



# The Campaign of **ARMAGEDDON**

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The two climactic events of the Great Tribulation are the Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah. A considerable amount of data is given about this time period in the Scriptures. One of the greatest difficulties in the study of eschatology is placing these events in chronological sequence in order to see what exactly will happen in the Campaign of Armageddon. This chapter is an attempt to do just that.

The basis of the Second Coming of Messiah is Israel's national regeneration. Until Israel as a nation is saved; until Israel as a nation looks to the One whom they have pierced; until Israel as a nation cries out for Him to return with the words: Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord; there will be no Second Coming (Lev. 26:40-42; Jer. 3:12-18; Hos. 5:15-6:3; Zech. 12:10; Mt. 23:37-39). While the Rapture of the Church has no preconditions and can happen at any moment of time, the Second Coming does have this one precondition.

If we understand what the basis of the Second Coming of Messiah is, we can understand the theological foundations of anti-Semitism. Satan knows that once Jesus returns, his career is over. But he also knows there will be no Second Coming until the Jewish people ask the Messiah to return. Therefore, if Satan could ever succeed in destroying the Jews once and for all before they have a chance to plead for Jesus to return, there would be no Second Coming and his career would then be eternally safe. That is why throughout the centuries and throughout Jewish history Satan has had this perpetual war against the Jews seeking to try to destroy them at every opportunity. That explains Jewish persecutions of the centuries; that explains the Holocaust under Nazi Germany; and that explains the unique activities of Satan during the Tribulation.

During the second half of the Tribulation, Satan will be confined to the earth (Rev. 12:7-12) and once Satan is confined to this earth he knows his time is short (Rev. 12:12), and, knowing his time is short, he persecutes the Jews (Rev. 12:17). He must try to destroy the Jews before they have a chance to plead for the Messiah to return. The persecutions of the Jews will begin in the middle of the Tribulation and will continue until we come to the beginning points of the Campaign of Armageddon, towards the end of the Tribulation. During the period of the persecutions of the Jewish people, approximately two thirds of the Jewish population of that day will be killed, but one third will be left in the closing days, weeks, or months of the Tribulation.

The Campaign of Armageddon is specifically organized by Satan for the purpose of annihilating once and for all the one-third Remnant of the Jewish people still living.

During the seven years of the Tribulation, there will be two distinct political systems; one for each half of the Tribulation. The political system of the first half of the Tribulation is that the entire world will be sub-divided into ten, distinct nations ruled by ten kings. If Daniel's words in chapter seven are taken literally, one cannot limit these ten nations merely to western Europe; they will have to cover the entire world. Perhaps the European Union may someday become one of these ten, but it could never, biblically speaking, become all ten. During the first half of the Tribulation, ten men will rule the political affairs of the world co-equally. But in the middle of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will declare war against these ten kings. In the course of this war, he will succeed in killing three of them, and the other seven will submit to his authority. At that point the Antichrist will institute the second political system of the second half of the Tribulation; that of him being the one-world political ruler.

There will also be two distinct religious systems; one for each half of the Tribulation. The religious system of the first half of the Tribulation is what is described in Revelation 17 in terms of "ecclesiastical" Babylon. There will be a unification of all false denominations and all false religions into a one-world super-religious system. This one-world super-religious system will control the religious affairs of the world during the first half of the Tribulation.

Those who do not submit to its religious authority will suffer persecution. But in the middle of the Tribulation and after the Antichrist takes over political control, he will himself destroy this one-world religious system. He will then take over the Jewish Temple; seat himself in the Holy of Holies of the Jewish Temple; and declare himself to be the one true god. Thus, the religious system of the second half of the Tribulation will be the worship of the Antichrist. Those who accept him as God must signify it by taking his mark of 666.

From the middle of the Tribulation until the point of Armageddon during this period of tremendous Jewish persecution one man will serve as both the one-world political ruler and the one-world religious ruler. With this background and introduction, the Campaign of Armageddon can be divided into eight distinct stages and this, in turn, will facilitate the understanding of the sequence of events.

## **THE 1st STAGE: THE ASSEMBLING OF THE ALLIES OF ANTICHRIST**

The Campaign of Armageddon will begin with the sixth bowl judgment, recorded in Revelation 16:12-16:

And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the 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 they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

With the outpouring of the sixth bowl judgment, the Euphrates River will be dried up (v. 12). This drying-up process will be for the purpose of making it easier for the Antichrist to assemble his forces for the Armageddon Campaign. Although it has become common to identify the kings that come from the sunrising, or more commonly the kings of the east, with the Chinese and to combine them with the army of the 200 million of Revelation nine, neither consistency of exegesis nor the structure of the Book of Revelation will allow for this. Relative to the structure of Revelation, the "200 million" and the kings of the east belong to two different judgments which must be kept distinct and cannot be combined. The "200 million" are in a trumpet judgment, whereas the kings of the east are in a bowl judgment. Furthermore, the 200 million are demons and not men, Chinese or otherwise. Thus, the structure of the book militates against making these two judgments into one. In regard to consistency of interpretation, it also rules out the kings of the east as a reference to the Chinese. Everywhere else in the Scriptures, the east always refers to Mesopotamia (Assyria and Babylonia). Consistency demands that this, too, would be a reference to Mesopotamia and not to China (e.g., Mat. 2:1). The fact that the Antichrist's capital city of Babylon will sit on the banks of the Euphrates River further attests to the fact that the kings who come from the east will be Mesopotamian kings. Thus, consistency of interpretation also militates against matching this reference with China. Consistency of interpretation and not current events must be the basis of determining the meaning of any given text. The sixth bowl judgment will dry up the Euphrates River to make it easier for the Antichrist's Babylonian forces to maneuver. A decree will be issued from the capital city of Babylon ordering the allies of the Antichrist to gather their armies together (vv. 13-14). The gathering for this final campaign against the Jews is clearly the work of the counterfeit trinity. All three members of the counterfeit trinity are involved: the dragon, or Satan (the counterfeit father); the Beast, or the Antichrist (the counterfeit son); and the False Prophet (the counterfeit holy spirit). The summons will be reinforced by demonic activity to make sure that the nations will indeed cooperate in assembling their armies together. These demonic messengers will be empowered to perform signs in order to assure compliance and defeat any reluctance on the part of the other kings to fall into line. These kings are the seven kings that have been under the authority of the Antichrist since the middle of the Tribulation.

While the term, "Battle of Armageddon," has been commonly used, it is really a misnomer, for more than one battle will be taking place. For this reason, many prophetic teachers have stopped employing that term and are using the term, "Campaign of Armageddon," as in this chapter. But this, too, is a misnomer because there will be no fighting in Armageddon itself; all of the fighting will take place elsewhere. A more biblical name for this final conflict is found in the closing words of verse 14: the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. This is a more accurate description of the nature and extent of this final conflict.

The train of thought is now interrupted by a parenthetical statement (v. 15) containing a message of comfort and hope to the believers living at this point in the Great Tribulation. They are encouraged to continue in the faith, for when they see the gathering of the armies together, then they can know that the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah is just around the corner.

The train of thought is picked up again in verse 16, which names the place where the allies of the Antichrist will be gathered: Har-Magedon. As the ASV text shows, the word is a combination of two Hebrew words which mean, "the Mountain of Megiddo." Megiddo was a strategic city located at the western end of the Valley of Jezreel, guarding the famous Megiddo Pass into Israel's largest valley. One can see the entire Valley of Jezreel from the mount upon which the city of Megiddo stood. So what is known as the Valley of Armageddon in Christian circles is actually the biblical Valley of Jezreel. The term Armageddon is never applied to the valley itself, but only to the mount at the western end. Here, in this large valley of Lower Galilee, the armies of the world will gather for the purpose of destroying all the Jews still living.

It should be noted that the passage says nothing of a battle in this valley, for no fighting will take place here. The Valley of Jezreel, guarded by the Mountain of Megiddo, will merely serve as the gathering ground for the armies of the Antichrist. Armageddon will play the same role that England played in the closing stages of World War II. The allied forces gathered their armies together in England, but that is not where the final battle took place. The final conflict began on the beaches of Normandy, France, on D-Day. Armageddon will also serve as a gathering place, with the battle beginning elsewhere. This passage describing the gathering of the armies of the nations is more or less viewed from man's perspective. From man's standpoint, it is merely a military gathering called together by the Antichrist. But two other passages which also speak of this event show God's perspective. The first is in Joel 3:9-11:

Proclaim ye this among the nations; prepare war; stir up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Haste ye, and come, all ye nations round about, and gather yourselves together: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Jehovah.

