

## REVELATION: CHAPTER 16

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Preparation is over: (8:2, 6)

**Rev 16:1** And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

- A loud voice (*presumably God's*) from the sanctuary (11:19) sends the angels (*clothed in priestly attire*), with their weapons of destruction (*God's wrath- 14:19-20*), on the inhabitants of Palestine, specifically on Jerusalem: Dan 9:27.

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**Rev 16:2** And the **first** went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. (Emp. added)

- The **first** bowl of God's wrath affected those citizens in Palestine who were participants in Jerusalem's abominations (*in any way*), especially when it involved the persecution of the saints (8:7). Just as the mark of the beast denotes ownership, his image exposed those who worshiped it (13:11-17). As in Ex 9:4, 26; 10:23, God's wrath was not poured out on His people. The martyred saints were spared. Those saints who were alive and remained faithful while living under the Roman Empire's persecution were spared of God's wrath (3:10) but still may have suffered as a result of the anguish their persecutors endured. (*Some of the bowls are reflective of the plagues of Egypt- Ex 9:8-11*)

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**Rev 16:3** And the **second** angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. (Emp. added)

- The **second** bowl was poured out upon the sea (*commerce- 8:9*). Becoming as the blood of a dead man these Jews were warned (*where only one third “became blood”- 8:8-9*) but here their judgment was complete.

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**Rev 16:4** And the **third** angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. (*Emp. added*)

- The **third** bowl was poured out on those Jews of the nations that Jerusalem still had authority over and that felt she was too powerful to fall. (*See 8:10 as it applied to Jerusalem.*)

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**Rev 16:5** And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because Thou hast judged thus.

**Rev 16:6** For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

- The one in priestly attire who has authority over the element of waters proclaims; here is righteous judgment! (*Angels were over the elements of fire- 14:18; 16:7; water- 16:5; and air- 16:17.*) The persecutor (*apostate Jews under both Testaments*) became the object of punishment; blood for blood! They deserved it!

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**Rev 16:7** And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.

**(6:9-11; 14:16-18; Deu 19:15)**

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**Rev 16:8** And the **fourth** angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. (*Emp. added*)

- The **fourth** bowl was poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem via the Roman Empire. It was Nero who “lit

up his garden with burning Christians” (*McGuigan*). Rome was also known for burning Christians at the stake, as was the case with Polycarp (*Mattox- The Eternal Kingdom, Pg. 95*) Here Rome’s attention was on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, their scorching was a result of the siege via their war machines (9:10; 17-19).

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**Rev 16:9** And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory.

- These Zealots (9:17-21) cursed the One Who would be their Deliverer. The apostate Jews felt that Christianity was just another heretic sect (*Act 5:36-39*), and they seemed unable, either through ignorance or rebellion, to repent of their harsh treatment of the saints.

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**Rev 16:10** And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, (*Emp. added*)

- The **fifth** bowl of God’s wrath was poured out on the seat of the beast; Jerusalem (*Caesar ruled in Palestine through Jerusalem his “seat” as the seat of Satan was in Pergamos- 2:13*), from where the persecution of the church was initiated. Now that Palestine (*v. 2*) was punished having been subdued by Vespasian, the attention of judgment is here focused on the apostate city (*Jerusalem, punished via Titus- 13:3*). Darkness here is compared to what Jesus foretold would happen in Jerusalem (*Mat 24:29*) and as Isaiah stated concerning the fall of Babylon (*Isa 13:10*). Caesar’s kingdom being full of darkness shows how it was shaken (*Dan 2:41-43*). Jerusalem’s fall was obviously not pleasant thus the (*figurative*) pain of chewing their tongues was of a lesser agony to refocus their minds away from it.

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**Rev 16:11** And blasphemed the God of Heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

- They did not repent but again blasphemed, by their further persecution of the saints (*Mat 25:40*), against the only One Who could relieve their agony: 2 Th 2:10-11.

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**Rev 16:12** And the **sixth** angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. (*Emp. added*)

- The **sixth** bowl was poured out on the military might of Rome (*9:14*). Dried is the opposite of flooding (*Num 3:38*) (*Jn 18:36; Rev 5:10*): Isa 8:7-8.

