

THE REVELATION

SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

Chapter 16:16 – 19

Let us not forget that the Euphrates River will dry up so the kings from the east can join the dragon in the valley. The religion of Islam was formed in two large confederations to the east of the *Revived Roman Empire*. They are still Islamic today, with no reason to change in the future. All of the southern confederation of Arabia will have no difficulty arriving safely in the valley because it lies south of the Euphrates River. However, the second confederation is basically divided by the Euphrates River, and all the nations that lie north and east of the river would have a difficult time getting to Megiddo. With the river dry, half of Iraq and all of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan will have no problem traversing the land to arrive in the valley.

Verse 15 is not found in the oldest and most reliable ancient manuscripts. Therefore, we will ignore it. To address the verse in context will disrupt the flow of the story and foster an error in biblical truth.

(4) The Three Unclean Spirits Gather People of the World (16:16)

Rev 16:16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

John saw that the frogs were successful. Those who will join the evil, will come “*to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.*” In the Western world, we know the place as *Armageddon*. We have discussed this place in past lessons, but in this verse, we have finally arrived at its introduction in the story. In *seal six*, the Church had gathered in heaven as a *great multitude with palm branches that no one could number*. In *trumpet six*, the Nation of Israel had gathered to recognize Jesus as Savior and give *glory to God*. In *bowl six*, Satan and his rebellious followers will be gathered in the valley of Megiddo to *war against God*.

Much has been said about “*Har-Magedon*” in literature and film. Most people believe it is the battle that ends the world; that is far from the truth. Most people believe that it is the final battle here on earth; that, too, is far from the truth. Waste no time worrying about this war. As Christians in the Church, we will be transformed to heaven long before all the tribulation of Israel begins in earnest. Jewish believers today must turn to the LORD and make Him Savior. The new name of Christian will be attached to today’s believing Jews, and their transformation to heaven will occur with the Church. Rebellious Jews, steeped in Judaism after the departure of the Church, must make Jesus LORD and hold on. It will be a rough ride, but the LORD is still in control and will prepare a place for them. As rebellious people get ready, the *lake of fire awaits* – but that is getting ahead in the story.

g) Bowl Seven (16:17-21)

(1) The Announcement Sounds (16:17)

Rev 16:17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done."

The pouring of bowl seven begins with an amazing announcement from a voice within the temple: “It is done.” What is done? Is the battle of Armageddon done? No, no, no! More of the story of the REVELATION must be told before the actual battle occurs. What is done, then? The answer is actually found in this verse; it is the Temple—“It is done.”

At the end of the *seven seals, trumpets, and bowls*, the Temple is mentioned. Here, in the seventh bowl of wrath, it is mentioned for the last time. The need for the Temple or the habitation of the Ark of the Covenant/Testimony in heaven will be over soon. That is not to say that a Temple will not be put in place on earth, for one will. Ezekiel’s Temple will soon be built in Jerusalem after Armageddon. The LORD will leave the Temple or habitation in heaven and enter His earthly Temple on earth. However, the REVELATION does not specifically address the Temple described in detail in Ezekiel. Think of it this way: the book of REVELATION is looking at the End Times from Heaven’s viewpoint, not Earth’s. Such is the reason the LORD would not allow John to record in this book the rumblings and grumblings of the thunder and lightning of this world. This book is not for the worldly; it is for the heavenly. It is not from Satan’s view; it is from God’s view. It is not from humanity’s view; it is from heaven’s view. Heaven knows what is there and what is about to change. The rule of heaven is about to become the rule of earth. The “Indweller” of the Temple in heaven is about to become the “Indweller” of the Temple on earth. And, the “Indweller” will never again return to the Temple in heaven. For the Temple in heaven, “It is done.” But even the Temple, inhabited by the LORD of creation, will not be needed for eternity. When the LORD has inhabited the earthly Temple for one thousand years, it, too, will be replaced by the *holy city of God coming down from above*. And there, in the New Jerusalem, there will not be a Temple; there will be no place for a Temple; there will be no need for a Temple; the LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are the only Temple that will be needed. But for the heavenly Temple, “It is done.” We will not hear of it again in the REVELATION.

(2) The Earthquake Occurs (16:18)

Rev 16:18 And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.

As expected, the thunder and the lightning will be unhappy with the declaration about the Temple, and they mumble and grumble, and the lightning flashes to the earth, and the greatest earthquake ever known will shake the world. As we mentioned in *seal six*, if this earthquake occurred today, in man’s records, it would have to be greater than the May 22, 1960 earthquake in Valdivia, Chile, measured with a 9.6 magnitude. All the other earthquakes in the REVELATION are just *great earthquakes*, but this quake will be “such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.” This quake will be the worst of them all!

(a) The Great City Splits (16:19a)

Rev 16:19a The great city was split into three parts,

The greatest earthquake the World has ever had will split the “great city … into three parts.” Where is this “great city?” What is its name? How big is it? How vast are the structures within it? How many people inhabit it?

