

Chapter Sixteen Introduction: *Chapter 15 was the prelude to this chapter. The seven angels pouring out the seven bowls of God's wrath upon the earth is the theme of this chapter. Also, it includes the interlude between the sixth and seventh bowls. It is worth repeating that the bowls of wrath contain the direct judgment of God upon the world. They are poured out during the reign of the Beast. They cover a very brief period of time, comparatively speaking. There is a definite similarity between the judgments in this chapter and God's judgments upon Egypt through Moses.*

16:1, *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels,* - Καὶ ἤκουσα φωνῆς μεγάλης ἐκ τοῦ ναοῦ, λεγούσης τοῖς ἑπτὰ ἀγγέλοις, -

Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. - Ὑπάγετε, καὶ ἐκχέετε τὰς φιάλας τοῦ θυμοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν.

****The Lord Jesus Christ is still in charge.** He was the only One found worthy to open the seven-sealed book, His opening of the seals ushered in this entire series of sevens. He is in command to the end of this book. He is marching to victory. The power, glory and the majesty belong only to Him. This is judgment upon a Christ-rejecting world. Christ sends out these seven angels with the final judgments. There is no longer a delay, no longer an interval or intermission. The hour has come. The order is given, and the seven angels execute the command. It is difficult for man, even Christians, to believe that God is going to pour out His wrath on a rebellious and God-hating world and destroy this civilization.

TESTIMONY OF DR. MCGEE: *"When Mrs. Mcgee and I first came to Southern California, we almost thought that we had entered the Millennium. Those were the good old days before the great population came, before we had smog and heavy traffic. I still love California, but it is not like it was then. Every Monday we would take the day off and go to see some of the sights. We would drive to the beach, to the mountains, or to the desert. One evening as we were driving down Wilshire Boulevard, a very attractive street, all around us we could see liquor signs and the world of glamour designed to satiate the demands of the flesh. I was reminded of what the Lord Jesus said to the apostles when they came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple, how beautiful they were. He said to them, "See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:2). They were amazed that He would make a statement like that. And I said to my wife, "All of this beauty and glamour that we are seeing is going to pass away. It is under the judgment of God. It all is going up in smoke someday." Believe me, we need to make our investments in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. Perhaps you are saying, "But I have gilt-edged investments and bonds in a safety deposit box." Yes, but you are still going to lose them because you are going to leave them. You are going to release your hand in death. You are going to turn them loose and move out."*

16:2, *And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth;* - Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν ὁ πρῶτος, καὶ ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν· -

and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men - καὶ ἐγένετο ἔλκος κακὸν καὶ πονηρὸν εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς -

which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. - ἔχοντας τὸ χάραγμα τοῦ θηρίου, καὶ τοὺς τῆ εἰκόνι αὐτοῦ προσκυνοῦντας.

Vincent: "Each angel, as his turn comes, withdraws from the heavenly scene." *the angel leaves the place of the mercy seat in heaven and executes judgment. He leaves heaven and pours a judgment bowl of wrath upon the earth.

first bowl of judgment: putrifying sores (pus, etc.). The first bowl compares to the sixth plague in Egypt and is the same type of sore or "boil" (see Exod. 9:8-12). The "noisome and grievous sore" is for those who received the mark of the Beast.

16:3, *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea;* - Καὶ ὁ δεῦτερος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν· -

and it became as the blood of a dead man: - καὶ ἐγένετο αἷμα ὡς νεκροῦ, -

and every living soul died in the sea. - καὶ πᾶσα ψυχὴ ζῶσα ἀπέθανεν ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ.

Second bowl: This plague is more severe than that of the second trumpet, where only one-third of the sea became blood. Here it is the total sea, and the blood is that of a dead man! The cool sea breezes become a stench of death. The first plague in Egypt was the turning of the waters of the Nile River into blood (see Exod. 7:20-25).

