

I. Introduction

- A. Every good story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Hopefully, the end is a satisfying end. That would be an end that ties up all the loose ends so that nothing is left hanging. It would also be an end that answers all the unanswered questions. And, a satisfying end would give the bad guys what they deserve and the good guys what they deserve. That is how to give a satisfying end to any story worth telling.
- B. The history of the human race is a story too. There is a long-running argument over what kind of story it is.
1. Atheists and materialists say it is basically a random story. It is random because the bouncing together of matter and energy produces what it produces by randomness and chance. So everything that happens in the human storyline is basically a roll of the dice on a cosmic scale.
 2. But, these same atheists and materialists turn around and contradict themselves. Because they say that within that randomness there is a driving force. This force drives things upward. It drives things contrary to the laws of entropy. This force makes things improve and progress and get better. It is the force of evolution which itself manifests a force called natural selection. Given this evolutionary core, therefore, the human storyline is one of progress and improvement all the way from primitive religions and war all the way better and better to enlightened human-made utopia and paradise on earth.
 - a) How that happens by randomness and chance is beyond me. It's illogical.
 3. Then there are philosophies and religions, like Hinduism and Buddhism, which see the human story as going in circles. Cyclical. Cycles of death and rebirth. Reincarnation. You are born. You live. You die. You are born again into another species or human. And hopefully by your actions, you can ascend a ladder of perfection all the way to Nirvana. But even if you don't, there's always another chance.
 4. Today's anti-creationists, like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, tell the story that human life was seeded here by aliens. Which is a faith with less evidence than the ancient view that earth was the shell of a giant turtle creeping slowly along. The fact that a so-called scientist could find the alien view credible, and divine creation incredible, leaves me shaking my head in 40 percent wonder and 60 percent disgust. The position is based less on science, and more on an arrogant compulsion to throw off the moral shackles of a holy God.
 5. The biblical story tells of a transcendent, infinite Creator God. He spoke the cosmos into existence. And then he made us. He endowed us with intellect and with emotion. He also gave us an almost magical ability: the ability to choose. To make choices. He gave us free will. He told us the highest and most life-giving use of that free will is to choose to trust him, and then to love him.
 6. But we didn't. We, and I mean all of us, the human race collectively, ran away from God as fast as our depraved legs could carry us. We trampled Paradise into non-existence, and wanted it back. So ever since then, we've been trying to create one on our own. But we can't.
 7. Enter another order of created beings — the majestic, glorious, larger than life angels. Evil originated there, when one angel rebelled, and drew a third of the angels with him.
 8. The Book of Revelation says:
 - a) *And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth... (Revelation 12:3, 4)*
 - (1) So Lucifer's rebellion took a third of the angels with him. Those angels are now called demons, and Lucifer is now called Satan.
 9. And Jesus said:
 - a) *And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18)*
 10. Satan created the infection called evil and sin. He transmitted evil and sin to the human race. Why?
 11. Because he knew evil was the one force that was terminal — evil would permanently prevent any kind of love between God, who is holy, and humans who are now sinful.
 12. God cannot be both holy AND a friend of sinners.
 13. Well, wait a minute. This is a thing the devil never saw coming, and something the world still gets wrong.
 14. God sent his son into the world. This was Jesus Christ. The devil hated him, and conspired to have him killed. But this played right into God's hand. Little did the devil know that God would turn the death of Jesus into a courtroom. In that courtroom, God would take up the case of the Holiness of God versus the World of Lost Sinners.

