SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

†
16·17

VERSE-BY-VERSE STUDY

Revelation

Chapters Sixteen & Seventeen

The Seven Vials, Armageddon, and Mystery Babylon the Great

KJV · STRONG'S | VERSE BY VERSE | THREE VOICES

Two chapters, read through three teachers — **David Jeremiah**, **John MacArthur**, and **David Guzik**.

THE PASSAGE

Revelation 16 & 17 · Complete

Thirty-nine verses

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

KJV with Strong's key words

WHAT'S INSIDE

Contents

Revelation 16–17 — the wrath completed and the harlot unmasked

—	**How to Read This Study** · *the three voices & their colors*	3
—	**Before the Chapters** · *where we stand in the book*	3
I	**Sores, Seas, and Rivers of Blood** · *Revelation 16:1–7*	4
II	**Scorching Sun, Darkened Throne** · *Revelation 16:8–11*	5
III	**The Euphrates Dried & Armageddon** · *Revelation 16:12–16*	7
IV	**"It Is Done" — the Seventh Vial** · *Revelation 16:17–21*	9
V	**The Great Whore on the Scarlet Beast** · *Revelation 17:1–6*	10
VI	**The Mystery of the Beast Explained** · *Revelation 17:7–14*	12
VII	**The Harlot Hated, God's Hand Revealed** · *Revelation 17:15–18*	14
†	**At a Glance** · *the three voices side by side*	16
†	**Key Findings & Questions for the Table** · *discussion*	16

❖

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings." — Revelation 17:14

SECTION I · THE CHAPTERS

Revelation 16–17

The Bowl Judgments & the Fall of Religious Babylon

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Revelation 16 and 17 verse by verse in the King James Version, with Strong's numbers marked on the key Greek words. At each movement you will hear the same three teachers, each marked in his own color — a highlighter for the ear as much as the eye. Read the Scripture first; study the key words; then let each voice add its angle. Where they overlap, the truth is underlined; where they differ, the chapter opens wider.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

† Before the Chapters

Revelation 15 ended with the heavenly temple filled with smoke and seven angels holding seven golden bowls — judgment loaded, but not yet poured. Chapter 16 empties those bowls in rapid succession: the seven last plagues, the third woe, the completion of the wrath of God before the King returns. Then chapter 17 slows down to answer a question the bowls raised twice (14:8; 16:19): who is this "Babylon" whom God remembers? **Guzik** notes that Babylon is named 287 times in Scripture — more than any city except Jerusalem — and stands for mankind's organized rebellion against God from Genesis 11 onward. **MacArthur** reads chapter 16 as literal, global, rapid-fire plagues at the very end of the tribulation, and chapter 17 as the exposure and destruction of the world's final false religion. **Jeremiah** keeps the pastoral thread: three times the chapter says men "repented not," once the Lord interrupts Armageddon's staging to say "Behold, I come as a thief" — judgment is certain, but so is the escape.

I
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 16:1-7

Sores, Seas, and Rivers of Blood

They shed blood; God gives them blood to drink

> *"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out*[G1632] *the vials*[G5357] *of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome*[G2556] *and grievous sore*[G1668] *upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous*[G1342]*, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed*[G1632] *the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy*[G514]*. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."*
>
> REVELATION 16:1-7 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Ekcheō G1632 — "pour out" — and the very same verb translated "*shed*" in verse 6. They *poured out* the blood of the saints; now God *pours out* the vials. The punishment is the crime, returned.

Phialē G5357 — KJV "vial": the broad, shallow temple bowl — emptied in an instant, nothing held back.

Helkos G1668 — "sore": an ulcer or abscess — the same word the Greek Old Testament uses for the boils of Egypt (Exodus 9) and for Lazarus's sores (Luke 16:21).

Axios G514 — "they are worthy": deserving, having earned it — the same word used of the Lamb ("Worthy is the Lamb," 5:12). All receive what they are worthy of — grace alone changes what that is.

CROSS REFERENCES Exodus 9:8–12 (boils); Exodus 7:14–25 (water to blood); Revelation 8:8–11 (the partial trumpet versions); Revelation 11:14 (the third woe); Revelation 15:8; Psalm 79:3, 12; Isaiah 49:26; Revelation 6:9–11.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

The plagues of Egypt return — but now worldwide, and now total. Jeremiah points out that the bowls fall on a world that has already made its choice: the sores strike only "the men which had the mark of the beast." Taking the mark looked like the safe option; it turns out to be the address where judgment is delivered. And heaven's commentary on the horror is not embarrassment but worship — "Thou art righteous." When we finally see sin as God sees it, His judgments will not need defending.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

The loud voice from the temple is God's own — no one else could be in that smoke-filled sanctuary (15:8). MacArthur stresses the pace and the totality: where the trumpets struck a third, the bowls strike everything — every sea creature dies, every river runs blood. These are literal, rapid-fire plagues compressed into the last days before Christ's return. And the angel of the waters answers in advance the oldest objection to God's severity: the sentence fits the crime — blood for blood — and the altar, where the martyrs prayed, says Amen.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

These judgments are both punishment and chastisement — justice dispensed, yet still summoning repentance. Guzik skewers the attempt to make "earth" mean anything but earth: if the words don't mean what they say, no one can tell what they mean. The sea becomes "as the blood of a dead man" — matching a corpse's blood in appearance and sickening character. And he quotes Clarke's grim summary of verse 6: they thirsted after blood and massacred the saints of God — and now they have blood to drink.

