

## Lesson 19 - Armageddon & the Seven Last Plagues

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Our subject is perhaps one of the most serious found in the Scriptures. The seven last plagues are the most terrible manifestations of God's wrath found in the Bible. To some this subject is quite upsetting. It seems so foreign to the nature of our loving God. But God has intended for these things to be soberly considered and devoted two chapters in Revelation for that purpose (**Revelation 15- 16**).

In **Revelation 1:3** God pronounces a blessing on all who heed the warnings of this book. We need to realize in a subject like this, not only the love of God, but His justice as well. God does draw lines. At times His cup of divine wrath is full. We have seen this twice in the history of the world, Once at the flood of Noah, again at Sodom and Gomorrah. Now we will see it again at the end of the world.

There are seven last plagues. The most terrible scourges God has ever sent upon willfully impenitent men. "Armageddon" is the sixth plague in the series of all seven. We are hearing a lot today about Armageddon, and yet we hear very little about the other plagues. That ought to raise a question in your mind. The devil's smart, and he knows if he can get us side-tracked, we will miss the impact of the message God is trying to convey. Armageddon is important, but no more important than other six plagues, The devil has created a mixture of truth and error about this subject of Armageddon to side-track us. Perhaps the greatest deception is that the Armageddon story today is only *half told*. Let's get the total picture and study carefully what the Bible says.

Before destroying any doomed generation, God always sends messages to warn them. In Noah's day the message of warning went out for 120 years, yet few heeded it. And now today, God has again sent three warnings in the book of **Revelation chapter 14**. Here three angels send out three messages. **Verses 6- 10, "And I**

saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for *the hour of his judgment is come*: and *worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters*. And there followed another angel, saying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man *worship the beast and his image*, and receive *his mark* in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

Today many are not heeding these solemn words. But for those who are wise and follow, God will spare them from the seven last plagues.

Since these are called the seven last plagues, it suggests there were some first plagues. The plagues of EGYPT! Let's go and study those and you will see some amazing parallels. In **Exodus 5:1** Moses was sent to deliver God's people, As you study you'll find God also gave him *three* distinct messages. The first was to worship God. Moses called for a revival. They had been breaking the Sabbath and not resting, and Moses in his first message called them to proper worship, **Exodus 5:5**, "**And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.**" The second message was a call out of Egypt to serve the Lord. **Exodus 8:1**, "**And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me,**" That parallels the second

angel's message that Babylon is fallen, come out of her my people!" The third message in **Exodus 11:4- 5** was a warning of death. "And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts." That parallels with the third angel's message of the Mark of the Beast which is also a life and death message.

Now, in the end of time, God will again pour out seven last plagues. God has brought the Mark of the Beast issue as the final issue for all people to make a decision as to what side they're on. Only those who have the Seal of God and who have rejected the Mark of the Beast will escape the plagues. **Revelation 15:4- 8** describes the seven angels leaving the temple with the seven last plagues. The study of the seven last plagues would be frightening if we did not have the promise of the faithful being spared from them. No one who is on God's side needs to fear. The words of **Psalm 91** describe the confidence we can have. **Psalm 91:1- 16**. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his *truth* shall be thy shield and buckler, Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday, A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee, Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see *the reward of*

*the wicked, Because thou has made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone, Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet, Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name, He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him, With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."*

PRAISE THE LORD!

Let's begin a careful study now of **Revelation 16**. You will notice something interesting. Each plague hits an area of false worship that the world chose ahead of God's will, and God in His wrath gives them all they want, and more, to the point He actually destroys them with the errors, and sins they chose ahead of His will.

**Revelation 16:1- 2**, "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." The first plague immediately exposes the false miracle workers of the world. False miracles today are leading millions of people astray. **Revelation 13:13- 14** and **Revelation 19:20** speak of how great deceptions through miracles will lead many astray. "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of

men, *And deceiveth* them that dwell on the earth by the means of *those miracles* which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that *wrought miracles* before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image, These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with *brimstone*." Many people will accept a "miracle" before a "thus saith the Lord." These false miracle workers will not be able to cure the "grievous sores." This too is a judgment upon those who are willfully immoral as in Sodom and Gomorrah. Homosexuality, Lesbianism, and all sins of the flesh will be punished!

The second plague and third plague go together in **Revelation 16:3-7**, "**And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy, And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.**"

The world will have rejected the shed blood of Calvary and laughed at the atonement. They have their own savior, and God says, "I'll show them what they rejected." And not only has the world rejected the blood of the Lamb, they substituted it with the blood of God's people. It wasn't enough to shed the blood of Jesus, they had to shed the blood of His people too! Throughout the Dark Ages over 50 million people were slain by the Beast. Today with all the war

and bloodshed, we live in a blood-crazed society. From movies, to music, to the books, without end we entertain a lust for blood. God says. "Okay if you want blood, I'll give it to you, all you want, I'll let you drink it, I'll choke you with it!" On the other hand, Isaiah 33:16 says God's people will have fresh water to drink! Praise the Lord!

The fourth plague is a plague of the Sun. **Revelation 16:8- 9, "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And 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."**

Since the beginning of time, men have worshipped the sun. From Babylon to the present Christian veneered "Sunday," men have rejected the plain Scriptures and worshipped in honor of the sun. God says, "Okay I tried, I tried with Abraham, Israel. Jesus, and my Word. I sent this message over the world in the end, but if you will not repent, I'll give you all the sun you want, I'll scorch you with it!" Notice **verse 9, "they repented not to give him glory."** How?

