

Revelation 16

“The Last Woes”

1. Message from God / 2. Messengers for God / 3. Message to God

1. Message from God

a. Wrath

1) Personal

SOME Theologians try to PROTECT GOD from Possible Misunderstanding
WRATH of God > Not IMPERSONAL FORCE > FACELESS SYSTEM

Voice of God > v. 1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple...”

The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.
Revelation 15.8

VISION BEGAN WITH JOHN SEEING ‘THE VOICE’

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw ...among the lampstands was someone “like a son of man,” Revelation 1.12,13

“Hear that uproar from the city, hear that noise from the temple! It is the sound of the LORD repaying his enemies all they deserve.”
Isaiah 66.6

“Some people are deeply disturbed by the teaching that the great God of the universe expresses wrath... The wrath of God is not at all like any emotion we know in human experience. It is rather, that *necessary and proper stance of the holy God to all that opposes him*. It means that he takes the matter of being God seriously, so seriously that he will not allow any thing or personality to aspire to his place.”
James M. Boice

v. 5 “You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One”
NOT> Was & Is & Is to Come > NOW He has COME > HOLY ONE in Judgment

Chapter 16 – Angel:
“You are just in these judgments”
“you who are and who were”
“the Holy One”
“because you have so judged”

Chapter 15 – Song of Moses and the Lamb:
“Just and true are your ways”
“King of the ages”
“you alone are holy”
“for your righteous acts have been revealed”

“The judgment of God is neither vengeful nor capricious. It is an expression of his just and righteous nature. All caricatures of God that ignore his intense hatred of sin reveal more about human nature than about God...If God were not to punish unrighteousness, the concept of a moral universe would have to be discarded.”

Robert H. Mounce

2) Punishment

v. 1 “Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth.”

v. 2 The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image.

Those who Received Mark of Beast > NOW RECEIVE Mark from God

v. 6 “you have given them blood to drink as they deserve”

v. 9 “They were seared by the intense heat”

v. 21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men.

DISTINCTION IN GOD’S JUDGMENT

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that hail will fall all over Egypt-on men and animals and on everything growing in the fields of Egypt." ...So the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt; hail fell and lightning flashed back and forth. It was the worst storm in all the land of Egypt since it had become a nation...The only place it did not hail was the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were.”

Exodus 9.22-26

These TERRIBLE JUDGMENTS > 7 Bowls of WRATH > NOT for Believers

b. Warning > BELIEVERS are Given a STRONG WAKE UP CALL!

v. 15 “Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.”

HOT NIGHTS > People SLEPT NAKED > Naked Householder Chasing Thief
SERIOUS WARNING: Echoes Jesus’ Warnings to Seven Churches

Faithful > Be Alert for Great Event > NOT taken by Surprise

Christ requires Discernment that Cuts thru Propaganda of Satan and Henchmen

WE NEED Blessing of God > be Faithful in Critical Hours Ahead

To DROWSY Church in Sardis: “Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.

Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief”
Revelation 3.2-4

To SELF-SUFFICIENT Church in Laodicea: You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy... white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness... Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.”
Revelation 3.17-19

FUNERALS > attended Many as Pastor in Hawaii > Some FALSE HOPE
One Popular Pastor > EVERYONE who Died in Hawaii went to Heaven
Deceased > NOTORIOUSLY Bad > Drunk, Womanizer, Convert to Buddhism
1960 Billy Graham preached in Hilo > this Person raised their Hand
3rd Grade Sunday School Teacher led them in the ‘Sinner’s Prayer’
...So Person who had no Visible Interest in Jesus for 40 yrs > HEAVEN NOW!

I HOPE SO > Salvation by GRACE ALONE > Not their JUDGE > GOD KNOWS
GOSPEL of Jesus NOT ‘Easy Believism’ > FIRE INSURANCE Policy
New Life with Christ > Walk with Him on Earth > Dwell with Him in Heaven

John NEVER Sugar-Coats Christ’s Call to DISCIPLESHIP > Call to DEATH?

“Nothing in the book is more remarkable than the grim honesty with which the writer faces the situation before him. Of course he desires to comfort his fellow-sufferers, but he does not comfort them with any false hopes. Fully conscious of the calamities that await it, the church must prepare to meet them undaunted.”

