

## Newsletter September 2018

In last month's newsletter, we saw seven majestic angels step out of the Temple in Heaven with the resolute purpose of administering seven final plagues of God's wrath upon the satanic world systems and upon all those individuals who have the mark of the Antichrist. In this newsletter we shall observe these seven angels as they fulfill their deadly mission. A few of these final plagues appear to be somewhat similar to plagues we have seen before – namely when God sent ten plagues upon Egypt through Moses (cf. Ge, 7:14-12:32), or those plagues the earth more recently suffered in the seven trumpet judgments, but the results will be far more devastating. It seems most probable that the pouring out of this final wrath of God will extend for thirty days, which corresponds to the thirty-day period recorded in the prophecy of Daniel (cf. Da.12:11; cf. Timeline of Daniel's Seventieth Week, Newsletter December 2016).

**“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” (Re. 16:1).**

The great voice out of the Temple in Heaven is without doubt the voice of almighty God. The cloud of his presence had completely filled the Temple such that none could enter into the Temple until the angels had all fulfilled their mission of divine judgment (cf. Re. 15:8). Nevertheless, inasmuch as all judgment of men has been given by the Father to the Son (cf. Jn. 5:22), it is all but certain that it must more specifically be the voice of the glorified Christ that is heard coming from the Temple. All of these angels are commanded by Christ's mighty voice to go forth as one to pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath upon the earth. These final judgments will be cumulative, one rapidly following another, and they will affect every earth dweller who has the seal of the Antichrist. Moreover, the first six plagues will continue with only hours or a few days between. That indicates that Christ is no longer pleading for man to repent; his righteous judgment of them is now inescapable.

**“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” (Re.16:2).**

The first plague begins as the first angel tosses out all the contents of his bowl upon the earth. The rapid discharge of this first bowl of God's wrath immediately results in noisome and grievous sores breaking out upon all men and women who have the mark of the Antichrist and have worshiped his image. The word “sores,” as translated from the Greek word *helkos*, describes ulcers or festering skin lesions. The word translated “noisome” here is *kakos* in the Greek, which can be translated as ugly, despicable, or loathsome. The word translated “grievous” is *ponēros*, which can be translated as hurtful, painful, and malignant. The first word, *kakos* describes its ugly appearance, while the second describes the alarmingly painful effects upon those infected with these sores. It must be noted that this plague is somewhat similar to the sixth plague God sent upon Egypt, which was described as “sores or boils” (cf. Ex. 9:8-12); however, in great contrast to this earlier plague this present plague will be very severe indeed.

This plague will not infect men and women who have not received the mark of the Antichrist and have their names written in the Lamb's book of life (cf. Re. 13:8). Certainly, we know that this number must include the 144,000 Jews who have born witness of Christ throughout the earlier trumpet judgments, as well as those redeemed of Israel whom God had earlier led out of Jerusalem to his hidden place of safety. Moreover, we know that there will be Gentile nations going into the Millennial Age, such that it is not unreasonable to assume that many Gentiles will be included within this non-infected group. That any such men could still be in existence on earth in this late hour can only be attributable to God's sovereign grace.

**“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” (Re.16:3).**

Even while men suffer from this first plague a second angel steps forth. While the first angel had dumped his bowl out upon the land directly affecting earth-dwellers, this second angel discharges the contents of his bowl upon the sea. The Greek word translated “soul” in this verse is *psuche*, which is defined as “breath of life” in general as opposed to *pneuma*, which is defined as a human mortal soul. This plague is specifically directed toward sea life of every kind and variety both animate and vegetative.

Periodically today, some coastal areas experience a “red tide,” which is caused by abnormal algae blooms. The waters at first turn yellow and then turn blood red killing marine life and contaminating the shorelines for miles. However, in this verse it must be clearly understood that all of the major oceans and seas will be affected

from shore-to-shore world-wide. No longer will the earth's oceans provide food for the world's population. Dead fish and other marine life will wash ashore in abundance, but their flesh will be putrid and extremely poisonous. The oceans will thicken and coagulate like "the blood of a dead man," and the resultant stench will become unbearable and very toxic to breathe in. It is obvious that men and women aboard ships at sea will become ensnared and die in this plague.

We saw during the second trumpet judgment that only one-third of the earth's seas had been turned to blood (cf. Re.8:8,9). This plague is also similar to the first plague God sent upon Egypt wherein the waters of the Nile were turned to blood for a time with similar effects (cf. Ex 7:20-25). That plague was specifically isolated to the Nile for a short period, but this plague will affect all of the great oceans and seas encompassing two-thirds of the earth's surface for the remainder of the bowl judgments to come.

