

Revelation 16

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Six Bowls of Wrath

16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

I. Context

- A. The world self destructing, but those that have chosen Jesus are safe in Heaven with God. The door is closed so no one else can enter.
- B. God send the angels to destroy the world with the 7 bowls filled with the wickedness fo man.

II. Notes

- A. Psalm 79:6 - *Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge You, on the kingdoms that refuse to call on Your name,*
- B. Jeremiah 10:25 - *Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not acknowledge You, and on the families that do not call on Your name. For they have devoured Jacob; they have consumed him and finished him off; they have devastated his homeland.*
- C. Ezekiel 22:31 - *So I have poured out My indignation upon them and consumed them with the fire of My fury. I have brought their ways down upon their own heads, declares the Lord GOD."*
- D. Zephaniah 3:8 - *Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD, "until the day I rise to testify. For My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them My indignation, all My burning anger. For all the earth will be consumed by the fire of My jealousy.*
- E. A great voice is heard out of the temple; it bids the angels pour out their vials "into the earth;" later on ([Revelation 16:17](#)) the voice is heard saying, "It is done." The voice is then said to come from the throne; it seems likely that the voice of the first verse is the same—the divine voice from the throne itself. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- F. All things being prepared, the angels having received their instructions from the oracle, and the vials being filled with the wrath of God, by one of the four living creatures, (see on [Revelation 15:7](#).) I heard the word of command given to the seven angels to pour out their vials in their order, the inhabitants of the earth being ripe for those judgments which the justice of God had appointed for their punishment. - [Benson Commentary](#)

16:2 So the first *angel* went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

I. Context

- A. The world is destroying itself. God has sent seven angels with bowls filled with the wickedness of mankind to end the world.
- B. The first bowl causes man to be physically wounded because of his choice to follow the beast. This could be something like ulcers and deformity or it could be medical conditions such as heart problems due to lavish lifestyles. Note that this plague does not afflict those that follow Jesus - showing two things: 1. That Jesus followers live a disciplined lifestyle and thus avoid the effects of this plague. 2. This plague is in effect before the church is removed so that an obvious distinction is seen between the two groups. This might show that the coming of this plague was not sudden, but the result of years of decadent and selfish living.

- C. A second thought comes from the idea that beast that was corrupting the church from within (Revelation 13:11) - the false prophets - came from the earth. Now they would be wounded and lose power.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 9:9 - *It will become fine dust over all the land of Egypt, and festering boils will break out on man and beast throughout the land.*
- B. Deuteronomy 28:35 - *The LORD will afflict you with painful, incurable boils on your knees and thighs, from the soles of your feet to the top of your head.*
- C. the first angel pours his vial forth upon the earth, that is, the dry land. *And there came an evil and painful sore upon the men* (i.e., upon that part of the human race) *who, &c.* The plague falls on those who carry the mark of the beast, and who worship it. Like the plagues of Egypt, *they* are directed against those who aid the oppressor. The plague here described resembles the sixth of the Egyptian plagues, the plague of boils (comp. [Exodus 9:8-12](#); [Deuteronomy 28:27](#)). Egypt is one type of the world-power; and the plagues are used as types also, and are not to be understood literally. The plague of the "evil sore" denotes some throbbing and hateful sore, perhaps spiritual or mental, which distracts attention and disturbs the personal serenity and self-complacency of the worshippers of the world-power. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- D. In many respects there is a strong resemblance between the pouring out of those seven vials, and the sounding of the seven trumpets, in [Revelation 8-9](#), though they refer to different events. In the sounding of the first trumpet [Revelation 8:7](#), it was the earth that was particularly affected in contradistinction from the sea, the fountains, and the sun: - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- E. The word rendered "sore" properly denotes a wound... and then, in later writers, an ulcer or sore. It is used in the New Testament only in the following places: [Luke 16:21](#), - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