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- Once Jerusalem was destroyed, the focus of God's wrath turned to Rome. Rome's army would be no match for the force (*kings- 1:6; 5:10; 1 Pet 2:9*) that was to come from the east (*the Gospel first spread from Jerusalem which is east of Rome- 2 King 19:31; Isa 37:32; Lk 24:47*). Its drying up here had to do with Rome's infrastructure, having been built "in the fulness of time" (*Gal 4:4*), which aided the army of the Great Commission to "go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel" (*Mk 16:15*). Rome's military might could not have stopped the kingdom that will "stand forever" (*Dan 2:44-45*). No physical army can repel the "camp of the saints" (*20:9*). It's difficult to battle against an army enlisted by God (*7:2; 12:1; 14:1*). East or sun rising denotes Divine support (*Eze 43:2*).

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**Rev 16:13** And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

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- dragon- Satan (*Jn 8:44*), and the...
- beast- Emperor of Rome, along with the...

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- false prophet- (13:11-18) representing the pagan cult religion of the Roman Empire.  
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- three unclean spirits- one from each of them. All three together make the complete lie.

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will **depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits** (*Gk.4151-vital principal, demon*) **and teachings** (*Gk.1319-instruction*) **of demons**, **2 through the insincerity of liars** whose consciences are seared, **3 who forbid marriage** and require **abstinence from foods** that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every **spirit** (*vital principal*), but test (*Gk.1381-discern, examine*) the **spirits** (*crucial doctrines*) to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)  
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- like frogs- (*lies*) even their appearance is deceptive. Indicates sorcery, false claims (*1 Jn 2:22; 4:1*). For what purpose?  
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**Rev 16:14** For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

- spirits- *Gk.4151- demon. (Eph 6:12)* They were to deceive the rulers of the earth (*13:14*) to gather them in array against the inhabitants of Jerusalem (*17:1-2*). See also 2 The 2:8-12.  
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- great day of God Almighty- Isaiah 13:9 speaks of “the day of the Lord” in which Babylon was laid desolate. Isaiah 17 speaks of the day of destruction for Damascus, chapter 18 concerns Ethiopia, 19 concerns Egypt; whereas Zechariah 14 is prophetic concerning

Jerusalem's demise (*Heb 10:25*). In verse 2 it states "for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city will be taken..." The "all nations" concerned the conscripts employed by the Roman army, out of the satellite nations that supported Rome, led by Titus: *Joel 2:1, 11; Zeph 1:14*.

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**Rev 16:15** (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.)

- Christians were (*are*) not to get caught up in the world's pleasures or (*as with those who fell through Jerusalem's persecution*) they (*we*) would (*will*) suffer the same fate as those who did. It is a matter of being prepared for any and all persecution. Read 1 The 5:2-10; Mat 24:42-44; 2 Pet 3:10. Other comings in the Revelation: 2:5, 16; 3:3, 11; 22:7, 12, 20.

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- In Rev 3:5 Jesus said "the one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life..." Christians have been clothed in Christ through obedience to baptism (*Gal 3:27*). Thus, Christ has become our garment. The word keepeth here is the same as the word keep in 1:3. Thus, we are to keep an eye on the garment we are wearing, by not allowing it to be soiled in sin, so as not to bring shame and reproach to the Name by which we have been named (*Act 11:26*). Without being clothed in Christ in the first place, or to have soiled His holy name through committing sin (*1 Jn 5:18*), our iniquities will all be exposed for Satan to take advantage of us (*2 Cor 2:11*). But...

Jas 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown (*victory*) of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. (*See also "the Beatitudes of the Revelation"*.)

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**Rev 16:16** And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

- he- Specifically Titus. He was the general who brought the armies of the conscripts to Jerusalem to destroy it.

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- a place- read Zec 12:11. “This figure in the text of the apocalypse was employed not for the physical location but for the battle imagery”. Wallace (*Jdg 5:19*)

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- **G717**- Ἀρμαγεδδών- Armageddōn- *ar-mag-ed-dohn'*

Of Hebrew origin [[H2022](#)] and [[H4023](#)]; *Armageddon* (or *Har-Megiddon*), a symbolical name: - Armageddon.

**H2022**- הַר- har- *har*

A shortened form of [H2042](#); a **mountain** or **range of hills** (sometimes used figuratively): - hill (country), mount (-ain), X promotion. (*Emp. added*)

**H4023**- מִגִּדּוֹן מִגִּדּוֹ- m<sup>g</sup>iddōn megiddō- *meg-id-done'*, *meg-id-do'*

From [H1413](#); *rendezvous*; *Megiddon* or *Megiddo*, a **place in Palestine**: - Megiddo, Megiddon. (*Emp. added*)

**H1413**- גָּדַד- gâdad- *gaw-dad'*

A primitive root (compare [H1461](#)); to *crowd*; also to *gash* (as if by *pressing* into): - assemble (selves **by troops**), **gather** (selves **together**, self in troops), cut selves. (*Emp. added*)

Speaking of Megiddo...