15. And God would judge the world of lost sinners, but he gave them an option: pay the penalty, or let Jesus pay the penalty for them. His life was of infinite worth, so his death could cover infinite sins. One by one the world of lost sinners began accepting this marvelous gift — and Satan hated every one. He still fights to keep the world of lost sinners in darkness. He still insists the world can create good without God, and paradise without Christ.
 16. We live in the middle part of the story, probably closer to the end. And what an end it will be:
 - a) *But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; “the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. (Mark 13:24-26)*
 17. I said God’s story has a beginning (creation), a middle (all of earth’s history) and an end (the second coming of Jesus). That second coming has been our theme since the New Year.
 18. The series is called ENDGAME, and today is Part 5.
 19. I began this way because of our focus for today. Our focus is one of the most widely known topics of second coming teaching. I invite you to think with me today on the topic of: The Battle of Armageddon
- C. *The Battle of Armageddon*
1. All the threads of Bible prophecy come together in a giant knot called the Battle of Armageddon. This is a great final battle. It is prophesied in the Bible. It is detailed in many different places.
 2. Some people call it World War 3. Maybe, maybe not. It might be World war 12 or 23. Nobody knows what will happen between now and Armageddon. So, since algebra uses X to indicate an unknown number, we will call it World War X.
 3. We are going to look at 2 main places in the Bible that describe World War X.
- D. *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon. (Revelation 16:13-16)*
1. *Cause: Triggered by demons.*
 - a) So, the first thing we should notice is it is instigated by demons. These are the unclean spirits, that, in the vision, look like frogs. There is all kinds of speculation on these demonic spirits, but let’s not speculate. Because our golden rule is to be a) charitable, and b) normal, and the more we speculate, the less we are either. What we can say is that these spirits draw the world into this final great war. The armies gather to fight each other, and then they will turn to fight against Christ at his return.
 2. *Location: World War X is centered in the Armageddon Valley.*
 - a) Armageddon is an English combination of 2 Hebrew words: Har Megiddo. “Har” means Mountain, and “Megiddo” is a small mountain in Israel. Armageddon is the massive, flat, plain which sits like a belt across the Holy Land. It runs from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, in northern Israel. The valley is about fourteen miles wide, and twenty miles long. It is only the staging area for World War X. The actual battle will spill out a couple hundred miles in every possible direction.
 3. *Combatants: the kings of the earth and of the whole world.*
 - a) This is a war to end all wars, almost literally.
 - b) The Bible speaks of great federations of nations who will come to make war in the battle of Armageddon. This war is the culmination of the Great Tribulation. We spoke about this. The tribulation is a seven year period of awfulness. This is when the Antichrist ascends to power. This is the time of the Mark of the Beast, and 666. All of this boils over in World War X and this battle in the Armageddon valley.
 4. Let’s turn to another place in the Bible that describes WWX.
- E. *Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. (Zechariah 14:1-3)*
1. The Day of the Lord is coming... what is the Day of the Lord? This is the prophetic title for a long period. It is a time of Judgement, a time of war, and a time of the outpouring God’s Wrath. All of this badness is necessary for a

whole lot of goodness. Because the Day of the Lord culminates in an awesome 1000 year period, which we have studied, called the Millennium. This is the kingdom of God on earth. This is future tense until Jesus returns.

2. Notice again that “all the nations” will battle against Jerusalem. The battle goes badly at first, and most of Jerusalem is destroyed and taken captive.
 3. But then, the Lord goes forth to war. Just when the antichrist and the nations of the world seem to be winning, a Champion swoops in. The Bible calls God a Man of War, and there are times, when he armors up, and fights against evil.
 - a) *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. (Revelation 19:11,12)*
 4. It’s an amazing scene, and this is how the battle ends. Jesus returns. Jesus returns, and he touches down on earth.
 5. If you recall, when I began this ENDGAME series, I talked about the day Jesus left earth. He rose up off the ground. He disappeared into the clouds. This event is called the Ascension of Christ, obviously, because he ascended. He went up to heaven.
 6. Two angels were standing by, and they promised that Jesus would return from heaven... and that this return would be literal, and physical, and visible.
 7. When Jesus ascended to heaven, do you know where he took off from? He was at a place called the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:11,12). So guess where he is going to land when we returns?
- F. *Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You. (Zechariah 14:3-5)*
1. At the height of the Battle of Armageddon, Jesus returns. When he returns, he comes riding down on a white horse. And he lands on the Mount of Olives. This triggers a massive earthquake. This earthquake will change the landscape of the region. It will also make a way of escape for persecuted Jews.
 2. This earthquake is mentioned in another place in the Bible. I want to show it to you. Then, I am going to try to pull this all together for you.
- G. *Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, “and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. (Ezekiel 38:1-3)*
1. So, Ezekiel describes this prophecy of the Battle of Armageddon. He lists a number of nations. Gog, Magog, Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal — the best scholars can figure out is this is the land of Russia and the nations that go with it.
 2. Russia has always wanted power in the middle east. It still does. It wants the oil. The money. The strategic location. And all of it. Russia heads the armies of the north. In fact some argue that Rosh is where Russia gets its name, and Meshech is where Moscow gets its name. I wouldn’t die on that hill, however,
- H. *“I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. “Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; “Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops--many people are with you. (Ezekiel 38:4-6)*
1. So these are more nations in the northern confederacy. The armies of Ethiopia, Libya. Gomer includes tribes that settled what is today Denmark, Belgium, and even in Wales and Ireland. Togarmah is said to include Turkey.
 2. Listen, the places are hard to identify. But do you know what isn’t hard to identify?
 3. It’s a whole-world war, gathered in one not-so-big place. Because the devil hates the Jews, and is going to wipe them off the earth, or so he thinks.
- I. *“And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” says the Lord GOD, “that My fury will show in My face. “For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, ‘so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.’ “I will call for a sword*