God's viewpoint is one of mockery. The nations are mockingly encouraged to go ahead and turn their farming equipment into weapons of war. As for those who are weak, let them persuade themselves and pretend that they are strong. Because while Satan and the Antichrist have their purpose for gathering the armies, that destroying the Jews, God has His own very different purpose for permitting this gathering to take place.

This taunting of the gathering of the nations is also portrayed in Psalm 2:1-6:

Why do the nations rage,  
And the peoples meditate a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers take counsel together,  
Against Jehovah, and against his anointed, saying,  
Let us break their bonds asunder,  
And cast away their cords from us,  
He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh:  
The Lord will have then in derision.  
Then will he speak unto them in his wrath,  
And vex them in his sore displeasure:  
Yet I have set my king  
Upon my holy hill of Zion.

The gathering of the nations is presented as a gathering against God the Father and His Anointed, that is, the Messiah Jesus. By seeking to destroy the Jews, Satan is also seeking to break the cords of God's control of the world. How foolish! Then God is portrayed as sitting in the heavens and laughing, because He will soon have these nations in confusion. It is God who will set His own king upon Zion, and Satan and the Antichrist will not be able to prevent it. Although the nations will assemble to carry out the program of the counterfeit trinity, they will actually accomplish the purpose of the Triune God. This gathering of the armies of the nations in the Valley of Jezreel will be the first stage of the Campaign of Armageddon.

## **THE SECOND STAGE: THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON**

The fact that the city of Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the world capital of the Antichrist is obvious if Babylon is taken literally and not allegorically. Babylon is to be rebuilt and become the Antichrist's worldwide political and economic capital of the world. The prophecies regarding the city of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the past, as any encyclopedia article on Babylon will make quite clear. In order for these prophecies to be fulfilled, it will require the rebuilding of the city of Babylon in the same general area. Ancient Babylon is in present-day Iraq.

But not only is Babylon to become the world political capital, it is also to become the world economic capital. This fact is portrayed in the vision of Zechariah 5:5-11:

Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their appearance in all the land; (and, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead;) and this is a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is Wickedness: and he cast her down into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork; and they lifted up the ephah between earth and heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build her a house in the land of Shinar: and when it is prepared, she shall be set there in her own place.

The ephah was a measure of weight and became the symbol of economy. This symbol of economy, in this case a corrupted one, was to be placed in the Land of Shinar, which is the same as Babylonia. Hence, the future center of world economy will be centralized in the rebuilt city of Babylon. Throughout the second half of the Tribulation, Babylon will be both the center of world economy and the world political center.

But later, in the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, Babylon will suffer a sudden devastation. Several passages are concerned with the future destruction of this city, but this study will be limited to certain key passages. In Isaiah 13:1-14:23, the prophet had much to say about this event. The means by which this destruction will occur is explained in Isaiah 13:1-5: The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

Set ye up an ensign upon the bare mountain, lift up the voice unto them, wave the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles. I have commanded my consecrated ones, yea, I have called

my mighty men for mine anger, even my proudly exulting ones. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, as of a great people! the noise of a tumult of the kingdoms of the nations gathered together! Jehovah of hosts is mustering the host for the battle. They come from a far country, from the uttermost part of heaven, even Jehovah, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

The burden of Babylon that Isaiah saw was another gathering of many peoples. Whereas the gathering in the first stage will be the pro-Babylon or pro-Antichrist forces, these will be anti-Babylon or anti-Antichrist forces. Their purpose will be to destroy Babylon. The ones destroying Babylon are referred to as God's consecrated ones. God will use Gentile believers to destroy Babylon. The details of this destruction are given in Isaiah 13:6-14:23. It should be noted that this prophecy of Babylon's destruction has never been fulfilled in the manner required by the text.

For example, the context of Isaiah 13:6-22 clearly puts the destruction of Babylon, announced in verses 1-5, within the scope and time of the Day of Jehovah, a reference to the Great Tribulation. Furthermore, Babylon's destruction is connected with the final redemption of Israel in Isaiah 14:1-2:

For Jehovah will have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the sojourner shall join himself with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the peoples shall take them, and bring them to their place; and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of Jehovah for servants and for handmaids: and they shall take them captive whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

In this final destruction, Babylon will become similar to Sodom and Gomorrah in that it will be fit for habitation by only the wild animals of the desert and be uninhabitable for any man. This is the thrust of Isaiah 13:19-22:

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. Isaiah's prophecy concerning Babylon concludes in Isaiah 14:22-23, clearly stating that unlike other nations, Babylon will not even have a surviving remnant:

And I will rise up against them, saith Jehovah of hosts, and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and son and son's son, saith Jehovah. I will also make it a possession for the porcupine, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith Jehovah of hosts.

Another prophet detailing the destruction of Babylon by a number of peoples is Jeremiah, with two long chapters (50-51) devoted to it. Because of the length of these chapters, it will be

necessary to limit the study of these passages to key verses which portray the destruction of Babylon.

The fact that this prophecy concerns Babylon is clearly stated in Jeremiah 50:1: The word that Jehovah spake concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

As in Isaiah, Jeremiah 50:9-10 tells of a gathering of many peoples against the city of Babylon:

For, lo, I will stir up and cause to come up against Babylon a company 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 an expert mighty man; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a prey: all that prey upon her shall be satisfied, saith Jehovah.

The extent of this destruction and the warfare is described in Jeremiah 50:11-16:

Because ye are glad, because ye rejoice, O ye that plunder my heritage, because ye are wanton as a heifer that treadeth out the grain, and neigh as strong horses; your mother shall be utterly put to shame; she that bare you shall be confounded: behold, she shall be the hindermost of the nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of Jehovah she shall not be inhabited, but she shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. Set yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against Jehovah. Shout against her round about: she hath submitted herself; her bulwarks are fallen, her walls are thrown down; for it is the vengeance of Jehovah: take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

Later, in Jeremiah 50:21-27, there is a more graphic description of the fall of Babylon:

Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: stay and utterly destroy after them, saith Jehovah, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against Jehovah. Jehovah hath opened his armory, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation; for the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, hath a work to do in the land of the Chaldeans. Come against her from the utmost border; open her storehouses; cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly; let nothing of her be left. Slay all her bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of their visitation.

This destruction is to be so total and so final that Babylon will never be inhabited by man again. It will be as total as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, according to Jeremiah 50:39-40:

Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wolves shall dwell there, and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from

generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof, saith Jehovah, so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son or man sojourn therein. Once again Jeremiah speaks of a gathering of many peoples against Babylon in 50:41-42:

Behold, a people cometh from the north; and a great nation and many kings shall be stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, every one set in array, as a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon.

Jeremiah 50 concludes with a statement of God's decree against Babylon and the anguish of the nations over the destruction of their world capital in verses 45-46:

Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembleth, and the cry is heard among the nations. The graphic description of the fall of Babylon in Jeremiah 50 is followed by a more detailed description in Jeremiah 51. It will be Babylon's influence on other nations that will cause God's judgment to fall on her, according to Jeremiah 51:7-9:

Babylon hath been a golden cup in Jehovah's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: wail for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country; for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. According to Jeremiah 51:24, the judgment will be especially severe due to Babylon's evil deeds against the people of Israel:

And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith Jehovah. Because Babylon has ruled the entire world ruinously, God will now destroy her that had destroyed so many, for Jeremiah 51:25-26 states:

Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith Jehovah, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith Jehovah.

Indeed, says Jeremiah 51:29, God has purposed a total and complete destruction of the city of Babylon:

And the land trembleth and is in pain; for the purposes of Jehovah against Babylon do stand, to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without inhabitant. Once more Jeremiah points out, in verses 35-36, that the necessity of this judgment will be due to Babylon's treatment of the Jews: The violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the inhabitant of Zion say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith Jehovah: Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain dry. The destruction of Babylon will bring about great rejoicing among the faithful,

and it is viewed as God's vengeance against Babylon for mistreatment of the Jews in Jeremiah 51:48-49:

Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the destroyers shall come unto her from the north, saith Jehovah. As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the land.

