

# From the Rapture to the Second Coming

## Revelation 16: “Seven Bowls”



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### Let's Get Started

We put the introduction to this chapter behind us when we studied Chapter 15. Now we move on to see what will happen when the seven bowls of God's wrath are poured out on a sinful world. The severity of these judgments indicate the extent of God's wrath toward those who steadfastly refuse to acknowledge him. They also indicate the extent of God's love by showing how far he will go to get unbelievers to repent. He loves the wicked and wants them to change before he has to remove them from the earth to set up his kingdom of righteousness.

### Seven Bowls

Revelation 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go,

**pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth."**

**In Chapter 15 we read that the heavenly Temple will be filled with smoke so that no man will be able to enter in. However, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will already be inside which is where this voice originates. Remember that God has committed all judgment to Jesus which means Jesus will order the seven angels to, *Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth. Each angel will be given a portion of God's wrath.***

## Key Symbols:

Seven Trumpet Judgments		Seven Bowl Judgments
Trumpet 1–Judgment	Hail, fire, and blood hurled to earth; 1/3 of plants burned up	Bowl 1–Judgment
Trumpet 2–Judgment	Burning mountain hurled into sea; 1/3 of seas polluted, fish killed, ships sunk	Bowl 2–Judgment
Trumpet 3–Judgment	Blazing object fall to earth; 1/3 of fresh water polluted	Bowl 3–Judgment
Trumpet 4–Judgment	Heavenly bodies struck; 1/3 of sun, moon, and stars darkened	Bowl 4–Judgment
Trumpet 5–Judgment (woe)	Abyss opened; Demon-possessed locusts released	Bowl 5–Judgment
Trumpet 6–Judgment (woe)	Four angels released at Euphrates; 1/3 of mankind killed	Bowl 6–Judgment
Trumpet 7–Seven Bowl Judgments (woe)		Bowl 7–Judgment End of Tribulation

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ Seven Bowls
  - *seven angels given seven portions of God's wrath*

## What Others are Saying:

**Peter and Paul Lalonde: Armageddon is coming... Who in their right mind would choose to fight with the Antichrist against God? Yet millions are making such a decision each day when they reject so great a salvation as that offered by God through his Son, Jesus Christ. For this is the heart of what Armageddon is all about. It is the world saying, "We will not bow our knee to anyone. We are too proud. We are too mighty. We are too important."<sup>16-1</sup>**

## The False Physician

**Revelation 16:2 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 worshipped his image.**

**The first bowl judgment will cause ugly and painful sores. Some Bible commentators say**

these sores will have a very offensive odor. Only those who take the **Mark of the Beast** or worship his image will be afflicted. When the **Antichrist** is unable to heal his own people, the world will know he is a false physician.

This plague will be similar to the **sixth plague** (Exodus 9:8-12) in Egypt when Moses was trying to have the Hebrews set free. At that time, God afflicted the Egyptian people with tumors, festering sores, and itching skin. The whole land, all the Egyptians, and even the animals were affected.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ First Bowl Judgment
  - *ugly and painful sores*

## What Others are Saying:

**J.R. Church:** In the end-time there will be several world-wide epidemics raging out of control. <sup>16:2</sup>

**Peter and Paul Lalonde:** Diseases like tuberculosis, once thought to have been totally eradicated, are now resurfacing. Other strange new diseases are also appearing. There's streptococcus A, the flesh-eating virus, and there was also the Ebola outbreak in (former) Zaire. Doctors are now finding themselves losing the battle as microbes are becoming immune to all the antibiotics that we have... World travel, changing sexual habits, and increasing numbers of refugees have made it possible for many of these diseases to become pandemic, rapidly spreading across the entire planet almost overnight. <sup>16:3</sup>

## Seas of Blood

**Revelation 16:3** The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.

The second bowl judgment will be worse than the second trumpet judgment. It will pollute the sea by turning it into blood and killing everything in it. One can easily imagine the repercussions of such a horrible event.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ Second Bowl Judgment
  - *sea turned to blood; everything in it dies*

## What Others are Saying:

**J. Vernon McGee:** I wonder if we realize how much we are dependent upon God today? <sup>16:4</sup>

## Remember This...

- ✓ In the second trumpet judgment, one-third of the sea creatures (Revelation 8:8, 9) were killed.

## Rivers of Blood

Revelation 16:4 The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

The third bowl judgment will be worse than the third trumpet judgment. This plague will be similar to the **first plague** (Exodus 7:17-25) in Egypt. Back then, God turned all the waters of Egypt into blood. The fish died, the water smelled, and the people could not drink it. This plague will be far worse because all the earth's water will be polluted causing worldwide suffering and death.