16:3 *The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.*

I. Context

- A. The world is ending because of man's wickedness. The first plague will be on the man's physical health.
- B. The wickedness of the man will pollute and destroy the oceans.
- C. As second thought is that the beast that tried to corrupt the church from the outside (Revelation 13:1) - the world governments - would be destroyed. The power base of the world would be as effective as dead men.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 7:17 - *This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD. Behold, with the staff in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will turn to blood.*
- B. Revelation 8:8 - *Then the second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned to blood,*
- C. The reference to the first of the Egyptian plagues is clear ([Exodus 7:20](#); comp. [Revelation 8:8-9](#)). It has been remarked that "the Egyptian plagues stood in a very close connection with the natural state and circumstances of Egypt. The Nile, which was their strength, became worse than useless when its waters were turned to blood." There is a similar feature here. The sea, out of which the wild beast rose, from which the world-power drew strength, is turned to blood, the blood as of a dead man, corrupt and loathsome. The sea represented the tumultuous impulses and passions of the masses; there is a certain healthy force in these, but under certain conditions, when devoted to selfishness and earthliness, they become corrupt and deadly. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Reader](#)

16:4 Then the third *angel* poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood.

I. Context

- A. The world is being destroyed. First, the false prophets were destroyed (scars from the earth). Then the governments that opposed God were destroyed (the seas).
- B. The third destruction is the drinking water that supplies man's needs. It will become polluted, just the like the seas.
- C. This could also refer to the morality of the world - which feeds the seas - is polluted, which pollutes the governments that opposed the church.
- D. Earlier, (Rev. 8), the image of streams could have referred to the corrupted worship within the churches - the watered down faith of the people. This will mean that this type of worship will be a big part of destroying the world.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 7:17 - *This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD. Behold, with the staff in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will turn to blood.*
- B. Psalm 78:44 - *He turned their rivers to blood, and from their streams they could not drink.*
- C. Revelation 8:10 - *Then the third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star burning like a torch fell from heaven and landed on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.*
- D. Revelation 11:6 - *These witnesses have power to shut the sky so that no rain will fall during the days of their prophecy, and power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they wish.*
- E. It is not only the great sea which becomes blood, but all the merry streams and babbling brooks which carry their tribute of water seawards also turn corrupt. And this plague is acknowledged by heavenly voices as a just retribution ([Revelation 16:5-7](#)). The streams and rivers feed the sea; they are the powers and influences which go to the making up of the great popular sentiment; these are smitten by the same corruption. Men cannot worship worldliness or earthliness without degrading even those who contribute to their instruction, their recreations, and their joys, to the same level. When the public taste grows corrupt, the literature will, for example, become so in a more or less degree; the up-flowing tide will colour the down-coming stream. "The morality of a nation's art," writes a modern critic. "always rises to the level of morality in a nation's manners. Morality takes care of itself, and always revenges any outrage which art may put upon its laws by either lowering the art that so offends, or extinguishing it" - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)

16:5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things;

I. Context

- A. The world is falling apart because God has removed His people and Spirit from it. The wickedness has taken over. First, the false prophets were destroyed. Then the world governments. Then man's morality.
- B. Even though this slaughter of mankind seems cruel - it is righteous judgement because mankind has done this to himself.

II. Notes

- A. John 17:25 - *Righteous Father, although the world has not known You, I know You, and they know that You sent Me.*
- B. Revelation 1:4 - *John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is and was and is to come, and from the seven Spirits before His throne,*

- C. Revelation 6:10 - *And they cried out in a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge those who live on the earth and avenge our blood?"*
- D. Revelation 11:17 - *saying: "We give thanks to You, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was; You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign*
- E. Revelation 15:4 - *Who will not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed."*
- F. The angel who presides over the element of water; in allusion to the common opinion among the Hebrews that the angels presided over elements, and that each element was committed to the jurisdiction of a particular angel. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- G. In view of the judgments that reddened these streams and fountains with the blood of people, the angel ascribes righteousness to God. These judgments seemed terrible - the numbers slain were so vast - the bloody stream indicated so great slaughter, and such severity of the divine judgment; yet the angel sees in all this only the act of a righteous God bringing just retribution on the guilty. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- H. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and that not without reason, that since these angels appeared in the garb of priests, [Revelation 15:6](#) and since there was a priest appointed to take care of the wells, and fountains, and ditches about Jerusalem, that the people might have water at the feasts - [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)

