

## I. INTRO: *Dispensationalism- From The Rapture To The Millennium* by Daniel Ridinger

A. Faithful children of God joyfully anticipate the Lord's Coming (1 Cor.16:22).

B. We have examined 3 lessons recently on the topic of Dispensationalism.

- Lesson 1: Introduction To Dispensationalism [D teach that Jesus will come again to set up an earthly kingdom & reign in Jerusalem for a literal 1K years.]
- Lesson 2: Dispensationalism & The Church [D do not believe that the church was involved in God's *eternal purpose*. They view the church as an *after thought, an accident, a stop-gap* measure that God took until Jesus comes to establish His millennial kingdom.]
- Lesson 3: Dispensationalism & The Rapture [D contend that Jesus will *come for* His saints, suddenly & secretly.]

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*Dispensationalism - From The Rapture To The Millennium* Let us notice: (I) Overview Of *D* Scenario From The Rapture To The Millennium (II) What The Bible Says About The *D* Scenario Purpose: Informative. To have better understanding of *D*. To give an overview & a rebuttal.  
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DISCUSSION:

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### I. OVERVIEW OF D SCENARIO FROM THE RAPTURE TO THE MILLENNIUM

- Elements of the D scenario may vary with some of the details among dispensationalists.
- My intentions under this point is to present a general overview of what D believe will happen from the time the *rapture* occurs until the beginning of the millennium.

#### A. The *Rapture* - Heavenly Scene

1. D believe the *rapture* is when Jesus *comes for* His saints. They assert that Jesus will mysteriously *catch up, snatch away* His people. The raptured saints will be with the Lord for 7 years.

2. Q: What will happen during those 7 years when the saints are with the Lord in Heaven? [2 things:]

a. Judgment Of The Saints

aa. D contend that the raptured saints will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. They call this the bema seat.<sup>1</sup>

bb. Haggee: *At this judgment seat, Jesus will not judge whether or not we are saved, for everyone before the bema seat is a believer. Paul says that the believer's works will be brought into judgment...The Lord does not intend to punish us for sins, but to reward deed done in His name.* [D appeal to 2 Cor. 5:10 & 1 Cor.3:10-15 as proof text.]<sup>2</sup>

b. Marriage Supper Of The Lamb (Rev.19:7-8) [Haggee: *The marriage supper of the Lamb will take place right after our appearance before the Lord's judgment seat, and we will wear the wedding garments we have prepared while on earth. You are constructing your wedding garment right now, piecing it together with your righteous acts.*]<sup>3</sup>

#### B. The *Tribulation* - Earthly Scene

1. D believe that the *rapture* will usher in *the tribulation*. While the raptured saints are with the Lord for 7 years in Heaven, those left on earth will undergo a 7 year period of tribulation (Jer.30:7; Mt.24:21).

2. D assert that during the *tribulation* several things will happen on the earth.

a. The *Antichrist, the son of Satan* will arise. [According to John Haggee in his book, The Revelation of Truth, D believe that:]

- aa. The *Antichrist* will come from a revived Roman Empire, probably the European Union.
- bb. He will use military force to gain/maintain world supremacy.
- cc. His agenda includes a one-world religion, one-world currency & one-world government.
- dd. He will make a treaty with Israel, but will break it after 3½ years (Dan.9:27).
- ee. He will require people to take his mark in the right hand or forehead (Rev.13:16-17).

b. God will regather the Jews to Palestine. The national conversion of Israel will happen.<sup>4</sup> The Jews will rebuild the Temple, animal sacrifice will be restored.<sup>5</sup>

c. God will seal a believing remnant of Israel, 144,000, to witness during the entire 7 year tribulation (Rev.7:1-8). They will preach the *gospel of the kingdom* in all the world as a witness to all the nations with great success (Rev.7:9-17).<sup>6</sup>

3. The *Tribulation* will end when Jesus *comes with His saints*. This is called the *Revelation*.

a. At the *revelation*, God will draw the nations to battle at Megiddo - *the last great world war of history* (Joel 3:2; Rev.16:16)

aa. Antichrist's enemies will lay siege to Jerusalem & overrun her defenses. They will take captives, murder, rape & pillage until the streets run red with blood.<sup>7</sup>

bb. Antichrist will try to destroy the Jewish people who have fled to Petra. But he will turn his attention toward Megiddo to face an army of 200 mil. advancing from China & the army from the north (Dan.11:44-45).<sup>8</sup>

cc. Haggee: As Jesus begins His descent to earth, 2 armies, that of Antichrist & the king of the east will turn from fighting each other & direct their weapons toward Christ Himself (Rev.19:19).<sup>9</sup> [D assert that so many will be killed that a stream of blood 180 (200)<sup>10</sup> long & as high as a horses' bridle will flow during the battle (Rev.14:20).]<sup>11</sup>

dd. The Antichrist & his army will be defeated by Christ (Dan.11:40-41, 44-45; Rev. 16:16; 19). The Antichrist & the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev.19:20).

b. Satan will be bound & cast into the *bottomless pit* for 1K years (Rev.20:2-3).

c. The Judgment Of The Nations will occur after Armageddon.