16:4, *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.* - Καὶ ὁ τρίτος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς ποταμοὺς καὶ εἰς τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων· καὶ ἐγένετο αἷμα. -

16:5, *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord,* - καὶ ἤκουσα τοῦ ἀγγέλου τῶν ὑδάτων λέγοντος, Δίκαιος, Κύριε,-

which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. - εἶ, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐσόμενος, ὅτι ταῦτα ἔκρινας·

16:6, *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,* - ὅτι αἷμα ἁγίων καὶ προφητῶν ἐξέχεαν, -

and thou hast given them blood to drink; - καὶ αἷμα αὐτοῖς ἔδωκας πιεῖν· -

for they are worthy. - ἄξιοι γάρ εἰσι.

16:7, *And I heard another out of the altar say,* - καὶ ἤκουσα ἄλλου ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λέγοντος, -

Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. - Ναί, Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, ἀληθινὰ καὶ δίκαια αἱ κρίσεις σου.

Third bowl: the total water supply of the earth will be cut off. This means destruction of human life on an unparalleled plane. Angels affect the physical earth: four angels who controlled the winds, etc.

God is righteous in everything He does. *"They shed the blood of saints and prophets, and blood didst thou give them to drink."* This is poetic justice with a vengeance. Those who take the sword will perish by the sword.

"The altar say" (16:7) may refer to the saints under the altar who had been praying for justice to be done: (Rev. 6:9-11). Here their prayer is answered.

16:8, *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun;* - Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ἥλιον· -

and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. - καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ καυματίσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν πυρί.

16:9, *And men were scorched with great heat,* - καὶ ἐκαυματίσθησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καῦμα μέγα, -

and blasphemed the name of God, - καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Θεοῦ -

which hath power over these plagues: - τοῦ ἔχοντος ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας,

and they repented not to give him glory. - καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν.

Fourth Bowl: Our Lord predicted signs in the sun during the Great Tribulation: (Luke 21:25). Cf. *"They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust"* (Deut. 32:24).

"Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left" (Isa. 24:6).

"Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart" (Isa. 42:25).

"For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1).

"And men were scorched...blasphemed..." The human heart is wicked. No punishment will purify or change it. Remember, the Tribulation is not for the purification of the church. Rather, it is a judgment upon the earth.

16:10, *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;* - Καὶ ὁ πέμπτος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον τοῦ θηρίου· -

and his kingdom was full of darkness; - καὶ ἐγένετο ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ ἐσκοτωμένη· -

and they gnawed their tongues for pain, - καὶ ἐμασσῶντο τὰς γλώσσας αὐτῶν ἐκ τοῦ πόνου,

16:11, *And blasphemed the God of heaven* - καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸν Θεὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ

because of their pains and their sores, - ἐκ τῶν πόνων αὐτῶν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐλκῶν αὐτῶν,

and repented not of their deeds. - καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν ἐκ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν.

Fifth Bowl: *"The throne of the wild beast"* - the first Beast of chapter 13? *"His kingdom was darkened"* - strange darkness - the sun's heat is increased, it grows darker instead of lighter. The heat will be greater, but the light will be less. Note the similarity to the darkness of Egypt during the ninth plague (Exod. 10:21-22).

"For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa. 60:2).

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.

. . . *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come*" (Joel 2:1-2, 31).

Nahum, Amos, and Zephaniah mention it. The Tribulation is where these prophecies fit into the program of God."

16:12, *And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates;* - Καὶ ὁ ἕκτος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ποταμὸν τὸν μέγαν τὸν Εὐφράτην· -

and the water thereof was dried up, - καὶ ἐξηράνθη τὸ ὕδωρ αὐτοῦ, -

that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. - ἵνα ἐτοιμασθῇ ἡ ὁδὸς τῶν βασιλέων τῶν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου.