16:6 *for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it."*

I. Context

- A. The world is self destructing. First the false prophets will fall (the scars from the earth), then the world governments will fail (the seas), then the morality of man (drinking water) will be destroyed.
- B. God is justified in destroying the world at this point because He had warned the world through many prophets and teachers, but the world did not listen. When God's teachings are removed, mankind reverts to its animal nature and this is what causes the end of the world.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 7:17 - *This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD. Behold, with the staff in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will turn to blood.*
- B. Isaiah 49:26 - *I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh, and they will be drunk on their own blood, as with sweet wine. Then all mankind will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."*
- C. Luke 11:49 - *Because of this, the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles; some of them they will kill and others they will persecute.'*
- D. Revelation 11:18 - *The nations were enraged, and Your wrath has come. The time has come to judge the dead, and to reward Your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear Your name, both small and great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."*
- E. They—*i.e.*, those enemies of all righteousness—are worthy; they receive the due reward of their deeds. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- F. And prophets - Teachers of religion; ministers of truth. It is not necessary to understand the word "prophets" here in its technical sense, as denoting those who are raised up by God and sent forth as inspired men, but it may be understood in its more common signification in the New Testament as denoting teachers of religion in general. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- G. Blood had been poured out in such abundance that it seemed to mingle with the very water that they drank. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

16:7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

I. Context

- A. The wickedness of mankind is causing the end of the world. First the false prophets, then the governments, then personal morality will fail. Without the influence of God and His Spirit (found in His church), mankind will revert to animals. God will be justified in His destruction of the world because mankind is choosing this path.
- B. This is righteous destruction because the world did not listen to the warnings of the prophets and the church - those that cried out in prayers for the world (from the altar).

II. Notes

- A. Revelation 6:9 - *And when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony they had upheld.*
- B. The altar beneath which the souls of the martyrs cried, and on which the prayers of saints were offered, is represented as confirming the testimony to the just dealings of God. - *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*

16:8 The fourth *angel* poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire.

I. Context

- A. The world is ending because of man's wickedness. First the false prophets fell. Then the governments collapsed. Then, because there is no influence of God's spirit (His church), mankind begins to revert to his animal nature - with no morality.
- B. Two things are happening.
 - 1. Global warming. Too much of the sun's rays are hitting the earth because of mankind's selfishness.
 - 2. Since mankind no longer holds a moral compass, he is being burned by truth and those that tell the truth. God's righteousness is still a burden for unrighteous man - when he comes in contact with the holy, he gets burned. Light destroys darkness every time.

II. Notes

- A. Revelation 6:12 - *And when I saw the Lamb open the sixth seal, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black like sackcloth of goat hair, and the whole moon turned blood red,*
- B. Revelation 14:8 - *Still another angel, with authority over the fire, came from the altar and called out in a loud voice to the angel with the sharp sickle, "Swing your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the vine of the earth, because its grapes are ripe.*
- C. The sun, the great source of light and warmth, whose beams call forth the flowers of the earth, becomes a power to blast, not to bless. This is another example of the way in which the things full of beneficence are turned into powers of sorrow to those who follow evil. Not only the pleasant gifts and influences, which, like streams, were made to gladden men, grow corrupt, but the very source of light and knowledge becomes a power to destroy - *Ellicott's Commentary for English Reader*

16:9 Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

I. Context

- A. The wickedness of mankind is causing the destruction of the world. Since God is no longer guiding them, they are reverting to animals with no morality or conscience.
- B. Instead of turning to God in dark times, mankind will turn from God and further influence the end of the world.

II. Notes

- A. Revelation 2:21 - **Even though I have given her time to repent of her immorality, she is unwilling.**
- B. The heart of man is so desperately wicked, that the most severe miseries never will bring any to repent, without the special grace of God. Hell itself is filled with blasphemies; and those are ignorant of the history of human nature, of the Bible, and of their own hearts, who do not know that the more men suffer, and the more plainly they see the hand of God in their sufferings, the more furiously they often rage against him - **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

16:10 Then the fifth *angel* poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,

