“None, for the city is broken down to this day and the kingdom is empty. There is no one there in the geographical location once occupied by that king.”

That system of interpretation would have left him without any Babylon in these last days. Therefore he was obliged to apply

² *Idem*, p. 643.

some other means of identification to discover who is the Babylon who will play so significant a role in the closing events.

Thus the geographical method does not stand the test of consistency and therefore must be completely discarded. All tendency to use it must be rooted out of the mind and new thought processes must take its place. There is no other safe way for we must find and follow a consistent gospel method of understanding what God is saying to us in His word.

Inspired Confirmation

If the geographical method has any place at all then we can expect that the Spirit of Prophecy will use it. If it does not then we can expect otherwise. So it is that when God, through His latest prophet, explained to us who the king of the south was at the very time when Uriah Smith was identifying that power as being still the nation of Egypt, He gave to us a very different identification indeed based upon a very different method of interpretation.

Uriah's identification of the king of the south in comment upon *Daniel* 11:40, is of that power around about 1798. The Spirit of Prophecy identification is given in comment on the parallel Scripture in *Revelation* 11:8, where reference is made to the king of the south under the terms of Sodom and Egypt, as that power was in 1798 also.

If then the method of interpretation employed by Uriah Smith by which he came to the conclusion that Turkey was the king of the north and Egypt the king of the south in 1798, is correct, then we will find this borne out by the Spirit of Prophecy also identifying national Egypt as being the Egypt, or the king of the south of *Revelation* 11. Here then is the explanation as given in *The Great Controversy*. Read it with care to see how much of geographical interpretation, if any, is used.

The Great Controversy, p. 269:

The "great city" in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, "is spiritually Egypt." Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God, and resisted His commands. No monarch

ever ventured upon more open and high-handed rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt.

When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered,

Exodus 5

² Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go.

This is atheism; and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God, and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.

The “great city” is also compared, “spiritually,” to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in licentiousness. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfill the specifications of this scripture.

According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some power of satanic origin and character would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God’s two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh and the licentiousness of Sodom.

This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the history of France.

As clearly as Uriah Smith used the geographical method of interpretation, so here the gospel principle is used. While the former asked Where? the second asked What? By applying the geographical method, Uriah Smith arrived at the conclusion that in 1798, political Egypt was the power designated by the king of the south in the prophecy, while, by using the gospel method, the Spirit of Prophecy arrived at an entirely different conclusion altogether.

Instead, Egypt is identified as being a spiritual power, namely atheism. The geographical location of this power was far from the place where it was in the days portrayed in the early part of *Daniel* 11. Atheism had found a new center but it was, and is, atheism still. Its change of geographical location did not in any

sense of the word change its character. Atheism in the new location was still the same atheism which it had previously been in the old location.

Thus two different methods of interpretation lead to two different conclusions. Only one can be correct.

Conclusive Evidence

All this is clear and conclusive evidence that the way of geographical interpretation is the way of private and, therefore, of very faulty interpretation. It is not according to the law and the testimony, and so there is no light in it at all. Therefore, we reject this principle utterly and entirely. It shall find no place at all in the presentations to follow.

Rather we shall follow the gospel principle that identification of a power is to be found, not by where it is, but by what it is. In doing so, we shall be on safe ground but will find ourselves with a very different view of Armageddon from those which are the popular theories of today.



5. The King of the North

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, August 1975

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IN SHOWING the error of the way of geographical interpretation, quotations were presented from the writings of Uriah Smith as an illustration of the inconsistency of this method of interpretation. We did this with no malice at all toward Uriah Smith. We believe that he was entirely sincere in his beliefs.

When he wrote that book, he was not yet living, as we are today, in the light of the fourth and final angel's message. What he wrote was the best he knew and his book has served a wonderful purpose generally speaking in the education of the advent people in the prophecies of *Daniel* and the *Revelation*.

We might in the same way use the arguments of Luther for continued observance of Sunday to show the falsity of those arguments, without in any way demoting Luther from his divinely ordained place in history. He preached, he taught and he lived the best he knew at that time. Had we lived then, we would not have done any better than he.

We ask you then to forget about Uriah Smith as a person as we discuss for the sake of greater clarity, the application of the false and the true principles of interpretation.

We saw in the last issue that the argument used in the identification of the King of the North was that whatever power today occupies the same territory as the King of the North previously, must be the King of the North now.

On the surface of it this poses no problem. While it seems a very reasonable and logical conclusion to draw, a second and more careful look by one who is familiar with the Word of God, shows that there are some serious problems arising from this stand. The very first question which must be raised is: If we are to look to the present occupant of the lands of the king of the north, then to which lands must we look?

We ask this because, prior to 1798, when this method of interpretation was used, the King of the North had already been found in more than one geographical place. Uriah Smith seems to have thought of the one geographical place alone, Syria, Thrace and Asia Minor, the lands in which the Turk now dwells.

It is true that if we have the limited view that the book of *Daniel* is a book with little or no connection with the rest of the Scriptures, we will see only one place where the King of the North was to be found prior to 1798. There is a tendency to see *Daniel* as such. There are those who feel that here is a book of prophecy set in a certain historical setting, interpolated between the other books of the Bible. This idea is as mistaken as it is limited and unfortunate.

The Scriptures of Truth

Because it is most important that *Daniel* be seen in its right and proper relationship to the remainder of the Word of God, a little time and space will be given here to the point.

The book of *Daniel* itself is a progressive revelation of gospel truth. Its setting is the great struggle between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. As it opens, the powers of Satan in the form of ancient Babylon are in the ascendancy. Israel is in bondage both to sin within and Satan's power without. To Nebuchadnezzar it appears that Satan's and man's way of building a universal empire is the way of success and has triumphed over God's way of doing things.

In the light of this setting, the God of heaven came through to reveal to the king the ultimate outworking of his way and of God's way. For Satan's way, it will be but scattered dust, while God's way will result in the setting up of an eternal kingdom of righteousness. In *Daniel* 7, 8, and 9, further light is given in subsequent visions and explanations.

Then we come to *Daniel* 10 which is the preamble to the explanations given in *Daniel* 11. Each time the Lord came to Daniel with a revelation of truth, Daniel dated the event. Thus the reve-

lations recorded in *Daniel* 7 came in the first year of Belshazzar. That in *Daniel* 8, in the third year of the same king, while that in *Daniel* 9 came in the first year of Darius.

The next great revelation of truth came to him as recorded in *Daniel* 11. *Daniel* 10:1 tells us that this came in the third year of Cyrus. The whole of *Daniel* 10 tells us the circumstances under which the explanations of *Daniel* 11 were given together with certain announcements as to what that revelation would be.

Thus it is that we read that the angel's last words to him before the explanation began were,

Daniel 10

²¹ But I will show you that which is noted in the Scripture of truth: and there is none that holds with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Great care should be taken to see what the angel said here. He told Daniel that he would show him that which was "noted in the Scripture of truth." In other words, that which Daniel and ourselves are shown in *Daniel* 11, is not something apart from the rest of the Bible, but is a further explanation of it all. To Daniel, the Scriptures of truth would be all of the Bible as far as it had been written at that time, just as the Scriptures are to us all that which has been written by God's prophets to this present point of time.

Now what is the significance of this explanation? It is this. If Daniel was to be shown that which was noted already in the Scripture of truth, then all the powers and principles spoken of in *Daniel* 11 are already to be found in the Scriptures of his day. That is to say that the King of the North and the King of the South are not introduced for the first time into the struggles of the ages in the days covered by the earlier verses of *Daniel* 11.

When they do appear there, they have geographical location in Asia Minor and Egypt respectively. This is the location to which Uriah Smith refers when he is seeking by geographical means to identify the modern King of the North. In doing this, he ignores

the fact that the reference to both the King of the North and the King of the South, is a revelation of that which is already noted in the Scriptures of truth. Any failure to recognize this will lead the student to believe that the only geographical location of these two kings prior to the last days was in Asia Minor and Egypt.

But those who do take note of this fact and search in the Scriptures to find the King of the North and the King of the South will find that, while the King of the South does remain in the same geographical place for a very long time, the King of the North does not. It will be seen that prior to the time referred to in the early verses of *Daniel* 11, he had a very different geographical distribution from what he had at that time.

As surely as this is so, then the question must be raised as to which geographical area we are going to look to find the modern King of the North if this method of identification be used? The real conclusion which must be drawn from this is that, inasmuch as the geographical location of this King changes from time to time, that geography cannot be used to identify this power or any other prophetic power.

Already it has been shown that while from the days of Moses to Daniel at least, the King of the South or Egypt, was geographically located on the land around the Nile where the political nation called Egypt is still to be found, the Spirit of Prophecy found Egypt in a very new location in 1798. Then it was to be found in atheistic France. The geography had changed but the character was still the same.

Earlier Geography

In order to learn something of the earlier geographical boundaries of the King of the North we have but to turn to the very Scriptures of truth to which the angel referred when speaking to Daniel. This is also what Daniel must have done when the angel spoke to him so that, when the angel spoke of the King of the North, Daniel would think back to where, in the Scriptures of truth, he had already read of this power. He would know that he

was not to learn of some new power, but more of a power with which he was already familiar.

At this point in the study, we will not attempt to exhaust all the references to the King of the North as noted in the Scriptures of truth prior to Daniel's day. We are concerned at this stage with the demonstrating of the fallacy of the geographical system of interpretation and, to do this, we need to show that the King of the North had a geography different from the one used normally to identify the modern King of the North.

In the prophecy of *Jeremiah*, which is a book of prophecy just as much as is *Daniel*, frequent reference is made to the king of the north.

Jeremiah 1

¹³ And the word of the Lord came unto me the second time, saying, What do you see? And I said, I see a seething pot; and the face thereof is from the face of the north. [marginal reading]

¹⁴ Then the Lord said unto me, Out of the north an evil shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land.

¹⁵ For, lo, I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, says the Lord; and they shall come, and they shall set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah.

Jeremiah was the prophet through whom the Lord revealed the coming invasions of Babylon and through whom God advised the Israelites as to how to behave toward their conquerors so to...

Prophets and Kings, p. 441:

...make their servitude as pleasant as possible.

This reference in *Jeremiah* 1:13-15, is the earliest prophecy made by Jeremiah under inspiration from God. In this he refers to the coming Babylonians not by that name but by the name, "the kingdoms of the north." With marvelous consistency throughout the book, he continues to refer to them in this way and to Nebuchadnezzar as being the King of the North.

Jeremiah 4

⁶ Set up the standard toward Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction.

Jeremiah 6

¹ O you children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Bethhaccerum: for evil appears out of the north, and great destruction.

²² Thus says the Lord, Behold, a people come from the north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the north.

²³ They shall lay hold on bow and spear; and they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roars like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against you, O daughter of Zion.

Jeremiah 10

²² Behold, the noise of the bruit³ is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.

These are some of the references in which we find Babylon being referred to as the north country. If the north country, then it is the kingdom of the north and its king is the King of the North.

Lest any doubt that the land of the north referred to here is Babylon, we will turn to *Jeremiah* 46 where the prophet makes this point very clear. This prophecy is about the smiting of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. In describing that destruction at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the prophet writes:

Jeremiah 46

¹³ Egypt is like a fair heifer, but destruction comes; it comes out of the north.

Then finally so that there should be no failure to see that the Babylonians were indeed the people or the kingdom of the north, in *Jeremiah* 46:26 it is declared that this destruction so far re-

³ Bruit: rumor (see RV).

ferred to as being at the hands of the northern people will be at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.

Jeremiah 46

²⁶ And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hands of his servants: and afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, says the Lord.

A Significant Title

There can be no doubt then but that to Jeremiah the prophet, Babylon was the kingdom of the north, and, as such, was the great enemy and destroyer of God's people. Because Daniel understood the Scriptures of truth, then he would understand with Jeremiah that Babylon was the King of the North so that the angel was but telling him in *Daniel* 11 more about that great apostate system of rebellion against God. It was not a new introduction of a new power.

This title, "The King of the North," is a most significant title. There is the general tendency to think that it was acquired because Babylon lay, as it is supposed, to the north of Jerusalem. But if you take out the map of the Middle East, you will find that Babylon lies almost due east from Jerusalem.

