

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Vaught Sermon Notes: A Study of the Book of Revelation

W.O. Vaught Archive

9-22-1981

Setting the Stage for Armageddon

W. O. Vaught

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_revelation



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "Setting the Stage for Armageddon" (1981). *Vaught Sermon Notes: A Study of the Book of Revelation*. 29.

https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_revelation/29

This Sermon Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the W.O. Vaught Archive at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vaught Sermon Notes: A Study of the Book of Revelation by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR ARMAGEDDON

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
REVELATION 16:10-16
NUMBER 27

Dr. W. O. Vaught, Jr.
Immanuel Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas

REVELATION 16:10-16 "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

These judgments here in these chapters illustrate the principle of evangelism by catastrophe. It is to make them realize their need for Jesus Christ the Saviour. (Like Paul on the Damascus Road)

We have now come to the fifth drinking cup, the fifth judgment in verses 10-11.

REVELATION 16:10 "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain" The fifth angel poured out his drinking cup on the throne, the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire. He is not only a political dictator but he is the head of Ecumenical Religion in the earth. "His kingdom was full of darkness" means that this darkness brought fantastic results. The darkness will protect the Jews in Palestine and cause their lives to be spared. This darkness hinders the King of the North and it also explains the passage in Daniel 11 which speaks of "Tidings out of the East". We will study this darkness more in detail when we get to the Armageddon Campaign. "They gnawed their tongues in pain" is a figure showing the intense suffering which characterized this whole period.

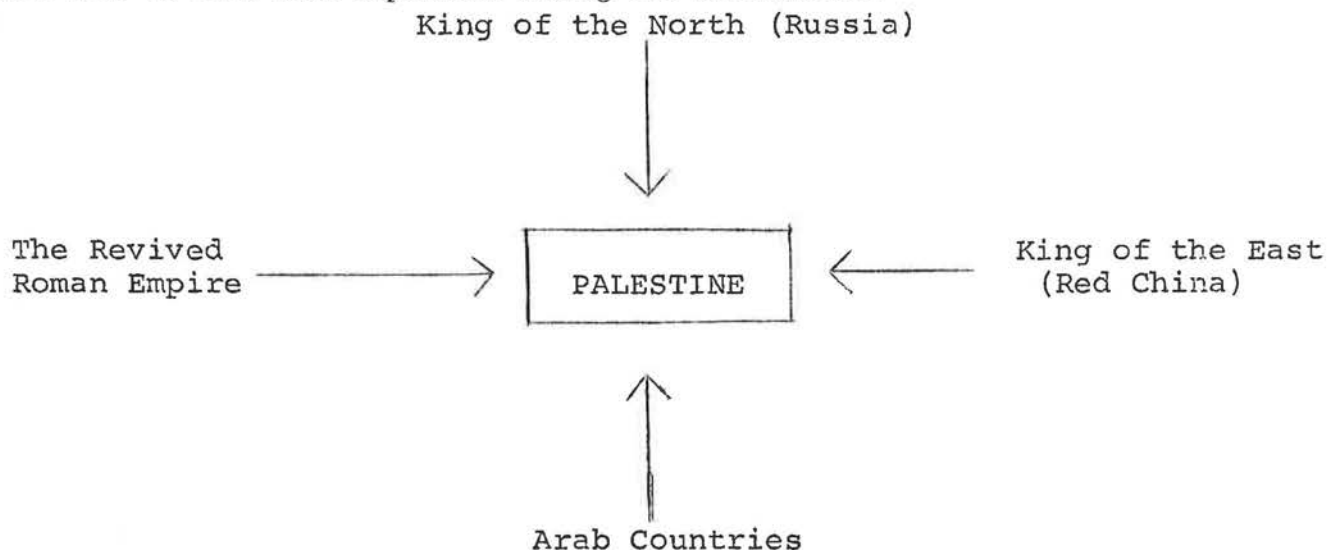
REVELATION 16:11 "And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Here we have the reaction of the people to the first five judgments. Instead of turning to God in belief because of the pains and sores, they blasphemed and repented not. "Repented not" means a stepped up negative volition. Their deeds encompassed the entire scope of their old sin nature. They didn't change their mental attitude. When religious, legalistic people are put under extreme pressure and punishment, they will not change their minds. There is no approach that could be used that would change their minds. I have heard a lot of idle talk that if you will just love the unbeliever and be tender and not push him in any way and cater to him as much as possible that finally he will come around and be converted. Nothing is farther from the truth. But this is not the case at all. The reason people will not accept is because they refuse to believe Bible doctrine. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Emotionalism is not the power of God unto salvation. Sentimental love is not the power of God unto salvation. So here we are in the midst of evangelism by disaster. This is sort of a last resort with God. They are not going to change their mental attitude and to the end they are going to depend on human good as their way of salvation. Now these Tribulational people are on negative signals, and they have heard the gospel at least four times, yet they continue to send up negative signals to God. These people have faced all kinds of disasters as God has made an attempt to arouse them, yet they have made no response. They resist Christ

