

‘Til Armageddon

By Conrad Barrett

It's a bit early for Armageddon, but until we actually get to it what lies ahead for us as a nation and for the world? Let's take a look.

The Bible tells us that difficult times are coming to the world. It is described by Jesus as a **“time of sorrows”** and then will extend into **“great tribulation”**. Both the “time of sorrows” and the “tribulation” periods will bring about devastation and unparalleled suffering. In fact both Jesus and Daniel tell us that this particular time will be worse than the world has ever encountered or ever will experience again. It will be terrible for everyone. The Bible is not a negative book, but it does forewarn us of many things which are ahead.

When we look closely at the **“time of sorrows”** and the **“tribulation”** periods, it is easy to understand what drives them. Greed and an insatiable quest for power and control are basic to this contest. Specifically, it relates directly to good versus evil and satanic forces versus Godly forces. It's the finality of a paradigm of time and ends with Jesus Christ being in total control of the universe. Evil is with us now, but it will never triumph. Trouble and sorrow are with us now but they, too, will ultimately be replaced with peace and tranquility. Peace can come first to the human heart when Christ is allowed to come in and lead. Peace will come to the world when Christ comes and changes the world system as we now know it.

As we are emerging into this time of great change three things are easily noticed in the unfolding of this end-time prophetic prediction. **The wrath of God, the wrath of Satan and the wrath of man** are all addressed in the book of Revelation. Other parts of the Bible reflect the same. The forces of God are brought to bear upon the sinister behavior of mankind and God demands an end to this way of life. Heaven moves to bring it to a complete halt and does. When God finishes His special work here on earth, life as we know it will be changed forever. The final result will be peace on earth and good will toward men. The angels predicted this at the time of Christ's birth. It's a promise and it will be fulfilled.

Satan who has three missions in mind will temporarily accomplish his objective. Jesus said Satan's purpose is to “steal, kill, and destroy”. Whatever evil we have on earth is traceable directly to satanic influence. He uses whatever means he can to create and execute misery. He even uses religion as a pretext for much of his work. Leaders in any religious order should examine closely their objectives and the context of their message. Deception, a tool of Satan, can easily become a viable reality here. Religion *per se* is never the answer to human problems; it's the short road and is dead-ended. Alignment and surrender to the true and living God is the final answer. Only God can give permanent peace.

Mankind, too, has a God-given free will. It is our special gift from God, but can be invaded by satanic influence. Mankind's wrath is clearly visible in the end-time contest of the ages and along with both God and Satan, will further complicate a very chaotic situation. If we humans choose the wrong path the consequence of such a choice can be devastational. The right choice, however, can be one of blessings both now and eternally.

The road which leads us to Armageddon is not all bad. It has a number of delightful experiences awaiting the Christian. None is more exhilarating and comforting than the coming of Jesus for His church. This glorious experience is a promise made by Christ, Himself, and without any future warnings will suddenly happen. It will be as fast as lightning flashing or as the eye can twinkle. It's a promise to all Christians and will result in our leaving earth and meeting Jesus in the atmosphere region. God has not “appointed us to wrath”. We shall be delivered and the dead in Christ shall rise. You can believe this promise. It will become a reality.

There is a divine invitation for people everywhere to become followers of Christ. The decision is totally up to us. We can choose for ourselves. No one can choose for us. Some, however, will choose late and will miss the Rapture of the church. The late choices will result in

encountering the “Great Tribulation” period of time. Revelation records large numbers of people being saved after the Rapture, but the price to pay for being a Christian during this period of time is physical death. A multitude which no man can number is seen in heaven and many have been beheaded for their faith. It happens during this period of time. One should not chance any spiritual opportunity and leave the future to fate. Today is the day of salvation, now is the accepted time. The Bible makes that fact clear. Make your spiritual move today and be safe in the arms of Jesus.

Like never before the challenge of time is before us and we should be fully alert as to what all the signs and events of time are telling us. Hiding and watching is not our answer. Jesus said, “Occupy until I come”. Occupying is simply doing the things God has called us to do. Preaching, teaching, building churches, attending to the hurting and ill are only a few of our many callings. We shall be held fully responsible for answering the call God has placed upon our lives and no time has ever been more challenging than now.

All over the world strange things are happening, but are they coincidental, or is there a relevance to what Jesus and the prophets of God have said? Why are we experiencing such sinister acts, almost unbelievable, which destroy people and property without a serious concern for life and the things for which people have worked? The Bible addresses this subject.

Paul in the Bible states that perilous times are coming and specifically relates them to “**last days**” events. “**Last days**” are described as those days that close out this grace dispensation in which we live and they conclude with the coming of Jesus Christ. No doubt we are nearing the “end” and a phenomenal change seems to be in process.

Characterizing the behavior of certain human beings during the end-time period, Paul and others state that men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, blasphemers and many such things. Children will be disobedient to parents and some people will have unnatural affections. Some will become fierce and will despise those that are good. Traitors, false accusers, unthankfulness are also descriptions of this time frame. Read II Timothy, Chapter 3 for more information on this subject.

When we read Bible prophecy it is very much like reading current daily newspapers. Newspaper reports tell us of murder, rape, thefts, cruelty to children, cruelty to the elderly, terrorism, alcohol and drug related problems along with many other such things. We understand that during the course of human history, there have always been sociological problems, but now there seems to be many more and in some instances the methods used by criminals is stunningly sophisticated and grotesque.

As the end-time draws to a conclusion do we anticipate better things coming from the human family or worse? Daniel said about the end-time that it would “be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time”... (Daniel 12:1). Jesus said, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”... (Matthew 24:21).

The “god of this world” (Satan) seems to be doing exactly as the Bible predicted. He walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8). His target is the human family, the church, human government and the individual. Social disruption and psychological turmoil are his prime objectives. Be fully aware.

HOW CAN WE PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE?

1. Individually, we can prepare ourselves by becoming repentant and humble before God. Our resource as well as our refuge is God. The Bible records many experiences in which people were in almost impossible situations, and yet, they came out of them victoriously. It was because they prayed and became dependent upon the Lord that they were able to overcome. When people pray, great things happen and yes, miracles do happen today and they can happen in the future. Remember each of us is a part of the whole

2. Our nation can turn to God. The Bible teaches, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12). Nations are made up of individual people and one by one we can become committed to our Creator and ask for His help. The tide of history has been changed many times when people prayed and the prayer chain starts with the person who will sincerely pray.

3. We must turn away from evil. Things which the Bible specifically labels as sin, we should turn from. There are a number of acts committed by the human family today which we should stop immediately. Things such as child pornography, murder, theft, abortion, fornication and other such sins are only a few of the many which all of us know to be wrong. Respect and love for each other must be restored and nowhere is this needed more than in the church world. Nations who forget God and turn from Him and from each other will be turned into hell the Bible states (Psalm 9:17). Let us not become victims of such disaster.

4. We can prepare ourselves by supporting that which is right. Sometimes it may be difficult to know what is right, but if we will pray, read our Bibles and wait upon God for direction; He will certainly show us the right way to go. When uncertainty clouds our minds, David said, “thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105). Sometimes where we must walk, there is some darkness so God’s word provides special light for our pathways. God loves us so much.

Christian Chapel Church 4043 Chandler Road Muskogee, Oklahoma 74403 (918) 687-1606
