

What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of The Book of The Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Last week I taught in part Rev 16:12-16 and when time expired we were exegeting verse 15.
2. Before continuing our study, I want to provide "1Jo 1:9 time" as may be necessary.
3. Let's first take a look at an expanded translation of Rev 16:12-15.

Expanded Translation

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel peeled off and poured out his bowl judgment on the river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. The Kings of the East moved a vast 200,000,000 man army across the river where they deployed in waiting.

Rev 16:13 Then I saw three demons that looked very much like frogs; they came out of the mouth of Satan, out of the mouth of the Antichrist and out of the mouth of the False Prophet.

Rev 16:14 They performed miraculous signs and wonders before the Kings of the South, North and West; by demonic control and possession the governments of the world were persuaded to gather in the Valley of Jezreel near Megiddo to await the great day of God Almighty.

Rev 16:15 I John then heard the Lord Jesus Christ exclaim "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he does not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

The End Times Judgment of Israel

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

4. These events reflect a divinely inspired conflict among the nations themselves in the latter portion of the Great Tribulation as the Beast's world empire so hastily put together begins to disintegrate.

4.1. The armies of the world contending for honors on the battlefield at the Second Coming of Christ turn their efforts first against one another and then form a coalition and that coalition will turn ultimately against Israel; they will fight against Christ when His heavenly army appears in the heavens.

4.2 It will be the final challenge to divine sovereignty and power as the military might of the world of that day will be engaged in fighting on the very day that Christ returns. (Zec 14:1-5)

4.3 The LORD Comes and Reigns:

Zec 14:1 A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you.

Zec 14:2 I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

Zec 14:3 Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle.

Zec 14:4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.

Zec 14:5 You will flee by my mountain valley...

4.4 It is significant that the battle itself bears the name of "that great day of God Almighty." In the battle the omnipotence of God will be fully demonstrated.

Rev 16:14 They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Rev 16:15 "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

4.5 The pronouncement is made, "Behold, I come as a thief." The expression is used of a sudden, unexpected coming which will result in judgment or loss on the part of the person overtaken.

4.6. In Matthew 24:43 and Luke 12:39-40 the second coming of Christ is compared to the coming of a thief who will overtake those who do not watch. A similar warning is given to the church in Sardis (Rev 3:3). Everything begins with the suddenness of the Rapture and no one knows the time of that marvelous event.

Mat 24:43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

Luk 12:39 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into.

Luk 12:40 You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

Rev 3:3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

4.7 In 2Pe 3:10 and in 1Th 5:2 and 4 the day of the Lord is said to come as a thief. The unifying factor in all these passages is that the coming in view results in loss for those who are not ready.

2Pe 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

1Th 5:2 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

1Th 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

1Th 5:4 But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

4.8 The contrast between those who are overtaken by the Lord at His coming and those who are prepared by faith in Christ is expressed in the beatitude "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

4.9 The symbolism of preservation of garments is not entirely clear from the passage. I believe this symbolism represents the temporal sanctification of many Tribulation believers.

4.10 The saints will thus be protected from spiritual nakedness at the coming of the great armies to Megiddo. The saints in view here are evidently those still on earth who have been able to escape martyrdom even though remaining true to their Lord.

5. It is probable that the beast will not be able to enforce his edict of death on those who are located in the outer reaches of his empire. These are they who heard and heeded. Mat 24:15-16.

Mat 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Mat 24:16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

5.1 There are those who contend the description in Rev 16:15 "he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him" describes the "positionally pure." I believe the reference is clearly to those who hear, believe and perform the protocol of God in a very difficult age.

6. The contrast between those who are overtaken by the Lord at His coming and those who are prepared by faith in Christ is expressed in the beatitude "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

6.1 The conclusion of the combined action of the sixth vial and the enticement of the demons is that the armies of the earth are gathered in the Middle East in a place described as Armageddon.

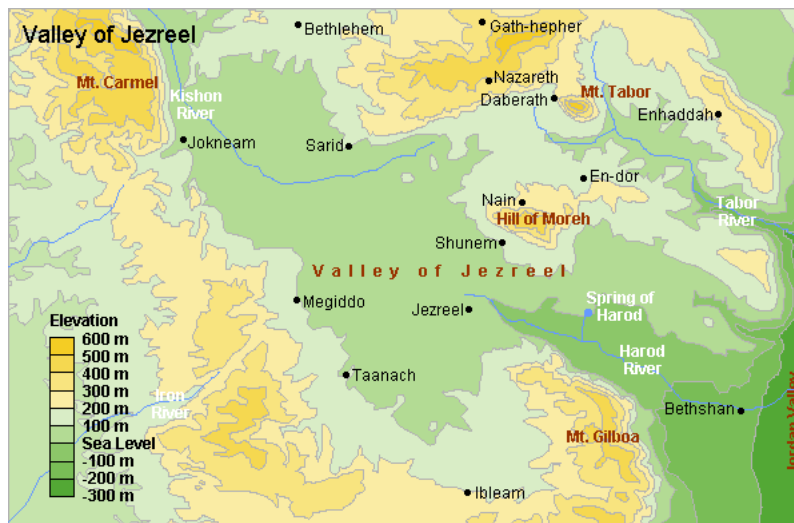
7. Though the armies are lured by the demons under the direction of Satan, they nevertheless fulfill the Will of God. It is probable that the "he" of verse 16 refers to God Himself.