*“In the days when John wrote the book of Revelation, that little mountain or hill or knoll was only about seventy feet high. Located in the central section of the land of Palestine, looking down over the rich, fertile valley of Jezreel, which took its name, and being the crossroads of the trade routes from Egypt and Babylon and Syria, it was of strategic importance. Whoever controlled Megiddo would control the trade routes and the area around about.” Mack Lyon- “Did You Miss The Rapture”, pg. 27*

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**Rev 16:17** And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of Heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. (Emp. added)

- The **seventh** and **final** bowl is poured out on the air; the world view or ideology of pagan and cultic practices taking place in Jerusalem: Psa 97:7; Isa 2:8, 20; 26:13-14. (Concerning Gentiles: Eph 2:2-3; 4:17-18, 23; 6:12.)
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- The great voice here is Christ’s, stating “It is done” (Jn 19:30), i.e., the plagues fulfilled their purpose.

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**Rev 16:18** And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

- voices, and thunders, and lightnings- together represent the action of God in the context/situation in which they are used (6:12; 11:13, 19).
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- earthquake- the city of Jerusalem, the hub of all things that pertained to the Jewish religion, is “shaken”: Heb 12:27-28 (denotes the difference between the temporary practice of the sacrificial system of the Mosaic as compared to the Gospel system and the eternal kingdom/church of Christ); Isa 13:13; 24:20; Jer 51:29.

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**Rev 16:19** And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell; and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

- divided into three parts- Jerusalem became divided because of the earthquake. (See notes on 9:5, 10.) These were the three factions that weakened the city because of the civil war that was transpiring at the time of the siege.

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- Babylon and Jerusalem are synonymous. John employs great and the name Babylon as a cipher Christians understood. “How the faithful city [has] become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers” (*Isa 1:21*).

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- cities of the nations- See notes on 12:16. They, with Jerusalem, suffered the complete disruption of the empire. Together they drank of God’s wrath. (*14:10, 19, 20; 18:3, 6; Jer 25:15-16*)

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

- island fled away- See notes on 6:14.
- mountains- authorities. Along with the islands these were part of the “things that are shaken” (*Heb 12:27*).

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**Rev 16:21** And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

- heaven- Gk.3772- (through the idea of *elevation*); the *sky*. With this last plague one would think those affected by it would turn to God for relief.

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- the weight of a talent- (*about seventy-five pounds*) These were the barrage of stones cast from the machines that the Roman military used to subdue this insurrection. This is opposite the “manna” that God blessed Israel with as “the grain from heaven” (*Ps 78:24*). That was a blessing whereas these hailstones were a curse (*from the same Source via the destroyer- Ex 12:23*) as punishment for persecuting God’s chosen people, the churches of Asia (*1:4*). (*See also Ex 9 and Jos 10:11.*)  
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- blasphemed God- Thinking God had left them, these rebel Jews wouldn’t accept the fact that it was actually they that had left God.

Worksheet  
**Revelation: Chapter 16**

1. What did “the first angel” pour “his bowl on” and what was the result? (*v. 2*)
2. When “the second angel poured out his bowl” what did it affect? (*v. 3*)
3. “The third angel poured out his bowl into” what? (*v. 4*)
4. “The fourth angel poured out his bowl on” what? (*v. 8*)
5. What did the “people” do once “the fifth angel poured out his bowl on” what? (*v. 10*)
6. What is the significance of “the sixth angel [pouring] out his bowl on the great river Euphrates”? (*v. 12*)
7. What were the three beings the “three unclean spirits like frogs” came out of? Explain. (*v. 13*)
8. Explain “the place... called Armageddon”. (*v. 16*)
9. What did “the seventh angel [pour] out his bowl into”? What is the significance of his being “the seventh”? (*v. 17*)
10. What is meant by “the great city [being] split into three parts”? (*v. 19*)
11. When “God remembered Babylon the great” what did He “make her” do? (*v. 19*)
12. What “fell from heaven on people” and what did they do in response? (*v. 21*)