The prophecy of Babylon's destruction closes with a description of the results of Babylon's fall in Jeremiah 51:54-58:

The sound of a cry from Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! For Jehovah layeth Babylon waste, and destroyeth out of her the great voice; and their waves roar like many waters; the noise of their voice is uttered: for the destroyer is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, their bows are broken in pieces; for Jehovah is a God of recompenses, he will surely requite. And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is Jehovah of hosts. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the peoples shall labor for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary. To seal the prophecies, Jeremiah the Prophet performed a physical act that had a symbolic significance. This act is described in 51:59-64:

The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was chief chamberlain. And Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written concerning Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, then see that thou read all these words, and say, O Jehovah, thou hast spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, that none shall dwell therein, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be desolate for ever. And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise again because of the evil that I will bring upon her; and they shall be weary.

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

A copy of Jeremiah 50:1-52:58 was written on a scroll and tied to a rock. After having been read before the Jewish exiles in Babylon, it was cast into the Euphrates River. Just as the scroll sank, so Babylon will sink.

There are two indications in the text of this prophecy that the king of Babylon, the Antichrist, will not be present in the city when his capital city is destroyed. The first is in Jeremiah 50:43:

The king of Babylon hath heard the tidings of them, and his hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. The second is in Jeremiah 51:31-32:

One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken on every quarter: and the passages are seized, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and the men of war are affrighted.

The very fact that messengers must be sent out to inform the king of Babylon that his city is destroyed is a clear-cut indication that he will not be there when it happens. Otherwise, there would be no need to tell him. So where is he? By comparing the Scriptures of the first stage with those of the second stage, it would appear that while the Antichrist is meeting his forces in the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies take the opportunity to gather and destroy his capital city.

Prior to the sudden massive destruction of Babylon, a warning will be given to the Jews who are still in Babylon telling them to flee out of the city before it is too late. This warning comes several times in the prophecy of Jeremiah. The first is in 50:6-8:

My people have been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray; they have turned them away on the mountains; they have gone from mountain to hill; they have forgotten their resting-place. All that found them have devoured them; and their adversaries said, We are not guilty, because they have sinned against Jehovah, the habitation of righteousness, even Jehovah, the hope of their fathers. Flee 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.

Later, a second warning is referred to in 50:28:

The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of Jehovah our God, the vengeance of his temple. Those who escape from Babylon will flee to Jerusalem to announce Babylon's destruction to the Jews there. This is God's vengeance on Babylon because of Babylon's mistreatment of the Jews and His vengeance for His Temple because of the sinful act of the Abomination of Desolation.

A third admonition is found in 51:5-6:

For Israel is not forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of Jehovah of hosts; though their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and save every man his life; be not cut off in her iniquity: for it is the time of Jehovah's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense. God's vengeance is about to be poured out against Babylon. Therefore, the Jews are encouraged to flee lest they also fall prey to this vengeance. As in 50:28, those escaping will go to Jerusalem to declare what God has done, according to Jeremiah 51:10:

Jehovah hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of Jehovah our God.

This is followed by a fourth warning in 51:45:

My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and save yourselves every man from the fierce anger of Jehovah.

The fifth and final warning is in 51:50:

Ye that have escaped the sword, go ye, stand not still; remember Jehovah from afar, and let Jerusalem come into your mind.

In this final admonition to flee Babylon before her destruction, they are also instructed to make their way to Jerusalem to inform the Jews there. Thus, prior to the sudden and great destruction of Babylon, the Jews will be given a warning to leave Babylon. They will succeed in their escape and will make their way to Jerusalem.

Reiterating a previous notation: these prophecies of the destruction of Babylon have never been fulfilled in the manner required by the statements of Scripture. The Babylon of past history slowly died out and became a ghost town. Furthermore, this destruction of Babylon is clearly associated with the final regeneration and restoration of Israel. Such events never did happen in connection with ancient Babylon.

Pertinent to the regeneration of Israel Jeremiah 50:4-5 states: In those days, and in that time, saith Jehovah, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping, and shall seek Jehovah their God. They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come ye, and join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.

In these verses, the destruction of Babylon will come at the same time that Israel is seeking Jehovah their God and entering into an everlasting covenant with God, the same as the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The destruction of Babylon is associated with the restoration of Israel in Jeremiah 50:19-20:

And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days, and in that time, saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: For I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant.

Israel is viewed as restored in her land with all her sins forgiven so that no one will even be able to find her sins any more. This restoration is to be a result of the destruction of Babylon and can hardly be true of ancient Babylon. All these things point to the fact that the city of Babylon is to suffer a destruction at the time of Israel's regeneration. This requires Babylon's destruction to come during the Campaign of Armageddon. This in turn requires the city of Babylon to be rebuilt.

Another extensive passage dealing with the destruction of Babylon is Revelation 18:1-24. This chapter of Revelation deals specifically with the political and economic Babylon that will rule the world for 3 1/2 years. The passage begins with a declaration of the fall of Babylon in 18:1-3:

After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and

a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness. With its destruction, Babylon is to become a habitation of demons. This will be the place of demonic abode and confinement during the Messianic Age (v. 1-2). This is hardly true of Babylon today. The reason for this severe judgment of Babylon will be the global political (kings of the earth) and economic (merchants of the earth) corruption originating in this city because of the Antichrist's rule (v. 3).

As in the Jeremiah prophecies, Revelation 18:4-5 reveals that there will be a call to the Jews to flee the city prior to Babylon's destruction: And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

The cup of Babylon's iniquity will then be full. Lest the Jews become subject to Babylon's judgment, they are urged to flee, and this they will do. The indictment against Babylon is given next in Revelation 18:6-8: Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her.

Babylon is condemned to receive double the punishment she inflicted on others (v. 6). Because this city, through the counterfeit trinity, will vaunt itself against the God of Heaven (v. 7), it will suffer a swift and sudden destruction by fire (v. 8).

After Babylon's destruction there will be intense lamenting by those who invested heavily in her, became rich by her, but will now be bankrupt by her destruction. Three classes of people will mourn over Babylon, and their lamentations are recorded in Revelation 18:9-19. First is the lamentation of the kings, the political rulers of the world, in 18:9-10:

And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.

These are the seven kings who have co-reigned with the Antichrist and submitted their authority to the Antichrist, the king of Babylon. Whatever power or authority they held, was held by the grace of Babylon. Seeing their authority waning with Babylon's destruction, they will lament the swiftness of the judgment. They will be able to see the smoke of Babylon "afar off," for they will see it from the Valley of Jezreel in Israel.

The second group of mourners are the merchants in 18:11-17a:

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men. And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearl! for in one hour so great riches is made desolate.

Babylon will become the economic center of the world, the center of business and world trade, a city characterized by the luxury items listed in this passage. But it will suddenly all go up in smoke, and the wealth of the merchants will be no more. Swiftly becoming paupers, the merchants will be heard lamenting indeed. The transporters of goods are the third group who benefited from their association with Babylon. But they, too, will lament in 18:17b-19:

And every shipmaster, and every one that saileth any whither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off, and cried out as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein all that had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Since the merchants will no longer have goods to market, the transporters will no longer have merchandise to transport, by which they have become rich. Hence, they, too, will lament greatly the sudden destruction. However, while three groups are in mourning, there will be three other groups rejoicing in 18:20:

Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her.

There will be lamenting on the earth by kings, merchants and transporters. But in Heaven there will be three groups rejoicing: saints, apostles and prophets. The destruction of Babylon will mark the soon return of Jesus the Messiah. The passage ends with a picture of the totality of Babylon's destruction in 18:21-24:

And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and minstrels and fluteplayers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in thee; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all the nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.

Jeremiah commanded a scroll-wrapped stone to be thrown into the Euphrates River to symbolize the sinking of the city of Babylon. Now another person, an angel, also casts a stone, the size of a millstone, into the sea to depict how totally Babylon will disappear so as not to be found any more (v. 21). Babylon will cease to be the world center and capital (vv. 22-23) because she was guilty of the blood of the prophets (e.g. the Two Witnesses) and the slaughter of the Tribulation saints (v. 24).

To summarize the study of the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, while the Antichrist will move his forces into the Valley of Jezreel, his enemies will take the opportunity to destroy the city of Babylon quickly and suddenly. According to Isaiah 13:3, they will be Gentile believers of the Tribulation. Just prior to this, however, the Jews will be warned to flee out of Babylon. This they will do, and will make their way to Jerusalem to report to the Jews who are there. This sudden destruction of the world political and economic capital will cause great consternation on the earth, but not in Heaven. For when Babylon's destruction comes, it will signal that the Second Coming will occur soon, and along with it the regeneration and restoration of Israel.