**"And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood" (Re.16:4).**

Rivers and streams have rainfall, mountain water falls, and underground springs from the earth as their sources that empty into lakes and reservoirs, which provide drinking water for the great populations world-wide. However, shortly following after the second bowl, the third angel dumps out his bowl of God's wrath upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they also become blood. This again is comparable to the first plague God sent upon Egypt. While the plague visited upon the oceans and the seas were indeed terrible, this plague is even more catastrophic, inasmuch as there will now be no potable water to drink and no clean water to wash and soothe men's ever-festering sores. The third trumpet had cut off a third of the water supply, but here the entire water source is turned to blood. Any drinking water that remains can only be found in sealed bottles, storage tanks, cisterns, and perhaps a few wells for a very brief time until the underground water also becomes infected.

**"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" (Re.16:5-7).**

Even as this plague takes place, John hears the angel of the waters (not one of the seven), whose task it has been to oversee and protect the lakes, rivers and streams, speak out to defend the righteousness of God's judgment by the bloody purified waters. He states that those who have shed the blood of saints and prophets deserve to receive blood to drink. From out of the altar we hear the persecuted saints and prophets echo the angels message that God's judgments are true and righteous in sending forth this great plague of blood, which avenges them for their own blood that they had earlier shed.

**"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" (Re.16:8,9).**

The first angel had poured out his bowl upon the earth, while the next two had poured out their bowls upon the earth's waters. This fourth angel pours out his bowl upon the sun, which has provided light and energy for all life upon the earth. Following the great Genesis flood, the sun had brightly shown forth to produce clouds and manage rainfall upon the earth. As a continuing judgment of the earth, its unfiltered rays had also produced great and damaging storms, and its radiation had shortened mankind's natural lifespan from what was once almost a thousand years down to threescore and ten. Since then, the sun's energy has been regulated within a delicate range for the continuation of life on the earth. This fourth bowl of God's wrath, which the angel now pours out upon the sun, apparently alters that carefully controlled balance. The sun's rays are greatly increased so as to scorch men on earth with intense heat. Instead of repenting and glorifying God, reprobate men on earth angrily blaspheme Him because they know He holds absolute authority over all these plagues.

**"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" (Re.16:10,11).**

This fifth angel pours out his bowl of God's wrath directly upon the seat of the Antichrist's power thus plunging his worldwide kingdom into darkness. His "seat of power" could be a rebuilt Babylon in Iraq, or it could be some other place as yet unknown. It could be that an electromagnetic pulse from the sun has shut down the power grid world-wide; nevertheless, this darkness will also prevail throughout the day-time hours as well as

during the night. Since the sun is still brightly shining and producing intense heat on earth, this darkness is an ominous supernatural darkness much as the dense darkness that had come upon Egypt for three days (cf. Ex. 10:21-22) during the ninth plague – just before the ultimate judgment was administered by the angel of death in the tenth plague (cf. Ex. 11:4-6). Just as Pharaoh had hardened his heart, the Antichrist as well as his followers that have his mark will blaspheme God in Heaven for the pain caused by their malignant sores, their unquenchable thirst, and the intense heat of the sun; with hardened hearts they will defiantly refuse to repent – even as they stubbornly make every effort to carry forth their evil sinful deeds of iniquity as before.

**“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” (Re.16:12).**

The ancient river Euphrates originates in the mountains of northern Turkey and continues south roughly 1800 miles to empty into the Persian Gulf. This river is first mentioned as one of the rivers flowing out of Eden (cf. Ge.2:14), and it also marked the Eastern boundary of Israel, as God had given it to Abraham (cf. Ge.15:18). Over half of it is navigable today, but it is both deep and wide making it very difficult or impossible for large armies to cross. Moreover, due to the intense heat from the sun caused by the fourth angel having poured his bowl upon it (cf. Re. 16:8), the river will have become heavily flooded by rapidly melting ice from the northern mountains, thus acting as a great barrier to all east-west travel by land.

As the sixth angel pours out his bowl of God’s wrath upon this great river, it will completely dry up, so that the rulers of the eastern oriental nations can readily send their great armies over it to invade the land of Palestine. Although the previous five plagues still persist against the reprobate of earth, a brief interval of time is seen between this sixth and seventh bowl, thus making it possible for the east’s massive armies to assemble and cross over into northern Palestine in an effort to destroy the city of Jerusalem.

**“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. 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” (Re.16:13,14).**

In this verse we see what has seduced the kings of these great eastern armies to attempt this invasion. John makes it clear that these unclean spirits are not literal frogs by his use of the word “like” (“like frogs”). The three unclean spirits leap quickly like three frogs from the mouth of Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet. These unclean spirits are the spirits of devils (i.e. demons), who rapidly hop from nation to nation, working false miracles and enticing the rulers of the entire world to gather together as one united army to mount a massive attack upon Jerusalem. Nevertheless, what they will encounter is not a human army protecting Jerusalem but the vast armies of God Almighty led by the returning Jesus Christ.

