

Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #32 | Revelation 16:1-18 | Seven Angels at Work

Revelation 16:1 | The Great and Terrible Day of the Lord

- This chapter contains the word **great** more than any other chapter in the Bible. And the runner-up is the next chapter!
- The chapter explains what happens when the **wrath of God** is poured out **upon the earth**.
- Almost every description of the *great and terrible day of the Lord* in prophetic scripture aligns with and gives more detail to chapters 16-18.
- While the events of these three chapters do not likely take place in a single day, such an argument is not unfeasible.
 - Notice that the angels are summonsed and sent all at once.
 - Whether a single day or not, these events take *very little time* to completion.

Revelation 16:2-7 | The First Three Vials

- Verse 2 – The first vial
 - A single **sore** on those who follow and obey the beast.
 - As with the rest of the vials, very little information is given beyond the most simple description of the event.
- Verse 3 – The second vial
 - With this vial, no life whatsoever remains in the sea.
- Verse 4 – The third vial
 - The fresh waters **become blood**.
 - This would make the continuation of life impossible (except for the provision of *living water*!)
- Verses 5-7 – Response
 - The response comes from **the angel of the waters**.
 - In the government of God over nature, it seems He has placed certain of His servants to control certain assigned spheres.
 - We call these “laws of nature” but God is behind each of these “laws” and has His messengers carrying out His command.
 - The angel responds that **they are worthy** (v. 6). That is, the peoples of the earth deserve this punishment. They had **shed the blood of the saints** and now they have **blood to drink** (v. 6).
 - How do the words of response align with 2 Corinthians 5:19 and this age of grace? *They don't!* We must *rightly divide* or the judgment of God becomes very problematic.

Revelation 16:8-18 | The Next Three Vials

- Verses 8-9 – The fourth vial
 - When this vial comes, “climate change” will be a sad reality.
- Verses 10-11 – The fifth vial
 - Darkness came upon the **seat of the beast** and covered the entire **kingdom** (v. 10).
 - We were told that this is in Pergamum in Revelation 2:13 (though few take this literally, likely due to their poor interpretation of the seven churches).
- Verse 12 – The Sixth vial
 - There is no symbolism apparent to make **the great river Euphrates** anything but the famous river.
 - This river, first turned to blood (v. 4) and now **dried up**, removes a barrier for **the way of the kings of the east**.
 - This *could* be the Persians, Chinese, etc. (as typically taught).
 - This could also be a *clearing* for the Lord and His “Holy ones” that will return with Him. Compare Isaiah 40:3, Ezekiel 43:2, and Matthew 24:27, for example.
- Verses 13-18 – Response
 - The “unholy trinity” responds by sending out **three unclean spirits like frogs** (v. 13).
 - The Greek is literally, “I saw...spirits, three, unclean like frogs.”
 - The *appearance* of the spirits *might be like frogs*, but the *uncleanness* is definitely **like frogs**.
 - The spirits go **into the kings** and **into the whole world**.
 - Compare Joel 3:9-21.
 - Could it be that **every eye shall see him** (Rev. 1:7) because the entire population of the earth is now gathered to Armageddon?
 - The Biblical name for the battle is **the battle of that great day of God almighty** (v. 16). The *place* is Armageddon (v. 18).
 - Verse 15 is a word to the *future* Jewish remnant, after the age of grace. It is a works-based “word to the wise.”
 - “Torah is not conceived of as a text, but rather as a spiritual garment. The goal of spirituality is to refine the soul in order for this garment to affix itself to one’s soul. Mitzvot, then, are the specific cultural expressions of “wearing” this spiritual garment and halakhot become the historical form these cultural expressions take at any one time.” <http://shma.com/torah-as-a-spiritual-garment-the-mussar-of-learning/>