

OBSERVATION STUDY SERIES

REVELATION

THE SEVENTH
BOWL JUDGMENT

16:17-21

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Revelation 16:17-21

The Seventh Bowl Judgment

One last angel... one last bowl... the grand finale of God's wrath...

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." Revelation 16:17

The bowls of the previous six angels have been poured out on the earth, the sea, the rivers and springs, the sun, the throne of the beast, and the great river Euphrates—the bowl of the seventh angel is now poured on the air.

A loud voice comes out of the temple from the throne where God the Father is sitting which declares, *"It is done."* In the Greek this reflects a certainty of finality. It means, "it has happened" or "it is over".

What is done? God asserted in Revelation 15:1 that in the seven plagues His wrath would be finished—when the seventh bowl is poured out there will be no turning back.

Think, for a moment, of the times when a work of God has been finished. The first time was when God completed His creating work. *"Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made."* Genesis 2:1–3

The second time was when God completed His atoning work. *"Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."* John 19:30

The third time is here in Revelation 16:17 when God completes the work (or deed) of sending of His wrath.

Reason with me... Of those whom God created, all come under His wrath because of sin. And yet, because of the crucifixion, those who believe in the atoning work of Jesus Christ will not receive the wrath of God (because Jesus received it instead of them). Those who do not believe that Jesus Christ received the wrath of God on their behalf must eventually receive it for themselves...

There will be one more time, a fourth, when God announces, "It is done." When? When He completes and fulfills His entire plan for His Glory! Not at the *destruction* of the

heavens and the earth, but at the unveiling of the *new* heaven and the *new* earth where God will dwell with men and all of creation will see God's unabridged Glory! Isn't that beautiful!

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 man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. Revelation 16:18

Talk about a grand finale—watch the final fireworks of the judgment of the seventh bowl.

As seen previously, there will be flashes of lightning, sounds and peals of thunder, and an earthquake. It is no surprise that the earthquake caused by the seventh bowl is not only described as a great earthquake, but one which has no equal from the beginning of man's history on the earth because of its greatness and its might following the pattern of increasing intensity of the seals, trumpets, and bowls. The power of this "off the Richter Scale" earthquake is unimaginable—words like horrible, terrible, cataclysmic, catastrophic, and devastating pale into insignificance.

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. Revelation 16:19

Attention is drawn to three areas of devastation: Jerusalem, the cities of the nations, and Babylon the great.

Jerusalem (already devastated by an earthquake in the hour that the witnesses go up to heaven, which is at the great big intersection of events just before the seventh trumpet—one tenth of the city fell, 7,000 people were killed and the rest terrified) will be split into three parts when the seventh bowl of judgment is poured out. Jerusalem's topography will be even more dramatically changed once Christ returns (Zechariah 14:4-10), at which time the Mount of Olives will be split in two by a new valley, the land around Jerusalem will be changed into a flat plain, while Jerusalem itself will rise in elevation and be established as the mountain of the house of the Lord (Isaiah 2:2).

Although it sounds pretty bad for a city to be split into three parts, it is nothing compared to what will happen to the cities of the nations—each of them will fall. At this point in history the nations of the world will be part and parcel of a global coalition which is financially controlled by the powerful city of Babylon.

Babylon, herself, is the city that will take the greatest hit from the earthquake—at that time, God will consider all that she has done against Him and His people and give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. (John uses the next two chapters to elucidate the judgment and destruction of Babylon.) The forced consumption of the contents of God's cup (His will) is a common picture in prophecy. Those who have drunk their fill of their own will and desires will find that their final "thirst" will not be quenched in a pleasant way at all...

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

The result of this earthquake will be global—the earth will truly become “flat” in the sense that mountains, including the underwater ones we call islands, will be no more—razed to the ground! This is completely consistent with Jerusalem’s ultimate geographical elevation at the time God establishes her as the center of the world.

This terrible earthquake is prophesied in both Haggai 2:6 , *“Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land”*, and Hebrews 12:25-27, *“See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.” This expression, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain”*. Mankind would do well to listen to the One Who continues to warn of the coming judgment for those who refuse His Son.

And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.” Revelation 16:21

The terrestrial and atmospheric disturbances of the seventh bowl include hailstones of unprecedented size—100 pounds each! They are delivered from heaven and aimed at men causing an extremely severe plague. Men’s reaction to God’s judgment is sadly typical—instead of repentance, their mouths are filled with blasphemies toward God.

Depending on your math, a 100 pound hailstone comes out to the size of somewhere between a five and ten gallon bucket. Think of it! When the weatherman warns you of golf ball sized hail, you most certainly don’t plan on being outside during its onslaught. And what about softball sized hail? It can crash right through windows or skylights so safety is not even assured when you are inside your home. Safety will not be easily found when 100 pound hailstones are hurled at the earth-dwellers—hailstones which will flatten buildings like so much butter...

Job 38:22-23 overflows with meaning when considered in the light of Revelation 16:21. *“Have you entered the storehouses of the snow, Or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, Which I have reserved for the time of distress, For the day of war and battle?”*

The passage in Job identifies the time when God will deliver His hail-bombs on men—during the “time of distress”. The timing of Jacob’s distress is one and the same with the last 3 1/2 years of Daniel’s 70th week—toward the end of which the seventh bowl of God’s wrath will be poured out...

The book of Job also informs us that God has already prepared the very hailstones which He will send plummeting to the earth during the seventh bowl judgment. They are

presently stockpiled in His storehouses located somewhere in His heavenly realm. Don't think for a minute that each hailstone will not be perfectly aimed to hit its exact and specific target—these will not be a few unusual hailstones dropping randomly around the world. God places every pea-sized, golf ball sized, and softball sized hailstone today... and someday, in the not too distant future, He will individually administer every single 100 pound hailstone...

Hearing about the terrible judgments to come should be staggering enough to put us in our place... He is God... and we are not...

I am reminded of the promise in Isaiah 28:17, *"I will make justice the measuring line and righteousness the level; then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters will overflow the secret place"*.

For those who defy Him, there should rightly be fear... but for those who repent and believe, there is joy and peace and rest...