

AN END, A NEW BEGINNING

THE END OF MAN'S DAY, THE BEGINNING OF THE LORD'S DAY

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After the removal of the Church and the establishment of a seven-year covenant with Israel by the man of sin, there will be a time of trouble on this earth such as has not existed "since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor shall ever be." And this time of trouble will be of such a nature that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:21, 22).

This is what lies in the immediate future, just ahead, for "the enlightened world" at the beginning of the twenty-first century. And this period of time, the Tribulation, lasting seven years, will be marked centrally by *Satan's final and most intense efforts to destroy the nation of Israel*. This will be Satan's final onslaught against Israel, which will bring anti-Semitism to its most intense state in history, immediately before it is brought to an end.

Anti-Semitism

Note a short history of anti-Semitism under Satan, from its beginning to modern times.

The Amalekites were the first of the Gentile nations to war against Israel following the birth of the Israeli nation and the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 17:8; Num. 24:20). Because of this move by the Amalekites, God pronounced a terminal judgment upon this nation:

"I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Ex. 17:14).

The Israelites became the appointed executioners of the Amalekites (Deut. 25:17-19), but because of repeated failures to carry out the Lord's command completely, the Amalekites remained in existence as the bitter enemies of the Israelites for over seven hundred years beyond the Exodus (*cf.* I Sam. 15:2, 3, 7-9; II Sam. 1:6-10).

The sentence pronounced upon the Amalekites in Ex. 17:14 was not carried out in its completeness until the days of Hezekiah (I Chron. 4:39-43), and from that point in history the Amalekites ceased to exist. Although the Amalekites figured prominently in Old Testament history, dating all the way back to the days of Abraham (Gen. 14:7), archaeologists today have failed to unearth a single trace of this nation's existence. The Amalekites have been "utterly put out of remembrance," just as God promised. They exist on the pages of Scripture alone.

There is a law of "first mention" in Scriptural interpretation which states that the first time a subject is mentioned, the subject remains unchanged throughout Scripture.

Exodus chapter seventeen presents the first mention following the Exodus of Satan's move against Israel, along with God's attitude toward this move. Thus, the pattern is set in this chapter for Satan's strategy in his efforts to destroy Israel through the use of Gentile national powers, and the pattern is also set (based on previously revealed principles) concerning God's attitude toward a Gentile nation which would allow itself to be so used.

The basic principles governing God's attitude toward and treatment of individuals or nations participating in anti-Semitism were established during the days of Abraham (Gen. 12:3), and these principles, as the principles governing the law of first mention in Exodus chapter seventeen, remain unchanged throughout Scripture.

Every nation which has lifted its hand against Israel throughout history has either suffered destruction or awaits destruction.

The Assyrians, like the Amalekites, were wiped out of existence for allowing themselves to be used

by Satan against Israel. No trace of this once mighty nation remains today.

Other nations throughout history which succumbed to the same manner of Satanic leadership have also suffered destruction, but have been allowed to continue their national existence as base powers. Not a single nation has escaped the edge of the sword, though for some today, judgment is pending.

Biblical principles governing Israel and her relationship to the Gentile nations have been established, and God must act in accordance with these principles set forth in His Word.

During modern times the world has witnessed anew one of the worst atrocities ever perpetrated upon the Jewish people by a Gentile nation. The only thing which will explain the actions of the Third Reich under Hitler, during particularly the years 1939-1945, is that which Scripture reveals concerning Satan's attitude toward and method of attack against God's firstborn son, Israel.

The leaders of the Third Reich allowed themselves to be used by Satan in his ceaseless efforts to destroy Israel. The result of this effort at the end of twelve years (1933-1945) was the death of six million Jews, the death of millions of others in slave labor or death camps, the death of six and one-half million Germans (both military and civilian), and the German nation itself left in ruins.

Germany, by no means though, has been the last of the nations to raise its hand against Israel and suffer destruction, for Satan remains very active in the affairs of man within his kingdom. Consequently, anti-Semitic nations presently exist — nations awaiting destruction (*e.g.*, Iran and others today, along with Gentile nations worldwide which will turn against Israel during the Tribulation and appear at the battle of Armageddon).

(There is an irony seen in anti-Semitism. Israel was brought into existence to be the channel through which God would bless all of the Gentile nations [Gen. 12:1-3]. And the practice of anti-Semitism by any nation is simply an attempt by that nation to separate itself from God's blessings.)

**Armageddon (Isa. 63:1-6; Ezek. 38, 39;
Joel 3:2-16; Rev. 14:14-20; 19:17-21)**

The battle of Armageddon has to do with Satan's final attempt to prevent Israel's Messiah from exercising the dominion which he himself presently possesses, and to prevent the nation of Israel from occupying the supremacy which Gentile nations have occupied for the past 2,600 years. This final and climactic battle will be the outgrowth of all Satan's efforts to destroy Israel through the man of sin during the Tribulation.