(b) The Cities Fall (16:19b)

Rev 16:19b and the cities of the nations fell.

The “great city” will not be the only city damaged in this greatest earthquake of all time. John tells us that he sees “cities of the nations” fall—not just one nation, so he must have seen the cities of many nations destroyed.

(c) The Babylon Remembered (16:19c)

Rev 16:19c Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of His fierce wrath.

Finally, John reveals a name for the second time, “Babylon the Great.” That’s the city! Babylon, Babylon, we are back to Babylon! What could be more appropriate? When we read the Bible, the story of Babylon comes up here and there, and it never seems to conclude. It was the city of the greatest sin against God after Noah and his family departed from the Ark. Babylon became the place where the righteous became the unrighteous, and the obedient became the disobedient. Sixteen-hundred and forty-nine years after the creation of Adam, sin had permeated the world. It started when Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the forbidden tree. In God’s plan for the ages, a flood was needed to rid the world of evil and yet carry humanity on after the flood. Noah, with his three sons and their wives, floated through the ordeal with all the animals, and when the Ark settled on the Mountains of Ararat, the family departed and began life alone in the new world. The Lord specifically instructed the family to disperse and populate the world. Over the next eight decades, children were born, and the family grew. The family began to migrate down the Tigris River and settled in a place they called Nineveh. A little later, the family crossed over the river and began to settle near the Euphrates River. As the family grew and Noah saw his family multiply down to the fourth generation, the 18 new family units stayed together instead of populating the world. At the Euphrates River, Noah’s grandson was in charge of the family. His name was Nimrod. He decided that the family would build a tower that would reach into the heavens. It was 98 years after the flood, and Noah’s family disobeyed God’s instruction. The original righteous family had chosen unrighteousness instead. Because of their attitude, the LORD caused each of the families to have a new language, and that caused them to spread out over the land and populate it according to each language. The Bible calls it the story of the *Tower of Babel*, and those who remained near the tower after the families were dispersed formed a village called Babylon. Later, it would be the capital of the Babylonian Empire and be Nebuchadnezzar’s home. All along the timeline of the earth, it will be a force in world history. The Bible, especially the Book of Isaiah, is filled with prophecies about Babylon. Some of those prophecies have been clearly fulfilled; however, Isaiah chapter 13:1-16 has not been fulfilled.

Isaiah 13: ¹The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. ²Lift up a standard on the bare hill, Raise your voice to them, Wave the hand that they may enter the doors of the nobles. ³I have commanded My consecrated ones, I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, To execute My anger. ⁴A sound of tumult on the mountains, Like that of many people! A sound of the uproar of kingdoms, Of nations gathered together! The LORD of hosts is mustering the army for battle. ⁵They are coming from a far country, From the farthest horizons, The LORD and His instruments of indignation, To destroy the whole land. ⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. ⁷Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt. ⁸They will be terrified, Pains and anguish

will take hold of them; They will writhe like a woman in labor, They will look at one another in astonishment, Their faces aflame. ⁹ Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. ¹⁰ For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises And the moon will not shed its light. ¹¹ Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. ¹² I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold And mankind than the gold of Ophir. ¹³ Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, And the earth will be shaken from its place At the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger. ¹⁴ And it will be that like a hunted gazelle, Or like sheep with none to gather them, They will each turn to his own people, And each one flee to his own land. ¹⁵ Anyone who is found will be thrust through, And anyone who is captured will fall by the sword. ¹⁶ Their little ones also will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; Their houses will be plundered And their wives ravished.

None of the above passage has been fulfilled to this day. Babylon was never destroyed in history. After the death of Alexander the Great, his empire was divided into four sections, each controlled by one of his faithful generals. Babylon was taken to be the capital of Seleucus I Nicator's section. However, by 293 B.C., Seleucus had built a new capital city, which he called Seleucia. It was at that point that the city of Babylon began to decline and eventually became deserted as it is now – basically a “bare hill.” As we will see later, Babylon was built on the hill called *Abzu*. When Isaiah prophesied in chapter 13, in 750 B.C., it was still a powerful city in the Assyrian Empire and had yet to become the capital of the Babylonian Empire. That distinction would not arrive for about 150 years after this prophecy in the year 606 B.C. To top that, the opening verse says, “Lift up a standard on the bare hill.” From the time of the tower of Babel incident in 2494 B.C., until it was abandoned after 293 B.C., Babylon was never a “bare hill.” It was never destroyed by a country from the “far horizon,” and it was never run over by the LORD’s “consecrated ones.” To that He says, “I have even called My mighty warriors, My proudly exulting ones, To execute My anger.” We can continue down the passage and fail to find any of it fulfilled in the pages of the history of the ages. This Isaiah passage is for the future. Babylon must be rebuilt. Babylon must one day endure the LORD’s wrath in this passage. No doubt it will be built; no doubt it will soon be destroyed when an earthquake divides it into thirds. But is this reference really for the city of Babylon or something else? Perhaps the Revelation will give more details, and it does in Revelation 17:5.