A Biblical View OF THE END TIMES

THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST, PT. 14

Week #40; Oct. 18, 2026, 6PM

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Review:

- We have been focusing on the rise of the antichrist and we have worked our way through several prominent aspects of his career.
- In studying the wars and conflicts of the antichrist, we landed on ***Daniel Ch. 11:41,*** and we've had a couple of interesting lessons based around the issues of this verse.
- We've spent some time discussing the fact that the antichrist – despite all his military successes during the Tribulation – will not be able to conquer one little region.
- That area is mentioned in this verse as *"Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon."* That area is in modern day Jordan, southeast of the Dead Sea.
- More specifically, that region is also known in the Bible as Bozrah, and it is where the ancient city of Petra is found, which is a city carved in a natural rock fortress.
- The bottom line is God's Word makes the point that the antichrist will be unsuccessful in conquering this little area because this is where the faithful Jewish remnant will flee.
- This is the place they will go to - - *"the mountains of Judea"* as Jesus instructed them to in ***Matt. 24:16*** and other parallel passages.
- They are called the mountains 'OF' Judea because, by that point, that region will belong to Israel.
- It is Jordanian territory TODAY, but Israel will annex it after a war we may soon see in our own time.
- The prophetic passage ***Psalms 83*** describes this territory in Jordan as being one of ten people groups that will come against Israel in a war effort intended to eliminate the Jewish state.
- And as I mentioned, this war could happen any day now. The result of this larger conflict means Israel is going to gain a LOT of additional geography.
- So - - the story starts to become clear when you look at all the Biblical passages that relate to this matter:
    - **Jesus, at His physical Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation, will go to Petra in Bozra first.**
    - This is what ***Dan. 11:41*** refers to as *"Edom, Moab, and the leaders of Ammon."* Jesus will rescue the faithful remnant of Jews who have fled there according to His instructions in ***Matthew Ch. 24.***
    - Jesus will singlehandedly fight against the forces of the antichrist which are global by this point, and which are gathered at Petra.

- It will be a vicious and bloody battle, and Jesus' garments will become soaked in blood.
- He will then lead the Jewish remnant out of there according to ***Micah 2:12-13,*** and up to Jerusalem. This conforms to Isaiah's vision in ***Isaiah Ch. 63.***
- Jesus subsequently appears - according to ***Rev. 19 -*** to fight the armies of the antichrist at the "Battle of Armageddon." His robes are – by this point – drenched in blood according to the Scriptures.
- That is the same blood he got spattered with in His battle against those forces which surrounded Petra.

NOTE: That's more or less where we left off last time. I received several questions last week, and even more since that point, about various other issues related to all of this.

- It's clear there are additional issues we need to consider concerning this timeframe and these events. For example:
  - Since this is about the physical return of Jesus Christ, then we need to consider how other events concerning His return fit into this storyline.
  - You can see this is a rabbit trail – that once started – needs to be finished. I'll seek to do that today so we can then reverse course and go back and deal with other matters that lead up to this point.

A. The Battle of Armageddon

NOTE: I need to discuss – at some level today – that conflict we call the "Battle of Armageddon," for it ties into some of the things we've already learned. This was a complex lesson to put together, so bear with me as I try my best to lay out the information.

NOTE: Most of us have heard of this battle, and we tend to isolate it to a large flat valley area north of Jerusalem. We tend to think everything is climaxed at this one spot.

NOTE: In truth – the actual "Battle of Armageddon" is one part of a series of battles that are all fought in rapid sequence. There is an order to them - - but really, they are all components of one larger end times military **campaign**.

1. Several notable Bible prophecy scholars have done a good job wrestling with this whole end times sequence concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
   - Among them are Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Dr. Dan Starcevich, and David Levy.
   - But, honestly, there are **very few** who have tried to tackle this complex matter, and I am one of **very few** that teach this. I will lean today on the studies of those who, like me, have examined this matter closely.
2. What I want to do today is provide an outline of events related to the "Battle of Armageddon."
   - It would be best to call it the **"Campaign of Armageddon,"** for as I have said, there are multiple battles involved.
   - The area of "Armageddon" itself – AKA the plains of Megiddo – is one facet to consider in this entire campaign.

- While this outline of events I am sharing with you today can be authenticated from Scripture, it is one based on those common conclusions of several prophecy scholars.
- I think they are sound in their conclusions, but we need to be as the Bereans here and study these issues for ourselves.