### Key Symbols:

- ✓ Third Bowl Judgment
  - *rivers and springs of water turn to blood*

### Remember This...

- ✓ In the third trumpet judgment one-third of the **waters turned bitter** (Revelation 8:10, 11).

## The Water Angel

Revelation 16:5 Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged;

We probably do not realize the important role angels play in managing God's creation. We have already encountered the **four wind angels** (Revelation 7:1), those angels in charge of holding back the earth's wind. Now we learn that God has a water angel in charge of the earth's water. Were it not for these angels man would not have survived as long as he has.

The angel in charge of earth's waters will look at this judgment and declare it to be a judgment deserved. He will express the **justice of God** (Psalm 89:14), the **eternal existence of God** (Deuteronomy 33:27), and the **holy nature of God** (Psalm 99:4, 5).

### Remember This...

- ✓ John saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth.

## A Round of Blood Please

Revelation 16:6 for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve."

The bloody waters will be God's response to the shedding of the blood of the Tribulation Saints and the Old Testament prophets. The Old Testament plainly says, *You shall not*

**murder** (Exodus 20:13), and Jesus clearly said, ***all who draw the sword will die by the sword*** (Matthew 26:52). It is a hard truth, but these unbelievers will get what they have coming to them. It is bad enough to ignore the Bible, but it is even worse, to turn one's back on the mercy of God at the same time.

### What Others are Saying:

**Wim Malgo:** We can only grasp the full extent of this judgment when we consider the reason for it. If the voice of the blood of one single person who was murdered (Abel, Genesis 4:10) cries to the Lord, how much louder must the blood of all the innumerable murdered people cry to heaven? <sup>16-5</sup>

**Peter and Paul Lalonde:** Today, through the power of television, a world is being fed an anti-Christian agenda. It has been so successful that a recent poll showed that Americans would least like to live next door to a cult member. Number two was a fundamentalist. <sup>16-6</sup>

## Just and True

**Revelation 16:7** And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

The **Antichrist** and his followers will shed the blood of saints all over the world. God will eventually respond by turning their drinking water into blood. When he does, the martyred Tribulation Saints will declare that God's judgments are just and true.

### Remember This...

- ✓ At the opening of the fifth seal, the martyred Tribulation Saints (Revelation 6:9-11) under the altar will ask God how long it will be until he judges the inhabitants of the earth and avenges their blood. God will tell them to wait until more of their fellow servants and brothers are killed.

## A Hot Time In The Old Town

**Revelation 16:8** The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire.

The fourth bowl judgment will cause the sun to scorch people with fire. According to the prophet Malachi a day is coming when the earth will **burn like a furnace** (Malachi 4:1). Many evildoers will be reduced to stubble.

### Key Symbols:

- ✓ Fourth Bowl Judgment
  - ***the sun scorched people with fire***

### What Others are Saying:

**Hal Lindsey:** Already the thinning ozone layer is being blamed for severe sunburns

in the southern end of Chile. <sup>16:7</sup>

**John Hagee:** The sun will scorch the earth and men with fire. Major uncontrollable fires will break out all over the world, spontaneously destroying homes, vegetation, and livestock. <sup>16:8</sup>

## Related Current Events

- ✓ What also makes current climate change different from earlier episodes (time periods) is the speed with which temperatures are rising. Creation will not be able to adapt to changes that occur so quickly. Scientists are predicting serious consequences of the rapid climate change such as the spread of infectious disease, rise in sea level, changes in weather patterns, and contamination of water supplies. <sup>16:9</sup>

### Still Cursing

**Revelation 16:9** 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.

The strong heat of the sun will bear down on them with a vengeance. They will sweat and thirst but will have nothing to drink except blood. They will get sunburned on top of the painful sores caused by the first bowl judgment. Blisters, sunstroke, and extreme thirst will be like God's punishment to the unbelievers.

These afflictions will cause them to finally admit that God exists, and that he controls these plagues. But even with that in mind, they will still not fall on their sunburned faces and sore knees to ask for mercy. Instead, they will curse his name.

### Darkness Over All The Land

**Revelation 16:10** The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony

The fifth bowl judgment will mark a turning point. God will begin to focus his attention on one of his biggest adversaries on earth, the **Antichrist**. Total darkness will cover the planet. People will not be able to see the stars or moon or even the sun.