### **THE THIRD STAGE: THE FALL OF JERUSALEM**

Although the Antichrist will have all his allied forces with him when he receives the news that his capital city has been destroyed, he does not move eastward to destroy his enemies. It is Satan who will be in control and it is Satan's program, that of Jewish destruction, that will be uppermost in his mind. So instead of moving east, the Antichrist will move south against Jerusalem. It is Zechariah who described this third stage in two places. The first is Zechariah 12:1-3:

The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus saith Jehovah, who stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him: Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of reeling unto all the peoples round about, and upon Judah also shall it be in the siege against Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples; all that burden themselves with it shall be sore wounded; and all the nations of the earth shall be gathered together against it. The second is in Zechariah 14:1-2:

Behold, a day of Jehovah cometh, when thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

From the Valley of Jezreel the armies of the Antichrist will move south, and all the armies of all the nations will gather against Jerusalem. Once again, Jerusalem will fall into Gentile hands, and half of the Jewish population will be taken into slavery while the other half will be allowed to remain in the city to await a later fate.

The capture of Jerusalem by the forces of the Antichrist will not come easily. God will greatly energize the Jews to withstand the attack to a great degree, causing heavy losses to the armies of

the Antichrist. Zechariah 12:3 stated that all these nations that burden themselves with Jerusalem will be sorely wounded, and Jerusalem will become truly burdensome to them. The empowerment of the Jewish forces is described in Zechariah 12:4-9:

In that day, saith Jehovah, I will smite every horse with terror, and his rider with madness; and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah, and will smite every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in Jehovah of hosts their God. In that day will I make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire among wood, and like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour all the peoples round about, on the right hand and on the left; and they of Jerusalem shall yet again dwell in their own place, even in Jerusalem. Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah. In that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. These verses describe God's providential dealings at this stage of the Campaign of Armageddon prior to the actual intervention by the personal return of Jesus the Messiah. In the battle for Jerusalem, the Jewish military leaders will be so energized that they appear to strike down the enemy as quickly as a torch begins to burn up wood that is very dry. The feeble among the Jews take on the strength of David, and the Davids among them take on the strength of the Angel of Jehovah. What is meant by God's saving the tents of Judah first, that is, before Jerusalem, will be discussed later in this chapter. Nevertheless, this is one of the ways God will begin destroying the nations that have come against Jerusalem (v. 9).

This energizing of the Jewish forces in the battle for Jerusalem is further described in Micah 4:11-5:1:

And now many nations are assembled against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye see our desire upon Zion. But they know not the thoughts of Jehovah, neither understand they his counsel; for he hath gathered them as the sheaves to the threshing-floor. Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt beat in pieces many peoples: and I will devote their gain unto Jehovah, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. Now shalt thou gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.

The nations will be assembled against Jerusalem (v. 11) for the purpose of destroying it. But in the course of doing so, these nations will become like sheaves on the threshing-floor (v. 12), and the Jewish forces will be able to thresh them well. However, the battle will be lost, and the Gentiles will capture Jerusalem and symbolize it by smiting Jerusalem's leader on the cheek (v. 1). After such heavy fighting and great losses, the soldiers of the Antichrist will plunder the Jewish homes of Jerusalem, and Jewish women will be subjected to massive rapes (Zech. 14:2). With this, the third stage will come to an end.

## **THE FOURTH STAGE: THE ARMIES OF THE ANTICHRIST AT BOZRAH**

While Jerusalem falls in the third stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, the majority of the Jews are no longer in Jerusalem. In fact, they are no longer even in the Land of Israel. According to Matthew 24:15-22 and Revelation 12:6-17, the State of Israel as it now exists will collapse in the middle of the Tribulation and there will be another dispersion out of the Land. The majority of the one-third Remnant that survives makes its way into a special place. The Scriptures provide several clues as to where this place is located. According to Matthew 24:16, it is in the mountains; in Revelation 12:6, 13-14, it is in the wilderness; and in Isaiah 33:12-16, it is in a very rocky place that is easily defended. These are all clues, but no specific place is named. However, Micah 2:12 does name a specific place:

I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of you; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The specific place where the Remnant of Israel is said to be hiding is a city known in Hebrew as Bozrah. That same city is better known today by its Greek name of Petra. It is called Petra by the Greeks because this entire city is composed of buildings which are carved out of cliff-rocks and the name Petra means "cliff-rock."

In Hebrew the city is called Bozrah which means "sheepfold" because that is what this city is shaped like. An ancient sheepfold had a very narrow passageway going in so that the shepherd would be able to count his sheep as they entered the sheepfold to make sure none were lost. Once they were inside the sheepfold, it would open into a larger, circular area where the sheep would have more freedom of movement. That is exactly what Bozrah looks like. The only way into this city is by a very narrow passageway which extends for about 1 1/4 miles in length. Once you are through this narrow passageway, which can be defended by only two men against a whole army, you are inside a huge, circular area. It is a place that is "easily defended"; it is within the wilderness of the area of Jordan; it is also in the mountain ranges of Mount Seir. It is part of the ancient territory known as Edom or modern-day, southern Jordan.

Why here of all places? Besides the fact that it is easily defended, another reason is given in Daniel 11:36-45. Here he describes the conquest of the Antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation as the Antichrist begins his world political takeover. But verse 41 makes the following statement:

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

While the Antichrist does gain world political control, Daniel says three nations will escape his domination. These three nations are the ancient nations of Edom, Moab, and Ammon. Today, all three of these ancient nations comprise only one nation: Jordan. The city of Petra or Bozrah is within the territory of ancient Edom or modern, southern Jordan.

As always in Jewish history, whenever there has been persecution of the Jews in one part of the world, God always opened up a place<sup>3/4</sup>a city of refuge<sup>3/4</sup>in another part of the world. The crucial Jewish-history year of 1492, as the nations of Europe began expelling their Jews, was the

same year that Columbus discovered the New World which has become one of the greatest havens for Jewish refugees fleeing persecution elsewhere. The principle is that when the Jews are being persecuted in one place, there is a city of refuge in another place.

In the Tribulation, when the whole world turns against the Jews under the Antichrist, even then God makes certain there is one place in the world outside the political domination of the Antichrist: the land of Edom or modern, southern Jordan. That is the only place the Jews will be able to flee to, and that is where they will flee. The bulk of the Remnant will be hiding there at that time. Since the purpose of this campaign is the total annihilation of the Jews still living, after Jerusalem falls in the third stage, next comes the fourth stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, when the armies of the world will move southward from Jerusalem to Bozrah as Jeremiah 49:13-14 makes clear:

For I have sworn by myself, says Jehovah, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. I have heard tidings from Jehovah, and an ambassador is sent among the nations, saying, Gather yourselves together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle.

The next place where the nations of the earth will gather is at Bozrah in order to destroy the Remnant of Israel that will be gathered there. In stage four the armies begin moving south and applying pressure upon the bulk of the Remnant now in hiding in the city of Bozrah or Petra.

## **THE FIFTH STAGE: THE NATIONAL REGENERATION OF ISRAEL**

There are two preconditions that must be met for the Second Coming of Messiah. First, there must be a national confession of Israel. According to Leviticus 26:39-42, before Israel can enjoy the full benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant as it pertains to the borders of the Promised Land, they must first confess the iniquity of their fathers. One, specific iniquity of their fathers has to be confessed before they could enjoy the full benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant. Jeremiah 3:12-18 teaches that before Israel can enjoy the full benefits of the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom they must also confess their iniquity. Again, iniquity was both singular and specific: one specific sin has to be confessed before they can enjoy the full benefits of the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom. Hosea 5:15 reads:

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.

Before anyone can go back to a place, he must first leave it. Only after he has left it can he then return to it. God says that He will return to His place. God's place is Heaven, so before God can return to Heaven He must first leave it. When did God ever leave Heaven? He left Heaven at the Incarnation when He became man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. But because of one, specific offence committed against Him, He went back to Heaven at the Ascension from the Mount of Olives. The verse goes on to point out that He will not return to this earth until that offence is confessed. The Jewish national offence committed against the person of Jesus is not in killing Him, because it was Gentiles who killed Jesus; it was Gentiles who put Jesus to death.

The Jewish national offence lies in the rejection of His Messiahship. Until that rejection is confessed, there will be no Second Coming.

