

## **Revelation - Chapter 16 & 17 Summary**

### **Bowl Judgements, Doom of Babylon & Jesus' Victory**

John has just seen Jesus, as the Lamb, in a prophetic vision of Jesus' ultimate triumph following His second coming to earth when He joins the 144,000 on Mount Zion, the highest point in ancient Jerusalem, at the beginning of His Millennial reign. Three angels flying in mid-heaven preach the everlasting gospel, pronounce judgment and promise doom. They also deliver God's last call to repentance before the final judgments fall and Jesus returns.

A blessing or encouragement is given to those who put their trust in Christ in the time of the Great Tribulation. Then John sees seven angels coming out of the Holy of Holies, where God's presence dwells, with seven plagues, the seven bowl judgments, the final and worst judgments of God.

### **God's Final Judgement: The Seven Bowls of Wrath**



God commands the seven angels to pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God. Because the bowls are shallow, their contents are dumped all at once unleashing God's final judgment on the earth in rapid succession.

#### **First Bowl of Wrath**

The only people affected by the first plague were the people who, "had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image." They will think they have spared their lives by taking the mark. Now they will receive God's judgement in the form of a cankerous, contagious sore that is putrefying and incurable. Those who have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will not be affected by this plague.



#### **Second & Third Bowls of Wrath**

The second angel pours out his bowl into the sea and every living thing in the sea died. The third angel pours his bowl into all the fresh water and it is turned into blood. These judgments are similar to the first plague in Egypt (Exodus 7:20-24), the second trumpet judgment (Rev 8:8-9, and the star Wormwood in the first half of the Tribulation. This time

the effects will be worldwide and much more intense since approximately 70 percent of the earth's surface is covered in oceans. No water will be safe to drink. This will cause unthinkable hardship and suffering.



### **The Fourth Bowl**

Waiting for rains to quench their thirst, the inhabitants of the earth experience the fourth bowl of wrath. Like the fourth trumpet the fourth bowl is a judgment that affects the starry heavens, specifically the sun. Searing heat exceeding anything ever experienced will scorch the earth's inhabitants so severely that it will seem that the atmosphere is on fire.

### **The Fifth Bowl**

Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast and his kingdom became dark and the people were consumed by excruciating pain. This affliction is reminiscent of the plague of darkness God brought on Egypt (Ex 10:21-23). Their beloved beast will not be able to help them now.

One would think that such devastation would cause the people to repent, but sadly it does not. This is the last reference to their unwillingness to repent. The first five plagues were God's final offer and humanity's final opportunity for repentance. The bowls of wrath reveal that the minds, hearts, and wills of those who took the mark have been sealed in their sinful condition.

### **The Sixth Bowl**

When his turn came, the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates. As a result its water was dried up and the way is prepared for the kings from the east to cross into Armageddon.

Three spirits of demons from the unholy trinity, Satan, Antichrist and the False Prophet, will seduce the kings from the east into making the difficult journey to their doom at Armageddon. The kings and their armies will be entering a deadly trap.

More than two hundred battles have been fought in that region. Here is where Saul and Josiah died. The Battle of Armageddon, will



rage the entire length of Israel as far south as the Edomite city of Bozrah (Isaiah 63:1). Other battles will also occur in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:1–3). Those who would gather to defy Christ's sovereign rule will suffer judgment for their rebellion.

Then Jesus speaks, giving a final warning that his coming will be sudden and un-announced. He also assures believers that they will not be forgotten and pronounces the third of seven beatitudes in Revelation. Those who are prepared for his arrival, those who have accepted Him as Lord and Savior, will be blessed.

### **The Seventh Bowl**

Like the final seal and the seventh trumpet, the final or seventh bowl is introduced by the sound of voices, thundering, lightning and an earthquake greater than any previous one.



The shaking from the earthquake will be so severe that it will renovate and reconfigure the earth in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom. The final judgement also includes hailstones weighing 100 pounds which would destroy much that was still left standing by the earthquake. It will be the worst calamity in the world's history. Then God declares, "It is done". This is similar to Jesus' final words from the cross, "It is finished" (John 19:30). God's judgment of Christ on Calvary provided salvation for repentant sinners; the judgment of the seventh bowl brings doom to unrepentant sinners.

### **The Doom of Babylon**

Next John witnesses the destruction of Babylon representing false religion and also the judgment of a woman, the symbol of Babylon, described as the "the great prostitute", who is seen sitting on many waters - the many nations ruled by Babylon.



The woman is called the mother of harlots because she represents an apostate worldwide religion. She is evil signifying the spiritual adultery of those who outwardly and religiously seem to be joined to the true God, but who are untrue to Him. Scripture makes it clear that the apostate church has eagerly sought and solicited the adulterous relation with the world political powers and therefore is primarily to be blamed. She will reap the penalty of her sin.

The Babylonian beast or Antichrist will turn around and utterly destroy the mother of harlots. He no longer wants a one world religion, he wants all to worship him. He no longer needs the help and power of the church. He wants to rule the world. He will strip her of all her finery, her flesh is eaten, and she is burned with fire. This will be the downfall of the apostate world church. Revelation 17:17 says God will put it in their hearts.

## Jesus' Return



Antichrist and the ten nations who unite will wage war against the Lamb. The Lamb will return as King of kings and Lord of lords and overcome the Beast and the kings of the earth. Christ will be accompanied by those who have accepted Him as Lord and Savior ("the called and chosen and faithful" Rev 17:14).

## Summary

In Chapters 16 and 17 we see the last of God's wrath poured out on an unrepentant earth. God then judges and destroys the apostate world religion. Antichrist rules for a brief time along with ten nations. Together they wage war against the Lamb who overcomes them along with the called and chosen and faithful.

Today, the invitation is still open to those who will receive the grace of God by trusting in Christ and being saved from entering this awful period that may be impending for this present generation.

*"while it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me." (Hebrews 3:15, NASB95)*

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16, NASB95)*

*"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." (Romans 10:9–10, NASB95)*