even under the extreme methods of disaster evangelism. But God is faithful and true and will not tamper with their volition. At this point Calvinism is off base. They claim no one can accept Christ unless the Holy Spirit pushes the positive button. But it is impossible for God to create free will and then tamper with it. He never has and he never will. If God tampered with free will, then everyone would be saved. Tampering with free will destroys the angelic conflict. In the Tribulation the first thing God did was to give the Gospel to the world through the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. Then the gospel was preached by redeemed angels. Moses and Elijah were brought back from the dead and they preached for 3½ years in Jerusalem. Now on top of all this comes evangelism by disaster and in spite of all this, they still say "No". These are the subjects who will be cast into the lake of fire. Now the scene is going to change and in verses 12-16 we move into military disasters.

Let us look at the problem the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire is facing. Here is the little strip of land we call "Palestine". It is literally a bridge between three continents. Russia, on the north, has always lacked fresh water ports. They tried to get these ports in Napoleon's time and he slapped them so hard they didn't try it for another hundred years.

In the Crimean War they tried to take over Turkey but they failed. Then they built a railroad clear across Russia, or we call it Manchuria. So finally they got their seaport on the Pacific and this port is open to traffic all the year round. They called this port Vladivostok. So this became the new policy for Russia. They took over Manchuria. But the rising empire called Japan said, "No, you can't do that" and this brought on the Russo-Japanese War, and the Japanese clobbered them so decisively that at the end of the last century Russia turned back home. Then they finally turned to a political system called Communism. But after 200 years they are just about where they were. At one time they even hired John Paul Jones to be their Admiral. They have done all sorts of things but they have never yet been able to become a great sea power. Russian saw how England had built a great empire with their Navy and they thought they could do the same. Russia has never had much of a Navy, but they saw what Manchuria and Vladivostok was to them in the 19th Century, and they saw what Turkey and the Black Sea and the Bosperous will be to them in the 20th Century. The northern part of their country is all frozen over for many months during the long winter. So Russia wants a great Navy but up to this point they have failed. The Bosperous is their future and Turkey is under their thumb. This is why the United States has a great interest in Turkey. The United States can't afford to let Russia take over the Bosperous and have a great Navy and have this outlet to the sea.

This area is even more important during the Tribulation.



You watch as the United States gets closer and closer to the Tribulation, we are getting in closer and closer in our relationships with Rome. We are in a way in subjection to Rome. We have an unofficial representative there now. No one can ever go over there without stopping by to see the Pope. There is sure to be a Revived Roman Empire in Western Europe. The nations of Russia and China have upset the balance of power and this is most significant. We fought World War 1 and 2 over this balance of power. We have an upset in the balance of power in the world now and at this moment the only thing that hinders these Godless nations breaking out to conquer the world is the fact that the U.S.A. is a major power. We have wealth and industrial power beyond anything else in the world. Yet in the Tribulation we have no mention of the United States, and evidently the U.S.A. is at that time subject to Rome and a part of the Revived Roman Empire.