This darkness will be similar to the **darkness that covered the land of Egypt** (Exodus 10:21, 22) when Moses was trying to free the Hebrews. The last time darkness covered the earth was when Jesus hung on the cross (Matthew 27:45). The next time it will happen will be to fulfill several Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 60:2; Joel 2:1, 2).

People will become anxious and nervous. They will begin to ponder their future. Some will have misgivings about taking the **Mark of the Beast** and following the **Antichrist**. Others may be tormented by insanity and chew their tongues in agony.

## Key Point

- ✓ They will be tormented by insanity and chew their tongues in agony.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ Fifth Bowl Judgment
  - *darkness over all the earth*

## What Others are Saying:

John Hagee: Mighty men, kings, and men of power will gnaw their tongues in pain and crawl into caves and beg God to kill them. [16-10](#)

## Something to Ponder

- ✓ It was so dark in Egypt the people could not see each other and they were afraid to move from the place they were in for three days.
- ✓ When Jesus, who is the Light of the World (John 8:12), died, God plunged the world into darkness for three hours. Because the world cannot survive without light many preachers understand this to mean that the world cannot survive without Jesus.
- ✓ The prophet Joel says the **Tribulation Period** darkness will be unlike anything the world has ever experienced. The agony and fear will be indescribable.

## It Ain't My Fault

Revelation 16:11 and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.

God is great and good. He is the God of heaven. He deserves praise and exaltation, but these people will curse and blaspheme everything he is and does. They will not blame themselves for their sins or admit that these judgments are fair retribution for their wrongdoing. Instead of repentance, they will choose continued blasphemy. And, in spite of their misgivings, they will continue to follow the **Antichrist** and his **False Prophet**.

## Key Point

- ✓ Men will not repent but will blame God for their afflictions.

## The Way Is Clear

Revelation 16:12 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.

The Euphrates River is mentioned more than twenty-five times in the Bible and is often referred to as the "great river." Nevertheless, this great river will dry up during the **Tribulation Period**. Why? Because it is a barrier that divides East from West. It prevents the kings of the East from moving their great army into the West (the Middle East).

When the sixth angel pours out his bowl, the river will dry up, the barrier will be gone, and the kings of the East will be able to move their **200 million man horde** (Revelation 9:14-16) against Israel in the **Battle of Armageddon**. Notice the word "kings" is plural.

This will likely be an alliance of Eastern nations.

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ Sixth Bowl Judgment
  - *the Euphrates River will dry up*

## What Others are Saying:

Charles H. Dyer: The world powers will come together, and the drying up of the Euphrates hastens their arrival. [16-11](#)

J.R. Church: **The Battle of Armageddon** will be a worldwide attempted genocide of the Jew. Israel will have no friends in that day, and the armies of the world will converge upon Israel to slaughter every Jew on the face of the earth. [16-12](#)

Peter and Paul Lalonde: Today, China and India alone comprise 40% of the world population. With 2 billion citizens, an army of 200 million is not all that hard to imagine. [16-13](#)

## Related Current Events

- ✓ Turkey today (through the installation of the Ataturk Dam) will cut off the flow of the Euphrates River, the lifeblood of ancient Mesopotamia, in a move that could lead to tensions with arid neighbors Syria and Iraq. [16-14](#)
- ✓ China's own military buildup is already alarming its neighbors. [16-15](#)
- ✓ According to the CIA, Red China has 330,353,665 men of military age, and boasts a standing army of 184,515,412 (1994 estimates). [16-16](#)
- ✓ The Clinton administration, as part of its drive for the so-called New World Order, has pulled out all of the stops to make Red China the future world's most powerful economic power. [16-17](#)
- ✓ Asia's need for oil will accelerate drastically and force Asia to focus more attention on the Middle East beginning in 1996. [16-18](#)

## A Frog In Your Throat

Revelation 16:13 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.

In the Old Testament, God was looking for someone to lure **the wicked king Ahab** (1 Kings 22:20-37) into a death trap. An evil spirit stepped forward and volunteered to be a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's false prophets. God said that would work and sent the lying spirit forth. Shortly after that, Ahab asked his prophets if he should battle the Arameans at Ramoth Gilead. His prophets, influenced by the lying spirit, said he would win. Instead, he was killed.

