

The Great Day of God Almighty

Revelation 16:8-21

Today we come to one of the most dramatic, most earth-shaking descriptions in all of the Bible. Here we find the final great shaking and the final gathering of all nations. God's royal might and men's godless rebellion are on full display. And yet in the midst of it, we see an exhortation to believers to maintain their personal purity. Today we will see the depravity of mankind in the full light of the majesty of God.

What does this passage reveal about the Lord?

- God has power over the plagues, 9 **"God which has power over the plagues"**
- He is the God of heaven, 10
- He is the God who controls nature: drying up the Euphrates River, 12
- God is Almighty and will intervene in a sudden and direct manner during the coming Day of the Lord. 14-15 **"that great day of God Almighty"**
- God will clothe His people in righteous robes, 15 (see Revelation 1:13)
- God will demonstrate His authority by allowing Satan and his demons to accomplish God's purposes and fulfill His prophecies. 13-16 (See Revelation 17:17)
- God will demonstrate His power in disasters in a way never before seen in the history of the world. 17-18, 20
- In the fierceness of His righteous wrath, God will judge those who have rebelled against Him. 19-21

The 4th Angel and the plague, 8-9

And the fourth angel poured out his vial [bowl] 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 has power over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory. (vs. 8-9)

In the message from Revelation 15, we learned that a "plague" refers to a sharp blow or strike. These plagues will be hurled upon the earth out of bowls full of God's wrath. This fourth plague intensifies the heat of the Sun so that the earth and its people are subjected to intense heat. Some have suggested that this refers to our Sun becoming a supernova. But scientists tell us that any supernova within 25 light years would destroy our atmosphere completely.¹ These verses could refer to an intensification in the Sun or a change in the ozone layer, causing severe sunburns. It is possible that it refers to a change in the orbit of the Earth. For instance, Haggai 2:6-7 describes a shaking of the heavens and the earth:

"For thus says the LORD of hosts; yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of hosts."

It is likely that these verses refer to the catastrophes in Revelation, leading up to the Second Coming of Christ. In any case, the inhabitants of people of the earth will be scorched with intense heat. Seeing this demonstration of God's power, would you expect people to ignore the Lord, or repent of their sins and call out to Him? In fact, they will do neither. They specifically take note of the Lord to **"blaspheme the name of God which has power over these plagues!"** And they will not repent to "give Him glory."

How can you be sure that you will escape these terrible plagues? Think again about that phrase, "give Him glory." When Paul described the saving faith of Abraham, he wrote, **"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;"** (Romans 4:20). When Abraham glorified God by embracing His promise, what happened? Here is the good news of the Gospel!

"And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. (Romans 4:21-25). The way anyone came to the Lord (in the Old or New Testament) is by embracing God's promises with faith – giving glory to God. When they did, the Lord imputed righteousness to them – clothing them in Christ's righteousness. But these rebels in the Tribulation will not repent; they will not give glory to God. Genuine repentance always means giving glory to God.

The 5th Angel and the plague, 10-11

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. (vs. 10-11)

Lest we think that the Antichrist is somehow exempt from these forceful plagues, verse 10 reminds us. Wherever Antichrist's capital is located will be covered in deep darkness. And the inhabitants will endure such pain that they gnaw their tongues. These verses read like a window on the deep depravity of the rebels. Because of this painful plague, they will blaspheme the God of heaven. The rebels will not repent from their wicked deeds. Like the Antichrist himself, the rebels will try to oppose the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even now, the Book of Romans describes it this way: **"Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them"** (Romans 1:32). To trust Christ, you must recognize your sin and sin's penalty and embrace Christ. The judgment of God is upon those who know that sin is the wages of death and embrace those who do evil with pleasure.

The 6th Angel and the plague, 12

"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." 12

In this forceful blow, the angel's bowl dries up the Euphrates River. The term, "Mesopotamia" refers to the plain between the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The gigantic Euphrates

runs roughly northwest to southeast for 1900 miles, dividing Europe and Asia in the Fertile Crescent. With this 6th plague, the Lord will prepare the way for the kings of the east to join the kings of the earth for the last great battle with Almighty God.

The unholy trinity and the dark deeds of demons, 13-14

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 [demons], 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. (vs. 13-14)

When the way is cleared, three dark and froglike demons will come out of the mouths of the unholy trinity: the dragon (Satan), the beast (the Antichrist) and the false prophet. These demon spirits will work miracles to cause the kings of all the earth to gather to this last great battle with Almighty God. In their depravity, suffering and pain, they will be eager to contend with God Himself, and be utterly defeated.

The Lord's Coming and the Battle of Armageddon, 15-16

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps 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. (vs. 15-16)

In the midst of these cataclysmic events, the Lord includes an exhortation to believers: Keep watching for the Lord and keep your garments clean so that you need not be ashamed. Clothed in Christ's righteousness (by the same faith that Abraham had), believers await the coming of the bridegroom. Rather than be distracted by all the evil events around them, they are to keep their focus on the Lord. This is a warning to the Tribulation saints, but it is also a good warning for today. Where have you begun to defile your garments with pornographic movies, or gossip or evil intentions? Remember, the Lord is coming and His blessing will be upon those who keep their garments from being soiled by sins. Don't grow comfortable in the dark deeds of this world.

The Lord will gather all the kings and armies of the world to Armageddon for the great day of God Almighty. Napoleon, the great French general and politician, once stood in this valley of Megiddo in northern Israel and declared, "All the armies of the world could maneuver their forces on this vast plain."ⁱⁱⁱ And so they shall, according to God's Word.

The 7th angel and the exceedingly great plague, 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 lightning; 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 [50-130 pounds]: and men

blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

- The angel will pour the bowl into the air
- A great voice from the temple of Heaven will announce, “It is done.”
- Voices, thunder, lightning and the worst earthquake in the history -- worldwide
 - Jerusalem, the great city, will be divided into three parts
 - The cities of the nations of the world will fall
 - Great Babylon will be destroyed.
- Great hail [50-130 pounds] will fall from the heavens.
- This will be an exceedingly great plague.

Yet what will be the response of rebellious human beings? They will blaspheme the God of heaven.

Applications:

What can we learn, practically speaking, from this text?

- ✓ Today is the day of salvation! Trust Christ by faith today (2 Corinthians 6:2)
- ✓ Praise the God of heaven and give Him glory – embracing Him by faith
- ✓ Take time to think through the fact that God is in complete control of world events. Don't get frustrated when depravity seems to increase. God will judge all things, including the Devil himself and all the demons of hell.
- ✓ Keep your garments clean. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Confess and repent of any known sin.
- ✓ Tell others about God's wrath against sin, and appeal to them to flee from the wrath to come.

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ⁱ See Supernova, accessed at <https://supernova.eso.org/exhibition/1218/>

ⁱⁱ The Battle of Armageddon, What Is It?" Compelling Truth, accessed at <https://www.compellingtruth.org/battle-of-Armageddon.html>

