**Armageddon**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*For other uses, see* [*Armageddon (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armageddon_%28disambiguation%29)*.*

Ruins atop [Tel Megiddo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo).

**Armageddon** (from [Hebrew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language): [הַר מְגִדּוֹ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo)‎, [*Har Megiddo*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo), lit. *Mount Megiddo*; [Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek): Ἁρμαγεδών *Harmagedōn*, [Late Latin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Late_Latin): *Armagedōn*) is, according to the Bible, the site of a battle during the [end times](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End_time), variously interpreted as either a literal or symbolic location. The term is also used in a generic sense to refer to any [end of the world](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eschatology) scenario.

The word *Armageddon* appears only once in the [Greek New Testament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novum_Testamentum_Graece), namely in [Revelation 16:16](http://bibref.hebtools.com/?book=%20Revelation&verse=16:16&src=!). The word may come from [Hebrew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language) *har məgiddô* (הר מגידו), meaning "Mountain of [Megiddo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo)". "Mount" Megiddo is a [Tell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tell) on which ancient forts were built to guard the main highway, the [Via Maris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Via_Maris), which connected [Ancient Egypt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Egypt) with [Mesopotamia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia). Megiddo was the location of various ancient battles, including [one in the 15th century BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Megiddo_%2815th_century_BC%29) and [one in 609 BC](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Megiddo_%28609_BC%29). Modern [Megiddo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megiddo%2C_Israel) is a town approximately 25 miles (40 km) west-southwest of the southern tip of the [Sea of Galilee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Galilee) in the Kishon River area.

According to one [premillennial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Premillennialism) Christian interpretation, the [Messiah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Messiah) will [return to earth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Coming) and defeat the [Antichrist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antichrist) ([the "beast"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Beast_%28Bible%29)) and [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) the [Devil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devil) in the Battle of Armageddon. Then Satan will be put into the "bottomless pit" or [abyss](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abyss_%28religion%29) for 1,000 years, known as the [Millennial Age](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennial_Age). After being released from the abyss, Satan will gather [Gog and Magog](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gog_and_Magog) (peoples of two specific nations) from the four [corners of the earth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corners_of_the_earth). They will encamp surrounding the "holy ones" and the "beloved city" (this refers to [Jerusalem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem_in_Christianity)). Fire will come down from [God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_in_Christianity), out of [heaven](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heaven) and devour Gog and Magog after the Millennium. The [Devil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Devil), death, [hell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hell), and those not found written in the 'book of life' are then thrown into [Gehenna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gehenna) (the [Lake of Fire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_of_Fire) burning with brimstone).

**Christianity**

Evangelist [John of Patmos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Patmos) writes the [Book of Revelation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Revelation). Painting by [Hieronymus Bosch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hieronymus_Bosch) (1505).

See also: [Christian eschatology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_eschatology)

Megiddo is mentioned twelve times in the [Old Testament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Testament), ten times in reference to the ancient city of [Megiddo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megiddo), and twice with reference to "the plain of Megiddo", most probably simply meaning "the plain next to the city". None of these Old Testament passages describe the city of Megiddo as being associated with any particular prophetic beliefs. The one [New Testament](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Testament) reference to the city of Armageddon found in [Revelation 16:16](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_Revelation) in fact also makes no specific mention of any armies being predicted to one day gather in this city, but instead seems to predict only that "they (will gather) the kings together to .... Armageddon. " The text does however seem to imply, based on the text from the earlier passage of Revelation 16:14, that the purpose of this gathering of kings in the "place called Armageddon" might be so that these kings could do battle with one another. Because of the seemingly highly symbolic and even cryptic language of this one New Testament passage, some Christian scholars conclude that Mount Armageddon must be an idealized location. [Rushdoony](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rousas_John_Rushdoony) says, "There are no mountains of Megiddo, only the Plains of Megiddo. This is a deliberate destruction of the vision of any literal reference to the place." Other scholars, including [C. C. Torrey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._C._Torrey), [Kline](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meredith_G._Kline) and [Jordan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_B._Jordan) argue that the word is derived from the [Hebrew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language) *moed* (מועד), meaning "assembly". Thus, "Armageddon" would mean "Mountain of Assembly," which Jordan says is "a reference to the assembly at [Mount Sinai](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_Mount_Sinai), and to its replacement, Mount [Zion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zion)."