It is true that the Babylonians usually traveled north-west along the Euphrates River and then came down from the north upon the Israelites so that to them, they came in from the north, but this does not change the fact that geographically, Babylon did not lie to the north of Palestine. It was a kingdom to the east of Jerusalem. Therefore it could hardly have been the King of the North from the point of view of geographical direction from Jerusalem, or from Palestine generally.

From whence then came this designation, "The King of the North"? To discover the answer to this we have but to go to the Scriptures of truth. Jeremiah, like Daniel, wrote nothing except he was being shown that which was noted in the Scriptures of truth. Every part of the Bible is but the unfolding of that which is already written. There is no such thing as the great controversies or

even of the controversies. There is but the one great controversy between good and evil. Every page of Scripture is written to record the unfolding of this struggle whether it be written of things in the past, or of that which is yet to come.

The Fallen Angel

The great controversy, of which the books of both *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, along with every other book of the Bible, is the recorded history, began up in heaven before this world was even created. Lucifer aspired to take the place of the Son of God. To achieve this he bent all the powers of his master mind, but he failed to do this. He fell from heaven never again to enter its sacred precincts.

Of that fall it is written in the Scriptures of truth:

Isaiah 14

¹¹ How are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
how are you cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations!

The question is asked here as to how it was that this all happened. The answer comes in the following verses.

¹² For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:

¹³ I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. In aspiring to take His place, Lucifer sought to ascend into the sides of the north. Had he done so then he would have become the King of the North in heaven, in the place of Christ who is the true King of the North.

Just why Christ as King should be in the sides of the north we do not know at least as yet. But the Bible states the fact of it quite clearly in the verse above. Not only is it stated there but also elsewhere in the Scriptures of truth.

Psalm 48

¹ Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness.

² Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king.

So then it is clear that the capital City of God is designated as being in the sides of the north, and it was to be the king of this capital that Lucifer aspired to be. Now, what he failed to achieve in heaven, he has been seeking ever since to achieve down here upon this earth.

- He could not replace Christ up in heaven but he has worked to replace him below.
- He could not sit on the throne of God in heaven, so he has sought to sit upon the throne of God upon this earth.
- He could not be the King of the North in heaven, so he has sought to be the King of the North down here upon the earth.

Babylon primarily and principally has been the agency through which he has worked toward these objectives. That city has been and still is entirely and completely of his character, his spirit, and his desires. She has been the exemplification of his way of working, of his principles of government and of his determined rebellion against the government of heaven.

It is small wonder then that Babylon became known in the Scriptures as the King of the North. It is a revelation in just those few words of the character of the Great Deceiver as being the usurper of that which does not belong to him.

Originally that counterfeit King of the North was located geographically faraway from this earth altogether. He was up in heaven sowing his seeds of rebellion and confusion among the angels. Then his geography changed very dramatically when he was cast out into the darkness of separation from God and His heaven. Then we see him in the heart and spirit of Cain the first murderer.

After the flood, Nimrod was upon this earth the personification of the King of the North. Later still the great city of Babylon is built. Now the geography is on the banks of the Euphrates River. The geography has changed it is true but has the character changed? There has not been the least change whatsoever.

There on the banks of the Euphrates, the devil is still the same. Here he is working out his character, his spirit, his objectives and his principles exactly as he did up in heaven. Geography has made no difference whatsoever. Exactly the same King of the North which Satan fought to be up in heaven, Babylon was upon this earth. Therefore, that great power upon this earth is called "The King of the North."

There was also upon the great River Euphrates a political city called Babylon. The military might of that city was devoted to the aims and purposes of Babylon itself. The time came when those armies were broken by the Medes and the Persians. The city itself was broken down never to be rebuilt anymore forever.

The power which had supported the King of the North was gone so far as that geographical location was concerned. But Babylon did not pass away nor did the King of the North cease to exist. It simply moved to a new geography and enlisted the support of new armies while she encased herself within the confines of a new cities.

When Babylon was overthrown by the Medes and the Persians, the priests at first attempted to maintain the religion of Babylon but were unsuccessful.

The defeated Chaldeans fled to Asia Minor, and fixed their central college at Pergamos, and took the palladium of Babylon, the cubic stone, with them. Here, in dependent of state control, they carried on the rites of their religion, and plotted against the peace of the Persian Empire, caballing with the Greeks for that purpose.⁴

⁴ *Lares and Penates*, by William B. Barker, p. 232-233.

Thus it was that Babylon transferred to Pergamos. Previously, the very center of Satan's warfare against God was geographically located on the River Euphrates. Next it was located in Pergamos in Asia Minor. When it was in the former place then that is where Satan's seat was, but, when in Pergamos, then this became Satan's seat as it is written:

Revelation 2

¹² And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things says He which has the sharp sword with two edges;

¹³ I know your works, and where you dwell, even where Satan's seat is...

Satan is "the prince of this world."⁵ Therefore his seat is a throne. Where his seat or throne is, there is the center of his kingdom. That kingdom is his attempted replacement of the true kingdom of the north.

Therefore as surely when his seat was on the River Euphrates, Babylon was the King of the North, so surely when his throne was at Pergamos in the land of Asia Minor, was that then the territory in which Babylon the King of the North, was next to be found.

The geography changes but the King of the North does not change. His character is still the same and his purposes know no variation.

Satan also found his seat in Rome on the River Tiber. There, the religion of Babylon was also established and it is worthy of note to know that when the Romans marched westward they found in Pergamos a very firm friend and ally.⁶

So it was then that the power exercised on Satan's behalf by the inhabitants of Asia Minor was passed on to the Romans. Rome then replaced Pergamos in Asia Minor as the throne of Satan, and Rome then became the Babylon of the middle ages and the King of the North.

⁵ *John* 12:31; *John* 14:30; *John* 16:11.

⁶ See *Encyclopedia Britannica*, vol. 17, p. 507, 1963 Edition.

In these last days, Babylon still lives on. It is still the great instrument in the hands of Satan whereby he seeks to set himself up as the King of the North in the place of Jesus Christ the true King of the North. Over the centuries the geography has changed again and again, but the character has never changed. Babylon is still Babylon. The counterfeit King of the North is still the counterfeit King of the North wherever he may be found.

Always in the history of the past and of the present he has been and is at war with God and with His Son. Soon will come the final confrontation. That confrontation is known as the battle of the great day of God Almighty,—the Battle of Armageddon.



6. Type and Antitype

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IT SHOULD now be clear to all who have thoughtfully, carefully and prayerfully studied the previous chapters in this series, that the geographical method of interpretation of prophetic symbols has no place in God's word.

Therefore, in identifying the Great River Euphrates as that river is in the time of the sixth plague, we certainly do not look in the area of the Middle East, nor do we look to the kings of the east as being the nations of Japan, China, India and so on. Finally, we do not look for Armageddon as being a geographical place by that name anywhere in the world.

All these can be and will be identified as we proceed in this study for the Scriptures make it abundantly clear as to how they are to be understood. There are some who have stated rather regretfully that the Spirit of Prophecy has so little to say about the battle of Armageddon and the Bible even less. What they are really saying is that the Spirit of Prophecy and the Bible have so little to say about the battle of Armageddon *as they understand it to be*.

As we proceed with this study it will be surprising to many as to how extensively both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy speak of this last and finishing conflict. There is so much on the subject that it is sometimes difficult for one writing on it to know just where to introduce the various elements of information.

Our task is to understand what the drying up of the River Euphrates is, what is the coming of the kings of the east and what and where is the place called Armageddon. So far in this quest we have been studying the sound and proper methods of Bible study and interpretation. The time is when we must introduce yet another very important principle. It is the principle of type and antitype.

Type and Antitype

This is the principle that there is nothing in the New Testament except it has already happened in the Old. In fact, the Old Testament is the great book of types while the New Testament is the great book of antitypes. This is not an imagined idea but the stated fact of the Word of God itself. Many references substantiate it. Solomon recognized the truth of it already in his day:

Ecclesiastes 1

⁹ The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.

¹⁰ Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it has been already of old time...

Ecclesiastes 3

¹⁵ That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been; and God requires that which is past.

It would be a mistake to interpret this as meaning that there were jet airplanes back somewhere in the past. It is not of this he is speaking. These inventions and the like are only vehicles or media through which that which has been will be repeated. That which was done with swords in the past, will be done with more sophisticated weaponry as time goes by.

What Solomon wrote about was the theme of the Bible which is the great controversy between Christ and Satan. That which has happened within the framework of this controversy is that which will happen again so that, for every event or struggle of the future, there is the same thing in the past. This is made quite clear in the following statement.

The Great Controversy, p. 343:

The work of God in the earth presents, from age to age, a striking similarity in every great reformation or religious movement. The principles of God's dealing with men are ever the same. The important movements of the present have their parallel in those of the past, and the experience of the church in former ages has lessons of great value for our own time.

There are some who object very strongly to parallels. In the light of the above statement this objection is seen to be without foundation. We have found that those who object the most strongly, are those who have no desire to accept and allow their lives to be changed by the present truth.

No one can understand the great truths of the Bible and least of all of *Revelation*, unless the principle of type and antitype is accepted and studied. That which has been will be. There is nothing new under the sun. The mechanisms by which these things are done may be new and unheard of in the past, but the things themselves are not new.

Here are further statements to add their witness to this truth.

The Review and Herald, May 2, 1899:

This history [of Nehemiah] has been recorded for our benefit. What has been will be, and we need to look to God for counsel.

Review and Herald, July 10, 1900:

We need to beware lest we suffer the same fate as did ancient Israel. The history of their disobedience and downfall has been recorded for our instruction, that we may avoid doing as they did. It has been written “for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” If we pass by these cautions and warnings, developing the same traits of character developed by the Israelites, what excuse can we plead?

The full force of the warning contained in this statement is revealed in this next one where it is stated that “we are repeating the history of that people,” thus giving an instance wherein that which has been is again.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, p. 160:

Satan’s snares are laid for us as verily as they were laid for the children of Israel just prior to their entrance into the land of Canaan. We are repeating the history of that people.

Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, p. 116:

We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Many of the prophecies are about to be fulfilled in quick succession. Every element of power is about to be set to work. Past his-

tory will be repeated, old controversies will arouse to new life, and peril will beset God's people on every side. Intensity is taking hold of the human family. It is permeating everything upon the earth...

As surely then as past history will be repeated; as surely as there is nothing new under the sun; as surely as that which has been will be again; the better we understand the history of the past, the better we shall know what is coming in the future and be prepared to meet it.

In the Book of Revelation

The principle of type and antitype or of the fact that the events of the future find their parallel in those of the past is as true of *Revelation* as of any other book in the Bible.

The Acts of the Apostles, p. 585:

...in the *Revelation* all the books of the Bible meet and end.

Already we have seen that *Daniel* was but the further unfolding of that which had already been noted in the Scriptures of truth. In turn, it is the truth that

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 115:

...the book of *Daniel* is unsealed in the revelation of John, and carries us forward to the last scenes of this earth's history.

Therefore, if the *Revelation* is the unsealing of *Daniel*, then it is the revelation of that which is written in *Daniel*, which in turn is the unfolding of that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth, as the statement reads,

...in the *Revelation* all the books of the Bible meet and end.

It is absolutely a mistake to suppose that *Revelation* simply deals with a certain period of history, while other books of the Bible deal with their particular subjects in turn. No book of the Bible can be studied as an isolated element. All have their close inter-relationship with each other and all unfold the one thing, the great controversy between Christ and Satan.

Therefore, if we are to understand the Babylon of *Revelation*, we must go back to the study of the Babylon of the Old Testament

beginning as far back as the very beginning of it in the heart of Lucifer in heaven itself. Such a study will not be confined to *Daniel* alone but will range through the whole of the Old Testament. There will be found the most surprising revelations of the past events in stories which previously we saw as being but simple little tales of the men and women of the past.

To give some idea of the extent to which the revelations of the last book in the Bible are an unfolding of that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth, we reprint from the *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 867-869, the following comparisons of texts on the subject of Babylon alone.

As these are read through side by side, it will be seen how richly *Revelation* draws on the very language of the Old Testament as it deals with Babylon as and where it then was, to describe the character, the purposes, the practices and the end of Babylon as and where she will be in the last days.

