

REVELATION 16:12-21

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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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

¹⁶ And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. (Revelation 16:12–16)

A. 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. (Revelation 16:12)

1 The great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up.

Several facts to note about the Euphrates.

- The Euphrates is one of the oldest rivers of history, being one of the four rivers which was fed from Eden in the pre-flood world (Gen. 2:10).



- The Euphrates was one of the boundaries of the Promised Land which God gave to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 15:18; Deut. 1:7; Jos. 1:4).
- According to Herodotus – the Greek historian – Babylon was overthrown when the Persian King Cyrus diverted the Euphrates allowing the Persian army to wade into the city unexpected. Jeremiah prophesied about this even in Jeremiah 50:38.
- The Euphrates is mentioned because the events of the Tribulation involve the literal city of Babylon on its banks. (Isa. 11:12-16)

2. The way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

In the Bible, there has been significant personalities who came from the east. In Greek, the east is literally “the rising of the sun.”

- Cyrus of Persia (Isa. 46:11).
- The wise men (Matt. 2:1)
- The kings from the east (16:12).

Who are the kings from the east?

Kings from the Orient, but this is not required by the text. All that is indicated is that they are kings representing nations east of the Euphrates.

B. 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. (Revelation 16:13)

1. Three unclean spirits like frogs

The three unclean spirits are demons (16:14). Their comparison with frogs alludes to their uncleanness, being aquatic animals lacking scales (Lev. 11:9-12; Deut. 14:9-10). The Jews would also recall the plague of frogs in Egypt (Exod. 8:2-13; Ps. 78:45; 105:30).

2. Coming out of the mouth

The mouth is the organ which reflects the will as evidenced by one’s words. Fire of judgment came out of the mouths of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:5). A sword comes out of the mouth of Jesus (Rev. 1:16; 19:15), denoting the Word of God.

That which comes forth from these mouths is empowered, influenced, and promulgated by the unclean spirits. The unclean spirits proceed from the mouths of the unholy trinity suggesting the persuasive and deceptive propaganda which in the last days will lead men to an unconditional commitment to the cause of evil.

3. Of the dragon...of the beast...of the false prophet

The three spirits correspond to the three personages of the “antitrinity” – the dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet.

- The dragon is Satan and the devil, both names which indicate his slanderous accusations (Rev. 12:9; John 8:44).
- The Beast is known for his blasphemous mouth (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 11:36; Rev. 13:6).

The False Prophet, although appearing like a lamb, speaks like a dragon – He tells those who dwell on the earth to make an image of the beast (Rev. 13:11).

C. 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. (Revelation 16:14)

A. Spirits of devils

These are among the angels that fell from heaven and joined forces with Satan (Rev. 12:4). Although they are “unclean” and in Satan’s domain, they have been used throughout history to accomplish God’s purposes.

In the Old Testament, we also see God sending evil spirits to do his bidding (Judg. 9:23; 1 Sam. 16:14; 18:10; 19:9; 2 Kings 19:7).

In response to Hezekiah’s prayer for help, God sent a spirit upon Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, so that he would hear a rumor and return to his own land (2 Kings 19:7).

But perhaps most frightening of all, Paul records that God will send strong delusion so they should believe the lie (2Thess. 2:11).

Unclean spirits play a major role in the events recorded in the gospels.

- The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit was attributing an unclean spirit to Jesus (Mark 3:30).
- Jesus healed a man in a synagogue who had an unclean spirit (Mark 1:23-27).
- Legion of the country of the Gadarenes had many unclean spirits which Jesus cast out into a herd of pigs (Mark 5:2-13).
- When Jesus sent his disciples out two-by-two, He gave them power over unclean spirits (Mark 6:7, 12).

The major role of demons in the time of the end is to serve as deceiving powers to influence men away from the faith (1Tim. 4:1-2)

This is seen in our own day in the abundance of earthly wisdom which elevates the fallen understanding of man above the inerrant revealed word of God.

Such wisdom, according to James, is sensual and earthly, and demonic in origin (James 3:15).

