

The Scriptures declare that the spirits of devils will work mighty miracles that deceive almost the whole world, and then gather the people together for the last great battle. The focal point of the conflict will be the law of God, particularly the Sabbath, which points to the Lawgiver as the only Creator and hence to our inherent obligation as His creatures to render Him obedience. It is the work of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 & 18:1-5 to counter this attack on God's law by presenting to the world the worship due to God as our Creator.

With the three-fold union of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, all the people of the earth will be forced to unite on the platform of error against God and the truth



of the Bible. And those who do not follow their decrees will be killed. Thus through the deceptive doctrines and teachings of this three-fold union of

spiritualism, Catholicism, and Protestantism, all the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to decide for or against God and His truth (see Revelation 13:15-17).

God never forces the will or the conscience, but Satan constantly resorts to varying degrees of force and cruelty in order to gain the control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce. Through fear, or by actual force, Satan endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to enact and enforce human laws which defy God and His law.

The Whole World Brought to a Decision

Once again, as in Daniel's day, an image will be raised, much as was the golden image upon the plain of Shinar (see Daniel 3). The issue is the same--the law and honor of God. Just as the music and imposing display worked to secure popular support for Nebuchadnezzar's image in ancient Babylon, in this final conflict there will be miracles to deceive. Anciently, when all lesser inducements failed, there was the fiery furnace waiting to persuade the conscience. In a similar manner the commandment-keeping people of God face the loss of all worldly support, and ultimately death itself, as the price for their faithfulness to God and His law. Only those whose faith is founded upon the sure Word of God will be able to stand amid the near total apostasy.

But at the darkest point in earth's history, when in the final stages in this battle of Armageddon it appears that the

forces of evil must surely prevail and God's obedient remnant people must soon seal their testimony with their blood, God's followers will be delivered and all the workers of iniquity will be destroyed. Christ Himself comes to save His obedient and faithful followers and take them home!

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Daniel 12:1.

"When once the master of the house is risen up...he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Luke 13:25,27.

"Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers...the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low....He (Christ) will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25:5,8-9.

It is for YOU to determine today which side YOU will be found on in this great battle of Armageddon between God and Satan--between truth and error. There will be no neutral spectators. Each person will be found in one of two positions. They will either join the lawless in making void God's law, or will be among those faithful who live by every word of God, and who keep all of His commandments.

"How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." 1 Kings 18:21.

"And if it seem evil unto YOU to serve the Lord, choose YOU this day whom ye will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord..." Joshua 24:15-16.

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The name "ARMAGEDDON" strikes terror and foreboding in the minds of many. Some imagine a great world war surrounding the Middle East. Others envision an Antichrist battling for world supremacy. Still others do not know what to believe or expect.

The word "Armageddon" itself translates "a symbolic name" (see Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, #717). Yet the Scriptures do teach that there will be an immense battle which involves the whole world!

This battle and controversy will not be fought with literal weapons, such as guns, tanks, aircraft, or armed forces. But will be fought, has already begun to be fought, and will continue to grow in intensity until every person in the world becomes involved.

"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. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Revelation 16:13-16.

As can be seen, the Scriptures teach that this battle is fought between two main forces: God, Christ, and His clean or righteousness followers, versus the Devil, evil spirits, and his unclean or wicked followers. So the battle of

Armageddon is a symbol describing this great controversy and conflict raging between God and Satan--between truth and error. And this spiritual battle will eventually involve every person on earth for each must decide whom to follow--either Christ and truth, or the devil and error: either eternal life with Christ, or eternal destruction with Satan.

This battle and warfare between Christ and Satan began in heaven.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7-9.

Even though the Devil was cast out of heaven, he continued his warfare against Christ and God on this earth. For nearly six thousand years this conflict has ebbed and flowed. But the final battle to be waged in this great controversy, the point towards which all events have been tending, is what the Bible describes as the great day of God Almighty--the battle of Armageddon. This final battle between truth and error is clearly portrayed in Revelation Chapters 12, 13, 14, & 18. And all humanity have entered into this battle today.

Since Armageddon is a symbol describing the spiritual battle between truth and error, what are the weapons the Devil uses in this great conflict? Things likened to frogs

which came out of the mouth of the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet. Now frogs catch their prey with their tongues, and what comes out of the mouth are words grouped together into statements of belief. So these three entities catch their prey by speaking or teaching various doctrines of error.

