

# The Soon Coming End – Part 14

2 Peter 3:9-13

Revelation 16 & 19 & 20

As we concluded the message last Sunday, the armies of the world, under the command of the antichrist and the demonic leaders of the world, were gathering near the Euphrates River, poised to invade the land of Israel and to engage in the last great battle of the world there on the “Plains of Megiddo” in central Israel.

And as we have done in most of these messages, before we move on ahead, may we first take a moment and briefly rehearse to ourselves the circumstances and the events that will have taken place to bring our world and its people to the brink of this final and disastrous end.

Leading up to the “rapture” of the saints, we know that behind the cloak of the visible world, satan and his fellow demons will have churned their evil turmoil throughout all the nations of the world, positioning themselves for their opportunity to rise to power during the “great tribulation” that will soon follow the rapture of God’s people from the earth.

And they will, and quickly so. As soon as God’s people are raptured away, “the great dragon”, satan, and his fellow “beasts” will rise to power, establishing their evil kingdoms on the earth, bringing about their “one-world religion”, the “Great Harlot”. And also, at the same time, the antichrist will enforce the use of his “mark of the beast” financial system, the 666. And with it, he will establish control over the economic systems of the entire world, as spoken about in chapter 18, there called “Babylon the Great”.

But all the while that satan is bringing about his plans and purposes, God will also be working out His own Plan. As evil continues to arise and troubles churn, God will call forth His 144,000 Jewish evangelists, and His two witnesses, and send them out to minister. And from those and other ministries, great multitudes of men and women from every tribe and nation and tongue on the earth will turn their hearts to Christ.

And all the while all those things will be taking place, Jesus will continue to break open seal after seal of the great scroll, with powerful angels continually pouring out the fury of God’s wrath upon the people and upon the nations of the earth, stars falling from the sky, killing billions of people, and killing wildlife and sea life, burning up the land and poisoning the waters; God’s bowls of wrath destroying the kingdom and the financial empire of the antichrist, frustrating his plans and bringing the antichrist and his demonic

world leaders to choose this final path of destruction that's spoken about here in chapters 16 and 19 and 20, the "Battle of Armageddon".

With that as our background, may we turn to Revelation chapter 16, and there witness with me the unimaginably violent end that God has in store for this earth and for its people. Listen,

1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." 2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. (Revelation 16:1-2 (ESV))

Note again here in these words that this wrath and this suffering does not touch those who have given their hearts to Christ, but only those who have taken the 666, the "mark of the beast", and are worshipping the antichrist. Verse 2 again,

2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. (Revelation 16:2 (ESV))

Verse 3

3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea. (Revelation 16:3 (ESV))

Can you imagine this? From all the many programs, we have viewed on the Nature channel on television, we know that the oceans teem with billions upon billions of sea creatures. But here, in only moments, they will all die. Verse 3 again,

3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea. (Revelation 16:3 (ESV))

And then, verse 4,

4 The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, "Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments. 6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!" 7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are your judgments!" 8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. 9 They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had

power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory. 10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish 11 and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds. (Revelation 16:4-11 (ESV))

Please remember as we read these words about these bowls of God's wrath being poured out upon the antichrist and upon the kingdoms he has established on the earth, this is not a battle between "equals". Not at all! As powerful as Satan and his fellow demons might be, they are nothing more than "spindly fleas" before the might and power of the Almighty God, the Lord Jesus.

And another thought that occurs to me is that, even with all of his brilliant intelligence, the antichrist is not able to discern that Jesus is guiding these evil armies straight to their doom! Listen to verse 12,

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. (Revelation 16:12 (ESV))

This will provide a pathway to the destruction of China's 200-million-man army. How blind they are!

And then also, in verse 13, we see a gathering of more and more of the world leaders and their armies together, for them to be destroyed, "on the great day of God Almighty. Listen!

13 And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. 14 For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. (Revelation 16:13-14 (ESV))

And then, note carefully in this next verse, verse 15, that these are the words of the Lord Jesus. Here, in amongst all of the death and destruction that is taking place, Jesus interjects the promise . . .

15 "Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!" (Revelation 16:15 (ESV))

Then the next verse, verse 16, turns back to the vision of John.

16 And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. 17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. (Revelation 16:16-19 (ESV))

This is truly a worldwide cataclysmic event, the earth breaking apart at the command of God, especially the evil city of Babylon.