Sixth Bowl: The Euphrates is called "the great river." First mentioned in Genesis 2, it is mentioned over twenty-five times. It was prominent in the Garden, so it is mentioned during the Great Tribulation. *It was the cradle of man's civilization and obviously will be the grave of man's civilization (McGee).*

The Euphrates was the eastern border of the land God promised to Abraham (Gen. 15:18). It also became the eastern border of the Roman Empire. The Euphrates River will be miraculously dried up, thus erasing the border between East and West, so that the kings might come to the Battle of Armageddon. The great hordes in the East come in a crusade to Palestine. The picture is frightening.

16:13, *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon,* πνεύματα τρία ἀκάθαρτα ὅμοια βατράχοις· ...καὶ εἶδον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ δράκοντος,

and out of the mouth of the beast, - καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ θηρίου, -

and out of the mouth of the false prophet. - καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ ψευδοπροφήτου,

16:14, *For they are the spirits of devils,* - εἰσὶ γὰρ πνεύματα δαιμόνων -

working miracles, - ποιοῦντα σημεῖα, -

which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, - ἃ ἐκπορεύεται ἐπὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς καὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης, -

to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. - συναγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν πόλεμον τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης τῆς μεγάλης τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος. -

16:15, *Behold, I come as a thief.* - (Ἴδού, ἔρχομαι ὡς κλέπτης. -

Blessed is he that watcheth, - μακάριος ὁ γρηγορῶν -

and keepeth his garments, - καὶ τηρῶν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ, -

lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. - ἵνα μὴ γυμνὸς περιπατῆ, καὶ βλέπωσι τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην αὐτοῦ.)

16:16, *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.* - καὶ συνήγαγεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν καλούμενον Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἀρμαγεδδών. -

This is Armageddon. It will probably be triggered by the coming down of Russia from the north sometime around the middle of the Tribulation period. The campaign extends the length of Palestine to the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the mountains of Edom. It will continue for approximately three and one-half years. It will be concluded by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven to establish His Kingdom.

The trinity of hell -- Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet. They force the nations of the world to march against Israel.

"frogs." Literal frogs? They were literal in Egypt. Notice that John says, "like frogs". J. A. Seiss, says,

They are spirits; they are "unclean spirits;" they are "demon spirits;" they are sent forth into activity by the Dragon Trinity; they are the elect agents to awaken the world to the

attempt to abolish God from the earth; and they are frog-like in that they come forth out of the pestiferous quagmires of the universe, do their work amid the world's evening shadows, and creep, and croak, and fill the ears of the nations with their noisy demonstrations, till they set all the kings and armies of the whole earth in enthusiastic commotion for the final crushing out of the Lamb and all His powers. As in chapter 9, the seven Spirits of God and of Christ went forth into all the earth to make up and gather together into one holy fellowship the great congregation of the sanctified: so these spirits of hell go forth upon the kings and potentates of the world, to make up and gather together the grand army of the Devil's worshippers.

The Lord Jesus is the only One who can stop this war! *Behold, I come as a thief.* (Rev. 16:15). Christ will never come as a thief to the church: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thess. 5:4). Christ does not come as a thief to His church which is looking for Him. "*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*" (Titus 2:13). The whole earth will mourn. They don't want Him to come.

"Blessed is he that . . . keepeth his garments." Edersheim: *the captain of the temple made his rounds during the night to see if the guards were awake and alert. If one was found asleep, he was either beaten or his garments set on fire. I suppose it could be paraphrased, "Don't lose your shirt. Be sure that you are clothed with the righteousness of Christ.*

This is the only occurrence of the word **Armageddon** in Scripture. "Mount of Megiddo." A compound word: Hebrew words Har, meaning "mountain," and Megiddo, which is a mount in the plain of Esdraelon. Many battles have been fought there in the past. Vincent cites Clarke's Travels regarding Megiddo in the plain of Esdraelon:

. . . Which has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in Palestine from the days of Nabuchodonozor king of Assyria, unto the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Christian crusaders, and anti-Christian Frenchmen; Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, and Arabs, warriors of every nation that is under heaven, have pitched their tents on the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the banners of their nation wet with the dews of Tabor and Hermon.

