

The Tribulation – Part 14

The last time in our study in the book of Revelation concerning the vial judgments that are coming upon this Earth, we saw that, in the first vial in Revelation 16:1, we were introduced to seven angels that are going to be pouring out these seven vials, the judgments of God. The first vial in Revelation 16:2, the angel poured out his vial upon the Earth. And then in Revelation 16:3, the second angel poured out his vial, the second vial, upon the sea. And then we saw how that the third vial, the third angel poured out the third vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters. Now we come to where we left off in our last study and we're going to look now at the last four vials that are to be poured out.

Revelation 16:8-9 says: *⁸And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And 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.*

The fourth vial relates only to the sun, and the sun's heat increases rather than decreasing as it did with the fourth trumpet. Now, men are baked and this is what this is actually speaking of here. Men are baked by the fire of the sun. In other words, there's intense heat, and those men and women who survive this judgment recognize that the judgment on the entire Earth comes from God, but they still refuse to repent.

The saints of God would not blaspheme God, so the implication of verse 9 is that saints in this period who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ will not suffer from this plague. They won't be baked or burned like the unsaved.

Now the fifth vial, Revelation 16:10-11: *¹⁰And 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, ¹¹And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*

Remember, they got boils in one of the plagues, and now it's all coming down on them, but pain is so great. The seat of the beast here mentioned more than likely means the throne of the beast where he's ruling from. In the ninth plague of Egypt, we see darkness, and the fifth vial that's poured out here is darkness, pain, and torment.

In the fifth trumpet and the ninth plague of Egypt in Exodus Chapter 10, there is darkness over the Earth, but this is only part of the divine judgment. As we've seen in both trumpet and vial judgments, there is also pain and torment. The wicked here in their suffering are declared to gnaw their tongues for pain, a description of severe agony. And the sores inflicted in the first vial were in this judgment aggravated and increased.

Again, we have the sad note that they blasphemed God as the author of these judgments and did not repent of their deeds. The Scriptures plainly refute the notion that wicked men will quickly repent when faced with catastrophic warnings of judgment.

The sixth vial, Revelation 16:12-16: *¹²And 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. ¹³And 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. ¹⁴For 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. ¹⁵Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. ¹⁶And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

We see here the great River Euphrates is dried up and the reason for this is preparing for an invasion from the East. The River Euphrates is the prophesied eastern boundary of the land which God promised to the seed of Abraham. Genesis 15:18 says: *In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram... That's Abraham... saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.*

And we read about this in many different areas of Scripture. In Joshua 1:4 it says, *From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.*

The great River Euphrates also forms the eastern boundary of the ancient Roman Empire. By the way, the Roman Empire never ceased to be; it's just dormant. That's another study in and of itself.

The purpose of the drying up of the Euphrates is indicated as a preparation for the way of the kings of the East. The passage is best understood as referring to the kings of the East, literally of the sun rising, referring to Oriental rulers who will descend upon the Middle East. The reasons seem to be weak for taking this prediction in other than its literal meaning. In other words, we don't spiritualize this away. This is true. This is going to happen. The rising

power of parts of the Orient in our day in countries such as Japan, China, India, as well as lesser nations, makes such an invasion a reasonable prediction.

In John's vision in verses 15 and 16, he sees three unclean spirits like frogs in appearance 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. The source of these unclean spirits is the world ruler specified as the beast, his associate, the beast who is the false prophet, and the dragon himself which is Satan. There's no need for speculation as to the identity of the three unclean spirits. These three frogs are specified in verse 14 as spirits of demons, and it should be so interpreted as spirits of demons.

The wicked spirits are declared to work miracles, and you read in Revelation 13:12-15, they're commissioned to gather the kings of the entire Earth to the battle described as the battle of the great day of God Almighty, combined with efforts of the armies of the world against Christ and His army from Heaven. It will evidently take place when the glory of the Second Coming appears in the heavens. And it's going to be the final challenge to divine sovereignty and power as the mighty might of the world of that day will be engaged in fighting on the very day that Christ returns.

Can you imagine someone thinking they're going to be able to defeat God? The devil's thought that for a long time, hasn't he. He's putting that into the minds of the people living during that time, all except those who are saved, those people who know God as Savior. Satan's going to put that in their minds that they can actually beat Christ. Well, that's really ridiculous. Christ says in verse 15, and I believe that's Him speaking, *Behold, I come as a thief.* This is an

expression used for a sudden, unexpected arrival which will result in judgment.

And in I Thessalonians 5:2, the Bible says: *For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.* There's a contrast here between the unprepared... this is the unsaved... who are overtaken by the Lord at His Second Coming and those who are prepared by faith in Christ. It's going to be expressed in, *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.* These are saved people who are not going to be caught off guard. They know that the Lord is coming.

As a result of the combined enticement of demons seen in Revelation 16:12-14 and the action of the sixth vial, the armies of the whole Earth are gathered in the Middle East in a place described as Armageddon. There's been considerable discussion concerning the meaning of the term "Armageddon," taken by some to mean mount of slaughter. Now, geographically it relates to the Mount of Megiddo located adjacent to the Plain of Megiddo to the west and the large Plain of Esdralon to the northeast. Megiddo is the Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek word Armageddon.

Notice with me if you would in Revelation 14:20, it says there: *And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.* That is a lot, isn't it, but this area that we're speaking of here where Armageddon will take place is a scene of many great battles of the Old Testament, such as that of Barak, one of the judges, and the Canaanites in Judges 4 and the victory of Gideon over the Midianites in Judges 7.

It talks about the sixteen hundred furlongs. It says by the space of a thousand and six

hundred furlongs. How long is that? A furlong is six hundred and sixty feet. Sixteen hundred furlongs is one million, fifty-six thousand feet. That's two hundred miles long. That is a huge distance that this will take place and the blood will be there.

As we keep reading, the seventh vial is found in Revelation 16:17-21. *¹⁷And 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. ¹⁸And 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. ¹⁹And 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. ²⁰And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹And 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.*

The vial of the seventh angel now is declared to be poured out into the air, and the resulting action is catastrophic. It is accompanied by a great voice out of the temple in Heaven and from the throne, stating in emphatic terms, "It is done," verse 17. This is the final act of God preceding the Second Coming of Christ. The great city, Jerusalem, is split into three parts. Could this be where Jesus comes back on the Mount of Olives and it's cleaved in the middle?

In Zechariah 14:4 it talks about that. There's no place to hide. The hail is the judgment comparable to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, but here, extending over the entire Earth.

If you are not a Christian, if you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, you need to do so right now. The end of the beast and the false prophet will be the lake of fire. The end of the devil will be the lake of fire. I don't want to go there, and I'm not going there because I've trusted Jesus as my Savior. I trust you've trusted Jesus as your Savior. Don't go into the tribulation period. Don't go into the lake of fire. Don't leave this day without trusting Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

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