

THE THREE STAGES OF ARMAGEDDON

By Andy Walton

Overview

We are going to attempt to demonstrate using scriptural logic that there are 3 key stages to Armageddon.

In effect there are 3 separate wars centred on Israel / Jerusalem. The 3 wars are separated by short periods of time. But they are 3 stages of the same conflict. The judgement of the world.

Stage 1 is a war with Israel's immediate neighbours eg Hamas, Hezbollah, Syria.

Following Israel's victory there is a temporary time of peace.

Stage 2 is a war with Israel's wider enemies eg Russia, Iran, Turkey

Stage 3 is a war is a religious war and is centred on Jerusalem - this war is with Rome and Europe

If you would like watch a talk on this please [CLICK HERE](#)

Scriptural evidence

We may not have looked at it in this way before but consider two key prophecies in Zechariah.

We have Zechariah 12 and Zechariah 14. In the past we may have seen these two chapters as simply the same war told twice. But what if Zechariah 12 was stage 1 of the conflict and Zechariah 14 was stage 2? What if Zechariah 12 involved Israel's immediate neighbours and Zechariah 14 involved totally different nations – the outer ring of nations of Russia, Iran, and Turkey etc.

Zechariah 12 (NLT = New Living Translation / AV = Authorised Version / RSV = Revised Standard)

v2 NLT says "I will make Jerusalem like an intoxicating drink that makes the **NEARBY NATIONS** stagger when **THEY send THEIR armies** to Jerusalem and Judah.

v2 AV says **ALL PEOPLE ROUND ABOUT**

v2 NRSV / NIV says **ALL SURROUNDING PEOPLES**

This description is surely talking about people living in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon etc. eg Israel's nearby nations. The nearby nations send THEIR armies. We cannot call Russia, Iran, Turkey nearby nations!

v3 AV Jerusalem will become a burdensome stone for ALL PEOPLE - ALL that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces though ALL PEOPLE of the world be gathered together against it

This verse sounds more encompassing but this is speaking of the broader second stage of the conflict – it is saying that Jerusalem WILL become a burdensome for the world. And it does of course eventually become this.

But now look at this

v6 NLT On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a flame that sets a woodpile ablaze or like a burning torch among sheaves of grain. **They (the Jews) will burn up THE NEIGHBOURING NATIONS right and left while the people in Jerusalem are living secure!**

AV says the "governors of Judah". Governors actually means a rulers.

So we have Judah on fire – so there is some destruction of Israel. BUT Israel responds and causes great destruction with fire on her neighbours. Judah catches fire but then Israel burns the surrounding nations. In other words the people living in Judah destroy the neighbouring nations to Israel (Syria, Lebanon, Gaza etc.). It is NOT the wider Russian, Iranian war – those nations are NOT neighbours of Israel.

Notice as well that verse 6 said that the people in Jerusalem are LIVING SECURE. The AV says "Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place". It is better translated as "the people in Jerusalem are living securely".

So in other words Jerusalem survives this first stage conflict.

v7-8 speaks of victory to Judah and Jerusalem and its inhabitants are defended by the LORD.

v9 God says "I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

This is a process of destroying Israel's enemies. Isaiah 17 speaks of the total destruction of Damascus.

Amos 1 speaks of the judgement of Damascus, Gaza, Tyre and Edom.

So Israel's immediate neighbours are destroyed.

Now we have something amazing in verse 10 – Israel sees Christ coming!

"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced and mourn."

This is Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Revelation 1 v 7 quotes this verse...

"Behold he comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him; **and they also which pierced him**; and all kindred's of the earth shall mourn because of him."

In verse 12 of Zechariah 12 we have the surviving clans mourning following the sight of the one whom they have pierced.

The initial return of Jesus is seen by all. Including the faithful.

It is described in Mark 13 v 26

"And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. AND THEN shall he gather his elect from the four winds."

Jesus is seen by all AND THEN the elect are gathered.

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to download a full analysis of the return of Christ.

But the destruction of Israel's immediate neighbours is not the final victory. In fact Israel is greatly weakened at this point. Despite a peace deal and a sense of security an enormous void has opened up in the Middle East. Into this vacuum pours Russia and Iran etc.

This is the second stage. It is detailed in Zechariah 14.

Please note that there is NO specific mention at all of neighbouring nations or people in Zechariah 14.

It begins with verse 2 which says ALL NATIONS are gathered against Jerusalem.

We also note that verse 1 gives the reason for the invasion... "Thy SPOIL shall be divided in the midst of thee"

Why are we told the nations have come to take a spoil?

This is surely a reference to Ezekiel 38 v 11-12

"I will ...take a spoil and take a prey"

Whereas in Zechariah 12 Jerusalem survives the onslaught in Ch 14 it most certainly does not.

We read in verse 2

“The city will be taken, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half the population will be taken into captivity, and the rest will be left among the ruins of the city.”

Jerusalem is in ruins – the city has fallen to the invading Russian army.

This is a totally different war to Ch 12 where Jerusalem does not fall.

There is no mention of neighbouring nations – remember in Zechariah 12 we have neighbouring nations mentioned twice. They are not mentioned here once. This is ALL (remaining) nations.

Then in verse v 4 we have not just the appearing of Christ in the heavens but the actual physical return of Christ back to earth. He descends onto the Mount of Olives.

“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem”

But notice that at the end of verse 5 the saints are with him.

So the judgement has taken place. It must have taken place for all saints in between his appearing in the heavens in Zechariah 12:10 and his final descent onto the Mount of Olives.