A. HER IDENTITY AND CHARACTER

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>1. Meaning of the name. "Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great" (<i>Revelation</i> 17:5; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:7; see on <i>Revelation</i> 14:8; <i>Revelation</i> 17:5)</p> <p>"What city is like unto this great city!" (<i>Revelation</i> 18:18; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 14:8; <i>Revelation</i> 16:19; <i>Revelation</i> 17:5, 18; <i>Revelation</i> 18:2, 10, 16, 21; see on <i>Revelation</i> 17:18)</p>	<p>1. "Therefore is the name of it called Babel" (<i>Genesis</i> 11:9; <i>Genesis</i> 10:9-10; <i>Genesis</i> 11:1-9; see on <i>Genesis</i> 11:4-9)</p> <p>"Great Babylon" (<i>Daniel</i> 4:30; <i>Isaiah</i> 13:19; <i>Isaiah</i> 14:4)</p> <p>"[His] look was more stout [literally, "greater"] than his fellows" <i>Daniel</i> 7:20</p> <p>Compare <i>Isaiah</i> 23:8; <i>Ezekiel</i> 26:17; <i>Ezekiel</i> 27:32</p>
<p>2. An apostate organization. "The great whore" "fornication" "a woman" "mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (<i>Revelation</i> 17:1, 2, 3, 5; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 14:8; <i>Revelation</i> 17: 6, 7, 18; <i>Revelation</i> 18:4; <i>Revelation</i> 19:2)</p>	<p>2. "The lady of kingdoms" <i>Isaiah</i> 47:5. "The Babylonians...defiled her with their whoredom." (<i>Ezekiel</i> 23:17; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 23:15; <i>Ezekiel</i> 16:15, 38, 44; <i>Ezekiel</i> 23:2-3; <i>Nahum</i> 3:4)</p>

<p>3. Wholly corrupt in character. “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:2; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 14:8)</p> <p>“Her sins have reached unto heaven” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:5)</p>	<p>3. “Babylon is fallen, is fallen” (<i>Isaiah</i> 21:9; cf. <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:8)</p> <p>“Babylon...has sinned against the Lord” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:14; cf. <i>Jeremiah</i> 50:24, 29, 31, 32; <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:6)</p> <p>“Her judgment reaches unto heaven” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:9)</p> <p>“Full of doleful creatures” (<i>Isaiah</i> 13:21)</p>
<p>4. Marked by luxury and pride. “She has glorified herself, and lived deliciously” “was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:7, 16; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:4)</p>	<p>4. “Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency” (<i>Isaiah</i> 13:19)</p> <p>“Tender and delicate” “given to pleasures...dwells carelessly” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:1, 8)</p> <p>“The, golden city” (<i>Isaiah</i> 14:4). “Abundant in treasures” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:13)</p> <p>Compare <i>Ezekiel</i> 27:7, 16, 25; <i>Ezekiel</i> 28:2, 5, 13, 17</p>
<p>5. Her counterpart. “That great city, the holy Jerusalem” (<i>Revelation</i> 21:10)</p>	<p>5. “The Lord...shall choose Jerusalem” (<i>Zechariah</i> 2:12)</p> <p>“They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 3:17)</p>

B. HER AMBITIONS AND OBJECTIVES

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>6. To rule the world. “She says in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:7)</p> <p>She reigns “over the kings of the earth” and lures them to “make war with the Lamb” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:18, 14; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 12:17; <i>Revelation</i> 13:7; <i>Revelation</i> 18:6; <i>Revelation</i> 19:19)</p>	<p>6. “You [Babylon] said, I shall be a lady forever.” “You...say in your heart, I am and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children.” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:7, 8; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 47:10)</p> <p>“The king of Babylon...the oppressor.” “He that ruled the nations in anger.” (<i>Isaiah</i> 14:4, 6)</p>

<p>7. To annihilate the saints. “I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:6)</p> <p>“In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:24)</p>	<p>7. “Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall.” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:49).</p> <p>“Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has broken his [Israel’s] bones.” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:17)</p> <p>“You did show them no mercy.” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:6)</p> <p>Compare <i>Ezra</i> 5:12; <i>Isaiah</i> 14:4, 6; <i>Jeremiah</i> 50:11; <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:25; <i>Daniel</i> 7:21, 25; <i>Daniel</i> 8:24</p>
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C. HER ACCOMPLICES

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>8. Demonic spirits. “Babylon...is become the habitation of devils” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:2)</p> <p>“Three unclean spirits” “the spirits of devils” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:13-14)</p>	<p>8. “The king of Babylon” “Lucifer” (<i>Isaiah</i> 14:4, 12; see <i>Ezekiel</i> 28:12)</p>
<p>9. The great powers of earth. “A scarlet colored beast” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:3; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 19:19-20)</p> <p>“The beast that was, and is not, and yet is” “even he is the eighth” “[when he] shall ascend out of the bottomless pit” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:8, 11)</p> <p>“Seven heads” “seven mountains” “seven kings” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:9-10)</p>	<p>9. “Like a lion...[with] eagle’s wings” (<i>Daniel</i> 7:4). Compare <i>Daniel</i> 7:7, 19</p> <p>“I am against you [Babylon], O destroying mountain,..and will make you a burnt mountain” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:25; see on <i>Isaiah</i> 2:2)</p>
<p>10. All nations. “The ten horns...are ten kings, which...receive power as kings one hour with the beast” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:12; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:3, 7, 16)</p> <p>“The kings of the earth” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:14; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:2; <i>Revelation</i> 18:3, 9)</p>	<p>10. “Ten horns” (<i>Daniel</i> 7; cf. <i>Daniel</i> 7:24). Compare <i>Daniel</i> 2:43. See on <i>Revelation</i> 17:12</p> <p>“These have one mind” “[and] agree” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:13, 17)</p>
<p>11. Other apostate religious or organizations. “Harlots” (<i>Revelation</i> 15:5)</p> <p>“The false prophet” (<i>Revelation</i></p>	<p>11. See No. 2.</p>

<p>19:20; <i>Revelation</i> 20:10)</p> <p>“An image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live” (<i>Revelation</i> 13:14)</p>	
<p>12. The leaders of earth. “Your merchants were the great men of the earth” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:23; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:3, 11, 15)</p> <p>“Every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:17; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:19)</p>	<p>12. “The astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators” “with whom you [Babylon] have labored, even your merchants” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:13, 15)</p> <p>“Tyre...whose merchants are princes...the honorable of the earth” (<i>Isaiah</i> 23:8)</p> <p>“All the ships of the sea with their mariners” “your rowers” “your mariners, and your pilots,” “all your company” (<i>Ezekiel</i> 27:9, 26-27)</p>
<p>13. The peoples of earth. “All nations” (<i>Revelation</i> 14:8; <i>Revelation</i> 18:3); “The inhabitants of the earth” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:2; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:18)</p> <p>“They that dwell on the earth” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:8)</p>	<p>13. “All the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth” (<i>Isaiah</i> 23:17; cf. <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:49)</p>

D. HER STRATEGY

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>14. Universal religio-political union. “Sit upon a scarlet colored beast” “the beast that carried her” “seven heads...on which the woman sits” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:3, 7, 9)</p> <p>“The kings of the earth...have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:9; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:2, 4; <i>Revelation</i> 18:3)</p> <p>“Receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These...shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:12-13)</p>	<p>14. “[Tyre] shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth” (<i>Isaiah</i> 23:17)</p> <p>See No. 2</p>

<p>15. Her policy and teachings. “A golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:4)</p> <p>“She made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication” (<i>Revelation</i> 14:8; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 17:2; <i>Revelation</i> 18:3)</p> <p>“Did corrupt the earth with her fornication” (<i>Revelation</i> 19:2)</p>	<p>15. “Babylon has been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:7)</p>
<p>16. Satanic miracles: deception. “The spirits of devils, working miracles” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:14; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 13:13-14; <i>Revelation</i> 19:20)</p> <p>“By your sorceries were all nations deceived” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:23)</p> <p>“Great wonders,” “miracles,” (<i>Revelation</i> 13:13-14) “merchandise” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:11)</p>	<p>16. “The multitude of [Babylon’s] sorceries” “your great abundance of your enchantments” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:9; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 47:12-13)</p> <p>With a few exceptions the long list of <i>Revelation</i> 18:12-13 is duplicated in <i>Ezekiel</i> 27.</p>
<p>17. Absolute control of men’s minds. “Sits upon many waters” “[that is] peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:1, 15)</p> <p>“They that dwell on the earth shall wonder...when they behold the beast” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:8; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 13:13-14)</p>	<p>17. “Dwell upon many waters” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:13; cf. <i>Ezekiel</i> 28:2)</p> <p>“All people, nations and languages, trembled and feared before him” (<i>Daniel</i> 5:19)</p>

E. HER FATE

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>18. God arraigns Babylon. “It is done.” “Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:17, 19; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:5)</p> <p>“The judgment of the great whore” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:1; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 19:2)</p>	<p>18. “I have taken out of your [Israel’s] hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; you shall no more drink it again: but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict you” (<i>Isaiah</i> 51:22-23)</p> <p>“I will punish the king of Baby-</p>

<p>“Strong is the Lord God who judges her” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:8)</p>	<p>lon, and that nation...for their iniquity.” “You [Babylon] shall certainly drink...Should you be utterly unpunished?...The Lord shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 25:12, 28-30; cf. <i>Jeremiah</i>. 50:18, 31)</p> <p>“God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it...You are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting” (<i>Daniel</i> 5: 26-27)</p>
<p>19. Her accomplices turn against her. “God has put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdoms unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:17)</p> <p>“These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:13)</p> <p>Gathered the king the earth “to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:14)</p> <p>“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:14)</p> <p>“The ten horns” and “the beast [see on 17:16] ... shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (<i>Revelation</i> 17:16; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:19; <i>Revelation</i> 19:20)</p> <p>“Her plagues...death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:8)</p>	<p>19. “I will bring upon that land [Babylon] all my words which I have pronounced against it even all that is written” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 25:13)</p> <p>“Blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms.” “For every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:27, 29)</p> <p>“I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:9)</p> <p>“The kingdoms of nations gathered together [against Babylon]: the Lord of hosts musters the host of the battle” (<i>Isaiah</i> 13:4)</p> <p>“I will kindle a fire in his cities” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:32)</p> <p>“The mighty men of Babylon ... have burned her dwelling-places” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:30)</p>
<p>20. Her annihilation is absolute. “A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the</p>	<p>20. “The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.” “Bind a</p>

<p>sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:21)</p> <p>“Divided into three parts” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:19; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 13:2, 4, 11-15; <i>Revelation</i> 16:13; <i>Revelation</i> 19:20)</p> <p>“The voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters ... shall be heard no more at all in thee” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:22-23)</p> <p>“Her plagues come in one day” “in one hour” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:8, 10; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:17, 19)</p>	<p>stone to it [a document foretelling Babylon’s doom], and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and you shall say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:42, 63, 64; cf. <i>Ezekiel</i> 26:3, 19; <i>Ezekiel</i> 27:32, 34)</p> <p>“Two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood” “[evil] shall...come upon you [Babylon];... mischief shall fall upon you; you shall not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon you suddenly...None shall save you” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:9, 11, 15; cf. <i>Jeremiah</i> 50:32; <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:8, 13, 26, 29)</p> <p>“Your kingdom is divided” (<i>Daniel</i> 5:28; cf. <i>Zechariah</i> 10:3; <i>Zechariah</i> 11:8)</p> <p>“Babylon is taken” “make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein.” “It shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate.” “So shall no man abide there” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:2, 3, 13, 40)</p> <p>“I will cause the noise of your [Tyre’s] songs to cease; and the sound of your harps shall be no more heard” (<i>Ezekiel</i> 26:13; cf. <i>Ezekiel</i> 26:3, 19, 21; <i>Ezekiel</i> 27:32, 34, 36; <i>Ezekiel</i> 28:19)</p>
<p>21. Her punishment is appropriate to her crimes. “Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she has filled fill to her double. How much she has glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so</p>	<p>21. “I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 25:14)</p> <p>“I will render unto Babylon...all their evil that they have done in Zion” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:24)</p>