2. Working miracles

Our Lord Jesus had said: “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22).

We should not be surprised that the devil is able to do miracles. The signs themselves may be real miracles, but if they do not witness to God and His truth, and draw men to Him, the reality and genuineness of the miracles are of no use (Deut. 13:1-5).

This deception is so powerful that it is irresistible by those who lack God’s protection by way of regeneration. The manipulation of the kings will be so complete that they themselves will think they are following their own will, but it is the demons who lead them along.

3 The kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

The word “world” [*oikoumenēs*] denotes the inhabited earth. The demons gather kings from nations all around the globe. This includes the ten kings who are allied with the Beast and go to war against the Lamb (Rev. 17:12-14).

The purpose of this gathering is war – the final showdown. The place where they are gathered is “Armageddon.” The great day of God is none other than the Day of the Lord.

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

1. Behold, I come

There are two main interpretations regarding the interjection of these words of Christ at this point.

- One interpretation understands the words as spoken to those believers who remain on earth during this time of awful turmoil and destruction. He is telling them to watch, remain faithful, and be ready for His Second Coming.

Yet there seem to be two major problems with such a premise. (1) The timing of the event. This is the second half of the tribulation. (2) It seems very unlikely that if there were believers at that time. And if there were, they, having survived the most trying period of history, would need a further reminded that our Lord Jesus is coming. The fact that they are persevering in their faith in Christ can only be constantly longing for His arrival.

- Another interpretation understands the words as an interjection for the readers of the vision which John was to “write in a book and send it unto the seven churches” (Rev. 1:11).

In other words, the vision is given both for the seven churches and for the saints of all ages to follow. It is to these saints that our Lord Jesus repeats His warning to watch (Rev. 3:3).

So it is not necessary to limit this warning to those who are living on the edge of the end of the world, but it is a warning to all believers across the ages to be faithful and watchful at all times.

2. As a thief

Christ will come as a thief upon those who are not watching. Jesus told the church at Sardis: “Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee” (Rev. 3:3).

Christians will be constantly on the lookout for our Lord’s return (Matt. 24:42-44; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 12:35-40; 21:34-36; 1Thess. 5:1-9)

3. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments

Blessed is the man who is watching. The true faith is proved by his watchfulness. Blessed is the man who keeps his garment. To keep one’s garments refers to the avoidance of sinful behavior and the continuance in the faith with confession in the event of sin (1 John 1:9; see Rev. 3:4-5)

4. Lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

Shame [*aschēmosunē*] denotes one who is “without proper clothing to cover the body shame.” Here, it denotes spiritual unpreparedness.” This speaks of the internal reality of a person’s walk being exposed for all to see (Isa. 47:1-3; Nah. 3:5).

Those who fail to watch were never true believers (Matt. 24:42, 51). Our Lord Jesus warns the disciples: “Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man” (Luke 21:36).

E. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. (Revelation 16:16)

1. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. (Rev. 16:16)

- The expression “Armageddon” occurs only here in the entire Bible, so that scholars struggle to present a convincing explanation.
- In Hebrew, the word is probably a transliteration of the



Harmageddon, which means “mount (*har*) of Megiddo.” Or Armageddon, which is rendered as “city (*ar*) of Megiddo.” The city was located on a plateau overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon to the northeast. In this valley many ancient and recent battles have been fought, to mention only the armies of Israel defeating Sisera and his host in the days of the prophetess Deborah (Judg. 5:19; see also 2 Kings 9:27; 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:22; Zech. 12:11) and the Six-Day War of 1967.

Another difficulty is that there is no mountain at Megiddo. Some take Armageddon as “the mount of congregation” (see Isa. 14:13).

This mountain is symbolic for Mount Zion, for this place is considered to be the place from which our Lord Jesus will come to defeat his enemies.

Because of the difficulty in identifying Armageddon, there are some who take Armageddon to be a symbol by which God delivers His people from harm and demonstrates that He has the power and might to overthrow his enemies.

