

Session 9. Seven Bowls of Wrath (Revelation 15-16)

THE CONTEXT

Revelation 15–16 is one of the easiest sections in the book of Revelation, in terms of reading it straightforwardly. It is just very straightforward. It means what it says and it says what it means.

Having said that, the difficulty with these two chapters is understanding the context this straightforward passage is describing. The context is not immediately apparent right here in the passage, but it is described in great detail in the prophetic Scriptures, particularly in the Old Testament prophets.

There is a paradox. It is a straightforward, easy passage, but the context is a challenge. Only for one reason, because really, the context is quite easy, if you can get past this one point.

Most people's paradigm or perspective—the lens they are looking through—is that when Jesus comes, He not only takes us away but He goes away. That is a completely wrong idea. I do not want to be arrogant towards people who say this, because there are a lot of godly people whom I greatly respect, who believe this.

If your paradigm is that Jesus is coming to take you away with Him, then it is really hard to understand what is going on and the storyline gets all mixed up.

TWO SIMPLE POINTS

If you get these two simple points—that He is coming at the second coming to stay permanently and so are you—then you begin to understand that the events which are described are really earthy—not just earthly—earthy: real blood, real war, real fear, real excitement. It will happen on the earth.

When Jesus returns in the fullness of the resurrection, the Bible is clear that He will bring the two realms together. Though we are excited about this supernatural realm of the resurrection coming to the earth, what happens when we read the end-time passages is that we often lose touch with the earthiness and the physical-ness and the natural-ness of the events. Because there is a supernatural realm, we are tempted to assume that the natural is just obliterated and done away with.

If you can get these two points—the idea that Jesus is coming to stay and so are we—then Revelation 15–16 is quite easy to understand.

When we get translated at the rapture and get new bodies, we get transformed and mobilized to take over, not to go away. If you get that point, that He is coming to stay, and the second point, that the two realms are coming together—the natural and the supernatural, the realm of the resurrection which will be on the earth—if you get that clear—and this is not that hard—then Revelation 15–16 is quite easy to understand.

JESUS IS COMING TO STAY

I want to say this nicely and kindly: most people do not have those two points clear. They think that they are going away and all that happens is mostly supernatural with very little of the physical involved in the process.

He is coming to stay and so are you. You are going to get transformed and stay. There is going to be a physical and supernatural dimension together. If you get that, you can understand this context in a really straightforward way. I think the days are coming—maybe we are a decade or two out—when it will be normative for people to have those two points in place.

Right now it is normative for people to believe that we are going away and that the whole physical realm will just kind of pass away and everything that will happen will be supernaturally, related to Jesus, because He has a resurrected body.

THE CONTEXT MAKES THESE CHAPTERS DYNAMIC

As we are going to read, I am going to give a bit of context, because it is the context that makes these two chapters dynamic. Once we set the context up—we'll spend about ninety percent of this session setting up the context—the passage itself becomes dynamic. It is like, "Whoa! What a drama, what an intense drama." You will be able to picture it.

If you do not get the context right, this chapter will just seem like disconnected, surreal information. We will know it is right, but we cannot really relate to it, because we do not have the context right. It is worth getting your mind around the context of Revelation 15–16. The details are just so straightforward. It is really quite easy, but without the context, the details will not seem realistic.

Why do we want to understand the details? Because this is the section—chapter 15–16—in which natural history shifts to the age to come.

Beloved, you only have one earth you live on and you only have one life. It is now. You will witness all this on the earth, very possibly in the lifetime of people in this room. The earth is part of your inheritance. You want to know the drama of what is going to happen on the earth. It is worth exercising a little bit of mental, vigorous, rigorous engagement. You are going to be involved in this drama. This is not just a distant story far away. It is your story. It is the transition of human history in one generation which some of you will see with your own eyes. You can picture the end of the story, the end of the drama, and Revelation 15–16 gets you right to the drama.

THE WORLD WILL NEVER END

I am talking about the end of natural history. We do not believe in the end of the world. The world never ends. The age ends, not the world. The world will go on forever and ever and ever.

People say, “You believe in the end of the world, that is exciting.” “Oh, you do not? I thought you were really into the end of the world.”

No, the world will never end. The age will change. The age means the way the world is governed—that is what shifts. The world does not go away, but the way in which the world is governed will change. Right now it is governed by men and women dynamically inspired by demons.

In a few minutes, the world is going to be governed by people inspired by the Holy Spirit and the demons will be in prison. That will change everything.