<p>much torment and sorrow give her” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:6-7)</p>	<p>“As she has done, do unto her.” “Recompense her according to her work; according to all that she has done, do unto her” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:15, 29)</p>
<p>22. Her accomplices lament her. “The kings of the earth...shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:9-10)</p> <p>“The merchants of the earth” “shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas.” “They cast dust on their heads.” “And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!” (<i>Revelation</i> 18: 11, 15, 16, 19, 18)</p>	<p>22. “Howl for her [Babylon]” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:8)</p> <p>“Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save you [Babylon] from these things that shall come upon you...The fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame...Thus shall they be unto you with whom you have labored, even your merchants...they shall wander every one to his quarter” (<i>Isaiah</i> 47:13-15)</p> <p>“Every one that goes by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 50:13)</p> <p>Compare <i>Ezekiel</i> 26:16, 17; <i>Ezekiel</i> 27:29-32, 36; <i>Ezekiel</i> 28:19</p>
<p>23. Her accomplices are destroyed. “The cities of the nations fell” (<i>Revelation</i> 16:19)</p> <p>“The beast...shall go into perdition” cf. (<i>Revelation</i> 16:11)</p> <p>“These both [the beast and the false prophet] were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” (<i>Revelation</i> 19 cf. <i>Revelation</i> 20:10)</p>	<p>23. “I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle” (<i>Zechariah</i> 14:2; cf. <i>Joel</i> 3:2)</p> <p>“The Lord has a controversy with the nations...And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 23:31, 33)</p> <p>“At Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:49)</p>
<p>24. A song of victory over Babylon. “He...has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand” (<i>Revelation</i> 19:2; cf. <i>Revelation</i> 18:20)</p>	<p>24. “This is the time of the Lord’s vengeance [upon Babylon]; he will render unto her a recompence.”</p> <p>“The Lord has spoiled Babylon”</p>

<p>“Rejoice over her, you heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:20).</p>	<p>(<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:55; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 47:3; <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:6, 55)</p> <p>“Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:48; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 44:23; 49:13)</p>
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F. GOD’S WARNING TO HIS PEOPLE

Mystical Babylon in Revelation	Old Testament Parallels
<p>25. Come out of Babylon. “Another angel” came “down from heaven having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:1-2)</p> <p>“Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues” (<i>Revelation</i> 18:4)</p>	<p>25. “Deliver yourself, O Zion, that dwells with the daughter of Babylon” (<i>Zechariah</i> 2:7)</p> <p>“Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity.” “My people, go out of the midst of her, and deliver every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord” (<i>Jeremiah</i> 51:6, 45; cf. <i>Isaiah</i> 48:20; <i>Isaiah</i> 52:11; <i>Jeremiah</i> 50:8; <i>Jeremiah</i> 51:9)</p>

The Babylon of the Old Testament was the type. The Babylon of the New Testament is the antitype. These Scriptures laid out in comparison with each other as they are here proves this is in a most striking way the truth of this.

So it will be then that as we proceed to study the drying up of the River Euphrates, the coming of the kings of the east and the great battle of Armageddon, we shall look firstly into the Old Testament to understand how the type of the last great battle was fought.

It is entirely logical that this should be done because Armageddon is but the last battle in the long standing controversy. The same principles by which Babylon rose to power in the past are those by which she rises to power in the future. The River Euphrates plays the same role in each case and the fall of Babylon

happens in the same way because that fall is the result of the out-working of Babylon's own principles.



7. The True King of the North

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, October 1975

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THE point has been made and established that only as we go back into the past will it be possible for us to understand the future. Before us lies the great battle of Armageddon. It is the battle of the great day of God and it is the last and final conflict to be waged upon the earth before Christ appears again.

Selected Messages, vol. 3, p. 426:

All the world will be on one side or the other of the question.

Because of this, it is a battle in which we shall be personally involved. In that battle we shall stand on the one side or the other. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we do understand what that battle will be, the issues over which it will be fought, the principles which guide each side and just what course we are to pursue.

So we will go back to the very beginning of things to obtain the picture of the purpose of the King of Babylon in his rebellion against God.

We will not attempt to open this topic up fully. A. T. Jones has done this for us in a wonderful way in his publication *The Spirit of the Papacy*.⁷ This is a study which every person, who wishes to make sure and certain work of salvation, should study with deep and prayerful intensity. Along with it, study chapter 1 in *Patriarchs and Prophets*, “Why Was Sin Permitted” and chapter 29 in *The Great Controversy*, “The Origin of Evil.” There is hardly a more fruitful area of the Scriptures upon which all should spend a great deal of time. This cannot be overstressed and we just wish we could find words with which to stir all to the most intensive study of this part of the Word of God.

While in the light of the material already available, we will not here go into the subject in great depth, we will need to establish

⁷ This booklet was actually chapter 21 from the book, *Ecclesiastical Empire*, 1901. It is also available under the title, *Self-Exaltation or Self-Renunciation*.

certain points in order to proceed to a clear understanding of the great battle of Armageddon.

Between Christ and Satan

The exact nature of the kingdom which Satan sought to set up in heaven is the exact nature of the kingdom which he has endeavored to set up on this earth. The battle of Armageddon represents his final effort to achieve this before the second coming of Christ.

What was the exact nature of the kingdom which Satan tried to establish in heaven?

Before the time when rebellion against the government and the ways of God appeared in heaven, God's order provided for Jesus Christ to occupy a very special role to fill a very particular need. That need was for open communication with God to be available for every one of the created beings from the cherubim which overshadowed the mercy seat to the beings on the most distant planet in the whole vast creation.

It was not a simple thing for that need to be filled, for the problems were quite immense. One has but to consider the infinite nature of God to realize in some limited way the vast gulf which must exist between the minds of the finite creation and the infinite Creator.

In order to make the communication between the creature and the mighty Creator open and free, God and Christ put into effect a perfect plan whereby Christ became the channel of access from the creature to the Creator. Thus it is written,

The Desire of Ages, p. 331:

Heaven is a ceaseless approaching unto God through Christ.

In order for Christ to do this, He of necessity had to be both the Creator God, and the creature. It was exactly as it was when He came down to this earth. Then, in order that men might once again communicate with the eternal Father in heaven, Jesus came down to be, at the same time, the Creator and the creature. The identification on both sides had to be complete. In order to lift man up to God, Jesus had to be God in very fact. In order to reach

man where he was, to lift him in turn to God, Jesus had to be man, as man was, in fallen, sinful flesh.

Therefore, it had to be that, up in heaven, the identification also had to be complete so that Jesus did in very fact have the same nature as the angels. He was an angel and He was a God in that position which He occupied as the channel of communication between the Father and His creatures. It is for this reason that through the whole of the Old Testament Jesus is called the Angel, just as throughout the New Testament, He appears as man and as the Son of man.

When pride entered the heart of Lucifer to the point where he began to evaluate himself as being far above what he actually was, then he looked upon the Angel Jesus, and saw the Son of God as being a lesser angel than himself. Then it was that he expected that the God of heaven would promote him to the position of which, in his own mind, he deemed himself to be worthy. When such promotion was not forthcoming for the very good reason that God rightly evaluated Lucifer and had put him into a position commensurate with that evaluation, then Lucifer decided that the Father and the Son had entered into a league to keep him under subjection to the advantage of Christ.

When Lucifer had decided this, then he determined that God was unjust and a liar so that the government of God needed to be reformed. It is true that if Lucifer's conclusions in regard to the character of God were true, then heaven indeed needed to be reformed, but they most certainly were not true. Rather, they were the product of a mind which had become darkened with the evil of pride and self-sufficiency.

So it was then that Satan, as he had now become, embarked upon his self-appointed and self-serving mission to reorganize the government of God so that he would be accorded in that government the position which he believed to be his by right.

It must be emphasized here, for this is a very important point in the whole study that it was not the position of God the Father

which was in question. It was the position of Christ which was challenged and which Satan wished to usurp for himself.

Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, p. 38:⁸

He [Satan] declares he cannot submit to be under Christ's command, that God's commands alone will he obey.

The problem for the devil was that, having lost the power of spiritual vision, he could no longer see God in the Angel who was Christ. He saw only another angel like himself, and because that Angel was the most modest and unassuming of all the angels, He looked, in the eyes of Lucifer, to be much less than he saw himself as being. Therefore, he questioned as to why the Angel, Christ, should have the pre-eminence over this angel, Lucifer.

The problem was repeated in the experience of the Jews in the days of Christ who saw Him as being only a man like ourselves. They could not and did not see God in the man, because they saw themselves as being much superior in education, wealth, prestige, and authority. Therefore they questioned as to why He should have the honor and the power above them. Because they could not understand these things, and because they rejected the power whereby they might have been softened into the likeness of Christ, they ridiculed His claims and set themselves to deprive Him of His very life so that they could, as they imagined, recover their lost standings.

It was the great controversy repeated to the most exacting details. As Satan in heaven coveted the position of Christ and determined to dispossess Christ of that position, so the religious leaders in the days of Christ coveted His position and determined to dispossess Him of it.

Christ had been and always will be God's spokesman to the creatures. On this earth the Pharisees had set themselves up as being God's spokesmen to the people and when Jesus came to fulfill His divinely appointed commission to be such, they refused to vacate the position which they had so wrongfully usurped. The

⁸ Also quoted in *SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 973.

whole controversy between them and Christ was over this same problem wherein Satan had controverted things in heaven.

The very course pursued by the Pharisees who were of their father the devil, is a clear revelation of the purposes of Satan. He desires to take the place of Christ and be the spokesman for God. He wished to stand between God and the people instead of Christ. This is the picture which so essentially must be kept in mind as we study now into what the battle of Armageddon really is.

The King of the North

It is important that this picture be kept in mind for it is the picture of Satan's kingdom wherever it is built upon this earth. He failed completely to set himself in the place of Christ in heaven. He could not do it, for he was not at the same time both God and creature. Only Christ could occupy that position. It was not that God would not give him the position for which he sought. It was because it was an impossibility for him to occupy it.

Now let us look at the history of Babylon on the River Euphrates in the Old Testament. From the prophet Jeremiah it has been seen that this is the power designated as the Kingdom of the North. We have gone back to the very beginning to see the significance of that title as it is connected with that power.

But now, as further reading into *Jeremiah* is made, it will be found that there is another power called by the name of the King of the North and it is not Babylon, but rather the power which destroys her.

In *Jeremiah* 50 is prophesied the judgments on that great city. These reveal that Babylon, whom we have seen to be the King of the North, is destroyed by the King of the North.

Jeremiah 50

¹ The word that the Lord spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.

² Declare among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is con-

founded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

³ For out of the north there comes up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

⁸ Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

⁹ For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.

⁴¹ Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

⁴² They shall hold the bow and the lance: they are cruel, and will not show mercy: their voice shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put in array, like a man to the battle, against you, O daughter of Babylon.

⁴³ The king of Babylon has heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail.

⁴⁴ Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?

⁴⁵ Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord, that he has taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he has purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.

⁴⁶ At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

This Other King of the North

As easily as we saw that Babylon was the power referred to earlier in the book of Jeremiah as being the King of the North, we can now see that the Medo-Persians are the King of the North referred to here.

There are various conclusions which may be drawn from the fact that both Babylon and the powers which destroy her are called by the same name, the King of the North. Some may conclude that there is merely the coincidence that they both came from the north geographically and the Bible is simply recognizing this fact.

However, it has already been noted that Babylon did not lie to the north but to the east of Jerusalem and Palestine. It is now to be noted that the map shows that, while the Medes did lie much to the north of Babylon, the Persians, who under Cyrus were the main conquerors of Babylon, again lay to the east of Babylon. In fact, in Isaiah, Cyrus is referred to as the king from the east.

We cannot dismiss the term, “the King of the North,” as being insignificant when it is used in Bible Prophecy. It is very meaningful indeed. Its use is a part of the message of the chapter.

Our search will now center on the finding of the significance of that title as applied to Medo-Persia.

Already we have noted that there is the true original King of the North, Jesus Christ. Babylon was and is the counterfeit or pseudo King of the North. Therefore, the great controversy is the struggle between the true King of the North, Jesus Christ, and the false one, Satan.

That controversy which was waged between the Person, Christ, and the person, Satan, up in heaven, is continued on earth through the representatives of each of them. Thus, if there were two kings of the North in heaven, there must be two below. The one will be the true, and the other will be the false. The one will be the agent of Christ and the other will be the agent of Satan.