Bruce M. Metzger

c. Whole “seven last plagues—last, because with them God's wrath is completed”
Revelation 15.1

v. 17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, “It is done!”

THIRD TELLING of FINAL STORY > 7th Seal Opened > 7th Trumpet Sounded

FINAL BATTLE FOUGHT > v. 12,14 “The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East...to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.”

Large Rivers DELAYED Armies CROSSING > UNTIL Bridges or Rafts BUILT
God INSURES will be NO DELAY > Opened Red Sea > Stopped Jordan River

6th Plague > Euphrates Dried Up > way Cleared for Kings from East to Advance
Hostile Forces > Ultimate Battle in age-long Warfare against God and His People

Geographically > Euphrates protected Israel from Empires to East

Over 150 years BEFORE > birth of Cyrus > Prophet Isaiah predicted:
"Who has stirred up one from the east, calling him in righteousness to his service?
He hands nations over to him and subdues kings before him. Isaiah 41.2

He who says to the watery deep, 'Be dry, and I will dry up your streams,' who says
of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please" Isaiah 44.27

HISTORY RECORDS > Cyrus DAMMED Euphrates River > Stopped FLOW
His PERSIAN ARMIES > Attacked & Conquered KINGDOM of Babylon
God's SERVANT from PAST > Prefigures CONQUERING SAVIOR KING

“Movements of armies, confederations of nations, and worldwide opposition to
God cannot hinder the Lord from fulfilling His Word and achieving His purposes.
Men think they are free to do as they please, but in reality, they are accomplishing
the plans and purposes of God!” Warren W. Wiersbe

From the CROSS > Jesus said “It is finished.”
From the CROWN ROOM > Jesus will say “It is done”

2. Messengers for God

Word ANGEL Means MESSENGER > “seven angels with the seven plagues...
dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests”
Revelation 15.6

v. 1 “loud voice from the temple saying *to the seven angels*, “Go...”

“Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?”
Hebrews 1.14

a. Structure – 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, 7 Bowls > all BASED ON 10 Plagues

“Divine Retribution is revealed by the Seals, announced by the Trumpets, and now fully executed by the Bowls. The three series cover the same period leading up to the end, each present God’s judgment under a different set of images, the visions are intended to confront readers with vivid portrayals of eschatological truth rather than to supply them with data for a precise chronology of the consummation.”

Robert H. Mounce

3rd Judgment Series > ‘Spiral-Staircase’ Vista – from Jesus 1st to 2nd Coming:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Seals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | | | |
| Trumpets | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | |
| Bowls | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

EACH PERSPECTIVE presents God’s Judgments with GREATER INTENSITY

Pour out Plagues in the Bowls > Not all at Once > Ordered Sequence

PLAGUES 1 to 4 > RELATE TO NATURE: Land, Sea, Rivers & Springs, Sun
5 to 7 > Strike the OPERATIONS of the POWERS of EVIL

Visitation of Divine Wrath // 10 Plagues on Egypt // 7 Trumpet Blasts // 7 Seals

“Every visitation of divine judgment in the course of history is a foretaste and a forewarning of final judgment to come.”
Philip E. Hughes

b. Symbols > ‘devil is in the details’ > MEANING of Strange Symbols??

“The author’s descriptive details of the plagues are not to be taken literally, but as contributing to the general effect of intense calamity and terror...John repeats with kaleidoscopic variety his central conviction that God rules and overrules in the affairs of the church and the world. We might say that John sets up several mirrors in which the same objects are reflected from different sides, so that the reader cannot fail to take note of them.”
Bruce M. Metzger

Armageddon > 6th Bowl because 7th Bowl is FINAL JUDGMENT DAY
 v. 16 “They gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called
 Armageddon”

“Armageddon probably has generated more heat and less light than any other term
 in Revelation.”
 M. Robert Mulholland, Jr.

‘Har-Magedon’ = ‘mount of Megiddo’ / LITERAL Interpretation? ---- 2 Problems:

1) Meggido > Northeast of Jerusalem > 2 Days Walk > J. site of FINAL BATTLE

“On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make
 Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations.”
 Zechariah 12.3

“I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be
 captured... Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights
 in the day of battle”
 Zechariah 14.2-3

2) Megiddo > FAMOUS Battle Site in Israelite & Ancient History > FLATLAND

Strange Sound > Mt. Megiddo // MOUNTAIN of Kazakh STEPPE > SYMBOL!

