

# The Great Controversy III

---

1. **Rev 12:17**--The great controversy which started in heaven between Michael and the dragon is brought to a climax in the time of the end; during this conflict, Satan makes a final attempt to silence the witness of God's people who vindicate the law of God by keeping His commandments, thus testifying to the falseness of his claim that the Law of God cannot be kept;

Satan, the fallen angel, had declared that no man could keep God's law, and he pointed to the disobedience of Adam as proving the declaration true. **ST April 10, 1893, par. 2.**

Satan claimed that it was impossible for human beings to keep God's law. In order to prove the falsity of this claim, Christ left His high command, took upon Himself the nature of man, and came to the earth to stand at the head of the fallen race, in order to show that humanity could withstand the temptations of Satan. **UL 172.**

**The holy life of Abel testified against Satan's claim that it is impossible for man to keep God's law.**

When Cain, moved by the spirit of the wicked one, saw that he could not control Abel, he was so enraged that he destroyed his life. And wherever there are any who will stand in vindication of the righteousness of the law of God, the same spirit will be manifested against them. **PP 77.**

2. The war between the dragon and the remnant of the woman's seed mentioned in **Rev 12:17** therefore, is nothing but the conflict between those who vindicate the Law of God in their lives by keeping the commandments of God and those who side with Satan in violating the law of God;

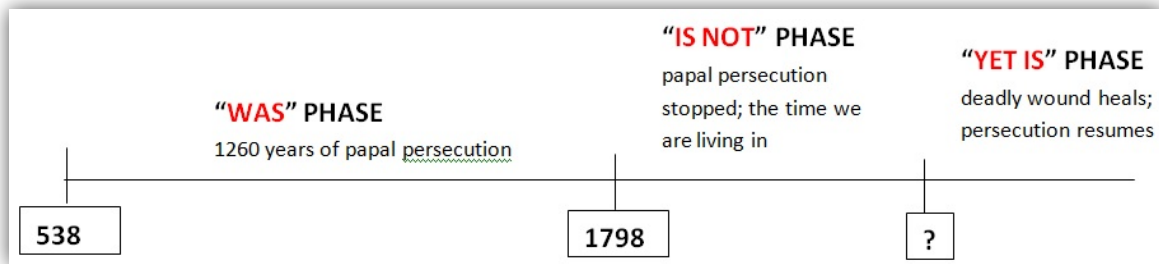
There are only two parties upon this earth—those who stand under the bloodstained banner of Jesus Christ and those who stand under the black banner of rebellion. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation is represented the great conflict between the obedient and the disobedient. **7BC 974.**

3. The war between the dragon and the remnant of the woman's seed recorded in **Rev 12:17** is nothing but the resumption of the deadly conflict that abruptly came to an end at the end of time period designated as "time, times and the dividing of time;" this is because the power represented by the dragon received a deadly wound in the hands of Napoleon (in 1798);
4. This conflict is resumed because the power represented by the dragon of **Revelation 12** is brought back to life as a result of the actions done by that the power represented by the beast coming out of the earth in **Revelation 13** (the United States)
  - a. **Rev 12:15-16**--The United States (the earth) is first described as helping the woman to flee from the beast of Revelation 12 by opening her mouth to swallow the flood (of persecution)

- b. **Rev 13:11-17**—In the end, the United States assumes beastly powers (“speaks like a dragon”) and experiences a change of heart and switches side, changes allegiance, this time helping the power that persecuted the church for 1260 years to come back to life!
  - 1. **verse 12**: exercises all the power of the first beast before him
  - 2. **verse 12**: causes men to worship the first beast
  - 3. **verses 13-14**: performs great wonders and miracles to deceive them that dwell on the earth
  - 4. **verses 14-15**: makes an image to the beast
  - 5. **verse 15**: causes as many as will not worship the image to the beast to be killed
  - 6. **verse 16-17**: causes all to receive the mark of the beast in the forehead or in the hand
- 5. **Revelation 17** expands on the activities of the sea beast of **Revelation 13** and focuses on the activities of the power represented by the beast that received a deadly wound, when that wound is healed and it is brought back to life!
- 6. A six-fold description of the harlot of **Revelation 17** identifies her as the same entity that persecuted the church for 1,260 years--except the timeframe is different; it is after the wound heals!
  - 1. **Verse 3**: sit upon a scarlet-colored beast which had seven heads and ten horns and full of names of blasphemy;
  - 2. **Verse 4**: the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color
  - 3. **Verse 4**: decked with gold and precious stones and pearls
  - 4. **Verse 4**: having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication
  - 5. **Verse 5**: upon her forehead was written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH
  - 6. **Verse 6**: the woman was drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus

## The Three Time Periods of the Beast

- 7. The life of spiritual Babylon is expressed in different ways in three phases:
  - a. **Rev 17:8**--“ascend out of the bottomless pit” (**Rev 17:8**)—a reference to the resurrection of the beast that received a deadly wound in 1798, from the grave
    - 1. Bottomless pit (Gr. “abbyssos”, also used in **Rom 10:7** to refer to the abode of the dead, the grave)
    - 2. “*the beast that thou sawest was*” and “*the beast that was*”—a reference to the 1,260 years of papal activity
    - 3. “*Is not*”—a reference to the period of time after the beast received a deadly wound, and is dormant; incapacitated (unable to continue persecuting God’s people); the time we are now living in
    - 4. “*Yet is*”—the beast that received the deadly wound comes back to life, when its fatal wound is healed



## "The Mind That Hath Wisdom"

8. **Rev 17:11**--he is the eighth, and is of the seven—the number "8" is associated with newness of life which is experienced now only spiritually in the new birth after baptism and will be experienced literally when the saints are endowed with eternal life in the new earth
- David is the 8<sup>th</sup> son and Jesse and Solomon is also the 8<sup>th</sup> son of David; both serve as type of the kingdom that Christ will establish after the millennium
  - The new earth comes into being in the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium;
  - 1 Per 3:20**—the number 8 is associated with rising into newness of life at baptism
  - Hebrew children were circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day before baptism was instituted
  - The name Jesus in the Greek (adds up to 888)
  - There are 8 New Testament writers
  - There are 8 better things in the book of Hebrews (better covenant, better promises, etc.)

## Six-Fold Rendition of the Events of the Final Conflict

9. The activities of the whore that sits on many waters in **Revelation 17** are rendered in a six-fold manner;
- Verse 10:** And when he comes (when the wound heals) He continues for a short space
    - The seven kings**—a reference to the seven kingdoms that opposed and persecuted the church of God from the beginning until Jesus comes
      - Egypt
      - Assyria
      - Babylon
      - Medo-Persia
      - Greece
      - Rome, both pagan and papal until 1798
      - Rejuvenated papal Rome allied with apostate Protestantism and paganism (this corresponds to the 10 toes of Daniel 2, which were made up of clay and iron)
    - Five are fallen**—the point of reference is John's time; in John's time, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece are fallen
    - One is**—in John's time, pagan Rome was the reigning power
    - The other is yet to come**—in John's time, the seventh head was still future
  - Verse 11:** He goeth unto perdition

3. **Verse 12:** The ten horns. . .receive power as kings and reign one hour with the beast
4. **Verse 13:** These have one mind and give their power and strength unto the beast
  5. Graphically depicted as the woman sitting on many waters and woman sitting on the scarlet colored beast, **Rev 17:1, 3**; this is Babylon's support base)
  6. All the world wondered after the beast when the wound is healed (**Rev 13:3; Rev 17:8**)
  7. All that dwell on the earth shall worship him. . .(**Rev 13:8**)
5. **Verse 14:** These shall make war with the Lamb and he shall overcome them (**Rev 12:17**)
6. **Verse 16:** The ten horns. . .shall hate the whore and shall make her desolate, and naked and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire
  - a. fulfilled during the 6<sup>th</sup> plague, when the symbolic river Euphrates is dried up and Babylon loses its support base, as her deceptions are uncovered
  - b. This constitutes the fall of spiritual Babylon

## Armageddon Leads to the Final Collapse of Babylon

10. **Rev 16:12; Jer 50:38**--Babylon falls when the support it receives from multitudes of people which have been deceived by her into compliance are withdrawn in the 6<sup>th</sup> plague; this withdrawal of support is symbolized as the "drying up of the great river Euphrates;"
  - a. Historically, the city of Babylon literally sat on the river Euphrates and draw support and protection from it
11. What circumstances and events lead up to the "drying of the river Euphrates" and the deceptions of spiritual Babylon being uncovered?
 