Without a doubt, Babylon, as the agency of Satan, was the false King of the North. Now it is to be seen that Cyrus the King of the Persians, represented the role of Christ as the true King of the North who will bring about the final and total destruction of Babylon.

Because Cyrus was an earthly monarch devoted to the ways of earthly rulers, his representation of Christ as the true King of the North is not a perfect and a complete one. For instance, the way of Cyrus as a destroyer of ancient Babylon, is very different from the way of Christ in bringing about the total end of modern-day Babylon. While Cyrus came against Babylon with weapons of destruction in his hand, Christ in the ultimate battle simply leaves Babylon to reap that which she has sown.

We do not intend in this series to divert to the subject of God's way of doing things. What is said here about Cyrus being a type of Christ does not for one moment contradict the great truths already taught in respect to the character of God.

The Type of the True King of the North

King Cyrus is given very special mention in the Scriptures of Truth. All that is said concerning him is very much the opposite from what is said concerning Babylon.

Isaiah 41

² Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow.

²⁵ I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treads clay.

In these verses, Cyrus is not directly named as being the person referred to, but he is directly named under the same terms a little later in the prophecy.

Isaiah 45

¹ Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;

² I will go before you, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:

³ And I will give you the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, which call you by your name, am the God of Israel.

⁴ For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel my elect, I have even called you by your name: I have surnamed you, though you have not known me.

Here Cyrus is directly named as the one whom the Lord had called to effect the destruction of Babylon. Of him the Lord has yet more to say in these words:

Isaiah 44

²⁸ ...Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, You shall be built; and to the temple, Your foundation shall be laid.

Isaiah 45

¹³ I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, says the Lord of hosts.

Reference to *Prophets and Kings*, pages 552 and 557, will verify that the second of these Scriptures applies to Cyrus as much as the first.

Consider the extensive list of statements in regard to this king from the north and the east, to see how not one of them would or could apply to Babylon the destroyer:

1. He is the righteous man from the east.
2. He is God's shepherd.
3. He is God's anointed.
4. He is raised up in righteousness.
5. All his ways are directed of God.
6. He will build the city of God, Jerusalem.
7. He shall set free the captives.
8. He will destroy Babylon so that she would rise no more again forever.

While not one of the statements listed above could apply to Babylon as the false King of the North, every one of them can be applied and do apply to Christ as the true King of the North.

1. Christ is God's righteous One. He comes from the east in that day when He finally comes against Babylon.
2. Christ is God's shepherd.

John 10

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd.

3. Christ is God's Anointed.

Luke 4

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

4. Christ is raised up in righteousness. He is...

Jeremiah 23

⁶ The Lord our Righteousness.

5. All Christ's ways are directed of God.

John 5

¹⁹ The Son can do nothing of himself, but what He sees the Father do: for whatsoever things He does, these also the Son does likewise.

6. Christ will build the city of God which is the Church of God. In fact there is no one else but He who can do this.

Matthew 16

¹⁸ And I say also unto you, That you are Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

7. Christ shall set free the captives. Only He can release the captives in the prison house of sin and death.

John 8

³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

8. Christ alone has the power to bring about the final end of Babylon. That power is His righteousness which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah.

Revelation 17

¹⁴ These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings.

Thus it is so clear that everything which the Word of God said prophetically about Cyrus in the Old Testament, it also states in regard to Christ in the New Testament. All who understand the principle of type and antitype will have no difficulty in seeing that Cyrus then is a clear type of Jesus Christ. This means that, when studying the fall of Babylon, the course pursued by Cyrus will reveal to us the role of Christ in the battle of Armageddon.

Those who think of Armageddon as being a political battle between the eastern and the western nations will not have thought of Christ playing any role in that great struggle. But He will play a most important role. He will in fact be the leader of one side while Satan is the leader of the other, for:

Manuscript Releases, vol. 19, p. 160:

Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon.

The Review and Herald, May 7, 1901:

Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion.



8. Drying Up the River Euphrates

The Messenger of Living Righteousness, November 1975

Original title: A Series of Studies No. 7

THE principle must now be clear that the final battle of the great day of God, which is called the Battle of Armageddon, will not be something new, but will be the repeating of that which has happened before. It will be the final struggle in the long-standing controversy between good and evil.

The final battle involves the drying up of the River Euphrates so that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. So it was in the fall of ancient Babylon. She sat astride the great River Euphrates exactly as the final Babylon the Great will sit astride Euphrates. Against the ancient city came the Kings of the East, who found the way of entrance to the city barred by the waters of the river. So they dried up the river so that their way might be prepared.

The result then was that Babylon was overthrown as a city and as a nation so totally that it never rose again forever. The outcome for Babylon the Great will be precisely the same.

Revelation 18

²¹ And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

At the time of her fall, the people of God, which was the church of God, were in captivity in the land of Babylon. It is to be seen though that, while they were in physical captivity, the true ones were not in spiritual captivity. Daniel was as free as man could ever be in this respect.

To Babylon had been given the final calls to repentance and she had made her final rejections. In spite of, and in defiance of the calls of mercy, Belshazzar had taken the very vessels of the sanctuary and from these had drunk the wine of Babylon. It was an action on his part declaring the height of self-exaltation to which he had elevated himself. It was a heaven-daring action. It was the

reaching of that pinnacle of pride upon which he stood, with the confidence that he, and his master the devil, had succeeded in establishing the rebel kingdom of darkness on a footing so strong that not even the God of heaven could overthrow it.

With a never-failing water supply in the great river which flowed through the city; with sufficient land within the walls to assure them of a perpetual food supply; with walls so thick that it was possible to hold chariot races around the top of them; the king felt assured that the city was invincible and would certainly stand forever. What need was there to fear the kings of the east of whose approach he had heard tidings? He was safe and Babylon would last forever. His great ancestor, Nebuchadnezzar, had been right when he built the image all of gold. Babylon was forever.

But this very time and place where he thought himself to have ultimately arrived, as king of kings and lord of lords, was the very time and place where he came to his sudden and utter end with none to help him at all. From the ruin inflicted that night, Babylon fell, never to rise again forever.

So it will be in the final time. Once again Babylon will have control of the whole world and will have the physical ascendancy over the people of God. Once again she will have taken the very things of God to use in her own service and aggrandizement. She will have come to the pinnacle of supreme self-exaltation; the whole world will be at her feet. She will see herself as king of kings and lord of lords, and, as the death decree is in the very moment of being put into effect, it will be that but an instant of time remains before the total annihilation of the people of God.

Should she achieve this, then she will emerge the winner in the battle. Satan will be the triumphant one in the great controversy, for,

The Great Controversy, p. 618:

If [at this time] he could blot them [the faithful people of God] from the earth, his triumph would be complete.

It will be at this point of time that she will see herself as being in complete command. The whole world will be at her feet and doing her bidding and the people of God are about to be destroyed. It is then that she will proudly say:

Revelation 18

⁷ I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

But, exactly as it was in the days of ancient Babylon, the moment of greatest apparent security and triumph is the moment of total and sudden destruction. It will be a destruction so absolute that from it she will never rise again forever. The change in her position will be from the one extreme of power and glory and unanimous support, to the opposite extreme of shame, defeat and utter desertion from her all of those who had a moment before stood so loyally for her. Never will there have been a fall so great and so terrible as the fall of Babylon in the last days.

The history of the past is to receive so striking a fulfillment in the events of the future that it will be essential to keep these things in mind as we enter now into a detailed study of the verses in the Scripture which describe the coming battle of the great day of God Almighty.

The Sixth Plague

Revelation 16

¹² And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Having shown that geographical interpretation counts for nothing in the identification of the powers listed in these verses, we will give no consideration to this method of interpretation as we now proceed into the investigation of the message given to us here.

The first act in the drama of the sixth plague is the drying up of the River Euphrates that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. No reference is made to Babylon directly in this passage, but there is but little need, for the picture is so clearly a repetition of what happened in the fall of that ancient city, that it is self-evident. The sixth and the seventh plagues are expressly the description of the fall and destruction of modern Babylon. Failure to realize this is to miss the whole message contained in these verses.

We know what the River Euphrates was in the fall of the first Babylon. It was a physical river of literal water which flowed under the walls and through the city of Babylon. The question arises as to what the River will be in the final scenes.

To find the answer we have but to turn to the next chapter of *Revelation*. Here John relates what he saw.

Revelation 17

¹ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come here; I will show unto you the judgment of the great whore that sits upon many waters.

It is to be noted that the thing which John was to see was not the whore only, but the judgment of the whore. That judgment comes to her in the seven last plagues and in the sixth and the seventh in particular. Therefore, the whole of *Revelation* seventeen is a further explanation of what is to happen under those plagues. It is a clearer picture still of the fate of Babylon the Great.

To carry out his declaration to the prophet, the angel carried him...

Revelation 17

³ ...away in the spirit into the wilderness: and [he] saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

It is evident that the promise of the angel to show him the judgment of the great whore which sat upon many waters, began to be fulfilled when he was shown the woman sitting upon the beast. Therefore the whore and the woman are one, and the waters and the beast are one. Some may ask as to how waters and a beast can be the same thing. They are not the same thing, but they symbolize, each in their own way, the same thing.

That this is so is made very clear by the explanation given in the same chapter of what each symbolizes.

⁵ The waters which you saw, where the whore sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Therefore, the waters symbolize the people of the earth who stand beneath the woman or the whore.

On the beast are seven heads each of which is said to be a king or rather a kingdom:

⁹ And here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits.

The Bible plainly declares that in prophecy a mountain symbolizes a kingdom which fills the whole world:

Daniel 2

³⁵ ...and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

⁴⁴ And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

⁴⁵ Forasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Verse 45 tells us that the setting up of this eternal kingdom would be the fulfillment of that which was symbolized by the stone becoming a great mountain which filled the whole earth. Therefore it is clear that a mountain symbolizes a kingdom in Bible prophecy.

Here of course it is the symbol of a good kingdom, namely the kingdom of God, but it also can symbolize an evil kingdom. Thus Babylon is described as being a...

Jeremiah 51

²⁵ ...destroying mountain...

So it is that right after reference is made to the seven heads being seven mountains, it is stated that...

Revelation 17

¹⁰ ...there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue a short space.

The beast which has seven heads each of which represent a consecutive kingdom of world dimensions, himself represents, as the beasts in *Daniel* and the *Revelation* do, a worldwide kingdom which appears down through history under seven different heads. As the kingdoms of the world are the people of the world, then it is clear that the beast and the waters, while they in themselves are different symbols, do represent the same thing—the peoples of the whole world.

Thus the clear picture given in *Revelation* 17 is that the woman, who is the whore, and whose name is...

⁵ ...MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH,...

...rides upon the support and protection given to her from the peoples of the whole world as she comes down to her judgment day.

The name of the whore, or the woman that rides upon the many waters, is Babylon the Great. If the name of the woman then, is Babylon, what must the name of the waters be?

Inasmuch as there is no difference between the Babylon of the Old Testament and the Babylon of the New, except for geographical distribution, then we have but to ask what the name of the River was upon which ancient Babylon sat, to find the name of the waters upon which modern Babylon sits. That name is the River Euphrates. It bears the same relationship to the Babylon of the last days as did the ancient river to the Babylon of the past.

A River of Life

To Babylon, Euphrates was indeed the river of life. It flowed with unfailing certainty throughout the entire year bringing them all the water they needed for vegetation, for drinking, for bathing and for their animals. The city was dependent upon that River not only for the continuance of the life processes, but also as a protection from their enemies for it kept the moat around the city walls continually full. While that river ran, the city was secure and could not fall. The walls were impenetrable and unscalable, and the water supply ensured that they could never be starved into submission.

So it will be with modern Babylon. The people of the earth will be the modern Euphrates which provides the life support for that great city. The time is coming when this Scripture will be fulfilled,

Revelation 13

³ ...and all the world wondered after the beast.

⁴ ...and they [all the world] worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

In that day there will be but the two classes of people. There will be the kings of the earth and the peoples under their command who will give their unqualified allegiance to the woman who is Babylon the Great, and there will be the faithful few who will give their loyalty to the God of heaven and will stand upon His side in the conflict.