“Like the place names ‘Babylon’ and ‘Euphrates,’ so ‘Armageddon’ does not refer
 to a specific geographical locale, but the whole world. The battles in Israel
 associated with Meggido and the nearby mountain become a typological symbol of
 the last battle against the saints and Christ, which occurs throughout the earth.”

G.K. Beale

c. Severity

Intensification of Judgments – from Trumpets to Bowls:

| Trumpets | Bowls |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| One-third of the Land | All Land |
| One-third of the Sea | All Sea |
| One-third of Rivers Bitter | All Rivers Blood |
| One-third of Heavenly Bodies Darkened | Sun’s Heat Magnified |

TRUMPETS > TROUBLES > PARTIAL, WARNINGS, CHANCE for Survivors
 BOWLS > TOTAL > NO Chance for Repentance > FINAL PUNISHMENTS

“Throughout history, especially during this entire new dispensation, God is using every department of the universe to punish the wicked and impenitent persecutors of his people...For one individual a certain calamity may be a trumpet of judgment, while for others that same event may be a bowl of wrath.”

William Hendriksen

TSUMANI that Devastated Western Indonesia > Brought Fear to Eastern Shores

OT Growing INTENSITY of PUNISHMENT on COVENANT People of God -

" If you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant, then I will do this to you: I will bring upon you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and drain away your life. You will plant seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it. I will set my face against you so that you will be defeated by your enemies; those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee even when no one is pursuing you.

" 'If after all this you will not listen to me, *I will punish you for your sins seven times over.* I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. Your strength will be spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit. 'If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, *I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve.*" Leviticus 26.14-21

1st Angel's Bowl "loathsome and malignant ulcers" Phillips Translation

Once bore the Mark of Beast > NOW visited by "Marks" of God

40 years after BOIL PLAGUE on Egyptians > Memory brings Fear to Israelites:
 "The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, festering sores and the itch, from which you cannot be cured...The LORD will afflict your knees and legs with painful boils that cannot be cured, spreading from the soles of your feet to the top of your head"
 Deuteronomy 28.27,35

Their HEAD to TOE AGONY > pales in Comparison with HOPELESSNESS
 Having TRUSTED Beast to be PROTECTOR > NOW Completely POWERLESS

2nd Angel's Bowl "sea turned into blood like that of a dead man"

Ocean > 1st C WORLD WIDE WEB > Commerce and Countries PARALYZED
 Everything SEA TOUCHED turned to DEATH and STENCH

3rd Angel's Bowl "rivers and springs of water into blood...to drink"

Water > Humanity's Basic Requirement > Critical in Arid Ancient Civilizations
Appropriate Retribution > Shed Innocent Blood of Saints > Given Blood to Drink

"I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will be drunk on their own blood, as with wine. Then all mankind will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." Isaiah 49.26

4th Angel's Bowl "sun scorches people with fire...seared by intense heat"

Intensification of Sun's Heat > Followers of Beast Scorched
ALREADY INTENSE > Piece of Sun size of NEEDLE would burn ALL for Km.

"The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3.7

SAINTS of God > SEALED by His Grace > Protected from this SUN
"Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat." Revelation 7.16

5th Angel's Bowl "throne of the beast and kingdom thrown into darkness"

"Some sat in darkness and in gloom . . . for they had rebelled against the words of God, and spurned the counsel of the Most High." Psalm 107.10

COMPLETE SEPARATION FROM GOD > ALL THAT IS GOOD
"God is light; in him there is no darkness at all." 1 John 1.5

"Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil." John 3.19

6th Angel's Bowl "great river Euphrates dried up...Armageddon"

"The final battle is preeminently spiritual in character. Attempts to correlate it with maneuvers of particular national armies miss the point. The battle is between servants of God and the enemies of God, not between nations of the world. Because of the missionary expansion of the church, nearly all nations now have in their midst both Christians and non-Christians." Vern S. Poythress

7th Angel's Bowl "catastrophic, global earthquake, huge hailstones"