B. So, I want to look now at the geographical layout of the Campaign of Armageddon
NOTE: We already know Jesus Christ – at His Second Coming - physically appears FIRST at Petra in Bozrah. I'll come back to that in a bit, but here are the events leading UP TO His Second Coming (I will describe all this in seven stages):

1. The First Stage:

- There is the assembling of the armies of the antichrist at Armageddon ***(Cf. Rev. 16:12-16; READ).*** Several things to note in this passage:
  - ✓ The armies of the antichrist are gathered as a result of one of the final judgments of God in the Tribulation (6th Bowl Judgment).
  - ✓ Specifically, three demonic spirits emerge from each of the three members of the False Trinity (Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet), and they gather the 'kings of the world' to assemble themselves at the Valley of Megiddo (AKA Armageddon).
  - ✓ This is a specific valley about 90 km. north of the city of Jerusalem.
  - ✓ This is the staging phase to a final battle. This preparatory staging comes as part of a great deception (demonic).
- The assemblage of the armies there – or at least a large part of them - **will then proceed** into the Valley of Jehoshaphat ***(Cf. Joel 3:9-14: READ).*** Again, several things to note:
  - ✓ This is the next staging point for the war campaign that takes place at the very end of the Tribulation period.
  - ✓ Here, there is a call to gather in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (AKA Valley of Decision) - - that is a valley that lies east of the city of Jerusalem; it separates the city from the Mount of Olives.
  - ✓ It is to this valley that many fighting forces are summoned – *"all nations"* ***(vs. 11)***
  - ✓ NOTE: In this passage, the people are urged to *"beat their plowshares into swords."* This is the opposite of what we read in ***Micah 4:3*** (Millennial Kingdom).

NOTE: Big picture so far: The armies of the Antichrist will be staged at two primary locations in preparation for the big end times battle: the Valley of Megiddo, and the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

The bulk of these forces appears to be at Armageddon, but the point is all the armies of the world are being sovereignly positioned by God **near** Jerusalem for their ultimate defeat.

2. **The Second Stage:**
    - This stage concerns the attack and near-fall of Jerusalem ***(Cf. Zechariah 14:1-5: READ).*** **NOTE:** Some prophecy scholars conclude from these passages that Jerusalem actually 'falls' and is fully defeated - - but I don't think so.
    - The greater Biblical counsel suggests it **almost gets to that point**, but it's spared at the very last moment.
    - The antichrist – as we've seen – gathers the bulk of his armies in Armageddon, while other contingencies he collects in the Valley of Jehoshaphat - - as we've also seen.
    - The ultimate goal of this campaign is to destroy the Jews once and for all. Dr. Fruchtenbaum believes the antichrist will move at least a portion of his forces from Megiddo to join with others who are already there, but both elements will ultimately fight against Jerusalem.
    - From ***Zechariah chapter 12,*** we learn several other important things about this great conflict against Jerusalem ***(READ vss. 1-8):***
        - ✓ God will make the battle a very tough one, for Jerusalem's foes (those who attack it will be injured ***(vs. 3),*** the attackers will be confused, panicky, and blinded ***(vs. 4),*** the weakest of the Jews will fight like King David ***(vs. 8),*** and the "Davids" among the Jews will fight like the Angel of the Lord.
        - ✓ As a result, they will cause tremendous decimation in the ranks of the antichrist's armies.
        - ✓ Despite these successes, the overwhelming superior numbers of the antichrist's armies will prevail. The city will be captured, the houses will be ransacked, and the women will be violated ***(Cf. Zech. 14:2).***
        - ✓ All will appear to be lost. Half of Jerusalem's inhabitants are prepared to be taken into exile, and half remain in the city.
        - ✓ By all practical measures, and despite valiant fighting by the Jews, it appears that the city of Jerusalem will be fully defeated.