From the great masses of the earth, the final Babylon will draw her vast financial and material support. She will feed from this river of life to her. Furthermore they will provide her with the protection which she needs against any possible foes, who, once the whole world is at her feet, can only be the powers of heaven. Not only will they be her supposed protection from the powers of heaven, but they will join with her in her direct warfare against the God of heaven. So it is written:

Revelation 17

¹⁴ 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.

These ten kings are symbolized by the ten horns upon the head of the beast. As such then, they make up the sum of the peoples who are symbolized by the beast at the time when the woman rides upon it in the last times. These people, to an individual, give their powers to the woman in her struggle against the Lamb, but they will be defeated utterly and entirely.

A River of Death

The River Euphrates was that river which the Babylonians considered to be their river of life and it was such up to a given point of time. Then the very waters which had been, up till that time, a life support for them became the channel by which the enemy entered the city and caused its complete, final and eternal overthrow. In one night the role of the river was changed from that of life to that of death.

So it will be in the very last days when the last Babylon comes to her final and everlasting end. In *Revelation 17*, it is so clearly revealed that the very powers of the earth which had given their support to the woman and the kingdom which was hers and is symbolized by the beast, turn upon the whore and destroy her. Thus they occupy, first of all, the role of a supporter and life sustainer, and then turn to the opposite role of destroyer of the very power they firstly upheld. So it is written:

Revelation 17

¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

¹⁷ For God has put in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

Thus it will be that Babylon will fall at the hand of her supporters. They will turn upon one another as did the enemies of Israel at any time when the children of Israel went forth in faith to allow the Lord to gain the victory for them. When Gideon and his tiny band appeared before the Midianites, when Jonathan and his armor bearer went up against the Philistines and when Jehoshaphat went forth against the Edomites, their enemies turned their weapons one against the other and destroyed themselves so that when the people of God came upon the scene, the battle was all over and finished.

The Other View

Inasmuch as old ideas are difficult to uproot it is well to spend a little space here comparing the old view with the truth as expressed here. In the erroneous view of Armageddon which depends so heavily upon geographical interpretation, the picture is that the eastern nations of Japan, China and so on gather together against the western nations on the plains of Esdraelon in Palestine.

As the western nations are the supporters of the papacy, the day of judgment against Babylon is accomplished by the attack made upon her and her supporters by the powers of the east. They are, it is argued, the instrument in the hands of God to destroy Babylon the Great and her supporters.

I well remember a most earnest discussion I once had with an evangelist who had long preached this theory. He stoutly averred that the end of Babylon would be brought about in the way described above.

In reply, I directed his attention to *Revelation* 17:12-17, where it is so clearly written that those powers of the entire world, which firstly give their support to Babylon the Great, are the very ones who suddenly reverse their allegiance and turn upon her and destroy her. Thus she is not destroyed by those against whom she goes forth to war, but by those with whom she goes forth to war.

This turning of the enemies of God against each other is the work of the Lamb. He does it not with the weapons of carnal warfare, but by the presentation of righteousness at its best through the lives of the one hundred and forty four thousand.

Thus then it is clear from the word of God as to what the great river Euphrates is in the last days. The name is very significant.

Editor's Note: This was the end of the series of articles published in *The Messenger of Living Righteousness*. Although it was marked "to be continued" this series was never finished. Instead, the completion of the prophetic interpretations can be found in the following books:

Last Day Events, chapter 4, and chapters 29-36

The Seven Angels, chapters 14-25

Revelation 17



9. The Gathering Storm

The Messenger and News Review, July 1979

Editor's Note: The following three articles are not part of the former series, but were written later. But since they are on the same topic, I have included them. Also note that the fall of Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe was destined to take place in 1989-1991, about 10 years after the following article was written.

THOSE of us who were either born into the advent message or came into it early in life have spent our lifetimes waiting for the initiation of the last day events and the culmination of them in the second coming of Christ. There has been a very long delay occasioned by nothing other than the failure of the Adventists to accept the message by which the end could be brought.

Now there is a people around the world who have accepted the light and have kept pace with its advancing glory. There is every reason to believe that the message is now complete, though there are yet to be seen greater depths in that which has already been given to us.

As certainly as this is so, the time has come for releasing the four winds of strife. The events taking place in the world today give the strongest indication that those restraints are being removed and earth's religious and political forces are becoming aligned for the climactic struggle.

Two events which are especially significant are the deposing of the Shah of Iran and the pope's visit to Poland. The former was achieved by a powerful resurgence of the Islamic religion; a powerful reactionary movement triggered by the attempts to westernize Islamic society.

A year ago, it seemed, Iran's Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi could hardly have been more secure on his 2500-year-throne. An absolute monarch, he controlled one of the Middle East's strongest military forces, a ubiquitous secret police and \$20,000 million of annual oil revenues. His principle foe, a 78-year-old Moslem religious leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, had been in exile for 15 years. Yet last January the Shah was forced to flee, and

Khomeini returned victorious. For, as it turned out, Khomeini and his followers were armed with something even more formidable than the Shah's sophisticated military hardware: a religious ideal.

Iran was caught up in the militant revival of Islamic fundamentalism sweeping through the world's 600 million Moslems, from Morocco on the Atlantic to Indonesia on the rim of the Pacific.

Although circumstances differ from country to country, the Islamic revival in general is a reaction to attempts to modernize Moslem nations along Western lines. Moslem reformers have for years sought to emulate the power and affluence of the West by promoting Western-style industrialization and mass education. But Islam is deeply conservative and strongly resistant to change. Whatever Westernization has taken place has been largely skin deep, affecting mostly the upper-class elite. Religious conservatives complain that attempts to modernize their countries serve only to weaken Islamic values, offering nothing in their place. And they have convinced growing numbers of Moslems that it is time to return to the familiar Islamic ways of the past.⁹

Thus the Islamic people see the West as an enemy and are exhibiting a determination to undermine its economy by reducing the supply of oil while at the same time, increasing the prices to the point where serious disruption will result.

The West in turn, recognizes this as a direct attack against it. *Time Magazine* for instance, carried the caption on the cover picture for the July 9, 1979 issue, "The World Over a Barrel-OPEC's Tightening Oil Squeeze." The lead article of the same issue is devoted to this topic with gloomy predictions of inflation taking off again, unemployment increasing, and a recession overtaking all the Western nations. The estimate for possible unemployment increase in the United States is 1.4 million.

This is certain to lead to serious consequences as the disgruntled public express their displeasure in such reactions as rioting and looting. This has already broken out in some places with thieves using all kinds of ingenious tricks to steal gasoline from other cars and service stations.

⁹ *The Reader's Digest*, July 1979, p. 31-32.

Said Bristol Township Police Chief Richard Templeton: "We're sitting on a powder keg."¹⁰

Thus the Islamics are imposing a very grim future upon the developed nations, a future which will bring its own drastic reactions.

But what can be done to solve the problem? It is the usual custom of men to resort to the force of arms when every other possibility fails. However, the United States and Europe did not do this when the Shah of Iran was forced to leave. When every other means had failed, they simply let him go rather than mount a military mission to save him and themselves.

Why did so powerful an organization as NATO, refrain from the use of force? There was more to the matter than simply attacking the enemies of the Shah in Iran. To the north were the mighty Russian armies who would not stand idly by to leave the oil to the Western powers. This was a factor the United States and Europe could not and did not overlook.

Some may argue that the Islamics are no friends of the Communists and this is true. The Russian motivation would not have been to protect the Moslem world but to assure themselves of the largest slice of the pie or the whole of it if possible.

What, then, is to eventuate? The *Reader's Digest* article closes with these projections:

What should the non-Islamic nations do in the face of the Islamic revival? Adjust to it and, hopefully, learn a lesson: that even in this age of space probes, a religion born in the desert centuries ago can prove capable of overthrowing the mightiest of monarchs.¹¹

But it will not be Islam who throws down the great technological powers of the present time. Bible prophecy is very clear on this point. We are fortunate not to be the children of darkness. We are the children of light, having "the more sure word of

¹⁰ *Time Magazine*, July 9, 1979, page 15.

¹¹ *The Reader's Digest*, July 1979, page 35.

prophecy” which shines into the future as a light illuminates the pathway ahead.

The Kings of the North and South

In *Daniel* 11:40-45; *Daniel* 12:4, the final struggles of the kings of the north and south are brought to view:

Daniel 11

⁴⁰ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

⁴¹ He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

⁴² He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

⁴³ But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

⁴⁴ But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.

⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

Daniel 12

⁴ But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

The Geographical Method

The correct interpretation of these words depends upon the identification of the kings of the north and south being right. The usual approach is to regard Israel as being the reference point and then to decide who the kings of the north and south are by locating the powers lying in those directions respectively.

We call this the geographical method of interpretation, but reject it for very good reason. This system is based upon the idea that where you are determines who you are. This is not the case, as a change in geography does not effect a change in character. If it did, then the solution to the sin problem would simply be to transfer to an ideal environment.

The Gospel Method

The other method of interpretation is the gospel method which recognizes that it is not where you are, but what you are, which determines who you are. *Revelation* is both the unfolding of *Daniel* and the gospel of Jesus Christ. These two statements prove that:

Counsels to Writers and Editors, p. 175:

Our lesson for the present time is, How may we most clearly comprehend and present the gospel that Christ came in person to present to John on the Isle of Patmos,—the gospel that is termed,

Revelation 1

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 971:

The books of *Daniel* and the *Revelation* are one. One is a prophecy, the other a revelation; one a book sealed, the other a book opened.

Therefore, *Daniel* must also be the revelation of the gospel. This being so, the principle of interpretation upon which the correct understanding of both is dependent, is the gospel principle that character is determined by what you are and not where you are. Consequently, the geographical bearings from the land of Israel have nothing to do with who the modern king of the north is.

A Counterfeit Kingdom

Originally, Christ was the king of the north and will be again when He receives His kingdom once more. When Satan aspired to Christ's throne, he sought to ascend into...

Isaiah 14

¹³ ...the sides of the north.

What he was unsuccessful in doing in heaven, he has fought to achieve on this earth. In the Babylonian system, he has set up this counterfeit form of government, the king of which is aptly called the king of the north. It is for this reason that throughout Jeremiah's prophecy, Babylon is consistently referred to as the king of the north.

At that time this power did have a limited geographical distribution, but, with the victorious onslaught of Cyrus, that geographical space was no longer available to them. The priests of Mithra then moved westward to two new locations. One was in Pergamos, the other in Rome. This did not change them in the least. They simply continued the same religion and principles as they had on the banks of Euphrates. The king of the north was still the king of the north.

Where Is It Today?

That was not the end of their expansion. Today, the same religion covers the world in the form of Roman Catholicism and apostate Protestantism. The king of the north is still the king of the north. This is Satan's chief instrument of rebellion. It exactly reproduces his plan.

However, there is another force which he uses at such times as Babylon falls temporarily into decay, and that is atheism. This is the king of the south. Proof of this is found in *The Great Controversy*, p. 269, where Egypt, the other name for the king of the south, is positively identified as being atheism.

The Great Controversy, p. 269:

The "great city" in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, "is spiritually Egypt." Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God, and resisted His commands. No monarch ever ventured upon more open and high-handed rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt.

When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered,

Exodus 5

² Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, neither will I let Israel go.

This is atheism; and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God, and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.

The “great city” is also compared, “spiritually,” to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in licentiousness. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfill the specifications of this scripture.

It is important to observe that when seeking the power represented by Egypt, the king of the south, in 1798, no reference was taken of geographical location. Instead, revolutionary France was denominated as the king of the south.

The Great Controversy, p. 269:

This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the history of France.

Daniel 11

⁴⁰ And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him...

The time of the end began in 1798. At this time then, it is to be expected that atheism made a push or a thrust at the papacy. This was fulfilled with the imprisonment and exile of the pope by the French General, Berthier. The pope died in exile, and it was generally thought that the papacy’s power was permanently broken. It was instead, the inflicting of the deadly wound mentioned in *Revelation* 13:3, from which he would duly recover.

⁴⁰ ...and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries and shall overthrow and pass over.

One hundred and eighty-one years have passed since 1798 and no event answering to this description has yet taken place. In the

meantime, the papacy, supported by the Western world, has made giant strides in recovering the king of the north's lost power, but atheism, supported by the communist powers of Russia and China, and by the Islamic powers of the Middle East, has maintained a balance of power in which neither the king of the north nor the south has been able to hold world dominion.