7th Bowl poured into Air > All Elements of Creation purged by Judgment
Climax of Human History > God Almighty takes up Great Power enters Reign

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.'" Haggai 2.6

Vivid Impact on People in a 1st C Asia > Many Severe Quakes

"Wait for me," declares the LORD, "for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger." Zephaniah 3.8

"No city, even on the most remote island, no fortress of the antichristian empire on a single mountain height escaped the destructive and final wrath." R.C.H. Lenski

This Great Day of Satan > Will Prove to be Great Day of Almighty God
Armageddon > Symbolic of Final Overthrow of Forces of Evil by Power of God

Great Conflict between God and Satan > Christ and Antichrist > Good and Evil
Final Struggle > God will Emerge Victorious > and All who have Faith in Him

"There will be a time of distress such as has not happened 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." Daniel 12.1

"The holiness of God in Revelation is a terrible thing. Fear pervades the scene, not the awe and reverence felt by Moses, Solomon, and Isaiah when they saw God's glory fill his house, but naked terror...The opponents of Christ cannot endure an onslaught of such goodness and purity." Michael Wilcock

3. Message to God

What do these people who have experienced these Judgments say to God?

a. Curse > Punishment does NOT bring Repentance > Persevere in Evil

v. 9 They were seared by the intense heat and they *cursed the name of God*, who had control over these plagues, but they refused *to repent and glorify him*.

v. 10,11 Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.

“God of heaven” > Dan 2:44 > Sovereign Rules and Raises Kingdoms of World

v. 21 And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

Heathen World does NOT Repent & give Glory to God > Instead they Blaspheme Like Pharaoh > Hardened their Hearts > Repentance is Out of the Question

“Citizens of Fallen Babylon rarely ever realize the root of their condition lies deep within their own life and not in the circumstances and conditions of the world around them. They believe it is the surrounding world that needs to change to make things better, not they.”
M. Robert Mulholland, Jr.

They have gradually Taken On the Character of the False god they Serve Far from Repenting > followers of Beast Curse God for their Pains and Sores Become ONE with Evil Master > CHIEF Characteristic is to Blaspheme God

LONG AGO THERE WAS A RIGHTEOUS MAN ON THE EARTH....

Job was afflicted with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the top of his head...took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes. His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? *Curse God and die!*" He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.

Job 2.7-10

b. Croak > Drying up Euphrates > EXPOSES Frogs

v. 13,14 Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs,

Dragon / Beast / False Prophet > Trinity of Evil > Unclean Spirit from Mouths Deceptive & Demonic Spirits // Ahab's Prophets > Enticed Evil King into Battle

Frogs > Unclean Animals > Blasphemy, False Teaching, Filthy Language Egyptian Plague of Frogs > Loathsome Creatures swarmed into Homes

“These unclean spirits mobilise the kings of the whole world, that is to say, national, political, and intellectual leaders and their forces, for worldwide unification of power for the purpose of worldwide domination - in other words, for the dethroning of God.” Philip E. Hughes

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,
2 Thessalonians 2.9

“The frogs and their croaking represent generally the ability to deceive by means of superstitions, preposterous claims, and lies.” Bruce M. Metzger

Croaking of TOBACCO Companies > COOL People Smoke > Fun, Sexy, Mature DECEIVERS who want to ENSLAVE and ADDICT > Entire Marketing Base They GROW RICH while their Customers GROW SICK and DIE

CROAKING of Sexual Deviants > Marriage is Loving Union of any 2 THINGS DECEIVERS want Social Acceptance and Promotion to appease Inward GUILT

> Effective DRUG COCKTAILS will stop SPREAD of HIV VIRUS - New Surge of Reckless and Unprotected Homosexual Promiscuity in ‘Enlightened’ WEST NUMBER of HIV/AIDS Cases GROWING > Perhaps DRUG RESISTANT HIV?!