Rev 16:16 And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

8. There has been considerable discussion concerning the meaning of the term "Armageddon," taken by some to mean "Mount of Slaughter."

9. Geographically, it relates to the Mount of Megiddo located adjacent to the plain of Megiddo to the west and the large plain of Esdraelon to the northeast. Megiddo is the Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek word Armageddon.

10. This area was the scene of many of the great battles of the Old Testament such as that of Barak and the Canaanites in Judges chapter four and the victory of Gideon over the Midianites in Judges chapter seven.



Barak:

Jdg 4:6 And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedeshnaphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor [a dome-shaped mountain in Galilee in the NE part of the plain of Jezreel, 12 miles N of Mount Gilboa] and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?

Gideon:

Jdg 7:1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley [located at the east end of the Jezreel valley 12 miles west of the Jordan River and five miles west-south west of Mount Tabor]

11. It was also here that the deaths of King Saul and Josiah occurred.

Saul:

1Sa 29:1 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel ...

1Sa 31:6 So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour bearer, and all his men, that same day together.

Josiah:

2Ch 35:22 ... Josiah ... came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.

2Ch 35:23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded.

2Ch 35:24 His servants therefore ... brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

12. The area of Jezreel, though it is a large one, is not sufficient for the armies of all the world, though the valley of Esdraelon is fourteen miles wide and twenty miles long.

13. What this Scripture seems to indicate is that this area is the central point for the military conflict which ensues.

14. Wycliffe in his Encyclopedia has written of Armageddon:

"This is the only place that Armageddon is mentioned by name in the book of Revelation. The battle itself is described in the last part of chapter 19. Moorehead wrote, even before World War I and the modern awakening of Asia, "The vast hordes of Asia will be involved in the decisive and overwhelming battle of the great day of God." The Far East has had deep significance for Western civilization only within the last century, and the same is true for the Near East since the close of the Crusades. What an enormous difference between the powerful China of today, in its communistic, atheistic regime, and the comparatively weak empire we knew at the beginning of this century! The drying up of the Euphrates River (vs. 12), allowing for the approach of these armies from the East, may or may not be taken symbolically; but it most assuredly cannot refer to the weakening of the Ottoman empire, nor is this the Mississippi River, as some contend. Hengstenberg has accurately commented:

"The Euphrates is mentioned here merely in respect to the hindrance it presented to the march of the ungodly power of the world into the Holy Land." These kings are not Jews coming to Palestine for blessing, but pagan kings coming to Megiddo for battle. This passage embraces one of the most dreadful statements in the Bible, i.e., that unclean spirits (vs. 13), the spirits of demons working miracles, go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto war (v. 14). This can mean nothing else than that at the end of the age the rulers of the earth will be demonized. And we are almost compelled to believe, by the events of the last forty years, that already some rulers have been demon-possessed."

15. Actually the armies are deployed over a 100-mile area up and down from this central location (Rev 14:19-20).

Rev 14:19 The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

Rev 14:20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia or approximately 200 miles.

16. At the time of the second coming, several Armies are in Jerusalem itself.

17. The difficulty of the historical interpretation of the book of Revelation is illustrated in the identification of Armageddon with World War I.

18. Alexander Hardie, for instance, stated, "The last Great War of 1914-1918 which convulsed and disgraced humanity, was doubtless the predicted Armageddon."

19. History alone has proved countless theories of the historical school to be in error. In view of the fact that the second coming which brings this battle to a climax is still future, it is far better to regard the entire conflict as relating to the latter stages of the great tribulation.

20. As a conclusion to our study of these verses let me read you some of that which John Walvoord has written of the coalescence of Revelation chapters sixteen and chapter nine, i.e., the relationship of the sixth trumpet with the sixth vial.