**ANSWER:** The "gathering at a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" results in the deceptions of spiritual Babylon being uncovered (**Rev 16:16**)
12. What is **Armageddon**?
  - a. It is a **Hebrew** word which literally means ("**Har Megiddo**"), the mountain of Megiddo
  - b. It is to be interpreted symbolically and spiritually, not literally as some Adventist commentators have done in the past:
  - c. **Uriah Smith's interpretation**--the final battle between the nations of the east and the nations of the west in a literal valley of Megiddo; a politico-military war of tanks and bombs!
    1. **The river Euphrates**--the Ottoman empire (modern day Turkey) through which the river Euphrates flowed
    2. **Drying up of the river Euphrates**--gradual dissolution of that empire
    3. **Kings of the east**--nations of the Orient
    4. **Armageddon**--the literal valley of Megiddo in Northern Palestine where the final military battle between the west and the east will be fought
    5. Hence the dissolution of the Moslem empire prepares the way for the nations of the Orient and the nations of the West to assemble in the plains of Megiddo for a final battle

13. The 6th plague of **Rev 16:12** must be interpreted as the final battle between God's loyal people and the disobedient; it is a religious battle; not a military battle; spiritual things are spiritually discerned;
- a. **the River Euphrates**---Symbolically refers to the dwellers of the earth who have rejected the three-fold messages of **Revelation 14** and end up being deceived into wondering after the beast and worshipping it and receiving its mark; (**Rev 17:1, 15**); they become a huge worldwide flood of ungodly men (**Isa 59:19**) who end up rekindling the fires of persecution reminiscent of that during the Dark ages (**Rev 12:13-15**);
    1. Assyrian flood in the time of Hezekiah--**Isa 8:7-8**
    2. the Egyptian flood--**Jer 46:7-8**
    3. the Babylonian flood--**Jer 47:1-2**
    4. the Roman flood in 70 AD--(**Dan 9:25-26; Dan 11:21-22**)
    5. the papal flood of the Dark ages--(**Rev 12:13-15**)
    6. the papal flood after the wound heals--(**Rev 17:1, 15**)
  - b. **the drying up of the River Euphrates**--withdrawal of human support from Babylon by the deceived masses of the world when they discover that they have been deceived and that God is not on their side (**Rev 17:15-18, EW 282**)
  - c. **The kings of the east**--Represents Christ and the armies of heaven who accompany him at His second coming (**Revelation 19**); prefigured by the historical Cyrus conquering Babylon and later releasing God's people from the Babylonian captivity
  - d. **three unclean spirits**-- the three-fold union of spiritualism (dragon), the papacy (beast) and apostate Protestantism (false prophet) who are instrumental in deceiving the whole world into submission to the spiritual Babylon. (**GC 588**)
14. **Armageddon ("har Megiddo")**--in the Hebrew literally means "the mountain of Megiddo" and geographically points to Mt Carmel, the mountain to the west of the City of Megiddo; Hebrew authors sometimes use a literary device where places are identified not by name, but by association with other places of interest:
- a. **The waters of Meggido**--the Kidron River (**Judg 5:19**)
  - b. **The Valley of Megiddo**--the valley of Megiddo (**2 Chron 35:20-23**)
  - c. **The mountain of Megiddo**-- Mt. Carmel (**Rev 16:16**)
15. **IMPORTANT:** The gathering in the place called Armageddon (**Rev 16:16**) is not a call to literally gather armies for battle in a literal valley of Megiddo; rather, it is an imagery borrowed from the Old Testament that had to do with the confrontation between Elijah and the false prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel! This confrontation will be repeated in the final crisis and will act as the turning point leading to the final victory of God's people over their enemies!

