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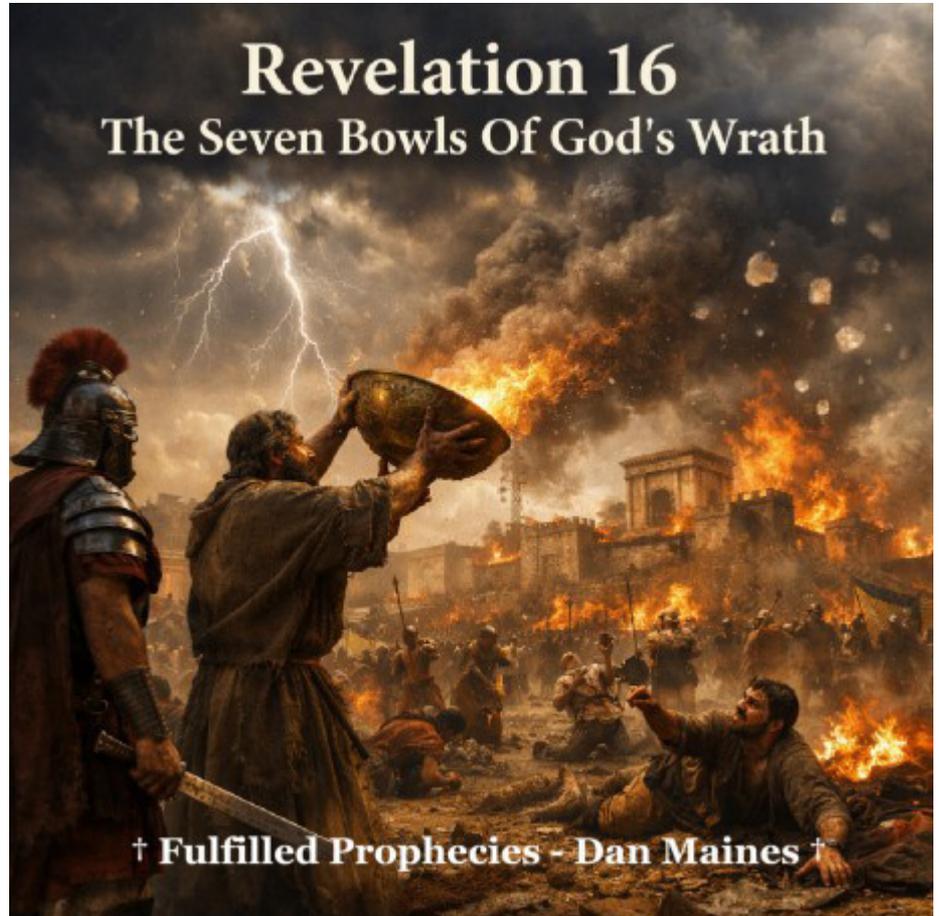
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## Revelation 16 The Seven Bowls Of God's Wrath



By Dan Maines

## Revelation 16 The Seven Bowls Of God's Wrath

### Introduction

† Revelation 16 continues the vision of covenant judgment that was about to fall upon Jerusalem. The seven bowls represent the final stage of the judgments already introduced through the seals and trumpets. Each bowl intensifies the message that God was bringing the Old Covenant age to its end through the destruction of the city that rejected His Son.

† These judgments follow the same pattern as the plagues poured out upon Egypt in the days of Moses. Just as God once judged Egypt for oppressing His people, He now judged Jerusalem for rejecting and killing the Messiah and persecuting His church.

† Jesus Himself warned that these things would happen within that generation. The bowl judgments therefore show the fulfillment of Christ's prophecy and the closing of the Old Covenant world.

### **Revelation 16:1**

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

† The command comes from the temple in heaven, showing that these judgments originate from God's authority and justice. This isn't random destruction, it's divine judgment against covenant breakers.

† The bowls are covenant judgments, paralleling the plagues of Egypt. They are poured out upon the land, Greek *ge*, meaning the land of Israel.

† The bowl judgments mirror the covenant curses promised in the Law if Israel broke the covenant. Moses warned that God would bring plagues, disease, siege, and devastation upon the land if the nation rejected Him. Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28.

† Josephus records the unparalleled horrors of Jerusalem's destruction, confirming the intensity of these judgments during the Roman war.

### **Revelation 16:2**

So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and a harmful and painful sore afflicted the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

† The sores recall the sixth plague of Egypt in Exodus. The connection shows that God is again judging a rebellious nation.