Second, there must be a pleading for Him to return. Zechariah 12:10 states that before there can be a national cleansing of Israel's sins (Zech. 13), and before there can be a Second Coming and Kingdom (Zech. 14), Israel must first look unto the One . . . whom they have pierced, and they must mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son. According to Matthew 23:37-39, before Jesus will come back, Israel must plead for Him to come back with the words: Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. The point is that just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, the Jewish leaders must someday lead the nation to acceptance of the Messiahship of Jesus.

The basis of the Second Coming of Messiah based upon these passages is basically two-fold: (1) Israel must confess their national sin<sup>3/4</sup>the rejection of His Messiahship; but (2) they must plead for Him to return<sup>3/4</sup>to mourn for him, as one mourns for [an] only son.

In Hosea 6:1-3, we have the continuation of the thoughts of chapter five. Hosea 5:15 ended with the statement that Jesus the Messiah would not return to this earth until that offence of the rejection is confessed. The first three verses of chapter six is a response to the demands of Hosea 5:15 and they read as follows:

Come, and let us return unto Jehovah; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live before him. And let us know, let us follow on to know Jehovah: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth. This passage is actually a continuation of Hosea five. The chapter division is unfortunate, because it breaks the train of thought. This passage contains the acknowledgment of the sin demanded in 5:15. Verses 1-3 are in the form of a call issued by the Jewish leaders exhorting the nation to repent and confess their national sin (vv. 1-2). Only then will the physical blessings Israel once enjoyed be restored to her (v. 3). The leaders of Israel will finally recognize the reason why the Tribulation has fallen on them. Whether this will be done by the study of the Scriptures, or by the preaching of the 144,000, or via the Two Witnesses, or by the ministry of Elijah, is not clearly stated. Most likely, there will be a combination of these things. But the leaders will come to a realization of the national sin in some way. Just as the Jewish leaders once led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, they will now lead the nation to the acceptance of His Messiahship by issuing the call of Hosea 6:1-3, which will begin the last three days before the Second Coming.

The confession of Israel's national sin will last for the first two days. The national confession of Israel is given with its actual words in Isaiah 53:1-9: Who hath believed our message? and to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been revealed? For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and as one from whom men hide their face he was despised; and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who among them considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due? And they made his grave with the wicked, and with a rich man in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. In this confession, they admit that the nation had looked upon Jesus as nothing more than another man, a criminal who had died for His own sins. However, on this occasion they recognize that He was no ordinary man, but the perfect Lamb of God, the Messiah Himself. Furthermore, it was not for His own sins that Messiah died, but for theirs, so that they need not be stricken for their sin. Thus, the national regeneration will come by means of the national confession of Isaiah 53:1-9. On the third of the last three days, the nation as a nation will be saved, fulfilling the prophecy of Romans 11:25-27:

For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins. The all Israel means just that-every Jew living at that point of time, meaning the third that are left from the original number of Jews living at the start of the Tribulation (Zech. 13:8-9). Israel's national confession and regeneration will be accomplished within two days after the issuance of the call. The second facet leading to the Second Coming is the pleading of Israel for the Messiah to return and save them from their predicament of having the world armies intent on their destruction gathered outside of Bozrah. The pleading of the Jews for the Messiah to come and save them is the subject of much revelation. It is described in Zechariah 12:10-13:1:

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeites apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

The pleading of Israel for the Messiah to return will not be confined to the Jews of Bozrah, but will include the Jews still in Jerusalem. It will begin with the confession of the national sin, and then they will plead for His return to save them from the troubles described in the preceding context. They plead for the One Whom they have pierced. This will be the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (v. 10); Israel's mourning for the Messiah (12:11-14); and the cleansing of Israel's sins (13:1).

Another prophecy of this event is in Joel 2:28-32:

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape, as Jehovah hath said, and among the remnant those whom Jehovah doth call.

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, and here the nation of Israel will be regenerated because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on them, creating some dramatic manifestations in their midst (vv. 28-29). This will be accompanied by wonders in the heavens as well (vv. 30-31). The result of all this is that the Jews of Jerusalem will be delivered and escape, as well as the Remnant of Bozrah (v. 32).

In the process of Israel's regeneration and new prophetic manifestations, the false prophets who have led Israel astray during the course of the Tribulation will be executed, as recorded in Zechariah 13:2-6:

And it shall come to pass in that day, saith Jehovah of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered; and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of Jehovah; and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he prophesieth; neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive: but he shall say, I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground; for I have been made a bondman from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds between thine arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

At the time of Israel's national cleansing from sin (v. 2) the false prophets will be sought out and executed. Often the parents of the false prophets will themselves be the ones to carry out the execution (vv. 2-3). Though many of these false prophets will attempt to hide the fact that they were formerly prophets, the scars on their bodies, a symbol of their prophetic office, will betray them for what they were. Their denials will not be able to save them (vv. 4-6).

That the Remnant comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus the Messiah by way of the fires of the Tribulation is summarized in Zechariah 13:7-9:

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith Jehovah of hosts; smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith Jehovah, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.

Verse seven gives the basic reason why the events of the Tribulation will fall on Israel. God's shepherd, the Messiah, was smitten and so His sheep, Israel, were scattered throughout the world. Toward the latter end of the dispersion will come the Great Tribulation, through which two-thirds of the Jewish population will be killed (v. 8). But the remaining third will be refined. By means of the national confession of their sin, they will be purified (v. 9). God will then answer their pleading for Him to come and save them. They will once again be His people, and He will be their God.

Isaiah 64:1-12 also describes the pleading for the Second Coming of the Messiah:

Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence, as when fire kindleth the brushwood, and the fire causeth the waters to boil; to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down; the mountains quaked at thy presence. For from of old men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen a God besides thee, who worketh for him that waiteth for him. Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou wast wroth, and we sinned: in them have we been of long time; and shall we be saved? For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousnesses are as a polluted garment: and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us by means of our iniquities.

But now, O Jehovah, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Jehovah, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, look, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. The holy cities are become a wilderness, Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned with fire; and all our pleasant places are laid waste. Wilt thou refrain thyself for these things, O Jehovah? wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?

The passage begins with the pleading for the Lord to come down and let the nations realize His presence (vv. 1-2). The Remnant of Israel will remember the mighty works of God in the past (vv. 3-7) and seek those mighty works of God again (v. 8). They will ask for the forgiveness of their sins (v. 9). Their disastrous plight is shown by the fact that Jerusalem had been made a desolation by the nations (v. 9-10) and the Temple was still defiled (v. 11). The passage ends with a plea for God to intervene lest they, too, become ruined (v. 12). Several of the Psalms are

merely poetic versions of the pleading of the remnant for God to come and save them from the invading armies. One such passage is Psalm 79:1-13:

O God, the nations are come into thine inheritance;  
Thy holy temple have they defiled;  
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.  
The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be food unto the birds of the heavens,  
The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.  
Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem;  
And there was none to bury them.  
We are become a reproach to our neighbors,  
A scoffing and derision to them that are round about us.  
How long, O Jehovah? wilt thou be angry for ever?  
Shall thy jealousy burn like fire?  
Pour out thy wrath upon the nations that know thee not,  
And upon the kingdoms that call not upon thy name.  
For they have devoured Jacob,  
And laid waste his habitation.  
Remember not against us the iniquities of our forefathers:  
Let thy tender mercies speedily meet us;  
For we are brought very low.  
Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name;  
And deliver us, and forgive our sins, for thy name's sake.  
Wherefore should the nations say, Where is their God?  
Let the avenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed  
Be known among the nations in our sight.  
Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee:  
According to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to death;  
And render unto our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom  
Their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee, O Lord.  
So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture  
Will give thee thanks for ever:  
We will show forth thy praise to all generations.

