

Handout Revelation Lesson 19: Chapter 16

The seventh angel emptied his bowl into the air, and a great voice boomed out from the sanctuary, "The end has come!"

Revelation 16:17

THE SEVEN CHALICE JUDGMENTS
1 st Chalice: On the land; people disfigured with sores (Rev 16:1-2)
2 nd Chalice: On the sea, becoming blood (Rev 16:3)
3 rd Chalice: On rivers and springs, becoming blood (Rev 16:8-9)
4 th Chalice: On the sun, causing it to scorch = burning and darkness (Rev 16:8-9)
5 th Chalice: On the throne of the beast, causing darkness, pain, and sores on people (Rev 16:10-11)
6 th Chalice: On the river [Euphrates], drying it up to make way for the kings of the east; invasion of the frog-demons (Rev 16:12-16)
7 th Chalice: On the air, causing storms, earthquake, and hail; the Great City splits into three parts (16:17-21)

16:3-6 repeats the word "blood" four times: blood poured out (*ekcheo*) over every living soul in the sea, blood poured out in rivers and springs, the poured out blood of saints and prophets, and the blood of the saints and prophets poured out for Israel to drink. The purity restrictions of the Noachide Law and the Sinai Covenant concerning blood and death (see Gen 9:4-5; Lev 3:17; 7:26-27; 15:19-33; 17:10-16; 21:1; Num 5:2; 19:11-19; Dt 12:16) decreed that consuming either raw flesh or blood was forbidden with the penalty of ex-communication from the community. To come in contact with either blood or death caused ritual impurity. Therefore, with all of Israel (Judea, Samaria, and the Galilee) covered in blood, Israel is unclean, defiled, and cast out!

In the Greek Septuagint (LXX) translation of the Old Testament (the primary translation in the first century AD), the verb *ekcheo* (to pour out), is in the liturgical directions to the priests in the command to "pour out" the blood of the victims for sin sacrifices around the altar of God. In the New Testament, Jesus uses the same word at the Last Supper: *Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he handed it to them saying "Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the New Covenant, poured out (ekcheo) for many for the forgiveness of sins"* (Mt 26:28; also see Mk 14:24; and Lk 22:20).

The word Armageddon only appears in Revelation 16:16 and nowhere else in the Bible. In Hebrew, it is *Har Megiddo*, "mountain of Megiddo"; however, there is no mountain by that name in Israel. There is the town of Megiddo and the nearby Mt. Carmel. Perhaps John intends us to think of the significance of both sites.

Significant Old Testament events at or near Mt. Carmel:

1. Joshua and the army of the Israelites conquered the kings of Megiddo and Mt. Carmel during the conquest of Canaan (Josh 12:21-22).

1. 2. Mt. Carmel was the site of the defeat of the false priests of Baal by God's holy prophet Elijah (1 Kng 18:19-42).

3. Mt. Carmel was the headquarters of the prophet Elisha and his community of prophets (2 Kng 2:25; 4:25).

Significant Old Testament events at Megiddo:

1. Megiddo was the scene of Joshua's victory over Canaanite forces in the conquest of the Promised Land (Josh 12:21).

2. It was one of the battle sites in the war with Canaanite general Sisera, defeated on Mt. Tabor by the army of the Israelite judge Deborah and her general Barak (Judg 5:19).

3. The Plain of Megiddo was the site of the assassinations of King Jehoram of Israel and his ally King Ahaziah of Judah. Ahaziah escaped only to die of his wounds in Megiddo (2 Kng 9:22-29).

4. Megiddo was where King Josiah, the last righteous Davidic king and the brilliant hope of Judah, died. In deliberate disobedience to the Word of God and believing false prophets, he went to war against the Egyptian Pharaoh Necho in 609 BC and was mortally wounded on the plain near Megiddo.

Historical events at Megiddo:

1. According to the records archaeologists discovered in the Assyrian archives, the Plain of Megiddo was where the Assyrians assembled the ten Northern tribes of Israel, after the defeat of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC. The Assyrians sent the Israelites into exile in Assyrian territories to the east, never to return (2 Kng 17:5-6). The Assyrians imported five Gentile peoples to live on the land of the Northern Kingdom. This historical event is probably the meaning of Zechariah 12:11.

2. Flavius Josephus wrote that Roman General Titus assembled his four legions on the Plain of Megiddo for the final attack on Jerusalem in the spring of AD 70.

When the seventh angel poured out the seventh chalice, a great voice from the Sanctuary in Heaven announced, "The End Has Come!" (Rev 16:17), fulfilling the prophecy Daniel received in the Book of Daniel 12:4, 9.

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