**“Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame” (Re. 16:15).**

At this point in the narrative, the Church has already gone into Heaven to be with her Lord. Therefore, this statement regarding Jesus coming as a thief is not a message intended for the Church, nor for that matter has it ever been. As the Apostle Paul stated to the Thessalonian believers, “...ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief” (1Th. 5:4). Christ’s coming will be welcomed by his saints who watch for Him, but He will come as an unexpected and unwelcome thief to the reprobate in this hour. Only those clothed in the righteousness of Christ can avoid being seen spiritually naked and ashamed when He comes with his saints. The vast number of believers born in that day after the Church has left the earth are being assured here by Jesus that they will not be forgotten during the calamitous wave of destruction that the Lord is about to unleash – as long as they hold tight to the righteous covering of faith that God has so graciously given unto them.

**“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon” (Re.16:16).**

Some question arises about whom the pronoun “he” refers to in this verse. It has been the three demons who have gathered the armies together, but since they jumped as frogs from the Antichrist, the False Prophet and Satan, they are united as one in this unholy trinity that has gathered them together to mount one final attempt to thwart God’s sovereign purposes. However, in a still greater sense, it has been Christ who has gathered them together that He may exercise his great power and might to utterly decimate them in this great final conflict.

The place that God has chosen for this battle is *Har-Megedon* in the Hebrew, which means the “mount of Megiddo” (unfortunately, here in the AKJV it has been awkwardly translated from Hebrew back to the Greek

form, *Armageddon*). Since we cannot locate any actual mountain by that name, it is generally acknowledged that it refers to the hills surrounding the plain of Megiddo (a.k.a. the valley of Jezreel and the plain of Esdraelon) in northern Israel, which is located some 60 miles north of Jerusalem. Somewhere around 200 battles have been fought on this wide valley in the past, and now God has chosen it to be the battleground of this final conflict.

**“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”** (Re.16:17).

As we read earlier in Re.14:20, this conflict will have resulted in an unimaginable crushing of Satan’s forces under the feet of Christ: “And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs” (cf. Re.19:15). This conflict will be quickly over as the seventh angel pours out this last bowl of God’s wrath in the air above the earth. Again we hear the mighty voice of Christ coming out of the throne from the Temple in Heaven with the words “it is done.” Although not the exact same words in the Greek, Jesus had uttered a similar pronouncement from the cross when He had victoriously completed the means of salvation for the lost human race through his sacrificial death (cf. Jn.19:30). Here, his victorious pronouncement is that all of mankind who had rejected his offer of salvation have been finally judged. Although the great final conflict has come to an end, the results are on-going:

**“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”** (Re.16:18,19).

The “voices and thunders and lightnings” indicate that God is now beginning to move in a great way. The massive earthquake is unlike any that has ever occurred on earth. It will shake and reshape the entire earth (cf. Ha. 2:6; He.12:26,27). Great changes will begin to take place upon the earth’s surface. Jerusalem, that great city, will be divided into three parts as all of the other nations of the world are flattened into unidentifiable rubble. God particularly remembered wicked Babylon as it also fell in the fierceness of his righteous anger; He had given her to taste of “the wine of the fierceness of his great wrath.” (cf. Re. Ch. 17 & 18 for details of Babylon’s destruction).

**“And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found”** (Re. 16:20).

During the great flood of Noah’s day the earth was totally transformed by the great rushing flood of waters caused by great upheavals in the earth. As the flood waters began to abate, vast mountains had risen up to create around them deep basins to hold the massive waters that had completely submerged the earth. In the mountains’ wake, dry land again began to emerge around it (cf. Newsletter August 2015). Here we see God beginning to orchestrate a reversal of the earlier catastrophe caused by the force of the massive waters to return the earth back into its pre-flood configuration in preparation for the Kingdom Age. Islands that were but the top of undersea mountains disappeared, as the earth flattened and continents began to shift back into their original configuration.

**“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”** (Re. 16:21).

Not every depraved person on earth will have engaged in the great battle of Armageddon. Therefore, there still remains a great company of reprobates upon the earth that will have escaped that great massacre of Armageddon. They must likewise be removed from the earth in preparation for the coming Kingdom Age wherein righteousness will reign supreme. Thus, we find that the Lord sends forth a great hail storm out of Heaven. The weight of these hailstones is an astonishing 100 pounds each. Due to the fact that the earth’s surface will have been reduced to flattened rubble by the massive earthquake, there will be no protection for the reprobate earth-dwellers. Even as the great hailstones crush them, they will with their last breath blaspheme God for sending down this great judgment upon them.

The end of this 30 days of God’s wrath, brings us into the 45 day period Daniel recorded in Da.12:12 (cf. Timeline of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, Newsletter December 2016), which is given as a period of mourning for the Jews over their earlier crucifixion of Christ, their Messiah, as well as a period of Christ’s final preparations of the restructured earth for the thousand-year Kingdom Age that will at last come to pass. (cf. Re. 20).