† These sores represent the spiritual corruption of those who aligned themselves with the beast system, the imperial power of Rome and its worship of Caesar.

† Josephus describes the moral collapse of Jerusalem's leaders and factions during the war, revealing the deep corruption that had overtaken the city.

### **Revelation 16:3**

The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead person, and every living thing in the sea died.

† This imagery reflects the first plague of Egypt when the Nile turned to blood. The symbolism emphasizes widespread death and devastation.

† In prophetic language the sea often represents the nations. The Jewish revolt spread violence and bloodshed throughout the region.

† Josephus describes the Sea of Galilee filled with bodies after Roman attacks, demonstrating the horrifying reality behind this imagery.

### **Revelation 16:4-6**

Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the

angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, the One who is and who was, the Holy One, because You judged these things; for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it."

† The rivers becoming blood symbolize divine justice. Those who shed innocent blood now receive judgment in kind.

† Jesus directly accused Jerusalem of killing the prophets and persecuting God's messengers.

† Jesus declared that all the righteous blood shed on the earth would come upon that generation in Jerusalem. Matthew 23:35-36.

† Josephus describes rivers of blood flowing during the Roman siege, confirming the severity of the conflict and the scale of death in the city.

### **Revelation 16:7**

And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

† The altar represents the prayers of the martyrs seen earlier in Revelation.

† In Revelation 6 the martyrs cried out for justice. Here we see their prayers answered.

† This shows that the destruction of Jerusalem was not unjust cruelty but righteous judgment carried out by God.

### **Revelation 16:8-9**

The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given power to scorch people with fire. And the people were

scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

† The scorching sun represents intense suffering and divine pressure placed upon the rebellious nation.

† Instead of repentance, the people hardened their hearts and blasphemed God.

† Josephus records that even as famine, violence, and suffering increased, many in Jerusalem continued in rebellion and lawlessness.

### **Revelation 16:10-11**

Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and their sores, and they did not repent of their deeds.

† Darkness recalls the ninth plague of Egypt and symbolizes collapse, confusion, and despair.

† The throne of the beast refers to Rome's ruling power that controlled the region through local authorities.

† Tacitus records famine, disease, and chaos spreading across Judea during the war.

### **Revelation 16:12**

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.

† The Euphrates historically marked the boundary of invading empires.

† The drying of the river recalls Cyrus conquering Babylon after diverting the Euphrates. Isaiah 44:27-28.

† In this context it represents the pathway opened for Rome's armies and their allied forces to advance toward Judea.

## **Revelation 16:13-14**

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; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the entire world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

† The frogs directly recall the plague of frogs in Egypt. Exodus 8:2.

† In Egypt the frogs invaded houses, beds, ovens, and kneading bowls, spreading everywhere as a plague across the land.

† In Revelation the frogs symbolize unclean spirits spreading deception everywhere, influencing rulers and nations.

† Frogs were considered unclean creatures under the Law, reinforcing the idea that these spirits represent spiritual corruption and deception. Leviticus 11:10.

† The spirits come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, showing that the deception spreads through speech, propaganda, and false teaching.

† This shows a coordinated system of deception between Satan, Roman power, and corrupt religious leadership in Israel that led the nation toward destruction.

† Josephus records that false prophets inside Jerusalem were encouraging the people to continue resisting Rome, promising that God would deliver them if they remained in the city.

† Josephus explains that these false prophets persuaded the people to stay in the temple expecting miraculous deliverance, which kept the population trapped until the Romans destroyed the city. Josephus, Wars 6.5.2.

† These demonic influences stirred the rulers and nations toward the final conflict that resulted in Jerusalem's destruction.

### **Additional Explanation About The Frogs**

† The frogs in Revelation 16 intentionally mirror the second plague of Egypt. In Exodus the frogs came out of the river and invaded every part of the land, entering houses, bedrooms, beds, ovens, and kneading bowls. Exodus 8:3. The plague showed that corruption and uncleanness had spread everywhere across the nation.

† In Revelation the frogs represent unclean spirits spreading deception everywhere across the land and among the nations. Just as the frogs filled Egypt, these demonic influences filled the political and religious world surrounding the Jewish war.

† Frogs were unclean creatures under the Law. Israel was commanded to avoid unclean creatures because they symbolized spiritual corruption. Leviticus 11:10. By describing the spirits as frogs, the vision shows that the messages coming from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet were spiritually corrupt and deceptive.

