

"THE BOOK OF REVELATION"

Chapter Sixteen

In this chapter the full outpouring of wrath upon the enemies of God is depicted. The seven angels with the seven bowls pour out "the seven last plagues" (**Rev 15:1**). Notice that these are not partial judgments, as with the seven trumpets described earlier (chs. **8-11**). In the pouring out of these plagues "the wrath of God is complete" (**Re 15:1**).

In the **first four bowls**, God's wrath is poured out on the earth, the sea, the rivers and springs, and the sun. Affected by these plagues are those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

God's judgment upon them is proclaimed righteous and just, because they had been guilty of shedding the blood of saints and prophets. Amazingly, their response is to blaspheme God, and refuse to repent and give Him glory (**1-9**).

The **fifth bowl** is poured out on the throne of the beast and his kingdom, resulting in darkness. The painful suffering of the wicked continue, as does their blasphemy and refusal to repent of their deeds (**10-11**). The **sixth bowl** is poured out on the river Euphrates, preparing the way for the kings from the east. John then saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Described as the spirits of demons, they perform signs and gather the kings of the earth to the place called **Armageddon**, for the battle of the great day of God. At this point Jesus speaks both a warning and blessing, for those who watch and keep their garments will be blessed, as He is coming as a thief (**12-16**).

The **seventh bowl** is poured out and a loud voice from the temple in heaven cries out, "It is done!" The declaration is followed by thunderings, lightnings, and a great earthquake. The great city was divided into three parts, and cities of the nations fell. Great Babylon was remembered by God, to give her the cup of the wine of His wrath. Every island fled away, the mountains were not found, and great hail from heaven fell upon men. The latter caused men to blaspheme God, unwilling to repent of their evil deeds (**17-21**).

The seven bowls of wrath depict a judgment upon pagan Rome that is more final than the judgment depicted earlier with the seven seals and seven trumpets against unbelieving Jerusalem (**Re 6-11**). While God would not destroy unbelieving Jerusalem completely, the judgment against pagan Rome as a world empire would be total.

Chapters 17-19 will elaborate upon the judgments upon the beast, the false prophet, and Babylon, identifying them in more detail, and describing their ultimate downfall.

POINTS TO PONDER

- * What happens when the seven bowls of wrath are poured out
- * Upon whom the seven bowls are poured, and why

OUTLINE

I. THE PRONOUNCEMENT (1)

A. BY A LOUD VOICE FROM THE TEMPLE (1a)

B. TO THE SEVEN ANGELS TO POUR OUT THE BOWLS OF WRATH (1b)

II. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH (2-21)

A. FIRST BOWL: TERRIBLE SORES (2)

1. The bowl is poured out upon the earth
2. Loathsome and foul sores came upon those who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image

B. SECOND BOWL: SEA OF BLOOD (3)

1. The bowl is poured out on the sea, turning it to the blood of a dead man
2. Every living creature in the sea died

C. THIRD BOWL: RIVERS AND SPRINGS OF BLOOD (4-7)

1. The bowl is poured out on the rivers and springs, turning them to blood
2. The angel of the waters declares God's justice
 - a. His judgments are righteous
 - b. For it is just due upon those who shed the blood of saints and prophets
3. Another voice from the altar also proclaims God's judgments as true and righteous

D. FOURTH BOWL: MEN SCORCHED (8-9)

1. The bowl is poured out on the sun, giving the fourth angel power to scorch men with fire
2. Men were scorched with great heat
 - a. They blasphemed the name of God who had power over these plagues
 - b. They did not repent or give glory to Him

E. FIFTH BOWL: PAIN AND DARKNESS (10-11)

1. The bowl is poured out on the throne of the beast, his kingdom became full of darkness
2. Men gnawed their tongues because of the pain
 - a. They blasphemed God
 - b. They did not repent

F. SIXTH BOWL: KINGDOMS GATHERED AT ARMAGEDDON (12-16)

1. The bowl is poured out on the great river Euphrates
 - a. Its water was dried up
 - b. Preparing the way for the kings of the east
2. Three unclean spirits like frogs appear
 - a. Out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet
 - b. Which are spirits of demons, performing signs
 - c. Who gather the kings of the earth to the battle of that great day of God Almighty
3. Jesus offers both a warning and a blessing
 - a. He is coming as a thief
 - b. Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, lest he

- walks naked and others see his shame
4. The unclean spirits gather the kings of the earth to the place called Armageddon

G. SEVENTH BOWL: GREAT EARTHQUAKE; THE GREAT CITY DIVIDED AND BABYLON REMEMBERED; CATAclysmic EVENTS (17-21)

1. The bowl is poured out on the air
 - a. Followed by a loud voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, declaring, "It is done!"
 - b. There were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and a mighty earthquake unlike any before
2. The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell
3. Great Babylon was remembered, to receive the cup of the wine of the fierceness of God's wrath
4. Great cataclysmic events occur
 - a. Every island fled away and the mountains were not found
 - b. Great hail fell upon men, and they blasphemed God because of the hail

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) **What are the main points of this chapter?**
 - The pronouncement (1)
 - The seven bowls of wrath (2-21)
- 2) **What did a loud voice from the temple say to seven angels? (1)**
 - "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth"
- 3) **Upon what was the first bowl poured out? What happened? (2)**
 - The earth; foul and loathsome sores came upon those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image
- 4) **Upon what was the second bowl poured out? What happened? (3)**
 - The sea; it became blood as of a dead man; every living creature in the sea died
- 5) **Upon what was the third bowl poured out? What happened? (4)**
 - The rivers and springs of water; they became blood
- 6) **Why did the angel of the waters proclaim God's judgments as just? (5-6)**
 - Because they had shed the blood of saints and prophets
- 7) **Upon what was the fourth bowl poured out? What happened? (8-9)**
 - On the sun; men were scorched with great heat
- 8) **Despite these judgments, how did men respond? (9)**
 - They blasphemed the name of God, and did not repent and give God glory
- 9) **Upon what was the fifth bowl poured out? What happened? (10)**
 - On the throne of the beast; his kingdom became full of darkness, and people gnawed their tongues because of the pain
- 10) **What again is said about the response to these judgments? (11)**
 - They blasphemed God because of their sores and pain, and did not

repent of their deeds

11) Upon what was the sixth bowl poured out? What happened? (12)

- On the river Euphrates; it was dried up, so the way of the kings from the east might be prepared

12) What did John see next? (13)

- Three unclean spirits like frogs coming of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet

13) What were these, and what was their mission? (14)

- Spirits of demons, performing great signs
- To gather the kings of the earth to the battle of the great day of God Almighty

14) What warning and beatitude did Jesus give at this point? (15)

- Behold, I am coming as a thief
- Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame

15) Where were the kings of the earth gathered? (16)

- To the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon

16) Upon what was the seventh bowl poured out? What happened? (17)

- The air; a loud voice from the temple of heaven, from the throne, proclaimed, "It is done!"

17) What then occurred? (18-21)

- There were noises, thunderings, lightnings, a mighty earthquake
- The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell
- Great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath
- Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found
- Great hail from heaven fell upon men