John tells us that three evil spirits will come forward during the **Tribulation Period**:

- ✓ **one from the mouth of Satan**

- ✓ **one from the mouth of the Antichrist**
- ✓ **one from the mouth of the False Prophet**

We can only speculate about the frog-like appearance of these **demons**. We know that the Egyptians worshipped Heka, a frog-headed goddess. She is one of the oldest goddesses who was said to have demonic powers. The **second plague** (Exodus 8:1-15) on Egypt during the days of Moses was a plague of frogs. We know too, that frogs are connected with the occult. Witches are often portrayed with frogs and use them in their spells. Frogs breed in mire and muck and are a symbol of uncleanness.

One more point. There are other Scriptures on this subject. For example, the Apostle Paul said, *The Spirit (Holy Spirit) clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons* (1 Timothy 4:1). **Demons** are real and will be very busy during the **Tribulation Period**.

## Key Point

- ✓ This verse is where we get the term "**False Prophet**."

## Key Symbols:

- ✓ **Three Evil Spirits**
  - *like frogs*
  - *they came out of the mouth of the dragon (Satan)*
  - *looked out of the mouth of the beast (the Antichrist)*
  - *and out of the mouth of the False Prophet*

## A Death Trap

**Revelation 16:14** They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Jesus was talking about the last days when he said, *false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect, if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time* (Matthew 24:24, 25). The Apostle Paul said the **Antichrist** will come *with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders* (2 Thessalonians 2:9). When the sixth bowl is poured out, spirits of **demons** will use miraculous signs to lure the leaders of the world and their God-defying troops into that death trap called the great day of God Almighty or the **Battle of Armageddon**.

## What Others are Saying:

Charles H. Dyer: **Satan** and his human henchmen send the **demons** to summon the armies. The armies come as allies, not enemies. **Armageddon** serves more as a staging ground than a battlefield. <sup>16-19</sup>

David Hocking: When miraculous signs are performed, many people believe God is behind them. The Bible teaches otherwise. While it is possible that God is performing the signs, it is also possible they are being done through the power of

**Satan or demons.** <sup>16-20</sup>

## Related Current Events

- ✓ On Thursday, September 21 (1995), the news swept around the world of the extraordinary miracles of milk-drinking Hindu statues. Never before in history has a simultaneous miracle occurred on such a global scale. Television, radio, and newspapers eagerly covered this unique phenomenon, and even skeptical journalists held their milk-filled spoons to the gods, and watched, humbled, as the milk disappeared. The media coverage was extensive, and although scientists and "experts" created theories of "capillary absorption" and "mass hysteria," the overwhelming evidence and conclusion was that an unexplainable miracle had occurred... <sup>16-21</sup>

## A Thief In The Night

Revelation 16:15 "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."

It is Jesus who says, *I come like a thief*. People do not usually expect thieves or they would prepare. This means the coming of Jesus will be a surprise, but what is Christ talking about? It cannot be the Rapture because by this time that will have already occurred. And who will be surprised? It cannot be the Church, because they went in the Rapture. This is a reference to the coming of Jesus at the end of the **Tribulation Period**. The unclean spirits will gather the armies of the world at **Armageddon**, and only then will Jesus return and catch them by surprise.

*Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him* is an encouragement for people to remain faithful. This garment (clothes) is the righteousness of Christ. Those who refuse the **Mark of the Beast** will be blessed when Jesus returns, but those who take it will be exposed.

## Key Point

- ✓ Those who refuse the **Mark** will be blessed when Jesus returns, but those who take it will be exposed.

## Armageddon

Revelation 16:16 Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

This is the only time the word "**Armageddon**" can be found in the Bible. **Armageddon** is Hebrew and is the name of a place in northern Israel. When translated, the word means "**Mount of Megiddo**." The **Mount of Megiddo** is a large hill just west of the Jordan River, in the Plain of Esdralon. The Euphrates River will dry up to allow the 200 million man army to approach from the East. **Demons** will go forth from the **Satanic** trinity (**Satan**, the **Antichrist**, and the **False Prophet**) and gather other armies from all over the world.

What Others are Saying:

Charles H. Dyer: The gathering of the armies at **Armageddon** is not the climax of world history. One final bowl of judgment must still be poured out on the earth before Jesus returns to claim his throne. <sup>16-22</sup>

## The Last Judgment

Revelation 16:17 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!"

The seventh bowl judgment will be the last. It will be poured out into the air, and then a voice from the throne of God will say, *It is done!* Just before Jesus died on the cross he said, *It is finished* (John 19:30). Just before Jesus returns to earth he will say, *It is done!* The remaining events will bring an end to **Satan's** reign.

### Key Symbols:

- ✓ Seventh Bowl Judgment
  - *"It is done!"*

## Off The Richter Scale

Revelation 16:18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.