† The text specifically says the frogs come out of the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. In scripture the mouth represents speech, teaching, and proclamation. This shows that the deception spreads through propaganda, false prophecy, and persuasive messages that stir the rulers of the world toward war.

† The dragon represents Satan working behind the persecution of the church. Revelation 12:9. The beast represents the Roman imperial authority that dominated the region. Revelation 13:1-8. The false prophet represents the corrupt religious leadership that supported the beast and opposed Christ. Revelation 13:11-15.

† Together these three sources formed a system of deception that influenced rulers and nations during the Jewish war. The demonic propaganda encouraged rebellion, stirred the nations, and drew them into the conflict that ended with Jerusalem's destruction.

† Josephus records that false prophets inside Jerusalem were telling the people that God would perform miracles and deliver the city if they remained inside the temple. Josephus, Wars 6.5.2. These lies kept the population trapped in the city even as the Romans surrounded it.

† Josephus explains that these deceivers persuaded the people to ignore the warnings of destruction and to trust in false signs and promises. This perfectly matches the description in Revelation of demonic spirits performing signs to gather the rulers and nations to the great war.

† The frogs therefore symbolize the spread of spiritual deception that led the nation into catastrophe. Instead of listening to Christ's warning to flee the city, many believed the false prophets and remained in Jerusalem until the final

judgment came upon it.

## **Further Explanation About The Frogs And The Exodus Pattern**

† The frogs also reveal that the bowl judgments intentionally follow the pattern of the Exodus plagues. In Egypt the plague of frogs came early in the sequence of judgments. In Revelation the frog imagery appears just before the final gathering to the great war, showing that God was repeating the Exodus pattern in His judgment on Jerusalem.

† The Exodus story showed God delivering His people while judging the nation that oppressed them. In the same way, the book of Revelation shows God preserving the church while judging the city that rejected the Messiah and persecuted the saints.

† The frogs therefore serve as a reminder that Jerusalem had become like Egypt. Just as Pharaoh hardened his heart during the plagues, the leaders of Jerusalem hardened their hearts even as judgment surrounded them.

† Jesus Himself used this comparison when He described Jerusalem as guilty of the blood of the prophets and warned that judgment would come upon that generation. Matthew 23:35-36.

† Revelation earlier identifies Jerusalem with the language of Egypt when it describes the great city as the place where the Lord was crucified and calls it spiritually Sodom and Egypt. Revelation 11:8.

† This means the frog imagery is not random symbolism. It is part of a deliberate Exodus pattern that shows God judging a rebellious nation and delivering His people.

† The same God who judged Egypt in the days of Moses was now judging Jerusalem in the generation that rejected Christ.

† The frogs therefore represent more than deception. They mark Jerusalem as a new Egypt, a nation under divine judgment because it refused to listen to God's warnings.

### **Revelation 16:15**

"Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked, and people will not see his shame."

† Christ interrupts the vision with a warning to remain watchful.

† His coming like a thief echoes His teaching in the Gospels about the sudden arrival of judgment.

† Jesus warned His disciples to stay awake because His coming in judgment would arrive suddenly within their lifetime. Matthew 24:34; Matthew 24:42-44.

### **Revelation 16:16**

And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

† Har-Magedon refers to the mountain of Megiddo, a place associated with decisive battles in Israel's history.

† The term symbolizes the climactic confrontation where God's judgment reaches its final stage.

† The Roman siege of Jerusalem became the decisive conflict that ended the Old Covenant system.

## **Revelation 16:17-18**

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake such as there had not been since mankind came to be on the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.

† The words It is done signal the completion of God's covenant judgment.

† Earthquake language throughout scripture symbolizes political and covenantal upheaval.

† The fall of Jerusalem marked the final collapse of the Old Covenant order and the full transition into the New Covenant kingdom.

## **Revelation 16:19-21**

The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. And every island fled, and no mountains were found. And huge hailstones, weighing about a talent each, came down from heaven upon people; and people blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because the plague was extremely severe.

† The great city refers to Jerusalem, which earlier in Revelation is identified as the place where the Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8.

† Josephus records that Jerusalem was divided into rival factions who fought each other inside the city walls during the siege.

† The hailstones likely correspond to the massive stones launched by Roman catapults into the city, some weighing close to a talent.