The heavenly realm, the New Jerusalem, will descend to the earth. We will have two realms coming together and a whole different government. In that sense, the age shifts. If you can see the end of the story, if you can picture it—I am talking about natural history which ends at the second coming, and the events right afterwards—if you can picture it—and Revelation 15–16 will really help you out—you will be able to process the coming events.

If the Lord actually comes in the decades ahead, and I believe He is—two, three, four, five decades, who knows, but I believe He is coming in the lifetime of people alive in this room—you will be able to process the events in the next several decades with far better accuracy if you can see the end of the drama clearly from the Bible.

END-TIME CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE

A lot of folks I talk to say, “I just cannot get any of this. Everything is just kind of like a maze of confusion.” They cannot get a grid of where things are going, because they do not have a framework. They love Jesus and they love the Bible, but they cannot picture what this thing looks like. They know Jesus will be in the sky at the seventh trumpet, they get that, but they cannot make sense of all these 150 chapters in the Bible.

There are 150 chapters in the Bible—Old and New Testament—which have the end times as their primary focus. That is a whole lot of Bible to throw away.

If you can see the end of it, you can interpret the process with a far greater clarity. If you can see the end of it, you can understand those 150 chapters a whole lot better. You need to get the piece I am talking about tonight clear: Jesus is coming to stay and the supernatural and the natural realm are coming together on the earth at the second coming. The process will be supernatural in the anointing, but it will be on the earth.

You need to get the context—these 150 chapters—clear. This is the missing piece for most people I have talked to over the years who are trying to get this big puzzle clear, who are trying to figure it out. This is the piece that most of them are missing.

THE FOURTH CHRONOLOGICAL SECTION

Paragraph A. It is the fourth chronological section. The book of Revelation, the storyline, the battle, the drama, has five sections which tell the story in chronological order.

We are in the fourth section which is describing the battle plan and the storyline in an event by event way in chronological order. What is happening in this section, is that we see the seven judgment events which Jesus will release on the Antichrist empire.

Here is the key, here is the part that is new to some, to many: Jesus releases these events, not from the sky, but marching up through the land of Edom—that's its ancient name. He is on His way to go to the Mount of Olives, to make a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and to be received as King of kings over all the nations in Jerusalem. He does not go to Jerusalem straight from the sky. He touches down, marches up through the land and slays the Antichrist armies en route.

There are many passages which say this. Most believers who love Jesus are new to the end-time Scriptures, but many passages make this clear.

This is so baffling, they say, “Jesus kills people on the way? Really?”

“Yes, there are lots of verses.”

“I do not know about those.”

Once you get this context clear and you begin to see this part of the drama, many passages in those chapters will open up to you.

THE GREATER DAVID AND THE GREATER MOSES

Jesus is marching through Edom. This is modern day Jordan. It is right next to Israel. He marches up through Jordan to confront the Antichrist who is in Jerusalem oppressing Israel. The Antichrist has been persecuting the saints for some time—for three and a half years—in a really intense way, but even a little bit before that as well. Jesus goes through Edom, and He is killing the Antichrist armies, literally killing them in physical combat.

He is the greater David capturing Jerusalem to never, ever lose it again. He is the greater David and the greater Moses, coming up through the wilderness again to bring His people into the promised land. He is fulfilling the Moses role, the Joshua role, the David role and a bunch of other roles all rolled up into one.

This is your drama. You are going to be a part of this. You are a part of it now, preparing yourself and the nations for it, but you will actually be a part of this when it happens.

ISAIAH 63

Let's look at one of the most significant second coming passages in the Bible. It is in the Old Testament, Isaiah 63. This is a very straightforward passage and it is very significant. This is the passage John quotes in Revelation 19—the famous Revelation 19, in which Jesus returns.

He is King of kings, He has the sword, and He has blood on His robe. John is quoting this famous second coming passage from Isaiah 63. The question will be asked all around the world, “Who is this man coming up from Edom” (v. 1, paraphrased)?

It is Jesus they are asking about. His garments are dyed, they look red. The guy asking the question says, “There is this man coming up with red garments and He is marching up through Edom to Jerusalem. What is going on” (Is. 63:1, paraphrased)?

He goes through Bozrah—that was the ancient capital. “Who is this one...glorious in His apparel” (v. 1)? His clothing is amazing because there is a supernatural dimension to it.

He is traveling. It will be the same route that Moses and Joshua took, right through the wilderness on the way to Israel. He is traveling in the greatness of His strength. This is where He is releasing the seven bowls of wrath against the Antichrist army. He is traveling up through the land, in His strength, smiting the nations.