aa. Haggee: *God will keep his promise to Abraham, blessing those who blessed the Jews, and cursing those who cursed the children of Israel...Jesus will sit on His throne, then every mortal individual living on earth at that time will pass before Him. This is...a judgment of the Gentile nations of earth for the manner in which they treated the Jewish people and Israel (Gen.12:1-3).*<sup>12</sup>

bb. Proof Text: Mt.25:31-37, 40-42, 44-46

4. After this Jesus will establish His millennial kingdom.

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## II. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT THE *D* SCENARIO

### A. The *Tribulation*

1. The word *tribulation* means *to press, to oppress, to squeeze* The English word is from the Latin *tribulum*, the roller used by the Romans for pressing wheat.
2. The word *tribulation* is found numerous times in the Bible (Jn.16:33; Acts 11:19; Rev.1:9).
3. Christians of every generation until the end of time should expect to experience tribulation (2 Tim.3:12).
4. But the Bible does not teach that there will come a 7 year *tribulation* on earth before the Lord's Coming.
5. Look at the text that *D* use to teach the *tribulation*.
  - a. Jer.30:7 [The context deals with God's deliverance of Judah from Babylonian Captivity & their restoration to the land (Jer.30:10).]
  - b. Mt.24:9, 21, 29 [This chapter through about vs.35 deals with the destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews would undergo tribulation from the Roman army. Vs.21 describes the event as a *great tribulation*. In 70 A.D., Titus & his Roman army sacked Jerusalem after about a 3 year siege. About a million Jews died in the siege.]

### B. The *Battle Of Armageddon*

1. *D* believe the events taking place in the Middle East & the world today are signs that Jesus will come *soon*; that His Coming is imminent.
2. They furthermore believe that the world will eventually be involved in a conflict of unprecedented proportions at a place called Megiddo. It will be the *final climatic battle*. The combined forces of Western Europe under the leadership of the Antichrist will fight against the kingdom of the north, Russia & the kingdom of the east, China.<sup>13</sup>
3. The single Bible reference to *Armageddon/Har-magedon* is Rev.16:16.
4. The word *Armageddon* literally means *mountain of Megiddo*.<sup>14</sup>
  - a. Geographically, Megiddo is a plain about 20 mi. long & 14 mi. wide. It was a strategic point guarding the northern entrance to Israel, protecting Israel & Judah.<sup>15</sup>
  - b. Historically, it was a place where some decisive battles were fought eg, Deborah & Barak defeated the Canaanites; Gideon defeated the Midianites (Judges 7); Josiah was killed there in battle by Pharaoh-necho (2 Kgs.23:29).

5. Q: Will there be a literal battle called *Armageddon*? NO!

a. The only reference to *Armageddon* is found in the book of Revelation. It is a book of visions & symbols (Rev.1:1).

b. Notice the context of Rev.16 where the word *Armageddon* is found.

aa. It records the pouring out of the 7 Bowls of God's Wrath into the earth (16:1).

bb. The *bowls of wrath* are in the form of plagues eg, sores, blood, fire, frog. The plagues affect the land, sea, fresh water, heavenly bodies, the beast's kingdom, the Euphrates River & the air.

c. Q: Does John teach that these things are to happen literally?

aa. If *Armageddon* is a literal battle, shouldn't the other things mentioned in the chapter be literal, too?

bb. If literal, then God will use literal bowls to pour out His wrath. If it is a literal battle, then literal frogs will come the mouth of literal creatures to engage in battle on the literal field of Megiddo.

d. To the contrary, *Armageddon* is symbolic of a decisive spiritual battle between the Satan's army & the forces of God.<sup>16</sup> Symbolic of the overthrow of evil by the power & might of God.<sup>17</sup> "It is the apocalypticist's way of describing the final, awful overthrow of the Roman Empire."<sup>18</sup>

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**CONCL:**

Preached: Oliver church of Christ, Rogersville, AL (10/27/02, PM)

<sup>1</sup>John Haggee The Revelation Of Truth A Mosaic Of God's Plan For Man (Thomas Nelson Pub: Nashville, TN 2,000), p.212

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, pp.212-213

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p.213

<sup>4</sup>*Christian Courier* edited by Wayne Jackson, 10/84, Vol.XX, No.62, p.21

<sup>5</sup>Hal Lindsay The Late Great Planet Earth (Zondervan Pub. House: Grand Rapids, MI 1970), p.152

<sup>6</sup>John Haggee The Revelation Of Truth, pp.235-236

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, p.219

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, p.219-220

<sup>9</sup>Ibid, p.221

<sup>10</sup>Hal Lindsay The Late Great Planet Earth

<sup>11</sup>John Haggee The Revelation Of Truth, p.222

<sup>12</sup>Ibid, p.234

<sup>13</sup>Tract, The Battle Of Armageddon by Wayne Jackson, p.5

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, p.8

<sup>15</sup>Homer Hailey Revelation An Introduction and Commentary, p.336

<sup>16</sup>Homer Hailey Revelation An Introduction and Commentary, p.336

<sup>17</sup>The New International Commentary On The New Testament The Book Of Revelation, by Robert H. Mounce, p.302

<sup>18</sup>Rubel Shelly, The Lamb and His Enemies, p.97