As the Russian dictator looks down on all this, he realizes that little Palestine is the bridge between these three continents. The Rapture of the Church seems to be very near. Russia can't break out of the Black Sea. They are in a very tight situation and they must have a land that can give them seaports and oil and a chance to take over great wealthy cities and ports. Now just how are they going to do this? They must take over the U.S.A. or Africa. You recall some time ago when the Russians tried to take over Cuba, to set up a screen between the U.S.A. and Russia. So in the time of the Tribulation they see Africa as a far greater prize than the U.S.A. They are vitally interested in Africa and this little land just north of Africa is the setting for the Armageddon Campaign.

So in the Tribulation Russia will overrun Palestine and take it and then go on to Africa. In behind them the battle is forming. The dictator of Palestine makes a decision at this time. He sides with the Revived Roman Empire and he places the statue of the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire in the Holy Temple. (Matthew 24:15, Daniel 11:38) This dictator in Palestine saw only one way to go, and he went to get help from Rome. Rome asks little Palestine to give them oil and wealth for protection and they agree. Thus the stage is set for the Armageddon War.

Turn now to Daniel 11.

DANIEL 11:36 "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done." This verse refers to the dictator of Palestine. He prospers because of the alliance with Rome.

DANIEL 11:37 "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all." This dictator of Palestine doesn't regard God or women and he treats them with total cynicism.

DANIEL 11:38 "But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things." The phrase "Honor the God of forces" refers to the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire. In this way Palestine will provide wealth and oil to this dictator.

DANIEL 11:39 "Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain." The words "Strange God" refer to this dictator. He will rule over the Jews.

DANIEL 11:40 "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over."

At the end of the Tribulation the king of the south will push (which means to make war) against this dictator. But the king of the north (Russia) will push down and conquer Palestine and move on through into Africa and take Egypt and Ethiopia.

DANIEL 11:41 "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon." This is where the Jews escape- Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

DANIEL 11:42 "He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape." This verse shows how the king of the north conquers Palestine and moves on rapidly into Africa and takes Egypt.

DANIEL 11:43 "But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps." The king of the north goes into Africa to get the wealth that is required for his empire. "Ethiopia shall be at his steps" simply means he will conquer Ethiopia. But just as he is about to conquer Africa something happens.

DANIEL 11:44 "But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." The king of the north (Russia) hears of the coming of Red China and the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire into Palestine. Rome would have come sooner but they were blacked out and couldn't advance. But all the vials are removed and Rome goes into operation. They conquer the Russian fleet and China moves in. Rev. 16:12 describes this.

DANIEL 11:45 "And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." When these armies meet in Palestine, they meet a force they had not anticipated-- Jesus Christ. For right at this time Christ will return to the earth. All of this is a background for Revelation 16:12.

Now turn back to Revelation 16.

REVELATION 16:12 "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." The River Euphrates is the natural boundary between Palestine and the rest of the world. You recall in taking the land God had promised the Jews, they never got as far as the River Euphrates.

JOSHUA 1:4 "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast."

GENESIS 15:18 "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates"

Both of these scriptures tell us that their land extended to the Euphrates. You recall that the Rhine, the Danube, and the Euphrates were the extreme boundaries of the Roman Empire. The Romans never conquered the Parthians across the Euphrates. By the drying up of the Euphrates this opened up the way for the coming in of the army of Red China. This made it much easier for a land army to move in from the east.

REVELATION 16:13 "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." Now what pulled these armies into Palestine? These few verses form somewhat of a parenthesis and they tell us of unclean spirits, or ruling demons that persuade these dictators to come in.

REVELATION 16:14 "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." These evil forces get into the minds of these dictators and persuade them to come into Palestine. The dragon mentioned here is Satan. The Beast is the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire. The False Prophet is the dictator of Palestine. This alliance between Rome and Palestine draws these armies into this little section of the world.

REVELATION 16:15 "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." "Behold I come as a thief" is a figure to emphasize that the coming of Christ is suddenly. This is the Second Advent of Christ. "Keepeth his garments" is a phrase that means watch and be ready to fight. Those who remember the promises of God and obey his direction will be spared.

REVELATION 16:16 "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." This verse explains that these demon forces gather these armies together for this last great conflict--This is The Battle of Armageddon.