The Mt. Carmel Confrontation	The Gathering in "Har Megiddo" during the 6 <sup>th</sup> plague
Jezebel	The corrupt church of Thyatira or the Dark ages ( <b>Rev 2:20</b> ) and the harlot of Revelation 17 (Rev 17:1-2)
King Ahab	Secular powers, the 10 horns

Ahab united with Jezebel in marriage	Babylon fornicating with the kings of the earth (church and state union) ( <b>Rev 17:1-2</b> )
Elijah the prophet, very jealous for the Lord God in the midst of national apostasy ( <b>1 Ki 19:10</b> )	The remnant of the woman's seed who keep the commandments of God ( <b>Rev 12:17</b> )
Elijah orders King Ahab to the gather all the prophets of Baal who have deceived Israel, for showdown on Mt Carmel ( <b>1 Ki 18:17-20</b> )	And He (God) gathers them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon ( <b>Rev 16:16</b> ); God arranges circumstances so that people discover that they have been deceived ( <b>EW 282</b> )
Fire from heaven fall on Elijah's altar ( <b>1 Ki 18:37-38</b> )	Signs and wonders that follow true believers ( <b>GC 612</b> )
The children of Israel realize they have been deceived ( <b>1 Ki 18:39</b> )	The masses of the world realize they have been deceived ( <b>Rev 17:15-16; EW 282</b> )
The false prophets of Baal taken and slain by the river Kidron ( <b>1 Ki 17:38-40</b> )	Beast and false prophet taken and cast into the lake of fire ( <b>Rev 19:20</b> )

### The deceptions fully uncovered

Many of the wicked were greatly enraged as they suffered the effects of the plagues. It was a scene of fearful agony. Parents were bitterly reproaching their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. Loud, wailing cries were heard in every direction, **"It was you who kept me from receiving the truth which would have saved me from this awful hour." The people turned upon their ministers with bitter hate and reproached them, saying, "You have not warned us. You told us that all the world was to be converted, and cried, Peace, peace, to quiet every fear that was aroused. You have not told us of this hour; and those who warned us of it you declared to be fanatics and evil men, who would ruin us."** But I saw that the ministers did not escape the wrath of God. Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people. **EW 282.**

## Conclusion

16. God's people now are living during the **"is not"** phase of the papal timeline; this is a time of relative peace and persecution by this power is virtually non-existent;
  - a. The **"is not"** phase is the time when God's people should be fully awake to what is going on around them and afflicting and purifying their souls in preparation for the final atonement and cleansing
  - b. The **"is not"** phase is the time when God's people should be faithfully sounding the warning messages of Revelation 14
  - c. the **"is not"** phase is not the time to be living self-indulgent lives, cherishing sin and saying "My Lord delayeth his coming;" and compromising our beliefs to be more popular and acceptable (**Matt 24:49**)
  
17. When the **"is not"** phase is over and the **"yet is"** phase comes, it will be too late for God's people to be making individual preparations; those who have failed to make their preparations are shaken out and do not receive the benefit of Christ's final atonement; those who are ready go through the cleansing process described in the vision of Joshua and the angel (**PK 587-591**):

- a. They realize fully the sinfulness of their lives (**PK 588**)
- b. They see the exceeding sinfulness of sin (**PK 580**)
- c. Their filthy robe of character are taken away and replaced with the robe of Christ's righteousness (**PK 591**)
- d. Once purified and fully reflecting the image of Jesus, they give the loud cry of the third angel; and the honest ones are called out of Babylon

18. The "yet is" phase therefore signals the beginning of the closing scenes of the great Day of Atonement!"

Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. "Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" ( Song of Solomon 6:10), she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer. **PK 725.**

20. **Rev 16:15**—God's people are warned not to abandon the Sabbath at this time for that would mean losing the white garment that was procured in the final atonement

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation is represented the great conflict between the obedient and the disobedient. The sign of obedience is the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

The Sabbath is a test to this generation. In obeying the fourth commandment in spirit and truth, men will obey all the precepts of the Decalogue. To fulfill this commandment one must love God supremely, and exercise love toward all the creatures that He has made.

The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day.... The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God's people are to stand firm for Him.

Let no one yield to temptation and become less fervent in his attachment to God's law because of the contempt placed upon it; for that is the very thing that should make us pray with all our heart, and soul, and voice, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law." Psalm 119:126. Therefore, because of the universal contempt, I will not turn traitor when God will be most glorified and most honored by my loyalty....

Shall Seventh-day Adventists relax their devotedness when all their capabilities and powers should be placed on the Lord's side; when an unflinching testimony, noble and uplifting, should come from their lips? "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." Psalm 119:127. When the law of God is most derided and brought into the most contempt, then it is time for every true follower of Christ ... to stand unflinchingly for the faith once delivered to the saints. **FLB 291.**