

How Close Are We To Armageddon?

The media and some religious groups want us to believe we are closer to the endtimes than we realize. But are we? This article examines the facts. <http://billallin.com>

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Nine specific prophecies in the Bible will occur within the final seven years prior to the Battle of Armageddon. - Armageddon web site of EndTime Ministries

Let's begin by putting Armageddon into perspective. People have been predicting the end of the world since shortly after the death of Jesus of Nazareth, supposedly based on Revelations 16: verse 16, in the final book of the Christian Bible (also shared by Islam, but seldom mentioned). That is, for 2000 years people have found evidence that the end of the world is imminent. Lots of predictions, not much evidence.

Revelations 16, verse 16, reads as follows: And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. That is the only mention in the Bible of a place called Armageddon.

The name supposedly comes from the Hebrew place name Megiddo. The "them" (King James version) that will gather would be kings who will gather with their warriors on a mountain. They would fight the ultimate battle of the resurrected Jesus versus the Antichrist.

That's all very well, but there are no mountains anywhere near Megiddo. Plains, maybe, but no mountains. The plains of the Megiddo valley, near Galilee, were the most common place for battles to be fought in ancient times. In all likelihood, Megiddo (or Armageddon) came to be used as a symbol of battle the way many people refer to all facial tissues as Kleenex, or Holocaust (there have been many throughout history) when they refer to the one perpetrated by Hitler.

Despite how often the name has been mentioned over the past 2000 years, there is no place on earth with the name Armageddon.

Who is the Antichrist? Some say Satan. Some insist the Antichrist is human, in particular any foreign leader who happens to be the enemy of the day. In the period following the death of Jesus, that would be the Caesar of the day. Today his name might be Putin or Ahmadinijad, possibly Bush, or even Obama, depending on your preferred prejudices.

Most people today who think about Armageddon, or the possibility of the world as we know it ending, have never read the book of Revelations. If you have read any other parts of the Bible, give Revelations a read. You will likely wonder what happened, why the Bible suddenly became different in its final book. In fact, scholars can't agree on anything about Revelations, except its position as the last book of the Bible.

Some say it was written by many people, some by only one man, some say by someone who was insane, but it was included in the Bible at the time of sorting in the Fourth Century because it was powerful (scary) and prophetic.

Why should we take those who predict the end of the world seriously? One religious leader, Harold Camping, has predicted the end of the world three times in 2011. He had "evidence" to support each of his predictions. I am here to tell you his predictions were wrong.

Might it all end for us in 2012, specifically on December 12, as predicted by the ancient Maya? Let me say only that the Mayan calendar itself went well beyond that date. If they expected the world to end on that date, it would not make sense to have a calendar extend beyond that date. The Maya predicted a time of renewal in 2012, but not of permanent destruction. They didn't even predict the end of their own empire, which should give us a clue as to the dependability of their predictions.

Surely all the violence and conflict happening around the world is evidence enough that life is getting worse on our planet. This would only be true if you knew nothing about history and if you believe the news media that have taken their modus operandi from supermarket tabloids. Violence sells advertising, just as we have come to accept

that sex and scandal do as well.

The world is actually more peaceful today than it has ever been in human history. Far fewer wars or violent conflicts are happening today than has been the norm for millennia. Major crime is down in most large cities of the world. Though we have seen Occupy protests in many countries of the world, they have been--and they have stressed the importance of their being--peaceful demonstrations.

Even the Arab Spring demonstrations were relatively peaceful. If you know anything of Arab history, you will appreciate how significant that was. Arab peoples are still largely associated with tribes and tribes--anywhere in the world they still exist or did in the past--are notorious for their wars and violent conflicts. That includes the tribes of Israel who were responsible for writing the Bible. They were primitive, coarse, violent people.

Slavery, rampant in the 19th and early 20th centuries (and throughout history before that), exists only in relatively small pockets in tribal conditions today. Genocide, which accounted for something over 60 million deaths in the last century, has all but disappeared due to pressure from world powers.

We live in a time of transition. We live in a period of history when the "civilization" of humanity envisioned in the past could possibly happen in the near future, even in the lifetimes of some of us. It won't happen quickly. It won't happen easily. For example, many people today would like to see former U.S. President George W. Bush charged in the International Criminal Court with Crimes Against Humanity. Others see Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinijad leading the world into its first truly nuclear world war. Neither will happen.

We need to separate what is real from the propaganda that those with something to gain want us to believe. We need to understand that when someone, or some power, strongly urges us to believe something, they have something to gain and we have something to lose by believing.

We also need to teach this to our children. Unless they learn what we now understand to be true, what has been gained in our lifetimes could be lost.

As always, education is the key to our future.

Bill Allin is the author of *Turning It Around: Causes and Cures for Today's Epidemic Social Problems*, a book of answers and solutions to problems our leaders want us to believe can never be solved. They can and the solutions are inexpensive and fairly easy to implement. Learn more at <http://billallin.com>

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