against Gog throughout all My mountains,” says the Lord GOD. “Every man’s sword will be against his brother. “And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. (Ezekiel 38:18-22)

1. There is the earthquake again. The death and badness could not get any badder.
2. Revelation points to this same earthquake too:
 - a) *And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. (Revelation 16:18)*
3. I guess we can literally call this “The Big One”.
4. This will be the deadliest war in history. If Jesus doesn’t end it by coming back, all life on earth would be destroyed.
5. This is the venom of the devil.
6. This is the inevitable outcome of evil.
7. Okay. So a few bullet points to pull it all together.

II. Facts about the Battle of Armageddon

- A. The Battle of Armageddon begins when the Antichrist invades Israel. Everyone else comes, because they want this strategic land, too. (Daniel 11:40-45)
- B. Antichrist will utterly destroy Jerusalem, which has recently become Israel’s capital city once again. (Zechariah 12:1-3; 14:1,2)
- C. Even so, as many as one-third of all Jews will be saved and put their faith in Jesus. (Zechariah 13:8,9)
- D. The blood in the valley will be up to a horse’s bridle for a 200 mile stretch. (Revelation 14:20)
- E. An army 200 million strong will come from the East (China, and Asian lands). (Revelation 9:16; 16:12)
- F. A plan to dry up the Euphrates River will facilitate the armies of the East. (Revelation 16:12)
- G. The armies of the West will include the European Nations, under the rule of the Antichrist. This is considered a revival of the old Roman Empire. (Daniel 11:40-45)
- H. The armies of the North are allied with the Arab nations and led by Russia. (Ezekiel 38,39)
- I. Armies will come up from Africa, including Ethiopia, Egypt, and Libya. (Ezekiel 38:1-3)
- J. It is unclear where the United States fits in Bible prophecy. There is no clear mention.
- K. Devastation will be worldwide, with all major cities facing massive destruction. (Revelation 9:15-18; Isaiah 24:1,5,6, 19,20)
- L. Nuclear destruction may be in play:
 1. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10)*
- M. You can view the whole Battle of Armageddon as an epic, ultimate temper tantrum by the devil. (Revelation 16:13; 20:2)
- N. The warring nations will turn from fighting each other and instead fight the Lord when he returns.
 1. But that is where we pick it up next time.

III. Conclusion

- A. Let me go back to the beginning of the story. Actually, almost the beginning.
- B. Why the war? Why the bloodshed? Why the pain?
- C. Because sin makes the human heart that messed up. And sin makes the human heart want to throw off the rule and reign of God.
- D. Thank God for the Cross — the only force on earth strong enough to defeat sin, and Satan and every dark force.
- E. I want to leave you with three reminders:
 1. *You can never find a better king than Jesus.*
 2. *You live every day in a world at war — things will one day boil over.*
 3. *God wins — and you play a role in that victory:*
 - a) *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (Romans 16:20)*