In other words the saints were rescued out of the time of trouble BEFORE the final earthquake and possibly before the invasion of Russia into Israel.

We are reminded of the words in Matthew 24:21-22

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.”

Finally Zechariah 14 v 5 says there is the great earthquake like in the time of King Uzziah – Amos 1 mentions this massive earthquake. Interestingly we are told that he received the vision two years before the earthquake. The vision involves the judgement of Damascus, Gaza, Philistines, Tyre and Edom. The very people mentioned in Psalm 83. Could it be the final terrible earthquake comes two years after the punishment of these peoples?

Either way we have a great earthquake in Zechariah 14. This surely also links to the great earthquake of Ezekiel 38 when Russia is destroyed.

And then when this second stage of the judgement is complete Christ is established as King in Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:9

And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

There is of course one last conflict – Stage 1 was a war with Israel's immediate neighbours. They have been dealt with in Zechariah 12. Their motive was revenge for Israel living in what they thought was their land.

Then Israel's wider enemies have been dealt with in Zechariah 14. Their motive was riches / spoil. This is speaking of the nations in Ezekiel 38. Russia etc.

But there is a final war. A religious war. This war is led by the Papacy against Christ and the saints. We note there is NO MENTION of a religious aspect to the war of Zechariah 14. It is about spoil.

The final war is recorded in Revelation 17. Rome joins with Europe attack Christ and the saints when they are established in Jerusalem.

The false prophet and the beast are destroyed NEVER to appear again. The kingdom is now at peace.

The world is now subdued under the rulership of Christ the King of Kings and Lord of Lords – and his saints.

ORDER OF EVENTS

Event	Detail	Passage	Key phrase or words
Israel's war with neighbours	War with Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinians and Islamic State	Psalm 83:2-8 Zechariah 12:2+6 Isaiah 9:12-16	Philistines, City of Tyre, Assyria Nearby armies NLT / surrounding peoples Palestinians and Syria devour Israel
Israel's war with neighbours	War with Syria	Isaiah 17:1	Damascus will become a ruinous heap
Israel's war with neighbours	Israel's immediate neighbours / enemies destroyed	Isaiah 17:3 Zechariah 12:6 Zephaniah 2:3-4	Royal power in Damascus will cease All people against Jerusalem devoured Gaza, Philistines destroyed
Israel's war with neighbours	Israel greatly weakened by the conflict	Isaiah 17:3 Isaiah 17:4 Zechariah 12:6	Ephraim (N.Israel) fortress ceased Jacob made thin / flesh lean Judah governors on fire
Israel's war with neighbours	Jerusalem survives	Zechariah 12:8	God defends inhabitants of Jerusalem
CHRIST APPEARS	Jesus appears in heaven (sign of son of man) with angels The Jews see him coming All the world see him coming We who are still alive and faithful see him coming	Isaiah 17:7 Zechariah 12:10 Matthew 24:30 Matthew 25:6 Matthew 24:30 Revelation 1:7 1 Thess 4:15	A man will look to his maker Look on me whom they have pierced and mourn Then appears sign of the son of man in heaven A cry is made the LORD cometh (is arriving!) All tribes of the earth mourn Every eye shall see him – all kindred's will wail We which are alive do not precede the dead
CHRIST APPEARS	Dead are raised and judged	1 Thess 4:16 Daniel 11	The dead in Christ are raised first
CHRIST APPEARS	Saints still alive wait to be gathered by angels	Matt 25:7	Saints prepare their lamps – oil = faith Foolish no oil – they cannot get faith once Christ has appeared in heaven! IT'S TOO LATE!
Israel dwells confidently	Israel makes peace agreement and dwells confidently	Ezekiel 38:8 Ezekiel 38:11 1 Thess 5:3	Enjoying peace after war NLT At rest – dwelling confidently When they say peace and safety
Israel dwells confidently	Israel gives up land	Joel 3:2	Parted (divided) my land
ANGELS COLLECT SAINTS WHO ARE ALIVE	Saints gathered by angels for judgement	1 Thess 4:17 Mark 13:27	Then we which are alive shall be caught up.... THEN he send his angels to gather the elect
Israel's war with outer ring nations	Russia invades Israel with Iran / Turkey	Ezekiel 38:1-6	Gog, Magog, Meschech, Tubal, Persia, Togarmah, Gomer
Israel's war with outer ring nations	War to take spoil Jerusalem falls to Russian forces	Ezekiel 38:12 Zechariah 14:1	To take a spoil – to take a prey Thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee
Israel's war with outer ring nations	God destroys Russian armies Massive worldwide earthquake	Ezekiel 38:18-22 Zechariah 14:3 Revelation 16:18	God's fury - worldwide earthquake The Lord will fight the nations Greatest earthquake ever
CHRIST RETURNS	Christ comes to Mount Olives with ALL saints	Zechariah 14:4 Zechariah 14:5 Acts 1:11	His feet shall stand on Mount of Olives All saints with thee Jesus will return in like manner
CHRIST RETURNS	Christ established in Jerusalem	Zechariah 14:9	Christ king over all the earth
Religious war against Christ in Israel	Europe / Papacy launch war on Christ and saints	Revelation 17:14	Beast and harlot make war on the Lamb and those called and chosen (saints)
Religious war against Christ in Israel	Nations are judged and papacy destroyed forever	Revelation 17:14 Revelation 19:20 Matthew 25:32	The lamb overcomes them Beast and false prophet destroyed forever Nations judged before him
KINGDOM ESTABLISHED	Kingdom established – Christ king over all the earth	Zechariah 14:17	All nations come to worship the KING.