"The relationship between the drying up of the Euphrates and the battle that follows has sometimes been connected with the sixth trumpet of Rev 9:13-21. In the sixth trumpet an army of 200 million men is loosed to slay a third part of men (Rev 9:15). This army is related to the Euphrates River even as the army of the kings of the East. Probably the best explanation is that the seven vials follow very rapidly after the trumpet and that the events such as a great invasion are pictured in their early stages in the sixth trumpet with a statement of their ultimate purpose that is actually realized in the sixth vial. The time sequence here may be in terms of days rather than months or years."

21. Now let's get an expanded translation of Revelation 16:12-16 before finishing chapter sixteen:

Expanded Translation

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel peeled off and poured out his bowl judgment on the river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East. The Kings of the East moved a vast 200,000,000 man army across the river where they deployed in waiting.

Rev 16:13 Then I saw three demons that looked very much like frogs; they came out of the mouth of Satan, out of the mouth of the Antichrist and out of the mouth of the False Prophet.

Rev 16:14 They performed miraculous signs and wonders before the Kings of the South, North and West; by demonic control and possession the governments of the world were persuaded to gather in the Valley of Jezreel near Megiddo to await the great day of God Almighty.

Rev 16:15 I John then heard the Lord Jesus Christ exclaim "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he does not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

Rev 16:16 Then the kings assembled their armies to the place which is called in the Hebrew Armageddon.

22. Now let's return to our study of the seventh angel with the seventh vile.

KJV

Rev 16:17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

Rev 16:18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

Rev 16:19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Rev 16:20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

Rev 16:21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

NIV

Rev 16:17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

Rev 16:18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.

Rev 16:19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

Rev 16:20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.

Rev 16:21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

Principles

1. The vial of the seventh angel is declared to be poured out into the air and the resulting action is catastrophic.
2. It is accompanied by a great voice out of the Temple in heaven and from the throne stating in emphatic terms.
3. "It is done!" In the Greek, the statement is one word, **Gegonen** a third person singular perfect active indicative of the Greek verb **Ginomai**, indicating action accomplished. It is the final act of God preceding the second coming of Christ.
4. There has been speculation as to why this vial should be poured into the air.
5. Some have compared this prophecy to Ezekiel 38:14-16 where the host from the north is said to "ascend and come like a storm" and "like a cloud to cover the land."

NIV

Eze 38:14 "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: In that day, when my people Israel are living in safety, will you not take notice of it?

Eze 38:15 You will come from your place in the far north, you and many nations with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army.

Eze 38:16 You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In days to come, O Gog, I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me when I show myself holy through you before their eyes.

6. Some have concluded that this is a description of an air attack, such an interpretation is perhaps reading too much into the passage.
7. In any event the seventh vial, which is poured out in the air, has its principle resulting action on the earth as the verses which follow indicate.

Rev 16:18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.

Rev 16:19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

Rev 16:20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.

Rev 16:21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

8. The solemn accompaniment of the affirmation "It is done" by the great voice from the Temple in heaven and from the throne is a most ominous introduction to a final judgment.

9. As in the case of the final seal and the seventh trumpet (Rev 8:5 and Rev 11:19 respectively) the final vial is introduced by the sound of voices, thunder, lightning and a great earthquake.

Rev 8:5 Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

Rev 11:19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

10. The earthquake is declared to be greater than any previous earthquake. The earth literally convulses.

11. The voices, thunders, and lightnings announce the express and final judgment from God.

12. Our verse declares that "the great city" is split into "three parts" and that the other cities of the Gentile world fall.

Rev 16:19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

13. The great city would certainly seem to be Jerusalem inasmuch as Babylon is specifically mentioned later in the verse.

14. Support for such a conclusion is also found from Rev 11:8 where the city in which the two witnesses are murdered is called "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

Rev 11:7 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.

Rev 11:8 Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

15. Verse 19 further declares that "the great city" Jerusalem is split into "three parts."

Rev 16:19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed ...

16. Great topographical changes take place around Jerusalem in connection with the judgments at the end of the age says Zec 14:4 and this may be a restatement of that prophecy.

Zec 14:4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.

17. With this judgment the other cities of the Gentile world are said to fall.

18. The gentile city of Babylon, however is said to be worthy of a special wrath from God.

19. The identification of Babylon as Rome has been argued elsewhere in our study but let me summarize:

19.1 Daniel prophesied of four empires naming the three Babylon, Persia and Greece.

19.2 We have seen the fourth historically - Rome.

19.3 Daniel clearly speaks of two Roman Empires with a veiled description of a Revived Roman Empire consisting of ten nations. The world has yet to see such a ten nation Federation.

19.4 There is a return of the Roman Empire, called by many as the Revived Roman Empire, just as there will be a return of Israel as a priest nation.