For those who desire to follow Christ and the truth, it is of the utmost importance that we clearly identify who the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet are so we can avoid being deceived by their various false doctrines and thereby lost.

As is revealed in Revelation 12, the Dragon is primarily Satan. And what statements of erroneous belief and false doctrine have originated out of Satan's mouth? Various spiritualistic, paganistic, and occultic teachings which many kingdoms of the world have been established upon--including the ancient pagan Roman Empire. While many believe paganism to be a thing of the past, there are still



millions today who are involved in its heathenistic beliefs and devil worship.

The primary feature of the pagan religion is the worship of nature. Since the most exalted form in nature is the human body, and most particularly the mind, man is led to worship the powers of the mind and thus to exalt human opinion above divine revelation.

All of the great ruling powers of earth also demonstrated the fact that in paganism, church and state were not separate—but were united together. In Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, the state was always used to support and give force to the pagan religion of the time. Time and again laws were enacted and civil power was used to enforce the worship of pagan deities and false beliefs.

Today, as well as in ancient times, the spirit of exalting and worshipping human opinions, institutions, and tradition; the spirit of worldliness; and the craving to unite the church with the state in order that the church might be strengthened to enforce her dogma and decrees, is the spirit of the Dragon. And this spirit will grow more and more prominent until it culminates in the great time of trouble for God's people.

It is not only this unclean spirit that is working today through humanism and other vain philosophies--exalting the human above the divine, exalting error above the truth--but there is a second unclean spirit which comes out of the mouth of the Beast.

In Revelation 13, the Beast which arose out of the ruins of pagan Rome; the Beast which united herself with paganism in order to increase her numbers; the Beast which ruled for 1260 prophetic days (Revelation 12:6), or 3 1/2 prophetic years (Revelation 12:14), or 42 prophetic months (Revelation 13:3)--each totaling 1260 literal years (see Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6), is none other than the Roman Catholic Church.

This great religious system of Catholicism exalts the organized church above the individual conscience, and when there is a conflict between the Bible and church creed, the latter always assumes predominance over Bible truth. If there is a disagreement between a person's conscience and church dogma, the church through its tradition and opinion always takes preeminence.

In contrast with this domination by church rule, Paul commends the noble Bereans because “they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” Acts 17:11. Nowhere do we see Paul asking the believers to accept doctrine on the basis of Apostolic authority, but rather he commended them for searching the Scriptures for themselves to confirm the truth of what they had been taught. The idea of God's word as the supreme authority and rule of life is the religion and truth of the Bible (see John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Isaiah 8:20), and this knowledge sets us free (see John 8:32).

The third unclean spirit is the spirit of the False Prophet. A prophet is one who claims to have received messages from God, and then claims to be God's spokesman in relaying these messages to the people (see Numbers 12:6; Deuteronomy 18:22). A false prophet would then be someone who purports to be speaking for God, when in reality he is not (see Jeremiah 14:14).

The False Prophet cannot refer to the papacy, for it has always claimed to accept tradition above Bible revelation and the right to change God's commandments at will. But the various churches of Protestantism have professed to follow the Bible and the Bible only as the basis of their faith and doctrine. Yet, we see them following in the footsteps of Rome by exalting tradition and human opinion above the truth of God's word! They are therefore a false prophet clinging to, and speaking forth, error and yet claiming it is God's truth!

While differing in some aspects, Protestant churches are all uniting together on points of doctrine which they all agree, and are more and more resembling Roman Catholicism. When, in the pursuit of her desired goals, this False Prophet of Protestantism follows in same footsteps of Rome, by uniting with and resorting to civil power to support its teachings and trample upon the right of free conscience in order to enforce her dogmas, she will also become an Image of this Beast (see Revelation 13).

By rejecting truth, people are rejecting the Author of truth and preparing themselves to take the Devil's side in this last great conflict. By persistent refusal to accept the authority of God--the Lawgiver, and to obey His laws, men, women, and children are binding themselves to the great apostate in lawlessness.

No error strikes more directly against the authority and government of Heaven and is more opposed to the dictates of reason than the idea that the law of God is no longer binding. Law is the basis of all government, and it is completely without reason or support to believe that the Ruler of the universe has abdicated His responsibility and left us without His law! Whether the Devil can get you to cast aside God's law altogether, or only reject one of its precepts, the result is the same. He that offends “in one point” manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes “guilty of all” (see James 2:10). Wherever the divine precepts are set aside, sin ceases to appear sinful or righteousness desirable.