“WHY ARE YOUR GARMENTS RED?”

Jesus speaks up, “I, who speak in righteousness, I am mighty to save” (v. 1). The guy interrupts Him, “I have a question. Before You go on mysterious man, why are Your garments red? It looks like You have been in the winepress stomping on grapes. It looks like the grapes have splashed up on You and You are all stained. Your clothing, it is odd” (v. 2, paraphrased).

Jesus says, “Yes, I have been in a winepress, I have trodden the winepress” (v. 3 paraphrased). We find out later that He is talking about the end-time judgments. “For I have trodden the nations in My anger, in My fury I have trampled them. Their blood is sprinkled on My garments” (v. 3, paraphrased).

Already people feel disconnected from this reality. They say, “Wait a second, blood gets on the resurrected Jesus? No way!” Wait, it does. There is one reason: Jesus wants us to know that He is intimately involved in the process of transitioning this age. You are His bride, and so you will be involved in this too.

Even with a resurrected body, the physical dimension does not go away. You might say, “Wow, well, that could get exciting. Wow, you mean that I am not playing a harp on a cloud for a billion years? That I am doing things on earth which will change history? Well, that could be interesting.” There you go, I got you. Ninety percent of you are already there.

He says, “Their blood is sprinkled on My garments, and I have stained all My robes in close up battle” (v. 3, paraphrased). He is the greater David taking Jerusalem, and slaying all His enemies.

JESUS WILL SET THE CAPTIVES FREE

Verse 4 (paraphrased), “For the day of vengeance is in My heart, but it is the year of redemption.” His wrath will only last a minute, but it will be intense. “That day is in My heart, but I am producing something which will last a year” (v. 4, paraphrased). In this context, He is giving the contrast. The idea is that the vengeance will be short, but the redemption will be long.

Verse 6, “I have trodden down the peoples”—the word “peoples” usually means “nations”—“I have trodden the nations down” (v. 6, paraphrased). He has trodden them down, marching up through the land for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

He enters Jerusalem, through the Mount of Olives, coming up through the land accompanied by an army. He is liberating the captives. Because many of the Jews will be in prison camps—literal prison camps—and He is liberating them as He said in Isaiah 61, “I will set the captives free” (v. 1, paraphrased). We can quote that for emotional captives, but in context He is talking about physical captives. He is liberating them like Moses liberated the children of Israel from Pharaoh. And He is bringing them to the land of promise to live forever in His kingdom.

Paragraph B, John quotes this passage, this famous Isaiah 63 passage about coming up through Edom, which is Jordan. John says—Revelation 19:11, 13—that He is on the horse and He is making war. The blood is on His garments.

JESUS WILL STRIKE THE NATIONS

Verse 15, He is striking nations. He is treading the winepress. John is quoting Isaiah 63 nearly verbatim. This is one of the most significant second coming passages.

David prophesied about this march up through the land and beyond. When He gets to Jerusalem, the conflict is not over. When He gets to Jerusalem, He captures the Antichrist and throws him into the lake of fire.

There will still be a couple of billion people in the earth who do not like Jesus and they do not evaporate. There will still be a lot of work to do, even after the Antichrist is captured and thrown in the lake of fire. It will be the parallel of World War II. When Adolph Hitler died, there were still war criminals all over the world doing bad things. The day Hitler died, there was still quite a bit of work to be done.

REPLACEMENT OF GOVERNMENTS AND INFRASTRUCTURES

In Psalm 2, David describes the Messiah when He inherits the earth. Verse 8–9, He breaks the nations and He dashes the nations. Can you imagine what it means for a man with His power to dash nations? To dash them?

What this means is, that Jesus will not only replace all the evil governments of the earth, He will also move out the personnel and replace them and destroy and dismantle all the infrastructures.

All the infrastructures of society will be rife with perversion and darkness. I mean all the infrastructures. I do not just mean the top government, but I am talking about the libraries, the media industry, the art industry etc. They will all be polluted with perversion at every level.

Jesus is going to dash the nations literally. He is going to break all the infrastructures and start all of them over again. I am not talking about just the top ones, but the water systems, the agricultural systems, the educational systems, the libraries, everything, every social institution—He will break them and start over again.

IT WILL TAKE TIME

This is going to take quite a bit of time. Of course He has supernatural abilities, He is fully God and fully man and He is full of wisdom, but He is still going to do it in the anointing of the Spirit and He will use the natural processes as well. He is not just going to wave His hand over a city and all the rubble disappears and the buildings are created.