This Psalm is impossible to understand except in the context of the faithful Remnant pleading for the Messiah to return and save them from the invading Gentile armies. After recalling the events of the fall of Jerusalem (the third stage), with the city in ruins, the Abomination of Desolation of the Temple, and the death of so many Jews (vv. 1-4), they will plead for God to come down, to rescue them and to pour His wrath out on the Gentile nations (vv. 5-7). They will plead for the forgiveness of the sins of their forefathers (as demanded by Lev. 26:40) who led the nation to the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus, as well as for the forgiveness of their own sins (vv. 8-9). On the basis of what these Gentile nations have done to Israel, they will ask God to avenge them as He had promised and to save them from their enemies (vv. 10-12). Then they will give thanks and sing the praise of God forever (v. 13). Another Psalm that describes the pleading of the remnant is Psalm 80:1-19:

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,  
Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock;  
Thou that sittest above the cherubim, shine forth.  
Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy might,  
And come to save us. Turn us again, O God;  
And cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.  
O Jehovah God of hosts,  
How long wilt thou be angry against the prayer of thy people?  
Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears,  
And given them tears to drink in large measure.  
Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors;  
And our enemies laugh among themselves.  
Turn us again, O God of hosts;  
And cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.  
Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt:  
Thou didst drive out the nations, and plantedst it.  
Thou preparedst room before it,  
And it took deep root, and filled the land.  
The mountains were covered with the shadow of it,  
And the boughs thereof were like cedars of God.  
It sent out its branches unto the sea,  
And its shoots unto the River.  
Why hast thou broken down its walls,  
So that all they that pass by the way do pluck it?  
The boar out of the wood doth ravage it,  
And the wild beasts of the field feed on it.  
Turn again, we beseech thee, O God of hosts:  
Look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine,  
And the stock, which thy right hand planted,  
And the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.  
It is burned with fire, it is cut down:  
They perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.  
Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand,  
Upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself.  
So shall we not go back from thee:  
Quicken thou us, and we will call upon thy name.  
Turn us again, O Jehovah God of hosts;  
Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

This Psalm opens with a pleading for the Shepherd of Israel to come and save them (vv. 1-2). Not only will they plead for their physical deliverance, but also for their spiritual salvation (v. 3). The phrase, turn us again, points to the repentance and conversion by which we shall be saved. After describing the bitter state in which they find themselves, having become the laughing stock of the nations, they will plead once again for God to come and save them (vv. 4-7).

Recalling God's past dealings with Israel from the Exodus to the kingdom of David and Solomon (vv. 8-11), they will mourn over their present state of having been slowly brought down by the Gentile nations (vv. 12-13). Therefore, they will appeal to God to turn to them and defend the cause of Israel which had been so badly bruised (vv. 14-16). The specific person they are pleading for is the one on God's right hand (v. 17), referred to as the son of man. This is none other than Jesus the Messiah, who has been sitting at the right hand of God the Father ever since the ascension from the Mount of Olives after He was rejected by Israel. Only by faith in the Son of Man can Israel be regenerated. Only by calling upon the name of the Lord can Israel be saved spiritually (vv. 18-19). Only by the return of the Son of Man can Israel be saved physically.

In conclusion, during the fifth stage, Israel as a nation will be regenerated and saved after two days of national confession of sin. On the third day, they will plead for the Second Coming of the Messiah.

## **THE SIXTH STAGE: THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS THE MESSIAH**

In the sixth stage, Jesus will return at the Jewish request for Him to do so. The initial place of His return will not be the Mount of Olives, as is commonly taught, but the place known as Bozrah. Since this fact is relatively new to most people, it would be best to deal with the place of the Second Coming of the Messiah before discussing the manner of His return. Four key passages pinpoint the place of the Second Coming as Bozrah. A fifth one has a possible reference to it. The first passage is Isaiah 34:1-7:

Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye peoples: let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof; the world, and all things that come forth from it. For Jehovah hath indignation against all the nations, and wrath against all their host: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and the stench of their dead bodies shall come up; and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away, as the leaf fadeth from off the vine, and as a fading leaf from the fig-tree. For my sword hath drunk its fill in heaven:

Behold, it shall come down upon Edom, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of Jehovah is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for Jehovah hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. And the wild-oxen shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be drunken with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness.

Isaiah begins with a call to all the nations, declaring that God has indignation against all these nations and against their armies in particular. They are destined to be slaughtered with the sword of the Lord (vv. 1-3). Not only will there be convulsions in the earth at this time, but there will be a shaking in the heavens as well (v. 4). But when the sword of God strikes all the armies of all the nations, in what place will it strike? The name of the country where all the nations will be smitten is identified as the land of Edom (v. 5). Becoming even more specific, it will occur at the city of Bozrah in the land of Edom (vv. 6-7). According to this passage, the exact geographic

spot where God will strike all the armies of all the nations will be the city of Bozrah in the land of Edom (southern Jordan).

A far more graphic description is given in Isaiah 63:1-6. While in a prophetic vision, Isaiah the Prophet was standing on some high point or mountain in Israel looking eastward towards the land of Edom when suddenly he saw a magnificent, but blood-stained, figure approaching him in glory and splendor. At that point a question and answer session ensues between Isaiah the Prophet and this marching figure. Isaiah initiated the conversation with the first question in 63:1a: Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?

The figure approaching him is coming from the land of Edom and from the city of Bozrah. His features are reflecting His glory, and there is greatness in His strength. There can be little doubt that this figure arrayed with the Shechinah Glory is the Jewish Messiah Himself. The answer to Isaiah's question comes in 63:1b:

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. If there was doubt as to the identity of the person before, it should be very clear now. Only one man can answer, I that speak in righteousness. Only one man has the power that is mighty to save. It is the Person of Jesus the Messiah marching toward Israel from the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah. Isaiah responds to this answer with a second question in 63:2:

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat?

Isaiah noticed that the clothing of this individual, though glorified with the Shechinah Glory, is nevertheless stained with blood. So Isaiah inquires as to how His garments became stained. This question is answered in 63:3-6:

I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yea, I trod them in mine anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my wrath, it upheld me. And I trod down the peoples in mine anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.

The staining with blood was caused by a battle fought in the land of Edom and the city of Bozrah. He fought against the nations alone. In the course of trampling the nations, their lifeblood sprinkled on His garments, staining them red (v. 3). The fight was necessary in order for Him to save His redeemed people, Israel (v. 4). He fought all alone and there were none to help Him (vv. 5-6).

The main point to learn from this passage is that the battle is initiated in the land of Edom and at the city of Bozrah. By the time Messiah reaches Israel, His garments are already stained with blood from the slaughter of the enemy. The third Scripture that places His initial return in this

area is Habakkuk 3:3: God came from Teman, And the Holy One from mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of his praise.

Teman and Mount Paran are both in the vicinity of Bozrah and are located in the same mountain range of Mount Seir. The context is obviously speaking of the Second Coming of Messiah, and that event is said to be in the same area. All these passages clearly pinpoint the place of the Second Coming as being in the land of Edom and at the city of Bozrah. This correlates with where the Remnant of Israel will be located in the last days. The Remnant of Israel gathered in Bozrah and the Second Coming are linked together in the fourth passage, in Micah 2:12-13:

I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat: and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them.

The Remnant of Israel will be gathered in Bozrah (v. 12) where they will be besieged by the forces of the Antichrist. They are finally able to break the siege, because Jehovah the King is leading them (v. 13). The breaker, the king, and Jehovah are all the same Person in this verse. At the Second Coming, the Messiah will enter into battle with the forces of the Antichrist which have gathered at this city.

A fifth passage that may refer to this same event is in Judges 5:4-5:

Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,  
When thou marchest out of the field of Edom,  
The earth trembled, the heavens also dropped,  
Yea, the clouds dropped water.  
The mountains quaked at the presence of Jehovah,  
Even yon Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

It is not really certain that these verses are speaking of the Second Coming, but if so (and the author leans toward this position with caution), God is seen as coming from Mount Seir and from the land of Edom. Mount Seir is the mountain range of southern Jordan in which the city of Bozrah is located.

Having identified the place of the Second Coming, it is now necessary to look at the Scriptures dealing with the manner of the Second Coming, and at the final battle between Jesus and Antichrist. It has already been learned from Isaiah 63:2-6 that when He fights, Messiah will fight alone and no others will participate in the battle.

The manner of the Second Coming is described in Matthew 24:30 as being with the clouds of Heaven:

. . . and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and thy shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Throughout the Old Testament, clouds and the Shechinah Glory are interrelated. In this New Testament passage, the interrelation can be seen again. According to Acts 1:9-11, Jesus will return in the same manner as He left:

And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

It must be noted that the angels did not prophesy that Jesus would return to the same place, but rather in the same manner in which He had left. Jesus left in the clouds of Heaven and, according to Matthew 24:30, He will return in the clouds of Heaven.

An extended passage on the Second Coming is in Revelation 19:1-18. Prior to dealing with the manner of the Second Coming itself, this chapter has a prelude composed of three elements in 19:1-10. The first element in 19:1-8 is the four-fold hallelujah. The first hallelujah is for the fall of the Ecclesiastical Babylon in 19:1-2:

After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

The second hallelujah, in 19:3, is for the destruction of the city of Babylon, the economic and political capital of the world:

And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goeth up for ever and ever.