I. Context

- A. The world is destroying itself because mankind refused God, abandoned morality (which comes from God), and lost its humanity. They are feeling the effects as they are burned by the truth of God's Holiness.
- B. The world is now a dark and painful place. Darkness and depravity governs the land.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 10:21 - **Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, so that darkness will spread over the land of Egypt--a palpable darkness."**
- B. Isaiah 8:22 - **Then they will look to the earth and see only distress and darkness and the gloom of anguish. And they will be driven into utter darkness.**
- C. Revelation 8:12 - **Then the fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun and moon and stars were struck. A third of the stars were darkened, a third of the day was without light, and a third of the night as well.**
- D. Revelation 9:2 - **The star opened the pit of the Abyss, and smoke rose out of it like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke from the pit.**
- E. The vials of judgment gradually dissolve the integrity and organisation of the kingdom of the wild beast. The result of the principles on which it has been based begin to show themselves: first, moral disease in individuals; then a corrupt tone of national morals spreading into the higher orders of society; then the fierce pride of vaunted light which scorches. Where these are, disorganisation is not far off; evil goes out a murderer and comes home a suicide. The retribution comes home; the throne of the world-power, the very head and centre of its authority, is smitten. - **Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers**
- F. wherever the world power is worshipped, there the beast has his throne. - **Pulpit Commentary**

16:11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

I. Context

- A. The world is self destructing because mankind refused God's leading and now they are feeling the effects of a life outside His protection as they destroy the world.
- B. Instead of waking up and trying to return to God, they will blame God for the problems they caused themselves.

II. Notes

- A. 2 Chronicles 28:22 - **In the time of his distress, King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD.**
- B. Revelation 2:21 - **Even though I have given her time to repent of her immorality, she is unwilling.**
- C. It would succeed, at no great interval probably, what is referred to under the previous "vials," and would be one in the series tending to the same result. - **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

- D. sores—This shows that each fresh plague was accompanied with the continuance of the preceding plagues: there was an accumulation, not a mere succession, of plagues. - [Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary](#)
- E. The expression, "God of heaven," seems to enhance the exaltation of God, and to place in more terrible contrast the sin of those who ventured to blaspheme One so high, so far above them. This title is only mentioned here and in [Revelation 11:13](#), where, however, some repented. - [Pulpit Commentary](#)

16:12 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.

I. Context

- A. The world is destroying itself because mankind has abandoned God and His teachings.
- B. Since mankind has abandoned discipline, and have embraced immorality — depravity is no longer restrained and mankind truly becomes animals.

II. Notes

- A. Isaiah 11:15 - *The LORD will devote to destruction the gulf of the Egyptian Sea; with a scorching wind He will sweep His hand over the Euphrates. He will split it into seven streams, for men to cross with dry sandals.*
- B. Isaiah 41:2 - *Who has aroused the one from the east and called him to his feet in righteousness? He hands nations over to him and subdues kings before him. He turns them to dust with his sword, to windblown chaff with his bow.*
- C. Revelation 9:14 - *saying to the sixth angel with the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."*
- D. In the great age-long struggle between the kingdoms of Christ and the world the Euphrates represents the great separating boundary between the two kingdoms, as the literal Euphrates formed the barrier between Israel and the hostile northern and eastern kingdoms. It is the great impediment to war. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- E. Men may be hostile to spiritual religion, yet they scarcely like to shock public sentiment, or to incur the charge of depraving public morals; but there may come a time, after false principles have been taught, corrupt manners tolerated, and the light of better things darkened, when the public sentiment loses all sense of shame, and the decorums of life, which have acted as a breakwater against the tide of outrageous evil, are swept away: then is the Euphrates dried, and then may the hostile powers of evil, unrestrained by any considerations, unchecked by the popular conscience, cross boldly over and invade the whole sacred soil of human life. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)

Armageddon

16:13 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;

I. Context

- A. The world is being destroyed because wicked mankind has abandoned God and chosen to live like animals - depraved, selfish, and immoral.
- B. New ideas will be spread through the world. These ideas, like the croaking of frogs, will be loud and convincing, but hollow and empty. The world will turn from God's truths to empty ideas - which will be presented passionately and loudly, but have no real foundation.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 8:6 - *So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.*

- B. Matthew 7:15 - Beware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.
- C. The forces which are at work preparing for this issue are evil forces; “unclean spirits,” little frogs, spirits of demons go forth to gather every world-power to the struggle. All this points to the final mobilisation of the hosts of evil for an attack upon the kingdom of Christ. Every impediment is removed, and the Euphrates is dried. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- D. They assumed a visible form which would well represent their odiousness - that of frogs - but still they are spoken of as "spirits." They were evil powers, or evil influences ([Revelation 16:14](#), "spirits of devils"), and the language here is undoubtedly designed to represent some such power or influence which would, at that period, proceed from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- E. The frog is here employed clearly as a symbol, and it is designed that certain qualities of the "spirits" here referred to should be designated by the symbol... for its rough, harsh, coarse voice... on this account, as a symbol of complaining or reproaching;... as a symbol of empty loquacity;... because the frog has its origin in mud, and lives in mud, as a symbol of those who are born in sin, and live in pollution. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

16:14 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.

