

## Revelation Chapter 16

<b>3A. THE PROGRAM OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE FUTURE</b>	<b>4:1-22:21</b>	
<i>(The things which will take place after this)</i>		
1B. The Scene in Heaven	4:1-5:14	
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### The "Campaign" of Armageddon

From *Connecting the Dots: A Handbook of Bible Prophecy* by Ron Graff and Lambert Dolphin, pp. 206-210

As we have said, it is obvious that the final conflict of the Tribulation is not one simple battle, but a complex series of military movements and engagements. Biblical scholars have proposed a variety of possible steps in this process. It is not wise to be dogmatic about the exact sequence. Like the prophecies of the first coming of Messiah, the various aspects were known, but there were many ways it could be envisioned...

1 - The Beast (the European military world dictator) will invade Israel, then take his troops to the South (North Africa, including Egypt and Libya - Daniel 11:40-43). His economic dictatorship will be challenged, involving military activity during the second half of the Tribulation. Toward the end, the "King of the South" (probably Egypt, with Libya and others) will rebel. He will bring his troops through Israel, and quell the disturbances.

2 - The Beast will be disturbed by news from the East and the North, so he will return to establish a staging area in the Valley of Armageddon ("between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain" - Mt. Zion - Daniel 11:44-45). He will return to Israel and set up his command post in the bread basket of Israel. The Valley of Armageddon is just 20 miles inland from the port city of Haifa, through which sea-borne armies of the world can enter.

3 - Kings and armies of all nations will be summoned to the battlefield. The Euphrates River will be dried up to enable the huge armies from the East to come (Revelation 9:14-16; 16:12-16). In a last futile effort to unify the armies of the Earth, and to divert attention from the fact that his strangle-hold on world powers is weakening, The Beast and The False Prophet will

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declare war against Jesus Christ, the common enemy of all the debased people of the Tribulation. The object of their wrath will be the chosen people in Jerusalem.

4 - Jerusalem will be devastated by the overpowering might of The Beast's forces (Zechariah 12:1-3; 14:1-2).

Many fine Bible teachers, including the late Ray C. Stedman, see the fulfillment at this point of the war of Ezekiel 38 and 39. In this view, the war, one of the campaigns of the Last War, will be against Israel, and will be provoked by Russia and her allies.<sup>132</sup>

Other respected prophecy scholars believe that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the end-times ruler will mount a futile attempt to attack the protected remnant who have fled, probably to the Petra/Bozrah area (Micah 2:12; Jeremiah 49:13-14). Thomas Ice and Timothy Demy<sup>133</sup>, following the lead by Arnold Fruchtenbaum, believe this will be part of the campaign of Armageddon.

5 - Ominous signs will turn men's attention to the skies (Luke 21:25-27). Jesus will appear in the heavens, coming as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, utterly destroying the gathered enemies with the sword from his mouth (Revelation 19:11-16). As suggested before, he would likely have been present on the Earth since the time of his *parousia* ("coming") at the rapture, appearing and disappearing as needed for the benefit of persecuted believers, like he did before his ascension. But at this momentous event he will make his presence known in such a way that "every eye will see him" (Revelation 1:7).

The annihilation of Christ's enemies will include the harvest judgments (of wheat and of grapes) described in the next chapter.

6 - Jesus will appear, blood-stained from the battle, to the sheltered remnant at Bozrah, near Petra, presumably to lead them from exile, back to the Holy City (Isaiah 63:1-6; Micah 2:12-13).

7 - When Christ's feet actually touch ground it will be at the Mount of Olives, and this event will trigger the great Earth-changing earthquake, which is discussed below (Zechariah 14:4-5; Acts 1:9-12; Revelation 16:17-19).

8 - Babylon will be destroyed (Revelation chapters 17 and 18). Revelation 16:19 implies that the destruction of Babylon takes place at the time of the great earthquake. There is considerable debate about whether or not the Babylonian system of world commerce and spiritual prostitution will have anything to do with a literal, rebuilt city of Babylon in Iraq. Saddam Hussein had managed to restore the city somewhat, and had planned to do more before his death. Only time will tell how this facet of the prophecy will unfold. Zechariah 5:5-11 also indicates that there will be future "wickedness" in a restored city of Babylon. But later still, Isaiah 13:1-20 indicates that the literal city of Babylon still has a devastating destruction coming, after which, it will never be inhabited again.