19.5 Babylon at the time of John's writing was just a village on the Euphrates; the city is today (though formerly in the early stages of reconstruction by Saddam Hussein) under the desert sand near Baghdad Iraq.

19.6 Babylon was the mother of idolatry which swept the world, ultimately effecting the early Christian church.

Dr. Dwight Pentecost in his book "Things to Come," Dunham Publishing Company has put together an excellent compilation of the historical identity of the harlot as found in the Book of the Revelation:

19.7 The great city said to split into three parts would certainly seem to be Jerusalem inasmuch as Babylon is specifically mentioned later in the verse. Support for such a conclusion is also found from Rev 11:8 where the city in which the two witnesses are murdered is called "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

19.8 There is also a reference to Babylon 1Pe 5:13 which most early expositors agreed was Rome. This is generally so interpreted today; the Catholic Church has long believed the reference here to Babylon is Rome given their desire to place Peter in Rome.

1Pe 5:12 With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.
1Pe 5:13 She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.

20. Babylon is the special object of the judgment of God, expressed graphically in the statement "to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath."

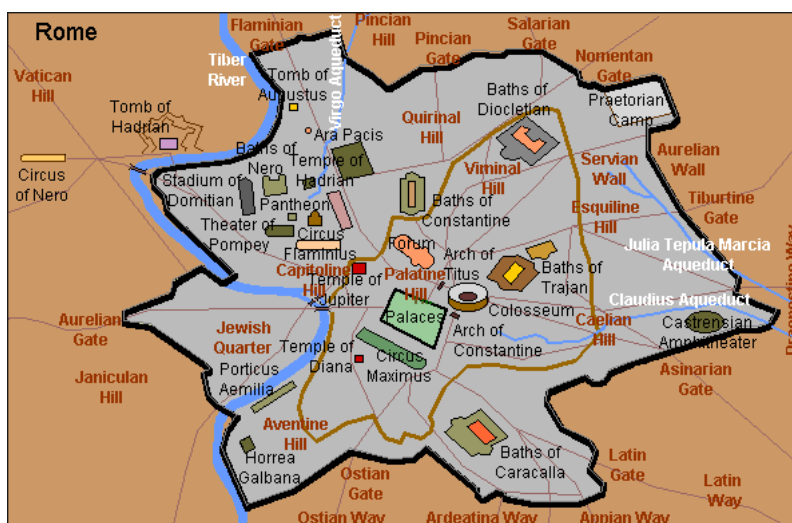
21. As earlier studied the word for "wrath" is **Orge**, a strong word often related to **Thumos**; this is no doubt a reference to divine anger. This is the final judgment of this wicked city.

22. The fact that the judgment is an earthquake would indicate a literal city, no doubt Rome. The time is just prior to or at the second coming of Christ.

22.1 The Rome declared to be the recipient of eschatological destruction is the former home of the evil universal church. A church full of false doctrine and laden with wealth. Though by now the Antichrist has moved his economic headquarters to "a city on the Shinar Plain", God has decided the city must now pay for its indiscretions.

22.2 At this time virtually all nations are under attack from God. Little wonder however that Jerusalem and Rome received special attention and are called out by name.

22.3 The entire world would seem to be suffering, certainly to include the cities of the United States of America.



23. There are expositors who believe these terrible "supernatural" disasters come in connection with the destruction of planet earth just before the Great White Throne. Such is not my view. Not only does every city of the world come under terrible judgment as a result of the great earthquake but there is also a sweeping statement in verse 20 that every island is affected and mountains disappear.

24. The movement of the islands and mountains described in Rev 6:14 is carried to a more violent conclusion in the seventh bowl where the entire earth is radically changed in its appearance.

Rev 6:14 The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

25. Such a judgment undoubtedly causes great loss of life and disruption of such world organizations as may have remained.

26. John Walvoord writes: "There does not seem to be any good reason for taking this verse in other than its literal meaning, coming as it does at the climax of the great tribulation when many other Scriptures indicate changes in topography including an entirely new appearance of the holy land itself."

27. In addition to mentioning the great earthquake which is the primary means of divine judgment in the seventh vial, verse 21 records a terrible hail storm where every stone is said to weigh a talent.

Rev 16:21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

28. Though the talent in different periods of history varied in weight, the reference here seems to be to a talent weighing about 100 pounds.

29. Such hail would have a devastating effect and destroy much of that left standing after the earthquake.

29.1 Although the judgment demonstrates the power and sovereignty of God men are still unrepentant, and verse 21 concludes with the sad statement that "men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

30. Chronologically the next event is that prophesied in Rev 19:11-19 where Christ Himself descends from heaven to take over His Earthly Kingdom.

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