When the seventh bowl is poured into the air something will happen to the atmosphere. Great flashes of lightning will explode to the ground, and thunder will rattle the earth. Fires will break out, and a tremendous earthquake will shatter the land.

### Related Current Events

- ✓ Major Earthquakes of the Twentieth Century (40,000 or more deaths)

Date	Location	Deaths
1908-12-28	Messina, Italy	83,000
1920-12-16	Gansu, China	100,000
1923-09-01	Yokohama, Japan	200,000
1927-05-22	Nan-Shan, China	200,000
1932-12-26	Gansu, China	70,000
1935-05-31	Quetta, India	50,000
1970-05-31	Northern Peru	66,794
1976-07-28	Tangshan, China	242,000
1988-12-07	Northwest Armenia	55,000
1990-06-21	Northwest Iran	40,000 <sup>16-23</sup>

## Remembered Again

Revelation 16:19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

This great earthquake will split the great city of **Babylon** into three parts, but it will still stand. This cannot be said for other cities because they will be leveled. Every city on earth, except **Babylon**, will be in ruins as the end of the **Tribulation Period** approaches.

With **Babylon** still standing, it will come into remembrance before God. One of the three angels (Revelation 14:8) predicted **Babylon's** doom just a short time before this. The Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 13:4-6, 19, 20; Jeremiah 51:7, 25, 26) predicted her doom long before that. It will be time for those prophecies to be fulfilled. She will get the *cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath*.

## Remember This...

- ✓ A second angel followed and said, *Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries* (Revelation 14:8).

## Creation Backwards

Revelation 16:20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.

**The surface of the whole earth will be changed. Every island will sink beneath the water. Every mountain will be leveled. The prophet Isaiah said the floodgates of heaven will be opened. The earth will reel to and fro like a drunkard** (Isaiah 24:19-23).

## What Others are Saying:

John Hagee: The earth will quake so severely that the islands of the sea will disappear. Puerto Rico and Hawaii will be covered with water. Every building, every wall will crumble. Millions will be trapped beneath the rubble with no one to come to their aid. <sup>16-24</sup>

Peter and Paul Lalonde: According to sources from *Energy, Mines, and Resources* in Canada there were, from 1900 to 1969, about 48 earthquakes that registered 6.5 or more on the Richter Scale. This is an average of *6 per decade*. From 1970 to 1989 there were 33 earthquakes measuring 6.5 or more. This is an average of *17 per decade*. From January 1990 to July 1990 there were 10 earthquakes of 6.5 or greater. This is 10 major earthquakes in just six months. And from July 1990 to October 1992 there were 133 earthquakes which measured at 6.5 or greater. This averages out to *600 per decade*. <sup>16-25</sup>

## Hail Bigger Than Bowling Balls

Revelation 16:21 From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so

terrible.

The **seventh plague** (Exodus 9:18-25) in Egypt during the days of Moses was hail mixed with fire. It was directed against Isis, the cow-headed goddess of the air. Giant hail killed the cattle in the fields and broke down all the trees.

This plague will be much worse. *These hailstones will weigh more than 100 pounds apiece and will beat the earth with a fury.* What effect will this have on mankind? Will people finally repent of their sins and avoid **hell**? No. They will still blaspheme God.

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## Study Questions

- ✓ Who tells the angels to pour out the bowls of wrath?
- ✓ Why will people have to drink blood during the **Tribulation Period**?
- ✓ What will happen to the kingdom of the **Antichrist** and how will it effect people?
- ✓ Who will the blessed be during the **Tribulation Period**?
- ✓ What will the evil spirits do to gather men for the battle of **Armageddon**?

[Go to Answers](#)

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## Chapter Wrap-up

- ✓ When the seven bowls of God's wrath are poured out, his judgments will come to an end.
- ✓ After the third bowl is emptied, the angel in charge of the waters and the Tribulation Saints will proclaim these judgments to be just and true. ([Revelation 16:5-7](#))
- ✓ The Euphrates River will dry up to make way for the coming of the kings from the East. ([Revelation 16:12](#))
- ✓ Three spirits will come out of the mouths of **Satan**, the **Antichrist**, and the **False Prophet** to summon the kings of the earth together for the **Battle of Armageddon**. ([Revelation 16:13-16](#))
- ✓ After the seventh bowl is poured out a great earthquake will rock the planet, destroying all cities except **Babylon**, which will split in three parts. ([Revelation 16:18, 19](#))

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