

70. The Book of Revelation—16:12-16

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(2-16-22)

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We have come to Chapter 16 in our study in the Book of Revelation.

In this Chapter, the final judgments of God (the 7-Bowl Judgments) will be poured out upon this rebellious, Christ rejecting world during the second half of the 7-year tribulation period (great tribulation period—Matthew 24:21) leading up to the return of Christ, the Battle of Armageddon, and the establishment of the Kingdom Age.

- **The First Bowl (malignant sores)—verses 1-2**
- **Second Bowl (saltwater seas turn to blood)—verse 3**
- **Third Bowl (fresh waters turn to blood)—verses 4-7**
- **Fourth Bowl (the sun scorches people)—verses 8-9**
- **Fifth Bowl (darkness and pain)—verses 10-11**

Sixth Bowl—Euphrates Dried Up

Revelation 16:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up...

We began talking about this last week before we ran out of time—as the longest and most significant river in the Middle East, the **Euphrates** deserves to be called the '*great river*' (Revelation 9:14; Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; Joshua 1:4).

The Romans considered the Euphrates River a secure barrier against invasion from the empires of the east (it was 1800 miles long and 300-1200 yards wide depending on if it was flood season). The source of the Euphrates River is in the snowfields and ice caps high on Mount Ararat (almost 17 thousand feet high) located in Turkey.

As the sun is allowed to scorch the earth it will cause the snow and ice on Mt. Ararat to melt and eventually (after severe flooding) to cause the Euphrates River to dry up—but there will be another interesting result from this. As the snow and ice on Mt. Ararat melts—it will leave Noah's ark completely visible and out in the open for the first time since the last time God judged the entire earth.

In Genesis 8:4 we read, that when the waters of the Flood began to recede, that Noah's ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat—where it still remains to this day.

This will no doubt be a reminder to the people of this world that as God judged the world once for its immorality and idolatry, He is doing it again—but not with a flood as He promised (rainbow)—this time with fire (2 Peter 3:3-7)!

➔ Chuck Missler—"the only reason to seal the ark with pitch on the inside and outside of it would be to preserve it—God has future plans for Noah's ark."

Revelation 16:12 (NKJV)

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

Don't confuse this army with the one mentioned in Revelation 9:13-19.

Because both passages mention the Euphrates River and 'armies' (Revelation 9 directly and Revelation 16 by inference)—many people claim they are talking about the same event. However, the size of the army in Revelation 9 is placed at 200 million—whereas in Revelation 16 the size of the army is never mentioned.

One of the big problems with the view that both passages are referring to the same event is that—in Revelation 9 we see that judgment being unleashed during the **sixth trumpet judgment**—whereas the judgment of Revelation 16 is a judgment that will result when the **sixth bowl** is poured out.

As I said when we studied Chapter 9 and the sixth trumpet judgment—I believe that will be an army of 200 million demons who were bound near or in the Euphrates River but will then be released from some kind of prison where they were being kept.

This demon army will unleash a horrific judgment upon the earth—whereas this judgment in Chapter 16 will be an invasion made up of a human army.

As the sixth bowl is poured out, the river Euphrates dries up preparing the way for the invading armies of the "**kings from the East**" — that is, from nations which will no doubt include China—but also possibly, India, Japan, and other Asian countries.

We have seen in recent years that one of these countries has risen to great prosperity and military power—I'm thinking of China.

One author had this to say—

"The transformation of China from a backward agrarian economy to near-superpower status is equally amazing. We can be virtually certain that these historical changes have been in preparation for the Day of Judgment that is coming at the end of this age."

Why do they (the kings from the East) come? Is it to wipe out Israel (possible Ezekiel 38 & 39 scenario)?

Is it to rebel against the European-based world leader we call 'the Antichrist'? We don't know—the passage never tells us specifically.

Ultimately, they come to do battle against God and His Messiah (Psalm 2).

But understand, God drying up of the Euphrates is not an act of kindness toward the **kings from the east**—but one of judgment.

The kings of the east will have their own reasons for invading this area—but little will they know that they and their armies will be entering a deadly trap—a trap set by God to judge these nations for their sins:

Henry Morris—

“But there are great nations in the east as well—China, Japan, India, and many others. These are every bit as antichristian as the nations in other parts of the world. For ages they have been dominated by religions (Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and others) which are fundamentally evolutionary religions. That is, they all envision an eternal universe, with no concept of a transcendent, omnipotent, personal God who created all things. Their emphasis is solely on present behavior. To them history consists mostly of interminable cycles, without beginning or ending.

Associated with these pantheistic systems was (and is) always the worship of spirits. Whether these are understood as spirits of ancestors or as the spirits of trees and other natural objects—such worship is in reality worship of demons, or fallen angels. Such religions thus are also commonly associated with idolatry. Thus eastern religion whatever specific form it may assume in a particular time or place is essentially the same old worship of idols which God’s prophets continually condemned (in the Old Testament)...”