Buildings will be fixed building by building just like they are now. There will be a different anointing of the Holy Spirit and the devil will be in prison so the environment will be a lot different.

I want you to get this. When Jesus comes up through the land—that is what the seven bowls of wrath are about—He will dash the nations. I want you to get that clear. Jesus is coming to dash nations.

You might say, “I thought He was going to blow a trumpet and we were going to be out of here.” No, He is going to blow a trumpet, we are going to be caught up in the air, we are going to get a transformed body, we will be given our rewards, we will be mobilized, and then we are going to come with Him to take over the earth, with physical, material, resurrected bodies. You will eat food. You will drink. You will learn. You will have friends. You will do work, and you will have a resurrected body. You will be on the earth forever.

The New Jerusalem is coming down. Heaven is coming down to the earth. When the angel blows the trumpet, we will be captured up in the sky.

The announcement will be made that all the governments will be taken over. Jesus might say, “There is so much work to be done. I am not doing it by Myself. I could, but I do not want to. My Father and I have determined that we are going to do it with Our people, for Our people, and through human processes in the natural realm with the anointing of the Spirit involved in it, and with resurrected bodies.”

YOU WILL DASH THE NATIONS

Paragraph D. Isaiah said that the Messiah will strike the nations when He comes. You can use the word “dash” or “strike.” This is what is happening in Revelation 16: in seven very strategic strikes of judgments, Jesus is dashing and smashing the nations.

What He is releasing as He is marching through the land will have a global impact. The saints will be with Him. We will be with Him in the process. As a matter of fact, Jesus said to the saints with His own lips in Revelation 2:27, “If you overcome, you will dash the nations with Me.”

You might say, “Yes, overcome, yes, with You, but dash nations? What do You mean? I want to overcome and I want to be with You, but dash nations?”

He says, “You will dash nations with Me.”

“That’s intense.”

Again, the mind of most believers is far away from that concept. They might say, “I thought we were playing a harp on a cloud. What do You mean dash nations when we overcome? What nations will there be when we overcome and when get a resurrected body and why will they need to be dashed?” Because the nations will be in a mess when Jesus appears.

The cities and the governments are going to be reconstructed, brick by brick, line by line, and issue by issue. It will take years and years to get it all right. As a matter of fact, it will take the 1000 year millennial reign, to get it all right, tested and matured in righteousness.

The 1000 years is not arbitrary. My theory is that it will take 1000 years. That is as quickly as Jesus can do it using people in the human process. It is as quickly as He can get it done without violating people’s free will. He wants it to be all about love.

HABAKKUK 3

Paragraph E. Habakkuk. Habakkuk 3 is like Isaiah 63. This must be one of your top three second coming passages. These have to be the top three: Habakkuk 3, Isaiah 63, and Isaiah 42. They have to be your top three. Well, you can pick any ones you want, actually, but Habakkuk 3 will be one of your absolute favorite Jesus passages in the Bible, once you figure this out.

Habakkuk 3 describes Him—verse 4—like brightness, like light with rays of light flashing from His hand. Verse 5, He is releasing pestilence and fever as He is marching through the land. “He is releasing pestilence and fever? I thought we went on the clouds somewhere.”

“Yes, we will go up in the clouds for a few minutes to get transformed and mobilized to work with Him.” The cloud event is a very functional thing which is part of the process.

The pestilence and the fever, these are the issues in Revelation 16, these are the bowls of wrath. Habakkuk 3 is describing the bowls of wrath in Revelation 16.

Verse 6, Jesus startles the nations. That is a little understatement. “He startled the nations? Habakkuk, you could have said that a little stronger than this.”

He says, “Ah, that is how the Holy Spirit gave it to me, ‘He...startled the nations.’”

Verse 12—again there are quite a few passages on this—“You marched through the land in indignation; you trampled nations in anger.” He is on His way to Jerusalem. Once He gets to Jerusalem, He is not going to run around trampling nations. He is trampling nations on His way up to Jerusalem.

THE ARMAGEDDON CAMPAIGN

We do not know where His touch down point is, but I have an opinion. I do not need to go there right now, but it is around the nation of Israel. He marches up trampling nations and defeating the armies that are mobilized around the Armageddon Campaign.

It is not the battle of Armageddon. I appreciate people saying that. That is OK, but it is not the battle of Armageddon. It is the Armageddon Campaign. The Armageddon Campaign is a series of battles. It will be from the plains of Armageddon, from Megiddo. It will be from Armageddon. That will be the staging area. There will be many battles from that staging area. The main battle at the end will actually be the battle of Jerusalem.