I. Context

- A. Mankind has abandoned the truths of God and followed hollow and empty philosophies - this has led to a loss of morality and a rise in depravity. Mankind has reverted to animals and are destroying themselves and the world.
- B. These philosophies will deceive the leaders the world into a final war that will end in the destruction of the whole world.

II. Notes

- A. 1 Kings 22:21 - Then a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will entice him.' 'By what means?' asked the LORD.
- B. 1 Timothy 4:1 - Now the Spirit expressly states that in later times some will abandon the faith to follow deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons,
- C. Revelation 13:13 - And the second beast performed great signs to cause even fire from heaven to come down to earth in the presence of the people.
- D. For they are the spirits of devils,... They are of their father the devil; they are acted and influenced by him, he works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; they do his lusts, and are murderers and liars, and false teachers, like him: - [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)
- E. and of the whole world; as many Pagan princes as they can come at, and engage by any ways and means in their interest; they will go forth to them like the lying spirit to Ahab's prophets, [1 Kings 22:22](#) - [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)

16:15 (“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.”)

I. Context

- A. Mankind has abandoned God and embraced hollow philosophies - in effect losing their humanity and through selfish, animalistic actions, are attacking God’s truth and His people and destroying the world.
- B. Through all of this, the people of God need to do more than watch and prepare for the return of Christ - they must be vigilant and awake. They must ensure that they are pure and focused when they meet the Lord.

II. Notes

- A. Matthew 24:43 - But understand this: If the homeowner had known in which watch of the night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.
- B. Luke 12:37 - Blessed are those servants whom the master finds on watch when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve and will have them recline at the table, and he himself will come and wait on them.
- C. 1 Thessalonians 5:2 - For you are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
- D. 2 Peter 3:10 - But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and its works will be laid bare
- E. Revelation 3:3 - Remember, then, what you have received and heard. Keep it and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know the hour when I will come upon you.
- F. Revelation 22:7 - "Behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of prophecy in this book."
- G. It reminds us not only that our Lord may come unexpectedly, but that He may even come and we be unaware. There is one day when He will come, and every eye will behold Him; but He comes in various ways and forms to bless and to test man. Blessed are they who are ready, watching. But vigilance is not enough: the garments must be kept. The powers of evil are abroad. Sloth and pleasure may counsel ease, and tempt the watcher to lay aside his garments and take rest and sleep. The earnest watcher desires, like St. Paul, to be found in Christ, clad in the true righteousness of faith (Philippians 3:9). - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- H. This is designed evidently to admonish people to watch, or to be in readiness for his coming, since, whenever it would occur, it would be at a time when people were not expecting him. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- I. The meaning here is, that he who watches for these events, who marks the indications of their approach, and who is conscious of a preparation for them, is in a better and happier state of mind than he on whom they come suddenly and unexpectedly. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- J. The essential idea, therefore, here, is the duty of vigilance. We are to be awake to duty and to danger; we are not to be found sleeping at our post; we are to be ready for death - ready for the coming of the Son of man. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

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

I. Context

- A. Mankind has become hostile to God, His teaching, and His people. They have reverted to animals and are attacking all that is God's. The faithful of God are warned that they need to stay focused so that they do not do the same.
- B. This tension between depraved mankind and the children of God will finally come to a head - a great battle will be fought between the two. It will be much like the many battles that happened on the mountain of Megiddo - where many of the victories of the Bible happened (such as with Gideon). A greater army will attack God's people, but God will win the day for His people.

II. Notes

- A. Judges 5:19 - Kings came and fought; then the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo, but they took no plunder of silver.
- B. 2 Kings 23:29 - At the end of Josiah's reign, Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt marched up to help the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went out to confront him, but Neco faced him and killed him at Megiddo.