**Dispensationalism**

The [Dispensational](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dispensationalism) viewpoint interprets biblical prophecy literally and expects that the fulfillment of prophecy will also be literal, depending upon the context of scripture. In his discussion of Armageddon, [J. Dwight Pentecost](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Dwight_Pentecost) has devoted an entire chapter to the subject, titled "The Campaign of Armageddon", in which he discusses Armageddon as a campaign and not a specific [battle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle), which will be fought in the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East). Pentecost writes:

It has been held commonly that the battle of Armageddon is an isolated event transpiring just prior to the [second advent of Christ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Advent_of_Christ) to the earth. The extent of this great movement in which God deals with "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" (Rev. 16:14) will not be seen unless it is realized that the "battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14) is not an isolated battle, but rather a campaign that extends over the last half of the [tribulation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribulation) period. The Greek word "polemo", translated "battle" in Revelation 16:14, signifies a war or campaign, while "machē" signifies a battle, and sometimes even single combat. This distinction is observed by Trench, (see [Richard C. Trench](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Chenevix_Trench), New Testament Synonyms, pp.301-2) and is followed by Thayer (see [Joseph Henry Thayer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Henry_Thayer), Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 528) and Vincent (see Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, II, 541). The use of the word polemos (campaign) in Revelation 16:14 would signify that the events that culminate in the gathering at Armageddon at the second advent are viewed by God as one connected campaign.

—Pentecost, p.340

Pentecost then discusses the location of this campaign, and mentions the "hill of Megiddo" and other geographic locations such as "the [valley of Jehoshaphat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valley_of_Josaphat)" and "the valley of the passengers", "Lord coming from [Edom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edom) or Idumea, south of [Jerusalem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem), when He returns from [the judgment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Last_judgment)"; and Jerusalem itself.

Pentecost further describes the area involved:

This wide area would cover the entire land of [Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel) and this campaign, with all its parts, would confirm what [Ezekiel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ezekiel) pictures when he says the invaders will 'cover the land'. This area would conform to the extent pictured by [John](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_Patmos) in Revelation 14:20."

Pentecost then outlines the biblical time period for this campaign to occur and with further arguments concludes that it must take place with the [70th week of Daniel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophecy_of_Seventy_Weeks). The invasion of Israel by the Northern Confederacy "will bring the Beast and his armies to the defense of Israel as her protector". He then uses [Daniel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel) to further clarify his thinking: (Dan. 11:40b-45).

Again, events are listed by Pentecost in his book:

1. "The movement of the campaign begins when the King of the South moves against the Beast-False Prophet coalition, which takes place 'at the time of the end.'"
2. "The King of the South is joined by the Northern Confederacy, who attacks the Willful King by a great force over land and sea (11:40). Jerusalem is destroyed as a result of this attack, and, in turn, the armies of the Northern Confederacy are destroyed"
3. "The full armies of the Beast move into Israel (11:41) and shall conquer all that territory (11:41-42). Edom, [Moab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moab), and [Ammon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ammon) alone escape. . . ."
4. ". . . a report that causes alarm is brought to the Beast"
5. "The Beast moves his headquarters into the land of Israel and assembles his armies there."
6. "It is there that his destruction will come. (11:45)."

After the destruction of the Beast at the [Second Coming](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Coming) of [Jesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus), the [promised Kingdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_God) is set up, in which Jesus and the [Saints](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saints) will rule for a [thousand years](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennialism). Satan is then loosed "for a season" and goes out to deceive the nations, specifically, Gog and Magog. The army mentioned attacks the Saints in the [New Jerusalem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Jerusalem), they are defeated by a judgment of fire coming down from Heaven, and then comes the [Great White Throne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_White_Throne) judgment, which includes all of those through the ages and these are cast into the [Lake of Fire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lake_of_Fire), which event is also known as the "second death" and Gehenna, not to be confused with Hell, which is Satan's domain. Pentecost describes this as follows:

The destiny of the lost is a place in the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8). This lake of fire is described as everlasting fire (Matt. 25:41) (Matt. 18:8) and as unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43-44), 46-48, emphasizing the eternal character of retribution of the lost.

—Pentecost, p. 555

**Jehovah's Witnesses**

See also: [Eschatology of Jehovah's Witnesses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eschatology_of_Jehovah%27s_Witnesses)

[Jehovah's Witnesses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jehovah%27s_Witnesses) believe that Armageddon is the means by which [God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God) will finally realize his purpose for the Earth to be populated with happy healthy humans free of [sin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sin) and death. They teach that the armies of [heaven](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heaven) will eradicate all who oppose the [kingdom of God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_God) and its rule, wiping out all wicked human and [spirit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirit) creatures on Earth, leaving only righteous mankind.

