

Apocalypse Now: Session Ten

The End: What Does Revelation Teach Us About Christ's Return?

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. – Rev 19:11

It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine. – REM

The End of the World

- How many times does the world “end” in Revelation?
 - Rev 6:12-17 (The 6th Seal)
 - Rev 11:13 (The End of the 2 Witnesses Ministry)
 - Rev 11:15-19 (The 7th Trumpet)
 - Rev 14:14-20 (The Harvest of the Earth)
 - Rev 16:17-20 (The 7th Bowl)
 - Rev 19 (The Battle of Armageddon)
 - Rev 20 (The End of the Millennium)

The Harvest of the Earth

- The First Harvest (14:14-16)
 - *14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, “Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” 16 So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped.*
 - Allusion to Daniel 7:13-14
 - Jesus’ language of reaping (John 4:34-48), the fields are “white for harvest”
- The Second Harvest (14:17-20)
 - *Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, “Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” 19 So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.*
 - Parable of Wheat and Tares (Matt 13:39)
 - See Joel 3:13: “Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their evil is great.” (see Joel 3:9-21)
- Descriptions of Christ's 2nd Coming Elsewhere:
 - The Olivet Discourse (Matt 24; Mark 13; Luke 21)

who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!") 16 And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. – Rev 16:12-16

- The unholy trinity deceive the nations (the whole world) for battle, but not just any battle, *the battle* (τὸν πόλεμον)—the battle of Armageddon.
- “Armageddon” in Hebrew is *Har Meggido*, that is, “Mount Meggido.”
 - “The reference to Armageddon, meaning Mount Megiddo in Hebrew, is quite curious, for it is obvious that Megiddo is not a mountain but a plain (2 Chron. 35:22; Zech. 12:11). Anyone familiar with the land of Israel would know this, and thus John must be making a symbolic point. John provides a clue that he writes symbolically by calling a well-known plain a mountain!” (Schreiner, *ESVEC: Revelation*)
- Another allusion to the Olivet Discourse: *stay awake! I come like a thief!* (Matt 24:42-43)
- But we are left with a cliff hanger—we aren’t told here how the battle ends. For that, we need to look at chapter 19-20.

- **Revelation 19:11-21: The Battle**

- Rev 19:11-16: The Psalm 2 Messiah and His armies prepare for battle
 - The reference to “treading the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty” connect this with the second Harvest in Revelation 14, the Day of the Lord.
- Rev 19:17-21: Armageddon
 - The connection between this battle and the battle referenced at the 6th bowl:
 - the beast and the false prophet are here, as they are in 16:13
 - In an amillennial interpretation, the dragon in 20:7-9 is also here.
 - “The battle” (τὸν πόλεμον) is referenced in 19:19, as it was in 16:14
 - The “kings of the earth” are all here (19:19), as they were in 16:14
 - *Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great. – Rev 19:17-18*
 - *As for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every sort and to all beasts of the field: ‘Assemble and come, gather from all around to the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. 18 You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—of rams, of lambs, and of he-goats, of bulls, all of them fat beasts of Bashan. 19 And you shall eat fat till you are filled, and drink blood*

till you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you. 20 And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all kinds of warriors,' declares the Lord GOD. – Ezekiel 39:17-20

- *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. – Rev 19:19*
 - For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle. – Zech 14:2
 - Zechariah 14 depicts the nations of the earth surrounding Jerusalem to attack, but Yahweh shows up and His “feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives” and will destroy God’s enemies, save God’s people, and establish the New Creation.
- *And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh. – Rev 19:20-21*
 - And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. – 2 Thess 2:8
 - “... and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.” – Isa 11:4b
- *7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. – Rev 20:7-10*
 - “Gog and Magog” allude to Ezekiel 38-39, the same battle John alluded to back in 19:17-18.
 - All the nations are deceived and gathered for battle, as in 16:14 and 19:19
 - Fire falling from heaven comes, again, from the prophecy of Gog and Magog (Ez 38:22; 39:6)