The armies will be mobilized in Armageddon. The enemy armies will be there for three and a half years. People say, “At the very end, there will be the battle of Armageddon.” Technically that is not right. It will be the battle of Jerusalem, but it is the Armageddon Campaign. The whole mobilization will be in Armageddon, that vast plain up in the north.

REVELATION 15

Roman numeral II. Now John is getting to the context. He sees what is happening in the heavens. Revelation 15:1, “Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.” In terms of the wrath of God in natural history, the lake of fire is still going to happen.

Verse 2–3 (paraphrased). I love this. I want to stir up your holy imagination. “I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire and the people who had victory over the Antichrist were standing on it. They are singing, they are singing love songs and songs of majesty and praise.”

John sees a sea of glass, this vast sea and he sees the people who overcame, standing on it and worshipping Jesus, on that sea of glass. It says at the end in verse 4, “For all the nations will...worship you.” The second coming has just happened.

What is happening in Revelation 15? What is the event right before Revelation 15? What is the minute before Revelation 15? If you understand the chronological order of the book of Revelation, it is the seventh trumpet.

THE SEA OF GLASS

Paragraph C. This sea of glass is curious to me. What most commentators say is that the sea of glass is in heaven, because we know that is where it is. The difference is that Jesus is returning and He is bringing the New Jerusalem with Him to the earth.

Where the sea of glass is exactly, I do not know, but I know one thing: the seventh trumpet has just sounded, all the saints have been raptured and resurrected, everyone has been rewarded, and all of the saints are with Jesus. Jesus is on this sea of glass. He is about to touch down on the earth.

I do not know where that sea of glass is, but there is a dynamic connection between this sea of glass and the events which unfold in the seven bowls of wrath.

In Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel saw what I believe to be the sea of glass. He called it the firmament. The NASB and the NIV call it the expanse. He saw Jesus on a throne and before Him was a vast expanse like awesome crystal. That sounds like the sea of glass to me. Jesus' throne is there and this awesome crystal is before Him.

Here is the issue: Jesus' throne is coming down to the earth. It is called the throne of glory in the Gospels. That is what Jesus called it. He is bringing His throne with Him and with the throne comes the sea of glass.

HEAVEN AND EARTH WILL CONVERGE

Well, the New Jerusalem is 1500 miles high. It could be anywhere in the arrangement. In my opinion, the sea of glass is before the throne of Jesus. That is true from Ezekiel 1, we know that, that is Biblical. We know His throne is coming down to the earth. There are fifteen verses which say this really clearly.

Moving on to the opinion part: I believe this is not just the martyrs because all the saints have been resurrected and raptured. I believe that all the saints are there and the whole complex is coming down with Him. I do not know exactly where it is, but we will be in that vast amphitheater watching everything unfold. Many will actually participate in it on the earth with Jesus.

And many will be in, what I call, the vast amphitheatre while all the transitional events are taking place. The heavens will be open and the whole sea of glass company—all the saints—will be there. It will all come down and it will connect with the earth. The heaven and the earth will come together at the second coming. I know I left you a little edgy there.

The two realms are converging. I think this sea of glass company will not only be martyrs. Because *all* the saints now have their resurrected bodies. I think that whole complex of the throne of Jesus is descending to the earth. Who knows what that really means in its implications?

WE WILL ALL BE THERE

We will all be there and we will be a part of it. I believe many of the saints will be involved in the events of the earth, literally touching the earth.

Others, during the transition time, will be in what I call that glorious amphitheatre, with that cloud of witnesses, watching it all unfold with an open heaven on the sea of glass. They will be praying, not cheerleading, not, “Go Jesus, go! Go Elijah, go!” They will be praying and declaring and worshipping. Some will be on the sea of glass, some will be on the land with Him, and who knows who will be where?

It will be one continuum. It will not be two different realms. It will be one open reality together because the New Jerusalem is descending to the earth and Jesus is about to march through the land to remove all the physical enemies who are standing in the way of Him becoming King over Jerusalem.

THE SAME EVENT FROM DIFFERENT ANGLES

Paragraph C. Revelation 11:15. Here is the event that happened immediately before the sea of glass company: “The seventh angel sounded...the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord.”

The nations will be angry, all the saints will get their rewards, Jesus is going to destroy the people who destroy the earth, and the next event is the sea of glass coming down with Jesus and the throne of glory.