They believe that the gathering of the all the nations of the Earth refers to the uniting of the world's political powers, as a gradual process beginning in 1914 and seen later in manifestations such as the [League of Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations) and the [United Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) following the First and Second World Wars. These political powers are influenced by [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) and his demons in opposition to God's kingdom. [Babylon the Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylon_the_Great) is interpreted as the world empire of false religion, and that it will be destroyed by the beast just prior to the great tribulation. Witnesses believe that after all other religions have been destroyed, the governments will turn to destroy them, and that God will then intervene.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the armies of heaven, commanded by Jesus Christ, will then destroy all forms of human government and rule Earth for 1000 years. They believe that [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) will be bound for that period, unable to influence mankind. After the 1000 years are ended, and the second resurrection has taken place, [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) is released and allowed to tempt the perfect human race one last time. Those who follow [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) are destroyed, along with him, leaving the Earth, and humankind at peace with God forever, free of sin and death.

**Seventh-day Adventist**

Main article: [Seventh-day Adventist eschatology#Armageddon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_eschatology#Armageddon)

[Seventh-day Adventist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Church) understanding of Revelation 13-22

The teachings of the [Seventh-day Adventist Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Church) state that the terms "Armageddon", "Day of the Lord" and "The Second Coming of Christ" all describe the same event. Seventh-day Adventists further teach that the current religious movements taking place in the world are setting the stage for Armageddon, and they are concerned by the growing unity between [spiritualism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spiritualism), American [Protestantism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestantism) and [Roman Catholicism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church). A further significant difference in [Seventh-day Adventist theology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_theology) is the teaching that the events of Armageddon will leave the earth desolate for the duration of the [millennium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Premillennialism). They teach that the righteous will be taken to heaven while the rest of humanity will be destroyed, leaving Satan with no one to tempt and effectively "bound." The final re-creation of a "new heaven and a new earth." then follows the millennium.

**Ahmadiyya**

In [Ahmadiyya](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmadiyya), Armageddon is viewed as a spiritual battle or struggle in the present age between the forces of good, i.e. righteousness, purity and virtue, and the forces of evil. The final struggle between the two comes as satanic influence is let loose with the emergence of [Gog and Magog](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gog_and_Magog#In_Ahmadiyya). [Satan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan) gathers all his powers, and uses all his methods to mislead people, introducing an age where iniquity, promiscuity, atheism, and materialism abound.

Ahmadiyya Muslims believe that [God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God) appointed [Promised Messiah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promised_Messiah) and [Mahdi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahdi) for the spiritual reformation and moral direction of mankind. This age continues for approximately one thousand years as per Judeo-Christian and Islamic prophecies of the [Apocalypse](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocalypse); it is characterized by the assembling of mankind under one faith, Islam in Ahmadiyya belief.

**Bahá'í faith**

See also: [Battle of Megiddo (1918)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Megiddo_%281918%29)

From [Bahá'í](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27%C3%AD_Faith) literature a number of interpretations of the expectations surrounding the Battle of Armageddon may be inferred, three of them being associated with events surrounding the World Wars.

The first interpretation deals with a series of tablets written by [Bahá'u'lláh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%27u%27ll%C3%A1h), founder of the Bahá'í Faith, to be sent to various kings and rulers. The second, and best-known one, relates to events near the end of [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) involving [General Allenby](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Allenby%2C_1st_Viscount_Allenby) and the [Battle of Megiddo (1918)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Megiddo_%281918%29) wherein World Powers are said to have drawn soldiers from many parts of the world to engage in battle at Megiddo. In winning this battle Allenby also prevented the [Turks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_people) from killing ['Abdu'l-Baha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%27Abdu%27l-Baha), then head of the [Baha'i Faith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baha%27i_Faith), whom they had intended to [crucify](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucify). A third interpretation reviews the overall progress of the World Wars, and the situation in the world before and after.

**Influence**

The idea that a final Battle of Armageddon will be fought at [Tel Megiddo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo) has had a wide influence, especially in the US. According to Donald E. Wagner, Professor of Religion and Director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at [North Park University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Park_University), [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) was an adherent of "Armageddon theology," and "seemed to blend his political analysis with his Armageddon theology quite naturally."

Some [militia groups](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Militia_movement) in the US, such as the [Hutaree](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hutaree), are reported to have prepared for violent action associated with related apocalyptic beliefs.

This page was last modified on 18 March 2012 at 10:26.