20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. 21 And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe. (Revelation 16:20-21 (ESV))

Right after these words of chapter 16, God turns our attention away from the great battle for a while, and with the words of these intervening chapters, 17 and 18, He reminds us of all that He has been doing, and is continuing to do, to bring about the fall and the complete destruction of the "Great Harlot", the "one-world-religion", and also the destruction of "Babylon the Great", the financial kingdom of the antichrist. We studied about their downfall in earlier messages, so we'll not return there for now.

But may we pick back up in chapter 19. In verse 1, John tells us,

1 After this, I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, 2 for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants." (Revelation 19:1-2)

There is often a question in our minds as to whether or not people in heaven can see what is taking place on the earth. Take careful note of these words. This answers that question. This great multitude of saints who are assembled in heaven, many of them martyred during the tribulation, have witnessed God judging and bringing to destruction the "great prostitute", the corrupt pagan "one-world-religion" that the antichrist formed so that people could worship him. And they have witnessed God pouring out bowls of wrath, avenging the blood of their fellow saints. And these heavenly saints are shouting "Hallelujah" in their joy about what God is doing.

So then, yes, at least on some occasions, if not all occasions, those who are in heaven can see the things that are taking place on the earth. Verse 3 again, and following . . .

3 Once more they cried out, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her (the great prostitute) goes up forever and ever." 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great." 6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. (Revelation 19:3-6)

And notice what takes place next, verse 7,

7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; 8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. 9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." (Revelations 19:7-9)

May I offer a thought about these words, and I confess that I don't know the full meaning of them. But these words tell us about the "marriage supper of the Lamb" and they seem to speak about a special "ingathering" of God's saints that is taking place. This may be the point in time when the remaining number of those who have been saved during this tribulation period will be brought on into heaven, that event that is described in chapter 14 when the angel dips his sickle into the earth and "reaps" the harvest of the saints.

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." 16 Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped. (Revelation 14:14-16 (NASB)

This "reaping" really does appear to be the final "ingathering" of God's saints, because very quickly here in chapter 19, the wrath of God will become indiscriminate as to whom it will destroy. And that would give indication that no more believers are remaining on the earth.

Continuing on in verse 10 . . .

10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, (the angel) but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10 (NASB))

This serves as a strong warning for us, even now, that we are never to exalt angels to any high level that could be confused as worship. They are creatures like us and no higher.

And then, pay close attention to all that happens next, because the great battle is about to “ramp up” to its highest level. Here comes the Lord Jesus in all of His might and power and glory. Praise the Lord! Verse 11,

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head, are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. (Revelation 19:11-14)

This is me, folks. I’m going to be on one of those white horses in the “armies of heaven”, racing into that battle, with great joy on my face. Praise the Lord! And listen! This is our weapon! Verse 15,

15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, (Revelation 19:15)

Folks, the only weapon that Jesus and the armies of heaven need is the “Word of His mouth”. It is more powerful than any weapon we can imagine. He will simply speak and His enemies will crumble before Him. Praise the Lord!

15 and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by

which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh. (Revelation 19:15-21 (ESV))

The great “Battle of Armageddon” is over, finished. Satan and his armies, his fellow demons and all the people who have taken the 666, the mark of the beast, all have been vanquished by the power of the Almighty God, the Lord Jesus.

And then in the first three verses in chapter 20, we read . . .

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while. (Revelation 20:1-3 (ESV))

Satan and his strong demon beasts are bound and thrown into the “bottomless pit”, with the pit sealed over to prevent any possibility of satan getting out from it. And it is here told to us that satan will be contained there for a thousand years, at which time he will be released for a little while.

Before we stop for today, may we take a moment and consider what is being said to us within these words? Folks, this is God’s way of expressing to us in the strongest way possible that He is “just”, and that “accountability” is absolutely real and it will come to each of us. And so, the question for us is an individual one. As the end of days draws nearer and nearer, are we each very, very sure that when the rapture takes place, we will go to be with Christ in the heavens. Are we absolutely sure? If we are not, this, THIS, may be our recompense, destruction and hell. And may I say to us, we do not want this to be our recompense. The bowls of wrath are painful beyond our imagination, and hell is even worse, and it is also eternal, forever and ever and ever. Are you sure? Absolutely sure?

The Lord willing, we’ll come back to this point and continue on here next week, when we will give consideration to this mysterious “1000 years” spoken about here.

May we pray!