3. **The Third Stage**

    NOTE: This is the stage we already learned of. This is the siege against Petra in Bozrah. From a timing perspective, it appears to happen either (a.) about the same time as the attack against Jerusalem is staged, or (b.) as the battle against Jerusalem starts finally going in the antichrist's favor.
    - While Jerusalem is falling, most of the faithful Jewish population has already fled to Bozrah ***(Cf. Micah 2:12-13).***
    - (NOTE: We cannot be dogmatic that NO element of faithful Jews is outside of Petra).
    - It is here in the ancient fortress of Petra that God has been providing for and protecting this faithful remnant of Jews for 3 ½ years ***(Cf. Rev. 12:6)***

- ✓ This Petra situation is very similar in its dynamic to the story of the Exodus.
- ✓ God provided for ("nourished") the Israelites in the wilderness during their wanderings, and He will supernaturally do so here again in the last days.
- ✓ God supernaturally employed the elements of the earth to destroy and frustrate Pharoah's armies, and he will do the same once more to keep this remnant of faithful Jews safe *(Cf. the earth opened up to swallow the river the dragon spews out against the fleeing Jews)*
- ✓ Remember, the Jews are supernaturally aided again in their escape from the antichrist as they were in ancient times by *"the two wings of a great eagle"* ***(Cf. Rev. 12:14).***
- ✓ As I shared last week, I don't think this is a reference to any air force or similar element. The same language is used in ***Exodus 19:4*** of God's miraculous provision for the nation during their Exodus from Egypt: *"You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself."* It's a figure of speech intended to show Divine assistance.

- ➢ But, getting back to the military campaigns that are underway…. Perhaps buoyed by the developments in Jerusalem, the armies of the antichrist will be intensifying their efforts against the Jews quarantined in Bozrah/Petra.

4. The Fourth Stage:

NOTE: This is the point where Israel gains national salvation, and multiple Bible passages speak to this key moment (well worth a personal study).

- ➢ With the Jewish people feeling the pressure of the armies outside Bozrah, they will finally realize, one way or another, why they are suffering these things.
- ➢ They will recognize that the root cause of their historical and end times persecution has been their rejection of Jesus as their only Messiah.
- ➢ They will then – at this very key moment in time when all seems lost - issue a call to national repentance:
  - ✓ ***Hosea 5:15*** says, *"I will go away and return to My place until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me."*
  - ✓ NOTE: "Until" indicates Israel will one day turn to the Lord, and it will take this calamity of their possible extermination for them to do so.
  - ✓ Jesus also underscored this important "until" condition to the nation in ***Matthew 23:39,*** *"For I say to you, from now on you shall not see Me until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'"*
  - ✓ According to Dr. Fruchtenbaum, this, then, is the twofold basis of Jesus' physical Second Coming seen in ***Hosea*** and ***Matthew***:

(a.) First, Israel must first confess her national sin: *"acknowledge her guilt."*

(b.) Second, then Israel must plead for her Messiah to return, to mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son ***(Cf. Zech. 12:10-14; READ)***

- It is **<u>this national cry of repentance</u>** that directly results in the PHYSICAL Second Advent of Jesus Christ as the rescuer of the Jewish nation.
- This is a KEY reason why Satan tries so hard to exterminate the Jews. If the Jews are totally annihilated, they cannot nationally repent, and they cannot then plead for their Messiah, Jesus Christ, to return.
- If Satan can utterly destroy the Jews, Jesus Christ cannot return and Satan ultimately wins. That's how he sees it....and this goes back all the way to what we learned in the beginning from ***Gen. 3:15.***
- And so - as we have already seen, Jesus returns FIRST to Bozrah, to Petra, where he fights personally, physically, and violently against the global armies of the antichrist, His garments becoming soaked with the blood of His enemies in the process.

NOTE: There is a related passage concerning Armageddon, Petra, and the judgements of God, in ***Isaiah 34:1-6 (READ).*** It is very clear in this passage that...

- Bozrah / Edom is a key hub concerning the Lord's Second Coming
- The amount of carnage is vast... making *"the mountains to be soaked with their blood"* ***(vs. 3)***
- This vengeance by Jesus Christ is on *"all nations and their armies"* ***(vs. 2)***
    - After this victory, Jesus Christ then leads the Petra captives out of Bozrah (meaning: 'sheepfold') as we saw in ***Micah 2:13,*** and He heads north towards Jerusalem as Isaiah sees in ***Isaiah 63:1.***
    - This is about the same point in time where Jerusalem is about to fall to the antichrist's armies.

5. The Fifth Stage

NOTE: This is the stage where Jesus Christ turns the tide at Jerusalem. The battle which started south, in Bozrah, now extends north to where Jerusalem is breathing her dying breath.