- C. 2 Chronicles 35:22 - Josiah, however, did not turn away from him; instead, in order to engage him in battle, he disguised himself. He did not listen to Neco's words from the mouth of God, but went to fight him on the Plain of Megiddo.
- D. Zechariah 12:11 - On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.
- E. Armageddon is the mountain of Megiddo. It is the high table-land surrounded by hills which was the great battle-field of the Holy Land. There the fortunes of dynasties and kingdoms have been decided; there the cause of liberty has triumphed; there kings fought and fell; there Gideon and Barak were victorious; there Ahaziah and Josiah were slain. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- F. The old battle-ground becomes the symbol of the decisive struggle. It is raised in meaning: it is a type, not a locality. The war of principles, the war of morals, the war of fashion culminates in an Armageddon. The progress of the spiritual struggle in individual men must lead in the same way to a mountain of decision, where the long-wavering heart must take sides, and the set of the character be determined. "There is no waving of banners and no prancing of horses' hoofs; the warfare is spiritual, so that there is in sight neither camp nor foe." It is that conflict which emerges out of various opinions and diverse principles: "the religious tendencies of the times" are (as we have been reminded) powers marshalling themselves for the battle of Armageddon. We must not look for great and startling signs: the kingdom and the conflict of the kingdom is within and around us ([Luke 17:20-21](#)). - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)

Seventh Bowl of Wrath

16:17 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."

I. Context

- A. Mankind has abandoned God and lost its humanity - they are acting like animals and attacking anything that is God related. Now the final confrontation between God and wicked man has arrived.
- B. The final bowl of wrath is emptied - into the air (possibly a nuclear strike). With this, God declares the end of the entire world.

II. Notes

- A. Ephesians 2:2 - in which you used to walk when you conformed to the ways of this world and of the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience.
- B. Revelation 10:6 - And he swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and everything in it, the earth and everything in it, and the sea and everything in it: "There will be no more delay!
- C. The results of the outpouring of this vial are described in the following verses; but before these are seen, the voice from the throne—God's own voice (see [Revelation 16:1](#))—proclaims, as though rejoicing in the near approach of the happy end, "It is done." The close of these scenes of sin and suffering is now at hand, for the last of the last plagues has been sent forth. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- D. The seat of Satan's residence, who is emphatically styled, ([Ephesians 2:2](#)), the prince of the power of the air, and is represented ([Revelation 16:13](#)), as a principal actor in these latter scenes; so that this last period will not only complete the ruin of the kingdom of the beast, but will also shake the kingdom of Satan everywhere. - [Benson Commentary](#)
- E. Why the vial was poured into the air is not stated. The most probable supposition as to the idea intended to be represented is, that, as storms and tempests seem to be engendered in the air, so this destruction would come from some supernatural cause, as if the whole atmosphere should be filled with wind and storm; and a furious and

desolating whirlwind should be aroused by some invisible power. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

- F. The series of judgments is about to be completed; the dominion of the beast is about to come to an end forever. The meaning here is, that that destruction was so certain, that it might be spoken of as now actually accomplished. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

16:18 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*.

I. Context

- A. Mankind has abandoned God and lost their humanity. A final confrontation happens for control of the world - Mankind vs. everything of God - and God declares that this is the end of the world.
- B. Mankind will be shaken by God's word - literally and figuratively.

II. Notes

- A. Isaiah 29:6 - *you will be visited by the LORD of Hosts with thunder and earthquake and loud noise, with windstorm and tempest and flame of consuming fire.*
- B. Daniel 12:1 - *At that time Michael, the great prince who stands watch over your people, will rise up. There will be a time of distress such as never has occurred from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered.*
- C. Matthew 24:21 - *For at that time there will be great tribulation, unmatched from the beginning of the world until now, and never to be seen again.*
- D. The meaning is, that a judgment followed as if the world were shaken by an earthquake, or which would be properly represented by that. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)

16:19 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.

I. Context

- A. Mankind has rebelled against God - and lost its humanity. Finally, God said it is over - and this shakes the world.
- B. The wicked (as represented as living in Babylon - contrasted with the Godly who lived in Zion) have been enticed by 3 demons that croaked like frogs (3 hollow philosophies that sounded good but amounted to nothing - Revelation 16:13). Now that God's teaching is no longer accepted, the wicked are divided among these philosophies and they begin to attack each other.