The third hallelujah is a worshipful praise to God from those around the throne, namely the 24 elders and the four seraphs in 19:4-5:

And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, ye that fear him, the small and the great.

The fourth hallelujah is for the marriage of the Lamb in 19:6-8:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the

Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

The second element of the prelude is an invitation to the marriage feast of the Lamb in 19:9:

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are true words of God. It is with the marriage feast that the Millennium will begin, but the invitations are sent out just prior to the Second Coming. They go out to all the redeemed who are not members of the Church: i.e., the Old Testament and Tribulation saints soon to be resurrected. Finally, the third element of the prelude comes in the declaration of the spirit of prophecy in 19:10:

And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. He is the source of all prophecy, and all prophecy moves towards a fulfillment by Him with a view towards His own glory.

With that prelude completed, the Apostle then describes the Second Coming in 19:11-16:

And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

This account of the Second Coming, which begins by describing Messiah as the Judge (vv. 11-13), has many similarities with the descriptions found in the first chapter of Revelation. The war He engages in against the nations is a result of judgment by Him Who is faithful and true. He wears on His head the diadem crowns, indicating His natural royalty. His garments are stained with blood, just as in Isaiah 63:1-6, for reasons discussed earlier. This is the Second Coming of the Judge and the incarnate Word of God; Jesus returning in righteousness to judge the nations.

When He returns, Messiah will be followed by armies (v. 14). The word is in the plural number, meaning that at least two separate armies will return with Him. One army is known as hosts of the Lord, or the angelic army. Matthew 16:27 states:

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds. Another army that will return with Jesus is the army of the Church saints who had been raptured previously, before the Tribulation. Jude 14-15 describes the events as follows:

And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

However, Isaiah 63:1-6 made it clear that although the armies of saints and angels will return with Him, they will not participate in the fighting. Messiah will fight this battle by Himself.

After describing Jesus in His role as Judge and the armies that return with Him, John next describes Jesus in His office of King (vv. 15-16). After judging the nations as a righteous Judge, He is to rule as King, with a rod of iron. These nations will gather and attempt to destroy the Jews in order to abolish God's rule over them (Ps. 2:1-6). However, they will partake of the wrath of God at the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah and He will rule over them. Hence, Jesus will indeed be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Because of the massive slaughter of all the armies of the nations, another invitation is issued. This one invites the birds of the heavens to the great supper of God in Revelation 19:17-18:

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great. The birds will eat the unburied carcasses of many who participated in the Campaign of Armageddon. In this way, the birds will be filled and satisfied, according to Revelation 19:21:

. . . and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

This feast for the birds is also described in Ezekiel 39:17-20 extending the invitation to the animals of the field:

And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan, And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord Jehovah.

Ezekiel closely connects these events with the final redemption of Israel in 39:21-29:

And I will set my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am Jehovah their God, from that day and forward. And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face

from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them.

Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Now will I bring back the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; when I have brought them back from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. And they shall know that I am Jehovah their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them; for I have poured out my Spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord Jehovah.

Only then will the Gentile nations realize that God did not cast off His people forever. Israel's judgment and dispersion was due to sin, primarily the sin of the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. So for a time, God hid His face and allowed the nations to come and cause havoc and destruction. But later, Israel will confess her national sin and seek His face in their affliction (Hos. 5:15). They will seek rescue from the nations that have so sorely afflicted them. The nations will recognize at the Second Coming that God is still Israel's God and He will avenge their affliction of Israel. In gathering all the armies of the world against Israel, they will actually be gathering against Israel's Messiah, as Revelation 19:19 clearly states:

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. Another passage giving a description of the Second Coming is in Habakkuk 3:1-19:

A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, set to Shigionoth.  
O Jehovah, I have heard the report of thee, and am afraid:  
O Jehovah, revive thy work in the midst of the years;  
In the midst of the years make it known;  
In wrath remember mercy.  
God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran,  
His glory covered the heavens,  
And the earth was full of his praise.  
And his brightness was as the light;  
He had rays coming forth from his hand;  
And there was the hiding of his power.  
Before him went the pestilence,  
And fiery bolts went forth at his feet.  
He stood, and measured the earth;  
He beheld, and drove asunder the nations;  
And the eternal mountains were scattered;  
The everlasting hills did bow;  
His goings were as of old.  
I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction;

The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.  
Was Jehovah displeased with the rivers?  
Was thine anger against the rivers,  
Or thy wrath against the sea,  
That thou didst ride upon thy horses,  
Upon thy chariots of salvation?  
Thy bow was made quite bare;  
The oaths to the tribes were a sure word.  
Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.  
The mountains saw thee, and were afraid;  
The tempest of waters passed by;  
The deep uttered its voice,  
And lifted up its hands on high.  
The sun and moon stood still in their habitation,  
At the light of thine arrows as they went,  
At the shining of thy glittering spear.  
Thou didst march through the land in indignation;  
Thou didst thresh the nations in anger.  
Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,  
For the salvation of thine anointed;  
Thou woundedest the head out of the house of the wicked man,  
Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck.  
Thou didst pierce with his own staves the head of his warriors:  
They came as a whirlwind to scatter me;  
Their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly.  
Thou didst tread the sea with thy horses,  
The heap of mighty waters.  
I heard, and my body trembled,  
My lips quivered at the voice;  
Rottenness entereth into my bones, and I tremble in my place;  
Because I must wait quietly for the day of trouble,  
For the coming up of the people that invadeth us.  
For though the fig-tree shall not flourish,  
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;  
The labor of the olive shall fail,  
And the fields shall yield no food;  
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
And there shall be no herd in the stalls:  
Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah,  
I will joy in the God of my salvation.  
Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength;  
And he makes my feet like hinds' feet,  
And will make me to walk upon my high places.

This prayer of Habakkuk (v. 1) is a prophetic one, for it records in vision what can only be the Second Coming of the Messiah. The prayer opens with the pleading of the Remnant (v. 2) to

save them physically (revive thy works) and spiritually (in wrath remember mercy). In answer to the Remnant's request, God is viewed as coming from Edom with all His shining glory (vv. 3-4). At His coming, He will begin to render judgment against the gathered nations by various means (vv. 5-7). Nature will also be greatly affected by the Second Coming (vv. 8-10), as will the terrestrial heavenly sphere (v. 11). The Messiah is next viewed as marching in indignation and threshing the nations (v. 12) on behalf of the people of Israel (v. 13a). The head of the armies, the Antichrist, will be smitten (v. 13b), as well as the soldiers of his armies (vv. 14-15) who have come to scatter the Jews afresh. Having seen this vision of the marching armies and the Second Coming, Habakkuk trembles with the knowledge of what must yet befall his people Israel where so many will be slaughtered (vv. 16-17). But he takes comfort in the fact that his personal salvation rests in the Lord Who, at the Second Coming, will make all things right (vv. 18-19). The Book of Psalms contains many poetical references to the Second Coming. A graphic one is found in Psalm 18:8-16:

There went up a smoke out of his nostrils,  
And fire out of his mouth devoured:  
Coals were kindled by it.  
He bowed the heavens also, and came down;  
And thick darkness was under his feet.  
And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly;  
Yea, he soared upon the wings of the wind.  
He made darkness his hiding-place, his pavilion round about him,  
Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies.  
At the brightness before him his thick clouds passed,  
Hailstones and coals of fire.  
Jehovah also thundered in the heavens,  
And the Most High uttered his voice,  
Hailstones and coals of fire. And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them;  
Yea, lightnings manifold, and discomfited them.  
Then the channels of waters appeared,  
And the foundations of the world were laid bare,  
At thy rebuke, O Jehovah,  
At the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.  
He sent from on high, he took me;  
He drew me out of many waters.

At His Second Coming, Messiah will come with the wrath of God (vv. 8-9), riding upon a cherub (v. 10), which will have horse-like features, according to Revelation 19:11. There will be convulsions throughout nature at the Second Coming (vv. 11-15) as the entire world is illuminated by the brightness of His glorious return.

So at the sixth stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, Jesus will return at the request of Israel and enter into battle with the Antichrist and his armies. With His return to the Remnant of Israel in Bozrah, He will indeed save the tents of Judah first, before saving the Jews of Jerusalem, as Zechariah 12:7 predicted: Jehovah also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem be not magnified above Judah.