Revelation 16:13-14 (NKJV)

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

These 3 unclean spirits are *like* frogs in form.

The Jews regarded frogs as unclean and repulsive—but the Egyptians revered and worshipped a frog-goddess. You remember that one of the plagues that God poured out upon Egypt was the plague of frogs—those were *literal* frogs.

In verse 14, these ‘*frogs*’ are specified as ‘**spirits of demons**’ and not literal frogs.

These wicked spirits will have the power to work miracles and manipulate the leaders of the earth and get them to come together for a final battle described as “**the battle of that great day of God Almighty.**”

With demonic miracles they deceive the nations to join with the Antichrist and False Prophet in launching the final war of human history—the Battle of Armageddon.

Joel 3:2, 9-12 (NKJV)

² I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land...

⁹ Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, Let all the men of war draw near, Let them come up. ¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' " ¹¹ Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. ¹² "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. ¹³ Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow-- For their wickedness is great."

Zechariah 14:2-3 (NKJV)

² For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. ³ Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

Revelation 16:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

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."

One commentator—

"This gracious word from heaven will come before the pouring out of the seventh bowl and assure believers that they will not be forgotten."

It is parallel to the beautiful passage in Malachi where the prophet addresses words of comfort from God to the righteous, who were frightened by the approach of the horrible Day of the Lord:

Malachi 3:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard *them*; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. ¹⁷ "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

God told them not to be afraid because they are His—and He never forgets His own.

When the Lord likens His coming to that of a **thief**—it's because it describes how He is going to come suddenly and catch unbelievers off guard with God's judgment:

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4 (NKJV)

² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

All Christians are *waiting* for Jesus' coming but not all Christians are watching for Jesus' coming! (Elaborate)

1 Thessalonians 5:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

The implication is that just because we are believers in Jesus Christ doesn't mean that we can't '*fall asleep*' in the light.

In fact, he goes on to tell us in Romans 13 that many have in fact gone to sleep in their relationship with God and are no longer being vigilant in looking for Jesus' return.

Paul tries to wake them up by saying:

Romans 13:11-12 (NKJV)

¹¹ And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. ¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Revelation 16:15 (NKJV)

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.**"

What does this actually mean?

Alfred Edersheim* sheds light on this phrase.

Alfred Edersheim was a Jewish convert to Christianity and a Biblical scholar known especially for his book *'The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah'*—he died in March of 1889.

As I said, he sheds light on this phrase by explaining that 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 were set on fire (no doubt where the expression 'rude awakening' came from!).

Other commentators have said that if a soldier was found sleeping (those who took off their armor and outer garment)—their clothes were taken from them (and possibly burned) and they were forced to walk around 'naked' so that others could see their shame—the shame of a soldier derelict in his duty!

The application to believers—Those whom God has "*clothed ... with garments of salvation*" and "*wrapped ... with a robe of righteousness*" (Isa. 61:10), who have "*put on the Lord Jesus Christ*" (Rom. 13:14), will be ready when Jesus returns, and judgment (Revelation 19) comes.

In other words, these are those who are saved and watching for Jesus' Second Coming.

Revelation 16:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ **And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.**

The word **Armageddon** comes from two Hebrew words, *har Megiddo* which means '*the hill or mount of Megiddo.*'

The word **Megiddo** means "*place of troops*" or "*place of slaughter*"— it is also called the Plain of Esdraelon and the Valley of Jezreel.

The valley is about 10 miles wide and 35 miles long, and forms what Napoleon called "*the most natural battlefield of the whole earth.*"

Standing on Mount Carmel (which I have done) and overlooking that great plain, you can well understand why it would be used for gathering the armies of the nations.

- *It was on this plain that Barak defeated the armies of Canaan (Judges 5:19).*
- *Gideon met the Midianites there (Judges 7)*
- *King Saul lost his life (1 Samuel 31).*
- *Titus and the Roman army used this natural corridor, as did the Crusaders in the Middle Ages.*

- *British General Allenby used it when he defeated the Turkish armies in 1917.*

From a human standpoint, it appears that the armies of the nations are gathering on their own—but John makes it clear that the military movement is according to God’s plan.

The ‘satanic trinity’ (Satan, Antichrist and False Prophet) in concert with demons—will influence the nations thru their miracles and cause their rulers to assemble their armies. But all this will merely fulfill the will of God and accomplish His purposes (see Revelation 17:17).

The question is—why does Satan go along with this? (Explain)

One commentator said—

“The Gentile nations will look on Armageddon as a battle, but to God, it will be only a “supper” for the fowls of the air (Revelation 19:17–21).”

The outcome of the “battle” is recorded in Revelation 19 when the Lord returns and defeats His enemies.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

Reach out to us [here](#).

*Pastor Phil referenced The Life & Times of Jesus Christ by Alfred Edersheim

– The Public Domain Book can be found by clicking [HERE](#).