In Matthew 24 Jesus gives us the same events from a different angle. There are about ten or twenty really significant passages like this, that tell the events from different angles. Jesus—here in Matthew 24—is describing the seventh trumpet, the blowing of the seventh trumpet event, from a cosmic point of view: what is happening in the sky.

When Paul talks about the last trumpet, he talks about it from a personal viewpoint. Our bodies get transformed in the twinkling of an eye. That which is mortal puts on that which is immortal. He tells us this same event, but from a personal view.

John tells it in Revelation 11, not from the cosmic or personal point of view, but he tells us that the nations of the earth will all be taken over. John takes it from a political point of view. He tells us what is happening in the governments of the earth. The Son of Man is the new King of the governments of the earth.

These passages are describing the same time frame. They describe the events surrounding the seventh trumpet from different angles. There are ten or twenty of these passages. Each have a different lens, a different look, a different facet of the same diamond.

JESUS’ VIEW OF THE EVENTS

Matthew 24 is Jesus’ view of it. He knows the whole story. He could have told the Isaiah 63 story about marching up through the land, He could have told it all. The miracle of Jesus—well, there are so many—is what He did not say. He was sitting there, and the disciples were so wowed. It is as if He was saying, “If you only knew that I am not even telling you the beginning

of the beginning. It is going to blow your minds.” Which translates into, “You are going to be lovesick worshippers when you see this.”

Matthew 24:30, Jesus will come and He will give a sign in the heavens. No one quite knows what that sign is. I think that sign and the sea of glass are all connected somehow. Everybody will say, “Wow.” Something happens in the whole sky which unbelievers see, but they do not get saved, although they can still be saved.

THE UNSAVED RESISTORS

Many of them have taken the mark of the beast and cannot be saved, but there will be many who have not done that. They are not believers and they are not worshippers of the Antichrist. I call them the unsaved resisters of the Antichrist. They have not said yes to Jesus, but they have not taken the mark of the beast. Those are the people who continue to populate the earth after the second coming.

Verse 30, Jesus says, “There is a sign that will appear and all the tribes will be really sad when they see it.”

“Lord, what is that sign?”

“Oh, I will tell you more later.” That is what the Lord would probably say to me if He was saying it out loud.

“Lord, is it across the whole sky?”

“Uh huh.”

“You are not the sign, because it is the sign *of* you”—because Jesus appearing is the glorious event itself, but first there is a sign. When the nations see it and they see Him, the nations will really be sad. They will say, “Oh no!” Because He is going to dash the nations when He comes. They will be very sad.

We will be raptured. We will be happy. The resisters who resisted the Antichrist and who are not yet saved, will be confused. They will say, “I do not get what is going on. Everybody seems to be calling fire down from heaven these days. There are so many things happening. What is going on?”

There will be some millions of them. Maybe hundreds of millions. I do not know. The vast majority will be the ones lining up with darkness. They will be very sad.

Now, Matthew 24:31, the seventh trumpet and the rapture. Jesus is telling the whole story and we end up on that sea of glass somewhere. I do not know quite where it is in the story. I think it is part of the sign. There are a bunch of missing parts which are working together.

Paragraph D. Paul makes it clear that it is the last trumpet. The last trumpet is the seventh trumpet. That is when it all happens.

THE SECOND COMING PROCESSION

Paragraph E. This is a new piece of information, but it is biblically substantiated. Do not throw it away because it is new. Jesus does not appear in the sky and go away. I call the second coming: the second coming procession. There is a series of events which take place at His second coming, and dashing the nations is a very significant part of the second coming events, because He comes to take over all the governments of the earth in partnership with us. We are working with Him in the overthrow. It is the great eschatological revolution in which all the governments are overturned—for real.

I talk about the three stages of the second coming procession. Of course you can break it up and use different definitions, but I call it three stages.

Jesus will come across the sky and every eye will see Him. Then He will come up through the land and He will trample the nations and strikes them. Then the third stage is that He will enter into Jerusalem and He will be received as the King of glory in the city. He establishes His throne there and it goes on from there.

Across the sky is stage one. That is the part most people think of when they think of the second coming. They think of the part where Jesus comes across the sky and end it there. Then He will walk up through the land. That is the second part. It is the part where He will release the seven bowls. We do not know for sure where His touchdown point will be. There are hints, but you do not want to build a doctrine on a hint. The third part is that He will enter into Jerusalem. It will be a thirty day period.