"He gathered them together." The "he" is possibly God Himself. Although Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet act in unison to force the nations of the world to march against Israel, they nevertheless fulfill the Word of God.

16:17, **And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air;** - Καὶ ὁ ἕβδομος ἄγγελος ἐξέχεε τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν ἀέρα· -

and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. - καὶ ἐξῆλθε φωνὴ μεγάλη ἀπὸ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ἀπὸ τοῦ θρόνου, λέγουσα, Γέγονε.

16:18, **And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings;** - και ἐγένοντο φωναὶ καὶ βρονταὶ καὶ ἀστραπαί, -

and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. - καὶ σεισμὸς ἐγένετο μέγας, οἷος οὐκ ἐγένετο ἀφ' οὗ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐγένοντο ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τηλικούτος σεισμὸς, οὕτω μέγας.

16:19, **And the great city was divided into three parts,** - καὶ ἐγένετο ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη εἰς τρία μέρη, -

and the cities of the nations fell: - καὶ αἱ πόλεις τῶν ἐθνῶν ἔπεσον· -

and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, - καὶ Βαβυλῶν ἡ μεγάλη ἐμνήσθη ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, -

to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. -δοῦναι αὐτῇ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτοῦ.

16:20, **And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.** - καὶ πᾶσα νῆσος ἔφυγε, καὶ ὄρη οὐχ εὐρέθησαν. -

16:21, **And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent:** - καὶ χάλαζα μεγάλη, ὡς ταλαντιαία, καταβαίνει ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄνθρώπους· -

and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great. - καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν Θεὸν ἐκ τῆς πληγῆς τῆς χαλάζης· ὅτι μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ πληγὴ αὐτῆς σφόδρα.

Seventh Bowl: "*The seventh poured out his bowl into the air.*" This is the last series of seven judgments before the coming of Christ, and this is the seventh and last of the last seven. We are at the end of the Great Tribulation. At this point the only One who could deliver these people and set up a righteous kingdom on earth and bring peace to the world is the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us keep our eyes on Christ through this.

This is the last reference to the temple. There is no temple in the New Jerusalem. Whether we like it or not, Israel will go through the Great Tribulation period. We know that the remnant, all 144,000 of them, will make it through; that is, they will be faithful until death.

"A *great voice*" That voice is not identified for us, but it is most likely the voice of the Son of God. His message is recorded: "*It is done.*" This is the second time we have heard Him say this. When He was hanging upon the cross, He said, "It is finished."

Lightning, voices, and thunders were the solemn announcement in the beginning of the Great Tribulation that judgment was impending. Now at the conclusion of the Tribulation are voices and thunders and lightning. There is also an horrendous earthquake which will shake the entire world.

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every stone about the weight of a talent: - καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τὸν Θεὸν ἐκ τῆς πληγῆς τῆς χαλάζης· -

and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great. - ὅτι μεγάλη ἐστὶν ἡ πληγὴ αὐτῆς σφόδρα.

This concludes the Great Tribulation period. There is a great earthquake, and it divides the "great city," which is Jerusalem. The earthquake divides this city into three parts. Although the center of the earthquake is in Jerusalem, it is not confined to Jerusalem, because we are told that "the cities of the nations fell." This tells us something of the extent and the vast destruction of the earthquake.

"Babylon" is mentioned. It was mentioned in 14:8.

"Every island fled away" - islands are shifted from one place to another by the earthquake.

The final act of judgment is the hailstorm. The size of the hailstones is enormous -- "a talent weight." The Greek talent was 56, and the Jewish talent was one hundred fourteen pounds. A hailstorm is recorded during the time of Joshua: "*And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword*" (Josh. 10:11). According to the historian Josephus, the Roman catapults threw stones the weight of a talent, into Jerusalem in B.C. 70 when Titus leveled the city.