**Revelation 14:7** says we give glory by true worship. Again during this plague the Bible promises that the righteous will be protected (**Psalm 121:6**).

The fifth plague in **verses 10- 11** is a plague of darkness! **"And 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, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."** This is specifically for the kingdom of the Vatican City. The Bible declares "men loved darkness rather than light" As men harden their hearts and reject clear light and love darkness rather than light, God says,

"I'll give you all the darkness you want. I'll make it so dark you'll gnaw your tongue in pain!"

Now the sixth plague: "Armageddon." Let's read **Revelation 16:12-16**, "**And 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. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs came out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For 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, *Behold, I come as a thief.* Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."**

Now we need to ask several questions.

1. What is meant by the drying up of the river Euphrates?
2. Who are the kings of the east?
3. Who are the three unclean spirits?
4. Where is Armageddon?
5. Who wins the battle?

The Bible is very clear, however, let's take a look at what some of Christianity is teaching on this subject today. Since the signing of the Israel Egypt peace treaty, March 26, 1979, a lot has been said. According to Christian thought to day, literal Israel will find deliverance from a nation in the east. A great battle will be fought in the valley of Megiddo (Armageddon), and Israel will be free.

Now there may be a battle there, but the Bible goes far beyond that. Let's look carefully. Notice these very interesting parallels between what happened to ancient Israel and Babylon in the Old Testament and the similarities for Spiritual Israel and Spiritual Babylon at the end.

<b>ANCIENT ISRAEL</b>		<b>SPIRITUAL ISRAEL</b>
Jer. 50:33, 34	Persecuted by Babylon	Rev. 17:6
Dan. 3:13	Forced to worship an image	Rev. 13:15
Dan 4:30	Called Babylon the Great	Rev. 17:5
Jer. 51:13, 14	Babylon sits on many waters	Rev. 17:1
Isa. 44:27, 28	Rescued by drying up Euphrates	Rev. 16:12
Jer. 51:6- 8	Called out of Babylon	Rev. 18:4
Isa. 45:1	Rescuer called "the anointed"	Dan. 9:24
Isa. 41:2, 25	Both rescuers from "east"	Matt. 24:27

So God is using a literal story that took place to represent what will happen at the time of the end. Now verse 14 says the *"whole world"* is involved in the battle. Can the whole world fit into the valley of Megiddo? Absolutely not! That valley is so small you probably couldn't get the population of New York City in it! And even if you could, how are you going to get every one there? What is Armageddon? John makes a special point of saying it's the "Hebrew" Armageddon. The Hebrew word is "HAR MOED," it means mount of the congregation." Now turn to **Isaiah 14:13- 14**, **"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the *mount of the congregation*, in the sides of the north: I will ascend**

**above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High,"** Here we come to the *real issue* in Armageddon--Satan's original claim to be God and sit on His throne, "in the mount of the congregation." The battle of Armageddon is the final showdown between God and Satan, good and evil, truth and error! That's why John stressed Armageddon "in the Hebrew." He's not even talking about the little valley! The mount of the congregation is where God's throne is!

Now on God's side stands the trinity of *truth*-- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And the devil has his counterfeit trinity of error. **Revelation 16:13, "And 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*."** The dragon is the devil (**Revelation 12:9**). The Beast is the Papacy and Vatican City. Who is the false prophet? A prophet speaks for its god. A *false* prophet teaches error, therefore the false prophet symbolizes any person, church, corporation, government or ministry that teaches the Beasts doctrines and false worship. That's why Jesus warned there would be many false prophets in the last days. **First John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** So here we have a counterfeit trinity.

Now who is represented as the kings of the east? Let's go back to the Old Testament literal story. The river Euphrates ran through Babylon. It was its life support. God had a man, Cyrus, who, overthrew Babylon by diverting the river and marching in through the two gates into the city on a dry riverbed. Let's read Isaiah's prophecy in **Isaiah 44:27- 45:1, "That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt**

be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall he laid. Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut." Cyrus came from the east. He's called the anointed.

Going back to Revelation, we have Spiritual Israel, being oppressed by Spiritual Babylon the Great. Who, and what army will rescue God's people and destroy Spiritual Babylon? **Revelation 19:11, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."** Here is the real battle of Armageddon. **Verses 12- 13, "His eyes were as a name of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."** The Word of God smites the nations. Here is *the issue--God's Word* against *tradition* and men, *truth* against *error*. **Verse 14, "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."** The armies are in heaven! Verse 15, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." The word smites, it's the *Word* that wins the battle! **Verses 16, 19, "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."** They war against Him, and the trinity of truth then destroys the trinity of error and the final war of Armageddon is over! **Verse 20, "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet**

that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." That's why Jesus said in Revelation 16:15, "I'm coming!" Which direction will Jesus come from? The east! **Revelation 7:2** and **Matthew 24:27** says as lightening comes from the east and shines west so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.

And then we come to the seventh plague. **Revelation 16:17- 21**, "And 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. And 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. And 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. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And 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." Everything in over as Jesus comes. There will be a great earthquake, hailstones up to 65 pounds. Job says God already has them made. **Job 38:22- 23**, "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?" Again. God's people will be protected (**Isaiah 32:18- 19**). And then Jesus will come. Friends, it makes sense to follow Jesus! Some folks say it's hard to be a Christian, it's hard to obey the law, it's hard to keep the Sabbath, but my friends, it's easy

compared to what the wicked will suffer! God is talking to intelligent people, and He invites you to think and make an intelligent decision as to where you`re going to be when Jesus comes.