It says eight different times that the saints are going to be persecuted and protected and that they are going to be prophesying for forty-two months. It says that eight different times. We will either be prophesying, divinely protected, or persecuted. It will be a combination of all of them.

THE ANTICHRIST WORSHIP SYSTEM

The Antichrist worship system is called the abomination of desolation. That is a fancy term which means the Antichrist worldwide worship system. It means that he is committing an abomination by calling himself God and telling everyone to worship him or they will be killed. It leads to the desolation of his whole empire. That abomination which he commits by claiming to be God and demanding that everybody worship him on pain of death, that abomination leads to desolation.

God judges him in the seven bowls of wrath. Here is the point about the thirty days: it is clear that the Antichrist worship system functions for forty-three months, but the saints are protected and persecuted and even prophesying for forty-two months.

There will be a thirty day period when the Antichrist will be here, running his worship system, but we will all be gone. It is really clear in the book of Daniel. The Antichrist and his system continues for thirty days longer, after the rapture. We are gone, but he is still going. That is the transition period I am talking about right now. It is not so hard to understand. It is really pretty straightforward.

Roman numeral III. Paragraph A. Immediately after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the saints are raptured, they are gathered on the sea of glass, they are worshipping Jesus as King, and the next thing that happens is right here in Revelation 16:1.

THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

These seven bowls are just so straightforward. “I heard a voice from the temple and the voice said, ‘Go and pour out the bowls.’” The saints have already been raptured at the seventh trumpet—the previous event. We are already with Jesus when this takes place. It is clear that we are together with Him at the last trumpet.

Roman numeral IV. The seven bowls. The first bowl: painful sores. The first angel went forth—and this will be at the command of Jesus and in concert with the prayer movement; these things will not happen separate from the prayer movement—and the angel poured out a fowl and loathsome sore on the Antichrist empire. It is not poured out on the saints because we are already raptured.

Second bowl. The angel poured out his bowl on the sea. It became blood. It is my opinion, but I cannot make this a doctrine, that this is the Mediterranean Sea, not the Pacific Ocean, because most of the prophetic drama is focused around the Sea and it is always the Mediterranean Sea. John and Daniel are prophesying in such unity using the same symbols, the same points, the same emphases, so my opinion is that the sea which becomes blood, is the Mediterranean Sea. I do not think it is the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Ocean.

JUDGEMENTS RELEASED THROUGH PRAYER

Paragraph C. The next thing that happens is the poisoning of the fresh water. It turns to blood.

Most of these plagues which happen, also happened through Moses in the ten plagues of Egypt. Most of these bowls and trumpets actually happened through Moses. Now it is not Moses against Pharaoh freeing the people of God, but it is the Greater Moses—Jesus—against the end-time Pharaoh, who is the Antichrist.

These are the same judgments and they are released in the same way: through the prayers of the saints. When Moses stretched forth the rod, he was making a prophetic declaration. He was praying in stretching forth his rod. Stretching forth his rod was in fact a form of prayer. He released those judgments through his prayers and the end-time church will do the same.

The fourth bowl: scorching heat. The sun became hot and it scorched men with great heat. Paragraph E. The fifth bowl: darkness fell on the Antichrist empire.

DARKNESS WILL FILL THE EARTH

This darkness has demonic power in it. Darkness fell on Egypt too. You know what is amazing? Darkness fell on Egypt, but the children of Israel in Goshen had light in their dwellings. How does darkness fall on a whole nation, but one group still has light? How does the dark/light thing work in the same neighborhood? I do not know, but I believe the Bible. Darkness is going to fill the earth.

Paragraph F. You know the famous verse which Isaiah prophesies, “Arise, shine, for your light has come...for behold, darkness, deep darkness is going to cover the people—the nations—” (Is.60:1–2, paraphrased).

Whenever you see the word “people” or “peoples”—often in prophetic literature, in the prophetic passages—it means “nations.” Because the word translated “people,” “gentiles,” and “nations” is the same word. The translators need to guess which is the best one.

There is coming a day when deep darkness will cover the nations, the people. Isaiah was prophesying about the fifth bowl. He was not just talking about moral darkness—although he was for sure—he was talking about physical darkness which has pain in it. When this darkness came on men, they felt pain in it because there was heightened demonic activity in the darkness.

It is not just the absence of light, but there was a realm of darkness about which Moses wrote, “It could be felt.” Darkness is more than the absence of light. It is a realm of demonic activity. The light is gone, but it is more than just dark. It creates pain.