- Jerusalem is saved - - but just barely. It is a terrible series of events that accompany the battle for Jerusalem.
- The battle for Jerusalem is equally violent as the one in Petra ***(Cf. Joel 3:12-13; READ).***
- Here in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the armies of the antichrist are seen as a harvest - - again, a *"trampling of the grapes in the winepress."*
- This specific event parallels the passage of ***Rev. 14:18-20; (READ).*** It is here that some additional details concerning this "campaign of battles" (which is really the way to look at "The Battle of Armageddon") are also mentioned:

(a.) the total devastation covers a distance of about 180 miles
(b.) the carnage is SO much that the blood rises to a depth of about 4 ½ feet in spots (some scholars feel this blood collects at low points like the Valley of Jehoshaphat to achieve this since the terrain is varied)
(c.) But here's a key point we should not overlook: the distance between the Valley of Megiddo in the north (Armageddon) and Bozrah in the south is approx. 180-200 miles. This fact underscores what this passage is saying in ***Rev. Ch. 14.***

6. The Sixth Stage:

NOTE: This is the point where the battle for Jerusalem is won by Jesus Christ. Jerusalem was hanging by a hair and was about to be fully be defeated, but Jesus Christ comes in the 'nick of time' to fight and to save it ***(Cf. back to Zechariah 14:1-5); We previously read vss. 1-2, now READ vss. 3-5.*** Several things to note about this particular stage:

- We need to take notice of the language of timing here: *"on that day," "Then," etc*. These are clues to a certain sequence.
  - ✓ In ***vs. 3,*** we see that Jesus Christ will fight just as He did in Petra. There is no reason to see in this passage anything different.
  - ✓ <u>On that day</u>, Jesus will stand on the Mount of Olives. NOTE a couple things about this:
    - It's not stated that He descends to the Mount of Olives from the air, but rather that He stands on it. Chances are best that He proceeds up the Mount of Olives at some point during this battle for Jerusalem.
    - It is only AFTER He stands on the top of the Mount of Olives that the mountain splits with half of it going north and half of it going south.
    - This split creates a deep valley which permits those Jews who had been besieged in Jerusalem to flee out of the city.
    - It is only THEN – or after that point – (see ***vs. 5b),*** that "*the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with Him."*
    - This is the likely point at which the events of ***Rev. 19:11-21*** now take place where the armies of heaven are seen with Jesus Christ.
    - Somehow, in all this, there is a transition here (we are not given the specific details how this happens), but it is AFTER Jesus fights for Jerusalem, it is AFTER He ascends to the top of the Mount of Olives and causes it to split, and it is AFTER the besieged Jews inside Jerusalem are able to flee out of the city, that Jesus now appears supernaturally with the armies of heaven ('the holy ones') and wraps things up with the antichrist's armies further north.

7. **The Seventh Stage:**

   NOTE: This stage concerns the well-known text of ***Rev. 19:11-21,*** typically considered to be the primary passage about Jesus' Second Coming ***(READ).*** Several things to note here (and maybe with a new perspective):

   - Jesus, AFTER fighting His prior battles, and AFTER ascending the Mount of Olives, is subsequently seen coming on the clouds with the armies of heaven.
   - There is more business to take care of - - more armies to defeat. This is the stage at which the last elements of the antichrist's armies are defeated, and unlike the prior battles, Jesus defeats this bunch with a spoken word ***(Cf. vs. 15).***
   - But it's not specifically mentioned here that this ***Rev. 19*** conflict is centered on the area of Armageddon. That is conventionally presumed, but the language ***(Cf. vss, 15, 17-18)*** recall other passages which were specific to other locations.
   - Chances are, there is a portion of the antichrist's armies still up north in the Valley of Megiddo. They need to be dealt with too. So, this is really mop-up time according to ***Rev. 19.***
   - Again, by this point, Jesus' robes are already drenched in blood. It all makes sense….
   - It is in this last conflict that – not only are the last elements of the armies of the antichrist fully killed, but the antichrist and the false prophet are also captured alive and thrown into the eternal lake of fire ***(Cf. vs. 20).*** They are the first two occupants of hell.

So, as we've seen, there are a series of battles which are part of Jesus' Second Coming. It's not just the Battle of Armageddon, but also a couple key ones before that. All in all, it is a greater **campaign.**

NOTE: This is not the Second Coming sequence which most of us have grown up understanding. But it IS the sequence of events according to multiple passages in God's Word which tell us various parts of the very same storyline.

NEXT WEEK: We need to backtrack a bit and analyze some events likely to take place soon. This will help us understand that gap of time between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation.

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The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don't pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don't teach what is NOT there. Don't force a passage to mean something it really doesn't.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.

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