For the people of God, this is a fortunate arrangement, because while the superpowers are preoccupied with each other, they have neither time nor interest in us. But as the history books testify, when one or the other has sole dominion, God's people suffer terribly.

A Long Gap

Some may object that one hundred and eighty-one years is a long time when the prophecy seems to call for a rapid succession, of events. This problem is answered by comparing the parallel prophecy of *Revelation* 13:1-3.

Revelation 13

¹ And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

² And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

³ And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death: and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

The deadly wound was administered in 1798, but the next part of the verse is yet to be fulfilled. Not until the papacy again rules the entire world will the deadly wound be healed. This will be accomplished at the time when the king of the north comes against the king of the south like a whirlwind and overruns him.

Thus it is clear that the same time gap present in *Daniel* 11:40, is also in *Revelation* 13:3. As the latter is the explanation of the former, there is no problem in seeing that there is such a gap.

No mention of events during this long period is made for the simple reason that no significant changes occur in the power balance until the king of the north's returning onrush. The order of events then calls for the king of the south to wound the other in 1798, followed by a period during which there is a power balance between the two. The interval closes with a sudden overwhelming onslaught by the king of the north against the king of the south whereby the former obtains complete possession of the territory and riches of the latter.

Modern observers of the power play between the superpowers may speculate as to the outcome, but the Bible leaves no doubt about it. The communist and Islamic world are to go under. Rome is to become the supreme ruler of the world with the support of apostate Protestantism.

Daniel 11

⁴³ But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

Russia, China, and the Middle East are areas where gold and silver as such are not in plentiful supply. However, these are terms which apply to riches no matter what form they may take. The gold and silver of these areas is oil. This is what the Western nations need far more than gold and silver. The prophecy declares that they will come into possession of it. It is no longer difficult to see how this will happen.

Rapid Progress of the Papacy

The other event of great significance is the pope's visit to Poland. Ever since the communist takeover of this part of Europe, every effort has been made to stamp out religion. The pope's visit proved how unsuccessful they have been.

All that is required is some factor to set in motion mighty forces of change in Russia and China which would result in the overthrow of the present government and a return to Catholicism. It could and will happen very quickly. When this does take

place, the balance of power in the world will change dramatically. A Catholic people will obey the directions of the papacy. Islam will suddenly find that it is no longer able to operate on the assumption that the superpowers dare not attack it for fear of one another, for they will have become one.

Then the king of the north will move to secure for himself the treasures of gold and silver, the oil of the middle east, with no power to stop him.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 9, p. 11:

Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

Daniel 11 is not alone in predicting this absolute supremacy of Babylon, the king of the north. In *Revelation* 13:3 it is written that after the deadly wound is healed...

Revelation 13

³ ...all the world wondered after the beast.

So great is the wonder that...

⁴ ...they (all the world) worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?

⁷ And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

It is because the papacy's world domination enforces her will that the warning against this system goes to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. If her rule was to be confined to only a part of the globe, then to that part would the warning go. In other words, the fact that the warning goes to the entire world proves that the problem will be present over the whole of the globe.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 18:

As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor

the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 395:

Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

“These have one mind.” There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan’s forces. “And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”

The king of the north is to possess the riches and dominion of the world. The day of communism and atheism is fast drawing to its close. Already, serious divisions are appearing in the ranks of the atheistic side of the world power structure. The Chinese and the Russians are increasingly hostile to each other. The Vietnamese and the Chinese have been at war with each other. The Islamics are turning their backs more and more upon the Russians. African nations are severing connections with the communists. There is much better unity among the Western nations.

These stirrings on the part of the Islamics, in which they are using all the power at their disposal to discomfort the king of the north, are a positive act of aggression which will initiate counter measures from the West. Every action has its opposite reaction.

This in turn will cause the oil nations to intensify their campaign to bring down their rivals, engendering a still more positive reaction from the West. Thus, things will develop rapidly to the point where a total decision is called for. From this, the king of the north will emerge as ruler of all.

This is the next development to be expected in the struggles of the ages. For years, those of us in this movement who have understood *Daniel* 11, have been expecting this to be the next move. It is evident that it is now drawing nearer than ever before.

The Loud Cry

Daniel 11

⁴⁴ But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.

Once the supremacy of Babylon is finally established, there will be no insurrections from within her own ranks. The entire world will be assured that the golden age of peace and prosperity has come and nothing must be allowed to stand in the way of it.

But there will be the voice of dissidence coming from those who know better than to put their trust in this anti-Christian system. God's people, empowered by His Spirit, arise to expose the hidden corruptions and deficiencies of the papal system.

Though initially, the priests, ministers, and rulers discount this uprising, they are soon alarmed as they see the power attending the message. They react by imposing persecutions, imprisonments, exiles, the buy and sell decree, and ultimately the death decree.

It is then that Satan through the Babylonian system will set the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, which are the peoples of the earth, and the glorious holy mountain, which is the kingdom of God. He will demand that God accept his kingdom as a legitimate dominion.

But it will not be necessary for God to make any decision, for at the very point where Satan is claiming that he has a kingdom, it will completely fall apart and he will suddenly find that not a single subject remains in it. That will settle the issue. Christ will then return to gather His subjects both from the grave and from the earth, leaving Satan to meditate for a thousand years on the mess he has made.

For a long time we have waited for these things. The delay has been largely because of the failure of God's children to fully appropriate the light which He has offered to them.

But we can praise the Lord that there is a company of people around the world today who do treasure the light and who are advancing in it. Care must be taken to more earnestly study the message so that we will know where we stand and will not be caught either unawares or unprepared for the coming test.



10. Not the Battle of Armageddon

The Messenger and News Review, January 1991

Editor's Note: This article was written shortly after the outbreak of the Gulf War.

ONCE again a fearful war has broken out in this, earth's perennial trouble spot—the Middle East. A study of the geography of the region shows the powerful nation of Iraq straddling the Euphrates as it flows from the Northwest into the sea.

False Interpretation

Once this fact is grasped, the minds of those who do not correctly understand the principles of prophetic interpretation turn to the reference in *Revelation* predicting the drying up of the great River Euphrates so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

Revelation 16

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵ Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he should walk naked and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

Those who are not established on sound principles of Bible interpretation will not find it difficult to see in the present conflict the development of the fulfillment of this prophecy. It is well known that waters symbolize people as it is written:

Revelation 17

¹⁵ The waters which you saw...are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

So then, the waters of the river are understood to be a symbol of the nation of people living in the country through which the river flows. Today, when these verses are due to be fulfilled, the Iraqis appear to be that people. In the expected, thorough defeat which will dry up the power of the Iraqi people, is seen the fulfillment of the prophesied drying up of the River Euphrates.

As in ancient times, the kingdom city of Babylon straddled the Euphrates, so today the same river flows down the middle of Iraq, leading many to the conclusion that Iraq is modern Babylon. Once these conclusions are drawn, it is logical to expect that, as the ancient city fell, never to rise again, so will Iraq. This, it is believed, will open the way for the battle of Armageddon which is seen as the final, titanic struggle between western and eastern nations at Megiddo in Palestine.

A Battle Between Christ and Satan

But, even though such a battle be joined between eastern and western nations, it will not be the Battle of Armageddon, for this confrontation which is called,

Revelation 16

¹⁴ ...the battle of that great day of God Almighty,

–will not be fought out by two great earthly confederacies opposing each other. Instead, in this final showdown, the entire, unrepentant, disobedient, inhabitants of the whole earth under Satan's personal leadership will be arrayed against Christ and those who follow Him.

Upon this point we must become unshakably settled. We must be absolutely sure about who will be the generals in the coming decisive conflict, whom they will lead into battle, and what will be the qualifications needed to stand on one side or the other. Note with what positive clarity these points are made in this statement:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 982-983:

Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion.

There is only one “last great battle”. It is the battle of Armageddon, which fact leaves no doubt about what battle is the subject of this statement.

So then who will make up the forces on one side of the struggle? The answer is: The Almighty Creator and those who obediently follow Him. And who will make up the forces on the other side? The answer is: Satan and all those in rebellion against God.

Identification by Character

Once this truth is accepted, then it is easy to recognize the other descriptions of this final confrontation which the Lord has provided for us in *Revelation*.

Consider *Revelation* 17. Here the final power which will array itself against the Omnipotent One is portrayed in symbolic form as a prostitute seated on a scarlet beast which had seven heads and ten horns. The name of this utterly corrupt woman is:

Revelation 17

⁵ Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth.

It must be emphasized that Babylon the Great, like all the other forces symbolized in *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, is identified by her character, not by her geographical location. This principle of Bible interpretation is utterly consistent with the gospel which is concerned, not with where you are, but with what you are.

In the days of Daniel, central Babylon was located geographically in the proud city which Nebuchadnezzar boasted he had built. But, in reality, the city itself was not Babylon nor was the whole of that worldwide power contained within those great city walls.

Daniel's perception that the great enemy of God and His church was to be found in every part of the globe led him to frankly declare before the mighty king:

Daniel 2

³⁷ You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

³⁸ And wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.

Thus we are to understand that Babylon was as much the mother of harlots and the abominations of the whole earth in Daniel's time as she is in these closing days of human history. In other words, we are never to think of Babylon on any lesser than worldwide proportions. No matter when or where we travel on this earth, Babylon will be there before we are.

But, let it be repeated that this proud and corrupt woman is not identified by her occupation of geographical territory even if it be the entire world. Instead, it is the corrupt spirit of that prostitute which fills and controls the people, which is the real mother of harlots and of the abominations which fill the earth. If that spirit has found lodgment in you or in me, then Babylon is in us and must be utterly dethroned and cast down, or we shall inevitably find ourselves at war against the Lamb.

Worldwide Union and Support

The fearsome beast on whom the woman rides is the symbol of the power of the people whose support enables the mother of prostitutes to carry out her will until her utter and final defeat at the hands of the Lamb totally deprives her of that support. The ten horns on that beast signify the ten divisions or kingdoms into which the whole world will be divided. These divisions are not political or national but are religious. This is made clear in these words:

Revelation 17

¹² And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

These cannot, as so many suppose, be the nations of Europe. Nor can they be the various, existing, political kingdoms of the world, for every one of them have received power as kings already, not with, but before the beast acquires his authority.

Who then are these ten kings who do not receive power as kings until the beast receives his? The answer is provided by Inspiration:

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

What is it that gives its kingdom to this power? Protestantism...

This is exactly right, for this religious kingdom does not have, at the present time, power as a kingdom—civil power—nor will she have it until the United States government gives its power to enforce the will of the churches. Then she will have power as a kingdom for a very short time.

But, Protestantism is but one religious force among ten who will all have...

Revelation 17

¹³ ...one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

This means that what will happen in the United States, will transpire in every other nation on the earth.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 18:

As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the Papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example.

Testimonies for the Church, vol. 6, p. 395:

Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces.

Looking on the world today in which there is revealed seething hatred of man by man, unrestrained acts of violence by man against man, and bitter destructive warfare, we see anything but "one great harmony". One would never believe such a state of peace could be attained without his having implicit faith in the prophetic word. We know that the Lord has said it will be so. Therefore, we can utterly rely on its coming to pass with startling rapidity.

Once "the kings of the earth, and of the whole world"¹² have been bonded together in one great harmony, there is no possibility of a battle of Armageddon involving men fighting against other men. Men in harmony with each other, do not fight each other under any circumstances.

The War Described

Nonetheless, there will be war—culminating in the battle of the great day of God. Here in *Revelation 17* that war is described:

Revelation 17

¹² And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.

¹⁵ And he said to me, The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

¹² *Revelation 16:14.*

¹⁶ And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the prostitute, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

¹⁷ For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.

¹⁸ And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.

That is the divinely provided picture of the battle of Armageddon—the final defiance of united mankind against the King of kings. The war presently taking place in the Middle East cannot be the battle of Armageddon.

Nor are *Revelation* 16:12-16 and *Revelation* 17 the only descriptions of the battle of Armageddon. There is also *Revelation* 19 where once again there is the picture of the King of kings who judges and makes war in righteousness, going forth to do battle with the assembled kings of the whole earth and their mighty armies.