The term tents points to temporary abodes rather than permanent dwellings. The fact that Judah is living in tents shows that Judah is not home in Judah, but is temporarily elsewhere. That elsewhere is Bozrah. Since the Messiah will save the tents of Judah first, this, too, shows that the initial place of His return will be Bozrah and not the Mount of Olives.

## **THE 7th STAGE: THE BATTLE FROM BOZRAH TO TVALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT**

While the battle between the Messiah and the Antichrist will begin at Bozrah, it will apparently continue all the way back to the eastern walls of Jerusalem which overlook a section of the Kidron Valley, which is also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The key passage is Joel 3:12-13:

Let the nations bestir themselves, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle; for the harvest is ripe: come, tread ye; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great.

Among the very first casualties will be the Antichrist himself. Having ruled the world with great power and having spoken against the true Son of God, the counterfeit son will be powerless before the True Son. Habakkuk 3:13b described it as follows:

Thou woundedest the head out of the house of the wicked man, Laying bare the foundation even unto the neck. The simplicity with which Jesus will slay the Antichrist is described by Paul in II Thessalonians 2:8:

And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming. The one who has claimed to be god, the one who has been able to perform all kinds of miracles, signs and wonders, the one who exercised all the authority of Satan as he ruled the world, will be quickly dispensed with by the Word of the Lord Jesus.

The arrival of the soul of the Antichrist into Hell is described in Isaiah 14:3-11:

And it shall come to pass in the day that Jehovah shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy trouble, and from the hard service wherein thou wast made to serve, that thou shalt take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the sceptre of the rulers; that smote the peoples in wrath with a continual stroke, that ruled the nations in anger, with a persecution that none restrained. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid low, no hewer is come up against us. Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall answer and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to Sheol, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and worms cover thee.

At the time of the redemption of Israel, the Jews whom the king of Babylon sought to destroy will taunt him with a new parable (vv. 3-4) commemorating the greater strength of the power of God (v. 5). The Antichrist ruled the nations of the world (v. 6), but then the whole world will rejoice over his demise (vv. 7-8). As the spirit of the Antichrist enters into the gates of Hell, the previous great ones of the earth already there will suddenly rise up off their thrones (v. 9) in utter shock that he, too, has entered the abode of Hell (v. 10). Yet it will be so, and all the pomp of his worldwide reign will suffer the demise of Hell (v. 11).

Having described the spirit of the Antichrist in Hell, Isaiah later describes the fate of his dead body on earth in 14:16-21:

They that see thee shall gaze at thee, they shall consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and overthrew the cities thereof; that let not loose his prisoners to their home? All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast forth away from thy sepulchre like an abominable branch, clothed with the slain, that are thrust through with the sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a dead body trodden under foot. Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, thou hast slain thy people; the seed of evil-doers shall not be named for ever.

Prepare ye slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they rise not up, and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities.

Many will be able to view the body of the Antichrist and will stare in utter disbelief that he died so suddenly and easily considering he had shaken the kingdoms of the world and the earth trembled in his presence (vv. 16-17). While lesser kings are buried in pompous sepulchers (v. 18), not so the Antichrist whose body will be trampled by the fleeing feet of his own armies (v. 19). In fact, his body will never be buried at all (v. 20) because he will be resurrected and cast alive into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:19-21). His entire family will be destroyed so that they can not try to follow in their father's footsteps and attempt to rule the world (v. 21).

After the death of the Antichrist, the slaughter of his army will continue. Several passages have been cited already which pictured the Messiah as marching through the land in indignation and treading the nations with His feet, causing blood to be sprinkled on His garments. Zechariah 14:12-15 describes the manner in which these massive hordes of Antichrist's armies will be destroyed:

And this shall be the plague wherewith Jehovah will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from Jehovah shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in those camps, as that plague.

In this manner, the fight continues all the way back to Jerusalem, coming to an end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:12-13). The nations that have gathered against the Jews (3:9-11) will now find themselves being treaded by the King of the Jews. It is of this treading in the Valley of Jehoshaphat that Revelation 14:19-20 speaks:

And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

The city spoken of in these verses is Jerusalem, and the winepress is just outside the city, meaning it is in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. From here the armies of the Antichrist will leave for Bozrah, and they will return here as the conflict comes to an end. The blood stretches for 1,600 furlongs, which is approximately 200 miles. The 200 miles may refer to the entire area from the Valley of Armageddon to Bozrah, which is about 200 miles. Another possible explanation is that it refers to the round trip distance between Jerusalem and Bozrah. The fighting will begin at Jerusalem and move to Bozrah (100 miles), and with the Second Coming, will return back from Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (another 100 miles). But the best explanation is based on Jeremiah 49:20-22:

Therefore hear ye the counsel of Jehovah, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: surely they shall drag them away, even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make their habitation desolate over them. The earth trembleth at the noise of their fall; there is a cry, the noise whereof is heard in the Red Sea. Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread out his wings against Bozrah: and the heart of the mighty men of Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

In the context (see vv. 13-14), this passage is dealing with the Campaign of Armageddon. The massive blood-letting that begins at Bozrah begins moving south down the Arabah until it empties in the Red Sea at the present-day cities of Eilat and Akaba. The distance from there to Jerusalem is about 200 miles. The level of blood is to be about four feet high. Exactly how this will be fulfilled remains to be seen. It may not be totally human blood, but also things turned into blood by divine judgment.

The battle will come to an end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, ending the seventh stage of the Campaign of Armageddon.

## **THE EIGHTH STAGE: THE VICTORY ASCENT UP THE MOUNT OF OLIVES**

After the actual fighting is completed, there will be a victory ascent up the Mount of Olives which is described in Zechariah 14:3-4a:

Then shall Jehovah go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.

Since this passage is often used as evidence that the Second Coming will initially take place at the Mount of Olives, it needs to be studied more carefully, especially in light of the other passages.

Earlier in the same context, Zechariah 12:7 stated that Messiah will save the tents of Judah first prior to saving the Jews in Jerusalem. The meaning of this was detailed at the end of the sixth stage of this campaign. Other passages also showing His initial return to Bozrah with the fighting commencing in that place have been previously cited. In Zechariah 14, Jehovah is first seen as going forth to fight against the nations that had gathered against the Jews (v. 3). It is only after the fighting of verse three that His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives (v. 4).

Along with this victory ascent upon the Mount of Olives, a number of cataclysmic events will occur as the Great Tribulation comes to an end. These cataclysmic events will be a result of the seventh bowl judgment described in Revelation 16:17-21:

And the seventh poured out his bowl upon the air; and there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and Babylon the great was remembered in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof exceeding great.

With the seventh bowl, a voice cries out, It is finished, because the seventh bowl brings the Tribulation to a definite end (v. 17). This declaration will be followed by convulsions of nature, including the greatest earthquake ever to occur in the history of the earth (v. 18). This will cause the City of Jerusalem to split into three divisions, while the city of Babylon will suffer the full wrath of God (v. 19). Many geographical changes will take place (v. 20) and hail will fall weighing 120 pounds (v. 21).

This earthquake that will shake Jerusalem is further described in Zechariah 14:4b-5:

And the mount of Olives shall be cleft in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee by the valley of my mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azel; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah; and Jehovah my God shall come, and all the holy ones with thee.

Not only will Jerusalem be split into three divisions, but the Mount of Olives will be split into two parts, creating a valley running east and west. This newly formed valley will provide a way of escape for the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem from the earthquake that will destroy the city. In this way the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be rescued following the deliverance of the other Jews in Bozrah.

Another cataclysmic event that will take place at this time is the worldwide blackout, described in Matthew 24:29:

But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

The earthquake and the blackout of this time are also described in Joel 3:14-17: Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. And Jehovah will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but Jehovah will be a refuge unto his people, and a stronghold to the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God, dwelling in Zion my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. With the multitudes defeated in the closing Day of Jehovah in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (v. 14), the blackout will occur (v. 15), as well as the great earthquake (v. 16a). But a refuge will be provided for the Jews from these cataclysmic events (vv. 16b-17) by means of the valley cutting through the Mount of Olives spoken of by Zechariah.

The Great Tribulation and the Campaign of Armageddon will come to an end with these cataclysmic events.

1 A more detailed study on the Campaign of Armageddon and other prophetic issues may be found in *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, by Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. This book may be purchased through Ariel Ministries.

1 Following this chapter is a map that illustrates these eight stages.

2 All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version of 1901.