MEN WILL BLASPHEME GOD

You will notice in this chapter— Revelation 16—you will notice that three times in this chapter, when these judgments hit, men blasphemed God. Not everybody, but multitudes said, “We hate You! We hate You! We hate You!”

Here is the theory, here is the point that you and I struggle with, but knowing where this is going will really help us. We get troubled by Jesus’ wrath. We are trying to reconcile the Jesus of Christmas and the Jesus of Armageddon. They seem like two different people, but they are not. The Jesus of Christmas who brings good will to men and the Jesus of Armageddon who drives away evil, demonized leaders, is the same Jesus, doing it for the same reason: for love.

Here is the problem you struggle with and I struggle with. We think, “It seems a really severe Jesus of Christmas. It seems like really severe.”

It is as if Jesus says, “You have no idea how much millions of people really hate Me. You have no idea. You think they do not hate Me and they do not think they hate Me, but I am going to create circumstances, and an environment in the earth, where what is in their heart will come raging out. You will see in that day, when everything on the inside comes out, why I am confronting it so fiercely.”

What happens is that we easily get onto the wrong team and we put Jesus on trial.

Jesus would say, “Let the truth of man’s heart emerge before you decide I am a little overdoing it. Get all the information first. It is better if you just stay on My team, because I am a God of love. I am not doing anything that does not need to be done.”

JESUS WILL NOT VIOLATE OUR FREE WILL

They blaspheme these three times where it is mentioned. When His judgments come, they do not say, “Have mercy, I am sorry.” They say, “We hate You. We hate You. We hate You. We want the other king, the Antichrist. We hate You.”

It is as if Jesus says, “That is why I am confronting this with such fierceness. I will not violate their free will and they will not change.”

Human beings do not just evaporate. They live forever. We might say, “Jesus, can you just figure out a way to wave Your hand and they just evaporate?”

“No! Because they are created in My image, they will live forever.”

The people in hell will live forever. You have a human spirit and you will live forever. God cannot uncreate a human spirit in His image. The human spirit is eternal and He will not make them love Him.

“Can you not have a really long talk, box them in, and just have a time out and talk to them and tell them.”

It is as if He says, “No. What you do not understand is that they will hate Me more as time goes on, not less.”

“How can that be possible?”

“You will get it all when You see what I see.”

The more I understand these passages, the more that my spirit gets aligned with truth. Because there is a lot of humanistic sentiment—sentimentality which is rooted in humanistic darkness—in the church, accusing Jesus, the one who is driving the man who is a hundred times more evil, off the planet in a confrontation.

Well, the sixth bowl is intense. We will skip that one. It is really intense. The seventh bowl is poured out, verse 17–18, and there is a great earthquake and a whole lot of things happen.

GREAT HAIL WILL FALL FROM HEAVEN

Verse 21, great hail falls from heaven. One hundred pound hailstones. Jesus is dashing all the nations of the earth. He is busting all the infrastructures, because He wants to start from scratch.

I am talking about the farming industry, the civic infrastructure, the educational infrastructure. Let's put it this way: the parts that are evil will be dashed. I believe there will be breakthroughs of righteousness. I believe that there will be areas where there will be righteousness and there will be a continuity in those areas of Jesus kingdom and the age to come.

I do not want to say that all the areas will be evil, because that is actually not true. We are believing God—and you need to believe God in your area—for the power of God to break through in righteousness so that we have a whole region. I do not know how big it can be, but as big as we can get it, hundreds and thousands of miles.

We can get more through prayer. We can pray until there is a zone of God's glory in righteousness—a part of the earth which does not have to be dashed to pieces, because it is already in agreement with Him, when He comes. We will labor for that now. What we are doing now matters. If it is righteous, it does not get dashed, it goes on with continuity into the age to come.

These hail stones are dashing infrastructures. Can you imagine what 100 pound hail stones are like?

Paragraph E. One of the reasons the hailstones are coming, is because God said to Moses, "If somebody is an idol worshipper, you shall stone him with stones until he dies" (Deut. 13:6, 10, paraphrased).

Satan worship will fill the earth. Many will resist it, because there will be a great prayer movement filling the earth too. Satan worship, Antichrist worship, is idol worship. Jesus is going to stone the earth because of idol worship.

That is what these hailstones are about. He is fulfilling His word and driving idol worship off the planet. It will never, ever happen again.

The next section is a parenthesis. There is an angelic explanation coming in a moment, but the chronological storyline picks up in chapter 19, where Jesus is marching through the land right into Jerusalem at the triumphal entry. Amen.