

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The Sixth and Seventh Bowls of Wrath

Revelation 16:12-21

INTRODUCTION:

The theme of judgment is woven throughout this book of Revelation. God wants us to be able to make sense of the things happening in this world. Because of this Revelation we can read, hear, and even see much of the evil that is happening across our world today and understand that it is being done by God's will. We can have the assurance that we are spiritually protected and secure. The seals, trumpets, and bowls tell us that we are spiritually secure by the blood of the lamb. The bowls tell us that since we are spiritually secure we must be a witness to the world. The word "witness" often scares the Christian. The bowls tell us how to witness by remaining steadfast by the way you live. Be a light to the world by living the Word!

Today we, once again, look at events just before and during the second coming of Christ and the final judgment.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Revelation 16:12-21 (NASB)

12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.

13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.") 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." 18 And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, *came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague *was extremely severe.

Prayer

Our Father we thank You that You have preserved for us this Revelation so that we can be encouraged in our walk with You when we see all of the evil taking place in this world. Thank you for sending Your Son to offer us escape from the judgment that we deserve. Grant us understanding and insight to this passage before us. Help me to present this message with clarity and accuracy that Your Son may be glorified. Help us to grow in our faith and become more like Your Son.

In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

BODY:

I. PREPARATION FOR THE BATTLE OF HAR-MAGEDON.

Revelation 16:12-14 (NASB)

¹² The sixth *angel* poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.

The Euphrates river has historical significance because all of Israel's enemies in Old Testament days laid to the East. It included the Assyrian and Babylonians empires. The Euphrates river was the boundary between the Israelites and their foes to the East. The river tended to keep them at bay. But here the barrier is dried up and removed. Generally when water is dried up it is against God's enemies, not His people. The kings of the world do not realize it yet, but God is setting them up for defeat.

For example, when the Red Sea was parted, it saved the Israelites. But it was a judgment against the Egyptian army because when they tried to cross on dry land, they were destroyed.

So when water is dried up in scripture, we find that it is signaling that the judgment of God is coming. This scripture is telling us that God is preparing to bring judgment against His enemies. Who are these enemies? We are told that they are the kings of the East which symbolize the kings of the world. We see that they are drawn into battle by demonic spirits in a place called Har-Magedon.

Every conqueror will someday have someone who is their conqueror. When they are persecuting people, they do not consider their own future suffering that will come when they themselves are conquered. Because now they see themselves as the biggest one on the block.

Does this sound a little like the United States?

No world power has ever given much thought to the fact that they may be taken over by another. Yet history shows that nation after nation has risen and fallen. One day the balance of power may shift, and when it does our nation will begin to understand the suffering that they were exerting on other people in a way in which they never thought about before.

We must always be prepared to remain true to Jesus even if it becomes the time for our nation to receive judgment for its sins. Sometimes we think that we will know if God is ready to send judgment to the United States of America. But God's judgments come unexpectedly.

13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

The "frogs" should remind you of the second plague of frogs in the Egyptian plagues in Exodus.

These symbolic frogs came out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, the anti-Christ, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

Remember back in Chapter 13 it told of the dragon, the beast from the sea, and the beast from the earth that had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. Here, for the first time, John identifies the second beast from the earth as a false prophet. He will be called a false prophet once more in Rev. 19:20. We are also told that these are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs and they go out to the **kings of the whole world to gather them for the battle on the great day of God, the Almighty.**

We are about to enter the battle, but first we have an interlude.

II. THE BLESSING FOR THE BELIEVER.

What are the functions of the interludes in each of the seven judgments? It is a message to the church.

After revealing the devastation of the **seal** judgments that were going to be sent to the earth, there was an interlude between the sixth and seventh seals which asked the question, "**Who is able to stand?**"

Then we are shown a vision in heaven of the 144,000 who were worshipping God before the throne. We are told that they are those who have the seal of God on their foreheads. Which we now know is the true church. Those who have had their sins taken away and made righteous by the grace of Jesus Who died on the cross for our sins.

Revelation 7:13-17 (NASB)

¹³Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" ¹⁴I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

You can stand church!

The third beatitude.

Revelation 16:15 (NASB)

¹⁵("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.")

The person is "staying awake" is someone who is following Jesus! If you are fully clothed you are living ethically. Blessed is the one who does what he is supposed to do so he will not be found naked and shamefully exposed.

The seals say you are spiritually secure.

Who can stand? You can stand.

The trumpets say "Therefore get out there and witness".

Revelation 12:11 (NASB)

11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

The bowls answer the question How do you witness? By what you do!

Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.

See how that works? You are spiritually secure. Awesome! So go witness! How do I witness? By what you do (the righteous things) and what you don't do (the sinful things of the world)!

1 John 2:15-17 (NASB)

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. 17 The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

Your ethics matter. What you do and what you don't do matter. Which is why it is emphasized over and over. "I know your deeds". "Vengeance is Mine, **I will repay**". "Their deeds follow with them".

Therefore, when Christ comes back unexpectedly, do not be found asleep and do not be found naked. Be awake and fully clothed!

How? By what you do! That is the complete message to the church. It is pretty clear.

Be awake and fully clothed!

I am spiritually secure. I have been saved by the blood of the Lamb. Therefore I must get out and witness by the way I live. Christ knows what everything you do. The word "witness" often scares the Christian. How do I witness? By being a light to the world by living the Word.!

III. HAR-MAGEDON AND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

FINALLY we have arrived at the scene of the great battle! The cowboys have arrived. God against Satan. But now that we are here, something odd happens...**there is no battle!** So they gather for battle, but there isn't one? This happens three times in Revelation. This being the first. They gather for battle and you say "**Here it comes! The battle to end all battles. And right before there is a battle...BAM...it is over!**"

This will happen again in **Rev. 19:11-21** where they will gather all the people for battle...and what happens? The rider on the white horse comes and wipes them out.

Rev. 20:7-10 says they all surround the church and prepare for battle just after Satan was released from the abyss, his prison,...and what happens? "**Fire came down from heaven and devoured them!**" And Satan was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone along with the first beast, the anti-Christ, and the second beast, the false prophet.

Actually all that is revealed is that this is the place they will gather for battle. The text does not say that there will be a battle there.

Many of the "prophecy experts" have fanciful interpretations concerning the battle of "Armageddon" and where it is going to be fought and even WHO will be fighting. What they have actually done is made it out to be something that it was never intended to be.

The NASB has translated the actual Hebrew word to be "Har-Magedon" instead of "Armageddon" as the King James, NIV, and others have translated it.

"Har" in Hebrew means mountain. So Har-Magedon means Mount Megiddo. They gathered for battle on a mountain. There actually is a valley of Megiddo and there are plateaus around it, but there does not appear to be a Mount Megiddo. The **plains** of Megiddo **was** a place of many Old Testament battles because it was in a key strategic location. It was on a North-South route between many of the battles that took place. Thousands of people have been slain on its plains.

Why would there be an appearance of a battle, but not one actually fought?

It is because WE HAVE ALREADY WON! The actual battle was fought when Christ died on the cross and the victory was confirmed at the resurrection.

We read of this war earlier when the sixth seal was broken.

Revelation 6:14-17 (NASB)

¹⁴ The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶ and they *said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

We see this war further described in Revelation 19:11-13 where it describes Jesus coming again on a white horse.

Revelation 19:11-13 (NASB)

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He **judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. ¹³ **He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood**, and His name is called The Word of God.**

Here you see the Rider on the white horse coming to battle with His robe already dipped

in blood even before the battle began. It is dipped in blood because Jesus is riding to battle wearing the same robe that He wore when the actual battle was won. The kings of the earth are assembling for war because they THINK they are going to fight. But they have actually been deceived and their gathering will actually be for their execution. There is NEVER a war in Revelation, just JUDGMENT because the battle has already been won.

But from the world's perspective and Satan's perspective, they believe they can still win. "Gather for battle. We still have a chance". No they don't! The tomb is empty!

As you see in verse 17, as soon as they gather together.

Revelation 16:16-17 (NASB)

16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done."

"It is done!" The end has come for this world power. The old creation and the old order of things is gone. It is all finished. Final judgment is here!

Isn't it neat to see these events recapitulated in the visions. As we are able to identify them as recapitulations, it clarifies the events for us.

Revelation 16:18-21 (NASB)

¹⁸ And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, (You could have predicted this one. We have arrived at the second coming one more time. Once again we are seeing the reaction of creation when it encounters the presence of God.) so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. ¹⁹ The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. ²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹ And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, *came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague *was extremely severe.

Notice once again, the men of the earth cursed God for the judgments that came upon them. Even at the end of people's lives you will see people shaking their fists at God. That is just who they are.

CONCLUSION:

The message to the Christian through all of this is clear. Jesus is coming like a thief in the night at a time we do not expect. Remain awake and fully clothed!

Accept Christ as your Savior. Be a light to the world by living the Word and telling them of Christ's saving grace. Remain faithful unto death.

This is the Day!