That is the symbolic interpretation of Armageddon. Those who take a literal interpretation will say that Armageddon refers to the place known as the Mount or Hill of Megiddo. A literal interpretation will identify Armageddon as the hill country near Megiddo, at the edge of the Jezreel Valley which is an optimum place to access the Promised

Land by sea and to serve as a staging area for vast armies. The drying up of the Euphrates river, a real geographical location, so that kings from the east can be gathered to Armageddon lends weight to the place that it is a real geographical location west of the Euphrates rather than to be taken as a spiritual concept.



REVELATION 16:17-21

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

²¹ 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. (Revelation 16:17–21)

A . **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. (Revelation 16:17)**

1. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air

The bowl is poured out into the air [*aira*]. In Ephesians 2:2, the “air” is said to be the domain of the devil (also Eph. 6:12)

It is at the pouring forth of this seventh bowl, that Satan's realm is judged. The pouring forth of this bowl corresponds to the binding and sealing of Satan in the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3) and the confinement of the demons to the region of the wasteland that was previously Babylon (Rev. 18:2).

2. A great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.
The temple [*naos*] denotes the holy place of God. And the voice must be God's who declared that the wrath is completely poured out. This agrees with what John has said earlier (Rev. 15:1)

The voice of the LORD is heard. The context is the full repayment of His enemies, as here. It must be pointed out that the pronouncement that "it is done" indicates that the wrath is completely meted out. There will be no further judgment, but the effects of God's wrath will be felt.

In Revelation 21:6, God makes a second pronouncement. It is then that the eternal state has begun.

B. 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. (Revelation 16:18)

1. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake

The voices, thunders and lightnings are the sounds of judgment and power. And then there was a great earthquake. There are numerous earthquakes associated with the time of the end.

- Earthquakes were an indicator of "the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:8).
- A tremendous earthquake results from the opening of the sixth seal, attended by cosmic signs (6:12).
- There was an earthquake after the seventh seal, but before the first trumpet, when the angel of the altar took the censer, filled it with fire, and threw it to the earth (Rev. 8:7-10).
- At the ascension of the two witnesses, a great earthquake leveled one-tenth of Jerusalem, contributing to the conversion of those who remained alive (Rev. 11:13).

2. Such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. (Rev. 16:18)

This earthquake surpasses them all. Haggai prophesied of a great shaking that would involve all nations prior to their recognition of Christ (Hag. 2:6-7).

C. 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. (Revelation 16:19)

1. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell

What is the “great city”? There are several views.

- The heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10)
- Earthly Jerusalem (Rev. 11:8).
- Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 21).

The great city is divided into three parts is believed to be an idiom denoting complete destruction. With the fall of Babylon the Great, the rest of the cities of the nations also fell. The cities of the nations fall because they have aligned themselves with Babylon against God.

2. Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. (Rev. 16:19)

Great Babylon is an allusion to Nebuchadnezzar’s boastful statement made immediately before he was humbled by God, living like a beast for seven years (Dan. 4:30).

The great Babylon will receive her just desert. The cup with which she intoxicated the nations will now be used to serve her the wine of God’s wrath (Rev. 14:6).

D. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. (Revelation 16:20)

The great earthquake moved the land and mountains. Science has found this to be possible. The Bible says it is possible (Jer. 4:23-28)

E. 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. (Revelation 16:21)

1. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent

This is reminiscent of the plague of hail which struck Egypt (Ex. 9:23b-25). This hail was exceptional because each hailstone weighs about a talent. Depending on which system of weights one adopts, a talent is anywhere between 58 to 80 pounds (26-36kg). This is, therefore, not a natural phenomenon, but a supernatural act of God.

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

Here is the irony. Stoning is a punishment for blasphemy. And here the people who blasphemed God are “stoned” by hail stones.

When God’s word guarantees such a stark day of doom, why do many continue in their rejection of Him? You know, there is a time is coming upon the earth when it will no longer be possible to repent. Then, their fate will be sealed. But today, there is still time to reconsider and come into the saving faith of Jesus Christ.