## **Historical References**

† Josephus recorded that the siege of Jerusalem brought famine, internal violence, and unimaginable suffering upon the city.

† Tacitus described the devastation of Judea and the collapse of the Jewish revolt.

† Eusebius recorded that the Christians in Jerusalem remembered Jesus' warning and fled the city before the Roman siege, preserving the church while judgment fell on Jerusalem.

## **How it applies to us today**

† God's judgments are just and certain.

† The fall of Jerusalem proves Christ's words cannot fail.

† The bowls reveal that rebellion and idolatry bring wrath, while faithfulness brings preservation.

† The church today rests secure in Christ's finished work, knowing His kingdom is unshakable.

## **Q & A Appendix**

**Q** Why are the bowl judgments similar to the plagues of Egypt?

**A** Because God was repeating the pattern of covenant judgment. Just as Egypt was judged for oppressing God's people, Jerusalem was judged for rejecting the Messiah and persecuting the church. Exodus 7:20-21; Exodus 9:9-11;

Revelation 16:1-2.

**Q** Who is the great city in Revelation 16?

**A** The great city is Jerusalem, identified earlier in Revelation as the place where the Lord was crucified. Revelation 11:8; Revelation 16:19.

**Q** What does Armageddon represent?

**A** Armageddon symbolizes the climactic battle of God's judgment against Jerusalem during the Roman war that ended in AD 70. Revelation 16:16; Matthew 24:34.

**Q** What does the declaration It is done mean?

**A** It means the completion of covenant judgment and the full transition from the Old Covenant system to the New Covenant kingdom established by Christ. Revelation 16:17; Hebrews 8:13.

**Q** Why do many people think these judgments are still future?

**A** Because the symbolic prophetic language is often taken literally and the time statements are ignored. Jesus clearly said these events would happen within that generation, and history confirms their fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem. Matthew 24:34; Revelation 1:1; Revelation 22:6.

**Q** Why are frogs used to describe the unclean spirits in Revelation 16?

**A** The frogs recall the plague of frogs in Egypt when God judged Pharaoh. Just as the frogs spread across the land of Egypt, the unclean spirits in Revelation symbolize deception spreading across the land and among the nations during the

time of judgment. Exodus 8:2-6; Revelation 16:13-14.

**Q** Why do the frogs come out of the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet?

**A** The mouth represents speech and proclamation in scripture. The frogs coming from their mouths show that deception was spread through false teaching, propaganda, and lying signs that stirred the rulers and nations toward the war that ended with Jerusalem's destruction. Revelation 13:11-15; Revelation 16:13-14.

**Q** What do the frogs reveal about the role of false prophets during the Jewish war?

**A** The frogs symbolize the false prophets who deceived the people of Jerusalem with promises of divine deliverance. Josephus records that these deceivers persuaded the people to remain in the city and temple expecting miraculous signs, which kept the population trapped until the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Revelation 16:13-14; Josephus, Wars 6.5.2.

**Q** Why does Revelation connect the frogs with the plagues of Egypt?

**A** Revelation intentionally mirrors the Exodus plagues to show that God was judging Jerusalem in the same way He once judged Egypt. Just as Egypt oppressed God's people and faced divine judgment, Jerusalem rejected the Messiah and persecuted the church, bringing covenant judgment upon the city. Exodus 8:2-6; Revelation 11:8; Revelation 16:13-14.

**Q** What does the frog imagery teach us about spiritual deception?

**A** The frogs show how deception spreads through false messages and corrupt leadership. When people follow lies

instead of God's truth, it leads to destruction. The fall of Jerusalem shows the danger of believing false prophets instead of listening to the warnings of Christ. Matthew 24:15-18; Revelation 16:13-14.

## † This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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### Source Index

† Revelation 16; Exodus 7:20-21; Exodus 8:2; Exodus 9:9-11; Exodus 10:21-23; Leviticus 11:10; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28; Matthew 23:35-37; Matthew 24:34; Matthew 24:42-44; Isaiah 44:27-28; Revelation 1:1; Revelation 6:9-10; Revelation 11:8; Revelation 16:1-21; Revelation 22:6; Hebrews 8:13

† Josephus, Wars 3.4.2; 3.10.9; 4.4.5; 4.6.3; 5.1.1; 5.6.3; 5.10.5; 5.13.6; 6.5.2; 6.9.4; Tacitus, Histories 5.13; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5

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