Satan's final effort, climaxing in Armageddon, is foreshadowed in Ps. 83:1-8 by a ten-kingdom confederation of nations moving against Israel. Their avowed purpose in verse four of this Psalm echoes Satan's unchanging approach throughout history:

*"Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation;
that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance."*

The thought goes all the way back to the death of the firstborn in Egypt (Ex. 4:23; 12:1ff), and God's subsequent announced destruction of the Amalekites in the wilderness (Ex. 17:14). The expressions "my son [God's son], even my firstborn" and "thy son [Pharaoh's son], even thy firstborn" in Ex. 4:22, 23 refer to both *personal* and *national* entities, with "sonship" having to do with *rulership*.

Egypt was the ruling nation under Satan, and Israel was about to become the ruling nation under God. God destroyed Satan's firstborn (Egypt); and, following the Red Sea passage, when Amalek came against Israel on the march to Mount Sinai, God announced that He would "utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

Armageddon will be Satan's final, climactic attempt to reverse the God-decreed death of his firstborn (the future world kingdom under the Assyrian, typified by the Egyptian kingdom under the past Assyrian). And he will vainly seek to accomplish this task by destroying God's firstborn (Israel), "that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance."

(Note that "sonship" is also involved with the leaders of the two opposing forces, for the leader of the Gentile nations will be *Satan's son* [Gen. 3:15],

the false Messiah, while the Protector of Israel will be *God's Son*, the true Messiah.)

Christ will return at the end of the Tribulation, Old Testament saints will be raised from the dead, and the "whole house of Israel [both those who are living (following Israel's national conversion) and those who are raised from the dead]" will be restored to the land of Israel. *It will be then* — prior to the actual ushering in of the Messianic Era — that the kings of the earth under the leadership of "the beast" will move against the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" in Jerusalem (cf. Joel 3:16; Rev. 19:19).

Just as Satan has used various Gentile nations throughout Man's Day, vainly seeking to accomplish his God-dishonoring purpose, he will use all the Gentile nations of the world in his last great attempt to effect his plans and purposes immediately preceding his dethronement.

"The beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies," will be "gathered together to make war against him [Christ]...and against his army" (Rev. 19:19). Although Christ will possess an accompanying army (composed of angels [cf. I Thess. 3:13; II Thess. 1:7; Jude 14; Deut. 33:2]), He will enter the battle *alone*. It was *alone* that He suffered, bled, and died; and it will be *alone* that He treads His enemies under His feet (Isa. 63:1-6).

At the first coming of Christ, immediately before His crucifixion, Roman soldiers led Him to the governor's palace, stripped Him of His garments, arrayed Him in a scarlet robe, and placed a crown of thorns on His head and a reed (symbolizing the sceptre of governmental power) in His right hand. This was done in order to openly ridicule the "King of the Jews," Whom the Jewish people had rejected, subsequently claiming allegiance to Caesar (John 19:1-15).

The Romans (the center of Gentile power in that day) had subjugated God's son, Israel; and soldiers from this same Gentile nation were ridiculing God's Son, Jesus.

"...they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'

And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head" (Matt. 27:29b, 30).

"This same Jesus" is the One Who will *tread the winepress alone*. He appeared on earth the first time as "the Lamb of God," but He will reappear as "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (cf. John 1:29; Rev. 5:5). *He was mocked in the governor's palace and smitten upon His head with the sceptre*. But in that coming day, when He reappears, *He will break the sceptre held by the Gentiles*, executing "judgment" resulting in "victory" (cf. Matt. 12:20; Isa. 42:1-3). That will be the day when *the Seed of the woman* in Gen. 3:15 crushes *the head of the Serpent, the head of Satan*.

The same scenes which witnessed Christ's sufferings and humiliation will one day witness His glory and exaltation. Satan's final attempt to prevent the transfer of power — his own (exhibited through *the Beast* in that day), his angels, and the Gentile nations, which will be transferred to Christ, the Church, and Israel respectively — will, as in all previous attempts, be quelled.

The Beast and False Prophet will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire, becoming its first occupants. The kings of the earth, along with their armies, will then be slain in the plain of Megiddo; and Satan (along with his angels) will be bound in the abyss.

Following the battle of Armageddon, God's Sons will then exercise their rightful positions of authority and power on and over the earth.

God's son, Israel, will be the supreme nation on earth, holding the sceptre previously held by the Gentile nations.

God's son, the Church, will exercise supremacy over the nations from the heavens, holding the sceptre previously held by angels ruling under Satan.

And *God's Son, Jesus*, will exercise supremacy over all things, holding the sceptre (and far more) previously held by Satan.

Thus will the present age end and the new age begin. "What a termination!" "What a climax!" "What a new beginning!"

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