

Seven Bowls and Armageddon

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The Bible indicates the seven bowls, also called the seven last plagues, will begin on the day following the seventh trumpet. I anticipate the seven bowls will last for 70 days, possibly ten days per bowl. Jesus and the Father will appear in billowing clouds of glory and flashes of lightning during the seventh bowl. (Matthew 26:64; Revelation 6:16,17) The armies of Earth will attempt to destroy Jesus as He draws near to Earth, but Jesus will speak and all of Lucifer's government officials will be thrown into a lake of fire. Jesus will speak a second time and the rest of the wicked will drop dead. The book of Revelation represents Jesus' power to kill people through speech alone as a sword that comes out of His mouth. (Revelation 19:15-21) These seven *last* plagues are God's vengeance on the wicked for defiant rebellion and the cruel treatment they imposed on His saints. (Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30) Graciously, the righteous will be untouched. (Daniel 12:1)

Consider the punishment that comes with each bowl (Revelation 16):

Bowl 1: Jesus will make festering boils develop on everyone having the mark of the beast. (Biblical parallel, see Exodus 9:8-11, Deuteronomy 28:35.)

Bowl 2: Jesus will turn the oceans to blood and everything in them will die. The oceans will no longer provide seafood. Imagine the horrific stench. Hundreds of millions of wicked people will die from disease or starvation. (Biblical parallel, see Exodus 7:15-21)

Bowl 3: Jesus will turn the springs and rivers to blood. Many wicked people, especially those who participated in the saints' martyrdom, will suffer and die from thirst.

Bowl 4: The Sun will scorch wicked people with searing heat and many will die.

Bowl 5: Jesus will strike all the people who work for the devil's government with painful blindness. Their eyes will rot in their sockets, their tongues will rot in their mouths, and their flesh will rot on their bones causing excruciating pain. (Biblical parallel, see Zechariah 14:12.) Millions will die. This plague will unmask the devil who claims to be "Almighty God." The wicked will realize that Lucifer is a fake; he cannot stop the plagues or the destruction of his government! The wicked will have to admit that the 144,000 were correct in saying that the glorious being masquerading as the Almighty was the devil, the father of liars, the false prophet. This bowl is very important for the saints because it ends the forty-two months allotted for persecution. When Satan's government is destroyed, there will be no one hunting or persecuting the saints.

Bowl 6: Even after his government is destroyed, the devil is not finished with his rebellion. When the sixth bowl occurs, the ten kings will clearly know the devil's true identity. Knowing this, the devil will send his three most powerful demons to visit the kings. The demons will implore the kings to join with the devil in waging war against Jesus when he appears. The

demons will perform great miracles and argue that it will be the kings' last and only chance to save themselves from death. The Bible predicts the ten kings will go along with the devil to save their own lives. They will activate their armies to destroy the Creator of Heaven and Earth when He appears!

Bowl 7: Armageddon will be a fatal war for the enemies of Jesus. The armies of the Earth will use whatever weapons they have to assault Jesus and the Father, but their efforts will do nothing. As Jesus draws closer, He will speak and the wicked will die. Afterwards, He will resurrect the saints; and together with the living saints (a few saints will remain alive through the Great Tribulation) they will ascend to Heaven on Day 1,335. (Daniel 12:12,13)

The seven last plagues will not affect those having God's seal. The angel said to Daniel: **"But at that time your people -- everyone whose name is found written in the book -- will be delivered."** (Daniel 12:1) **"A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked."** (Psalm 91:7,8)

Armageddon - The Battle of the End

A lot of confusion exists about Armageddon. This battle will occur during the seventh bowl (the final ten days of Earth's history). The word, Armageddon, comes from two Greek words that are joined together, "*har megiddon*" and they are transliterated into the word, "Armageddon." The two words mean "Mount Megiddo" or the "mountain of Megiddo." When John received the vision that makes up the book of Revelation, the ancient city of Megiddo (located about 19 miles from modern Haifa in northern Israel today) was well known for its ruins. For centuries, the city had been a landmark in Israel. At one time, Megiddo had been a proud and prosperous city sitting on a mountain top. Because of its location it had a natural defense. However, in 586 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar reduced it to ruins and it was never rebuilt. It was common knowledge in Israel that Pharaoh Neco's forces killed King Josiah in a battle near Mount Megiddo. The Lord told Josiah to avoid Pharaoh, but Josiah went out to fight a battle that should not have been fought and it cost him his life. (2 Chronicles 35)

The battle of Armageddon is neither concerned with a physical location in the Middle East, as many people suspect, nor will it be a mystic or spiritual battle. The battle is called Armageddon because God wants us to learn three lessons from the ruins of "Mount Megiddo." First, Armageddon will be a battle that should not be fought! Earthly kings and their armies will knowingly and willingly join forces with the devil and his demons to foolishly make war against the King of Kings, and they will suffer the same fate as King Josiah. Second, the battle of Armageddon will leave the whole world in ruins the same way that Nebuchadnezzar's armies left Mount Megiddo in total ruins. Third, when Armageddon ends, Earth will remain desolate for one thousand years in the same way that Mount Megiddo remained desolate for centuries! The prophet Zephaniah wrote about the great Day of the Lord saying, **"Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath. In the fire of His jealousy the whole world will be consumed, for He will make a sudden end of all who live in the Earth."** (Zephaniah 1:18)

God's Purposes for Armageddon

After the fifth bowl occurs and the kings of Earth realize that they were duped into believing that Lucifer was Almighty God, the ten kings will agree to join forces with the devil and his demons to save themselves from death. If you think it farfetched that men and angels would war against God, remember Jesus on the cross and the war in Heaven between Lucifer and Michael. (Revelation 12:7-9) These wars reveal that when the sinful nature is confronted with God's will, it would rather kill God (if possible) than to obey and worship Him! This is what the curse of sin does to every sinner and why the Great Tribulation will consist of a war over worship!

Armageddon will be an interesting war between the Creator and those He created, the very people who borrow life from Him! When we consider this battle to destroy Jesus and consider the cross and God's efforts to save sinners, Armageddon reveals why God has to completely eliminate sin and those who love it from the universe. The curse of sin is a predatory virus from which there is no recovery except through the "born again" experience. If a person exercises his free will and refuses to listen to the Holy Spirit, refuses to be born again or worship his Creator, Jesus must protect the universe from such people by destroying them. Earth's history proves there is enmity between the children of the woman and the serpent. (Genesis 3:15) When sinners controlled by the sinful nature are allowed to live, they always prey on the weak or the righteous. The children of the serpent persecute the sons of God just as Cain killed Abel. The enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman is endless.

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