II. Notes

- A. Isaiah 51:17 - *Awaken, awaken! Rise up, O Jerusalem, you who have drunk from the hand of the LORD the cup of His fury; you who have drained the goblet to the dregs, the cup that makes men stagger.*
- B. Revelation 14:8 - *Then a second angel followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, who has made all the nations drink the wine of the passion of her immorality."*
- C. Revelation 14:10 - *he too will drink the wine of God's anger, poured undiluted into the cup of His wrath. And he will be tormented in fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.*
- D. All that was most secure was carried away by the ruin. Men blasphemed: the greatest judgments that can befall men, will not bring to repentance without the grace of God. To be hardened against God, by his righteous judgments, is a certain token of sure and utter destruction. - [Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary](#)
- E. *Was divided into three parts.* The signification of this clause is somewhat uncertain. The idea is probably that of total destruction, as in [Ezekiel 5:2](#), where a similar

description is applied to Jerusalem. Possibly there is a reference to the trinity of evil mentioned in ver. 13. - [Pulpit Commentary](#)

16:20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

I. Context

- A. Mankind has lost its humanity - attacking anything that is God's and attacking each other over empty philosophies.
- B. Every man is involved in these battles because there is no place they can hide (no quiet mountain or Island retreats). Everyone is involved as the world destructs.

II. Notes

- A. Revelation 6:14 - *The sky receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place.*
- B. Revelation 20:11 - *Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them.*
- C. Expressive of great and terrible judgments, as if the very earth were convulsed, and everything were moved out of its place. - [Barnes' Notes on the Bible](#)
- D. Here, as at [Revelation 6:14](#), the removal of hills tallies with the Iranian belief (shared by later Jewish Christian apocalyptic, cf. Böckler, 131 f.) that mountains as the work of Ahriman would disappear with him (S. B. E. ver. 129), leaving the earth in its ideal state of a smooth plane on which mankind could dwell in unity of speech and intercourse, free from barriers. - [Expositor's Greek Testament](#)
- E. Such convulsions of nature generally, in biblical descriptions, accompany the near approach of the last judgment. - [Pulpit Commentary](#)

16:21 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.

I. Context

- A. Mankind has lost its humanity, turned against God and itself - no one is excepted. And this is the cause for the world to end.
- B. The world will finally end with an explosion - all that remain will be crushed by falling stones. The world that mankind has destroyed will destroy mankind.

II. Notes

- A. Exodus 9:18 - *Behold, at this time tomorrow I will rain down the worst hail that has ever fallen on Egypt, from the day it was founded until now.*
- B. Job 38:22 - *Have you entered the storehouses of snow or observed the storehouses of hail,*
- C. Ezekiel 13:13 - *Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says: 'In My wrath I will release a windstorm, and in My anger torrents of rain and hail will fall with destructive fury.*
- D. Revelation 8:7 - *Then the first angel sounded his trumpet, and hail and fire mixed with blood were hurled down upon the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, along with a third of the trees and all the green grass.*
- E. Revelation 11:19 - *Then the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple. And there were flashes of lightning, and rumblings, and peals of thunder, and an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.*
- F. Revelation 16:9 - *And the people were scorched by intense heat, and they cursed the name of God, who had authority over these plagues; yet they did not repent and give Him glory.*
- G. There is again a reference to the Egyptian plagues. But we may also call to mind the great defeat of the enemies of Israel at Beth-horon ([Joshua 10:1-11](#)), when "the Lord cast down great stones from heaven." Such an overthrow awaits every confederacy that sets itself in array against the kingdom of the righteous King. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)

- H. The discomfiture and the plague works no repentance; the men blaspheme God because of the hail, **for great is its plague exceedingly**. The proud, hard spirit which still hates the good remains: thus is sin its own worst penalty. - [Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers](#)
- I. Men blasphemed: the greatest judgments that can befall men, will not bring to repentance without the grace of God. To be hardened against God, by his righteous judgments, is a certain token of sure and utter destruction. - [Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary](#)
- J. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven,.... Which must be understood not as after the fall of the cities, and the flight of the islands and mountains, but at the same time; and it looks as if such men that shall escape at the battle of Armageddon, that hail stones from heaven will fall upon them and destroy them; just as the kings of the Amorites and their men were killed by hail stones, cast down by the Lord from heaven, as they fled before Joshua, when more were killed by the stones than were slain by the sword, [Joshua 10:11](#) the allusion seems to be to the plague of hail in [Exodus 9:23](#) - [Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible](#)