More likely *both* the destruction of the literal city of Babylon (and perhaps the nation of Iraq) as well as the destruction of "Mystery Babylon" are implied. The latter aspects of Babylon (Revelation 17 and 18) include the apostate church in league with the western confederacy of nations, and also the world-wide institutions of trade and commerce, which are part of the present world order. False religion sprang from the ancient city of Babylon after the Flood, and now has polluted the entire world, spiritually speaking. But commerce, trade and economic systems in the world, including capitalism, have likewise become corrupted and must be replaced by righteous means of economics under Messiah's reign.

## **2G. The Venomous Vials            16:1-21**

Bowl (Gr. *phiale*) – “Vial” in many translations

Judgments – little detail – supernatural judgments that affect the whole earth

Wrath- passion, extreme anger – In God’s case – righteous indignation/ without sin

Rapid succession – leading to the Battle of Armageddon

### **1H. The First Vial – Damaging Sores**

**16:1-2**

Foul and loathsome [NIV – “ugly, festering”]

Sores – Painful but not deadly – On all who had received the Mark of the Beast

A warning to young ones who haven’t received the Mark?

Similar to 6<sup>th</sup> Plague of Egypt—Boils, Exodus 9:8-12 – No apparent converts, but an opportunity

Possibilities: Biological warfare, drug-resistant bacteria, alien disease from asteroids...?

But- supernatural, not natural, causes

### **2H. The Second Vial – Deadly Seas**

**16:3**

Similar to 1<sup>st</sup> Plague of Egypt – Water into Blood - Exodus 7:14–24

The Sea – At least the Mediterranean – possibly all oceans

Death of every living creature in the sea.

### **3H. The Third Vial – Deplorable Springs**

**16:4-7**

Continuation of the previous judgment

Spreading the horror of bloody water to all sources of water

Heavenward explanation— Angel of the waters

Another assurance that God is good and is in control.

“You are righteous in these judgments.”

“They have shed the blood of saints and prophets.”

### **4H. The Fourth Vial – Dangerous Sunlight**

**16:8-9**

The Sun causes great heat

Possibilities: CME- Coronal Mass Eruptions, slight change of orbit, depletion of the ozone layer...

Blasphemed (spoke evil of) God—Did not repent! Cf. Revelation 9:20-21

Those who would repent might have done so during the previous judgments.

### **5H. The Fifth Vial – Dark Seizure**

**16:10-11**

After terrible burns from the Sun—complete darkness and cold—painful chills

Their response—cursed (blasphemed) God.

### **6H. The Sixth Vial – Drying of the Strait**

**16:12**

Drying of the Euphrates River- Have dams now

Allow eastern troops to enter the Middle East to prepare for Armageddon.

**( ) Demonic Spirits            16:13-16**

Demonic spirits from the unholy trinity  
Not conventional political alliances, but demonic seduction

**7H. The Seventh Vial – Destructive Scourge**

**16:17-21**

Various portions of The Revelation give different aspects of the Battle of Armageddon  
Revelation 6:12-17; 9:13-21; 11:13; 14:14-20; **16:12-21**; 17:14-18:23; 19:11-21

See [Revelation Chart](#)

Zechariah 12:3 – Jerusalem a stumbling stone for all nations

Great city split into three parts—cf. Zechariah 14:3-4; Acts 1:9-11—Messiah splits Mount of Olives

Greatest of all earthquakes—literally sinking every island and shaking down every mountain

*Then the LORD will go forth  
And fight against those nations,  
As He fights in the day of battle.  
<sup>4</sup> And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,  
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.  
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,  
From east to west,  
Making a very large valley;  
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north  
And half of it toward the south. – Zechariah 14:3-4*

*Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, <sup>11</sup> who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” – Acts 1:9-11*

God remembered Babylon the Great – Will study in Chapters 17 and 18