The message of *Revelation* 19 is so clear, and so consistent with that of the other chapters that no one should have any difficulty in seeing *Revelation* 19 as a clear description of Armageddon. I will simply quote the verses and leave each of you to see this for yourselves.

Revelation 19

¹¹ Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except himself.

¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He himself will rule them with a

rod of iron. He himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

¹⁸ That you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.

¹⁹ And 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.

²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Thus the battle will end in the total annihilation of the woman and of the beast which carries her. Babylon will so utterly fall that she will never rise again. All those who once supported her will, as they are delivered from her deceptions and perceive what it has cost to follow her, turn their weapons of destruction upon her, and destroy her.

But what will be the issues in this decisive confrontation? Will both parties be contending for possession of the earth and its treasures of gold, silver, and oil? No true child of God will waste a moment of time quarreling over possession of these material, earthly goods. Rather, as we have learned from the messages of God's Sabbath Rest¹³ and Gospel Order¹⁴, he will be resisting Babylon's relentless pressure to compel all to build God's king-

¹³ See the book, *God's Sabbath Rest*.

¹⁴ See the book, *Gospel Order: An Introduction*, by Andreas Dura.

dom, the devil's way. Thus the Sabbath principle will be the great issue in the final conflict.

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Lawgiver identifies himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Does all this mean that the events now transpiring in the Middle East are not specific fulfillments of prophecy? No! It does not mean this at all, for these events are very important fulfillments of prophecy. As has been stressed, the battle of Armageddon cannot be fought and won until the entire world shall wonder after the beast. So the time will come when...

The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 983:

There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces.

The Kings of the North and South

Satan's has ever been a divided kingdom, partitioned in the main between those who seek to build God's kingdom, man's way, and those who seek to build man's kingdom, man's way. These two forces are denominated "The King of the North" and "The King of the South", respectively. From the beginning, these two have ever been pitted against one another, but their final battles are foretold in *Daniel* 11:40-45. Here is a brief summary of these events.

During the Middle Ages, the King of the North, the papacy, dominated the world, but at the time of the end, 1798, by arresting and exiling the Roman Pontiff, the King of the South administered a deadly wound to his hated rival, a blow from which he has been steadily recovering. This led to a situation in which a balance of power was established between the two kings. On the one side were the forces of the anti-Christian world such as Communism and the eastern religions, on the other, were the professedly

Christian nations. So preoccupied were these with each other, that, in the western world at least, God's people were free to worship God according to the dictates of their enlightened understanding of God's word.

But this situation was not to go on forever, or neither the Battle of Armageddon nor the end would ever come. Instead, the King of the North was to come against the King of the South with great speed and completely overwhelm him.

For a long time we watched for this development to take place. Over the years there were various contests between these two kings, such as the world wars, Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, the wars between Egypt and Israel, and so forth. But none of these gave the one king or the other the ascendancy except perhaps on a local scale, nor did they generate positive conviction in the minds of any of us that these were the return of the King of the North to total supremacy.

But when Communism collapsed so suddenly in eastern Europe during 1989, we knew that the time had come for the whirlwind return of the King of the North. We recognized that prophecy was being fulfilled before our eyes. The long waiting time was over. Our hearts were made glad as we began to catch sight of the gleams of the glory of our Savior's coming.

But the King of the North did not complete his return against the King of the South when Communism in Europe was overthrown. Communism in China still remains in power. So do the Islamic and heathen nations, but they too will come under the absolute dominion of the northern kingdom.

What is happening in the Middle East is a movement in the prophesied direction. The Alliance will win this conflict. Iraq will utterly fall, while the King of the North will march inexorably on his way to universal supremacy. Nothing will be permitted, or even be able to stand in the way of the great new world order. If any should doubt this, let him read the following verses:

Daniel 11

⁴⁰ At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.

⁴¹ He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.

⁴² He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.

⁴³ He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.

⁴⁴ But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

⁴⁵ And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

This is no picture of a protracted, indecisive campaign, but of a sweeping, rapid, conclusive decimation of the forces of the King of the South which will open the way for Armageddon.

A Summary of Last Day Events

I will now make a brief summary of the order of last day events as best we know them.

The next great event to be anticipated will be the setting up of the image of the beast firstly in the United States, and then successively throughout the nations of this earth. This is an important landmark, which, as it is seen to be approaching will give added effect to the third angel's message.

In the meantime, as the King of the North establishes his supremacy over mankind, the restraining Spirit of God is progressively withdrawn, and increasingly violent manifestations of nature running out of control, wreak incredible destruction. This is already happening. We are shocked at how markedly more vio-

lent, life-taking, and terrible the storms are this year already, compared with previous manifestations.

Crime, terrorism, and wanton disregard for human rights will break through all restraint, eventually passing completely out of all control. Conditions will worsen until the whole earth will stagger under problems of such immense proportions as to defy solutions. Politicians and law-enforcement agencies will prove themselves helpless to avert the threat to the very existence of mankind.

This is the hour of opportunity for the churches who by this time will have achieved unification. They will offer their services to the world claiming that the desecration of Sunday is the direct cause of all their woes and troubles which, they declare, will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced. Their argument will be that they will have solved their problems as their united front attests, and that they have God's personal blessing as will be evident in the outpouring of what they believe to be the Holy Spirit in latter rain power.

To the civil powers they will argue:

"See, we have solved our problems. All our differences are put away. We stand united in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. Now, give us your power and we will solve your problems."

The government, relieved by the prospect of no longer being responsible for providing solutions to the world's problems, and impressed by the supernatural power in the churches, will be pleased to surrender their power to enforce the solutions formulated by the churches.

When they do this, they will have formed the image to the beast, Babylon's fall will be complete, and this national apostasy will be followed by national ruin. Yet, the people will hail this coalition of church and state as the certain solution to every one of their problems. A wave of euphoria will wash over the masses with the glad assurance that an age of universal goodwill, peace, and prosperity has at last eventuated.

This brings all to the hour of final appeal and last opportunity for salvation as God pours out His Holy Spirit in latter rain proportions upon His people. By this means the utterly disastrous outworking of the human solution to the prevailing problem will be laid bare. Thousands upon thousands hear and many are convinced that Babylon is the church fallen because of her errors and sins.

At first the church leaders treat the message with contempt, but their fury is aroused as their authority is questioned and the people demand Scripture proof for their assertions. Severe persecution will then be generated. Firstly, the Lord's messengers will be reviled by the multitudes. Then the law will be called in against them, and many will be subjected to fines and imprisonment.

When all this fails to silence their testimony, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. But these sanctions will be breached by Him who assures us that our bread and water shall be sure. Finally, just before probation closes, the death decree will be passed giving the multitudes permission upon reaching a certain date, to execute the saints.

In the face of this last desperate resort on the part of the woman on the scarlet beast, every one on this earth will have made their final, irrevocable choice, and the accounts in heaven are closed. Mercy no longer pleads for guilty mankind. Probation closed, the seven last plagues begin to fall in their order while the wicked will be assembling for the execution of the righteous. Deluded by the ecclesiastical authorities into believing that they are acting in righteous vindication of God's honor, they are in the act of rushing upon His praying people when the incredible darkness of the fifth plague will obliterate everything from sight.

Then a glorious rainbow will encircle each group of God's people and His voice will announce their deliverance. There will then be a terrible awakening of all those standing on Satan's side of the battle. They will see that they have been deluded and are hopelessly and eternally lost. In their incredible fury, they turn their weapons firstly on the ministry, and then upon each other.

In the worldwide slaughter of every one of his supporters apart from those who survive till Christ appears, Satan's power is utterly broken.

The battle of Armageddon is over. Men and angels have been brought to see the real nature of Satan's lies on the one hand, and the absolute righteousness of God's course on the other. Thus the issues in the great controversy will be eternally settled. At last we will be blessed with eternal, universal, and indestructible peace.

Revelation 21

² Then I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.



11. A Further Re-Evaluation

The Messenger and News Review, March 1991

AS WORLD EVENTS have developed, we have been led to think more seriously about our understanding of prophecy; that is, whether or not prophecy is being fulfilled and whether or not we have understood correctly how prophecy is to be fulfilled.

General Facts, Not Details

If you look over the major prophetic events of the past, it soon becomes clear that the details of how a prophecy will be fulfilled, have never been known until the prophecy begins to be fulfilled. While God's people can know that a prophecy will be fulfilled, and can know some general facts about how it will be fulfilled, still, the pattern has been that we remain ignorant of the exact details until the event occurs.

For instance, while the enlightened students of prophecy were able to know that something would happen to the Papacy in 1798, no one really knew exactly what or how until it all happened.

When the ten horns were foretold to arise out of the pagan Roman empire, one could know that horns symbolize kingdoms, but who they would be, and how and when was left till their arrival on the scene of action.

One more example was the prophesied plucking up of the three horns by the little horn. Which three horns would be plucked up? How would the little horn accomplish it? The details were left to reveal themselves at the appointed time.

The Push of the King of the South

For many years now we have been aware of the prophesied events of *Daniel* 11:40. We know from *The Great Controversy*, p. 269, that the first push of the King of the South against the King of the North was the push of Atheism against religion. This is another prophesied event that was understood in detail only when it happened.

The next major push against the King of the North was Napoleon's capture and imprisonment of the Pope in 1798 which constitutes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the deadly wound of *Revelation* 13:3.

The Whirlwind Retaliation

Today we are confronted with the whirlwind retaliation of the King of the North against his southern competitor. And as the pattern has been, we did not see that the overthrow of the King of the South would happen exactly as it did. We also are not able to tell exactly how the rest of the divisions of the King of the South will come under the dominance of their northern rival.

In the past we have tended to shy away from physical interpretations of this prophecy, opting instead for an exclusively spiritual interpretation. Maybe not all of us have done this, but it has been the dominant concept. But why have we thought thus and is it justifiable?

One reason for this is that we have long since learned to reject the geographical interpretation of prophecy. And since the concept of a physical interpretation is a near cousin to the geographical one, then we have tended to throw out the physical one as well. This line of reasoning has not been an obvious one but rather more subconscious.

But there is a legitimate place for the physical element when interpreting prophecy and we must not overlook it. Let us now move on to substantiating the physical aspect of *Daniel* 11:40.

Using the trustworthy method of letting inspiration interpret its own words, we will consider the divine definition of the word "whirlwind" and by this definition we will understand whether it is only spiritual or if there is a physical element involved. To do this we will look at two statements. The first defines the word "wind" and the second defines the word "whirlwind".

Testimonies to Ministers, p. 444:

John sees the elements of nature—earthquake, tempest, and political strife represented as being held by four angels. These winds are under control until God gives the word to let them go.

Prophets and Kings, p. 279:

The closing years of the ill-fated kingdom of Israel were marked with violence and bloodshed such as had never been witnessed even in the worst periods of strife and unrest under the house of Ahab. For two centuries and more the rulers of the ten tribes had been sowing the wind; now they were reaping the whirlwind. King after king was assassinated to make way for others ambitious to rule.

The first statement, which is referring to *Revelation 7:1*, describes winds as very physical things—earthquake, tempest, and political strife.

The second statement describes whirlwind in political terms, that is, the assassination of kings and the grasping of political power. The second statement also brings out something interesting, which is that a whirlwind is a reaping of that sown by the wind. If you can identify the type of seed, then you know what the fruit will be. Both are physical and political.

So we can safely say that the whirlwind of *Daniel 11:40* has a physical aspect to it though I am not saying that there is no spiritual element either.

Another reason establishing the physical element is the fact that numbers-power, money-power, deception, and force, are immovably fixed procedures of Satan's kingdom building system. It is impossible for him to do anything without the use of these means. His is not an exclusively spiritual kingdom. It never has been and never will be. Only a little review of Bible history reveals how very physically oriented Satan's kingdom is.

So we can expect that the moves of the King of the North against the King of the South will involve deception and physical force. Where he can employ an army as force, he will do so.

Where he has no military army as such, he will amass the people into a united front.

We should not be afraid of physical interpretations of Biblical symbols. We have already done this with the river Euphrates, which has only a physical interpretation: human support. The waters of *Revelation* 17:15 are only interpreted physically as well:

Revelation 17

¹⁵ The waters which you saw, where the whore sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

We must compare all our thinking with the Word and be on guard against erroneous carry-overs from the past.