CROAKING from ONE DEADLY MOUTH >

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” John 10.10

c. Conquered - HORRIBLY TRAGIC PICTURE of UNREPENTANT

‘ugly and painful sores’ cover their BODIES
CURSING and BLASPHEMY Fills their MOUTHS
MISERY INTENSIFIED > Plunged into DARKNESS > Eternal BLACKOUT
GNAWING their TONGUES in UNQUENCHABLE AGONY

Sound like their MASTER > Curse God like the BEAST they Obediently Follow TRUST the Beast > But the BEAST CANNOT SAVE > Follow Beast TO HELL

“The wrath of God is not ignoble. Rather, it is too noble, too just, too perfect – it is this that bothers us. In human affairs we rightly value justice and the ‘wrath’ of the judicial system, for they protect us. If we by chance run afoul of the law, there is always the chance that we can cop a plea, escape on a technicality or plead guilty

to some lesser offense and be excused for it. But we cannot do that with God. With him we deal not with the imperfections of human justice but with the perfections of divine justice. We deal with the one to whom not only actions but also thoughts and intentions are visible. Who can escape such justice? Who can stand before such an unyielding judge? No one. Sensing this truth we therefore resent God's justice and deny its reality in every way we can." James M. Boice

d. Come? TOO LATE?? Can Anyone Come? > Will be THEN > but NOT YET

"Grace does not eliminate wrath; wrath is still stored up against the unrepentant. But grace does eliminate the necessity for everyone to experience wrath." James M. Boice

Global Catastrophic Judgment > Stands in contrast to City of God

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea." Revelation 21.2

YOUR Judgment DAY > May ARRIVE BEFORE these DAYS of Judgment...

"We ought not to forget that whenever destruction comes upon the impenitent sinner, that is for him the 'last day,' the end of his world, and the final confrontation with Christ, who comes at all times like a thief, when men least expect him." Michael Wilcock

AFTER ALL Seals Opened > Trumpets Sounded > Bowls Poured Out

BOOK ENDS WITH AN INVITATION > Come, before that Final Day...

"Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come: and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Revelation 22.17

"God's common grace still shields even the rankest, most arrogant rebel from the despair and destruction that are rebellion's inevitable consequences...His kindness is intended to draw his chosen ones out of their idolatries and into repentance. ...Before the last bowls are poured out on an unrepentant world, the church is called to hold fast and hold forth the testimony of Jesus, who drained the cup of wrath and suffering for all who turn and trust in him." Dennis E. Johnson

Received letter from dear old lady in Kansas > Holding forth Testimony of Jesus Ann > 40 yrs of Missionary Work in Japan > w/ Sister planted 8 Churches

Old Missionaries DO NOT RETIRE > they just RELOCATE to Meade, Kansas:

Dear Mark, Dayna, and sons, May Easter may have a special meaning to you this year as you think of the resurrection. The Meade community Easter Sunrise Service will be held at the old stone school house again on Easter Sunday morning. Since Dec. 3 I have been unusually busy helping the Shannon's who shut out God, family, and people in general. Then when Mr. Shannon got sick they found out just living for themselves was not enough. They had made no friends, although they had lived here since 1984. Now who could help them? People feared to go near their house, since they had a very bad reputation. About a year ago I heard about them and I heard his wife Yoshi was Japanese, so I tried to go visit them. He would not even let me meet her, and he growled, "We are doing fine!" Then one day they weren't doing fine. On Dec. 3 the doctor wanted me to translate the news of his tests to Yoshi - they were not good. I had to tell her that her husband was full of cancer and that they didn't think he would even make it a year. To make a long story short, he died on Feb. 19. The day before Mr. Shannon died I was called into the hospital again when he had taken a turn for the worse. When I got there he was not responding, but his wife rubbed and rubbed him and he started talking again. Then he saw me and he called me by name and said, "Tell me the truth, am I dying?" I stepped up to his bed and said, "I can't tell you whether you are dying, but I can tell you how to prepare to die." If you believe in Jesus that is how to prepare to die. Then he stretched his arms heavenward and said in a strong voice three times, JESUS, JESUS, JESUS. Till now he had always cut me off if I said anything spiritual to him. Then he apologized to his wife and to me for lying to us. I said, "I don't know what you said to me that wasn't true, but if you feel bad about it Jesus said he would forgive us, if we ask Him to." Then he said four times, "JESUS FORGIVE ME." Not long after that he again became unresponsive, and never regained consciousness. The pastor used this in his message at the funeral. Since the funeral I have helped Yoshi often.

Ann