



The Book of Revelation: Week 16

Chapters 14-16:

The Outpouring of God's Wrath

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Chapter 14

1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. 3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

- It seems likely that these are small scenes showing us the spiritual state of people throughout the time that the Beast is persecuting believers.
- This special group of Jewish believers will be rewarded for their faithfulness with some certain privileges. First, they are given the right to worship God with a special song which only they are allowed to learn. Second, they follow the Lamb wherever he goes. Third, they're described as being before the throne of God.

A Psalm of David. 1 Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? 2 He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; 3 he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; 4 in whose eyes a vile person is despised, but he honors those who fear the Lord; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change; 5 he who does not put out his money at usury, nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved. [Psalms 15:1-5 (NKJV)]

- A life lived for God! First, they don't have the name of the Beast on their forehead, but they have the name of their father.
- Second, they don't blaspheme God like the followers of the beast, but they render pure worship to God, and they sing a new song.
- The followers of Antichrist do not have a love for the truth. But these men have no deceit in their mouths.
- The followers of the Beast reject God and fall away from his truth, in the Great Falling Away, but these men follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

- They also live a life of personal holiness.

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— 7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

- I believe that God's heart so eagerly desires men to be saved, that he will suspend His own typical way of doing things, and send an angel to preach.

8 And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

- The concept of Babylon represents fornication or immorality. It's a city that represents spiritual fornication: committing spiritual adultery against the Lord.
- Because of the influence of Babylon, whom the Bible calls the mother of harlots or prostitutes, the nations will have to face the wrath of God.

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” 12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

- John says that this is the patience of the saints – in other words, this is a situation that will call for the utmost patience and faith on the part of believers.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” 14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” 16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” 19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

- At some point the harvest of salvation is indeed over. Jesus compared the end of the age to a harvest. Both crops, the righteous and the unrighteous, will grow up until the end and be fully mature. Both will be harvested.
- One will be harvested and brought into the presence of God, and the other will be appointed to wrath and trampled upon. This is a picture of blood and judgment.

Chapter 15

1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.

2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

“Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! 4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.” (Revelation 15:1-4 NKJV)

- Those who have gotten the victory over the Beast rejoice in God. Notice that they are singing a song that justifies God. Everything He does is just and true.

5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. 6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests

girded with golden bands. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. (Revelation 15:5-8 NKJV)

- These judgments came directly from the Throne of God.
- The bowls described here are shallow bowls used for washing. They are a picture of rapid judgment, rapid action on the part of God. There is no longer any intercession that can be made at this point.

Chapter 16

1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.” 2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. 3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. 4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying: “You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.” 7 And I heard another from the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. 9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. (Revelation 16:1-9 NKJV)

- God will strike the natural world and He will also specifically strike those who have taken the mark and worshipped the image of the Beast. But the result of seeing God’s power to punish is not repentance but more blasphemy.

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. 11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds. 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. 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. 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.” 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon. (Rev. 16:10-16 NKJV)

- The 5th bowl is an unspecified darkness with pain, which reminds us of the plagues against Egypt. Again there is no repentance.

- The 6th bowl allows the kings of the east to come into the Middle East. The enemy gathers these armies to Armageddon, in the north of Israel.
- Jesus warns that He is coming like a thief!

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” 18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great. (Rev. 16:17-21 NKJV)

- This is the end of the wrath of God that comes out of Heaven. We don't know whether this is something supernatural or natural.
- People will blaspheme God rather than serve Him. The angel of the waters said, *“You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be...”*
- Let this be our confession as well!