II
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 16:8-11

Scorching Sun, Darkened Throne

Judgment falls; repentance does not rise

"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch[G2739] *men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat*[G2738]*, and blasphemed*[G987] *the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented*[G3340] *not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat*[G2362] *of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness*[G4656]*; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."*

REVELATION 16:8-11 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Kaumatizō G2739 — "scorch": to burn, to sear (KJV margin: "burned"). The sun — creation's daily mercy — becomes an instrument of wrath.

Metanoeō G3340 — "repent": to change the mind, to turn. The refrain of the chapter is "repented *not*" (16:9, 11, 21) — the most chilling words in Revelation 16.

Skotoō G4656 — "full of darkness": darkened, blacked out — the ninth plague of Egypt poured on the throne (KJV "seat," ***thronos*** G2362) of the beast: a preview of the outer darkness.

Blasphēmeō G987 — "blasphemed": to rail at, speak evil of. Under judgment, the unregenerate heart does not break — it curses.

CROSS REFERENCES Exodus 10:21–23 (darkness that could be felt); Malachi 4:1; Matthew 25:30 (outer darkness); Revelation 9:20–21; Romans 2:4–5; Luke 16:23–31.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

Here is the tragedy inside the terror: pain alone saves no one. Men know exactly who "hath power over these plagues" — they name Him even as they curse Him — yet they will not turn. Jeremiah observes that the tribulation strips away the modern myth that people reject God only for lack of evidence. With the evidence scorching their skin and darkening their capital, they choose blasphemy over repentance. What the heart loves, not what the eyes see, decides eternity.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

The fifth bowl is aimed with precision — not at nature now, but at "the seat of the beast": Antichrist's own throne and capital go black. The god of this world cannot keep the lights on in his own kingdom. MacArthur draws the doctrinal line hard: judgment reveals the heart but cannot renew it; men gnaw their tongues in agony and still grip their deeds. Only sovereign grace produces repentance — which is why the wishful thought that people would believe "if they only knew" is shattered three times in this one chapter.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

The darkness need not be explained away as political collapse — Egypt's ninth plague was literal darkness with spiritual weight, darkness that could be felt. Those under this bowl stand, as it were, on the shores of the lake of fire. Guzik adds Spurgeon's surgical distinction: judgment can produce a *carnal* repentance — the thief is sorry when he is caught — but the stone is carved into a more sightly shape, not turned to flesh. Real penitence gives glory to the justice of God even though it condemns him.

III
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 16:12-16

The Euphrates Dried & Armageddon

Demons gather the kings; Jesus interrupts with a promise

> *"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates[G2166]; and the water thereof was dried up[G3583], that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs[G944] come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet[G5578]. For they are the spirits of devils[G1142], working miracles[G4592], which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world[G3625], to gather them to the battle[G4171] of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief[G2812]. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments[G2440], lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon[G717]."*
>
> REVELATION 16:12-16 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Xērainō G3583 — "dried up": the very word used of the over-ripe harvest in 14:15. The river dries so the nations can march to their own reaping.

Batrachos G944 — "frogs": a New Testament hapax. Unclean, croaking, spawned in darkness — a deliberate caricature of the demonic "miracles" that seduce the nations.

Armageddōn G717 — Hebrew *Har-Megiddo*, "mount of Megiddo": the valley-plain of northern Israel where over two hundred battles have been fought across history — and where the last one will gather.

Oikoumenē G3625 — "the whole world": the inhabited earth. This is no regional skirmish — the summons is global, and the war is against God (Psalm 2).

CROSS REFERENCES Isaiah 11:15–16; Daniel 11:44; 1 Kings 22:19–23 (the lying spirit); 2 Thessalonians 2:9–11; 1 Timothy 4:1; Psalm 2:1–6; Judges 5:19; 2 Kings 23:29; Zechariah 12:11; Matthew 24:43; 1 Thessalonians 5:2–4; Revelation 3:3, 18; Revelation 19:11–21.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

Notice who does the gathering: a counterfeit trinity — dragon, beast, false prophet — sends out demonic spirits to market one last war. The kings of the earth think they are marching for their own reasons; they are being herded to an appointment God set long ago. And right in the middle of the mobilization, Jeremiah hears the tenderest verse in the chapter: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth." The Lord Himself breaks into the war report to bless the watching believer — prophecy is given not to frighten the saints but to keep them dressed and ready.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

The drying of the literal Euphrates — the ancient eastern boundary — opens a highway for the kings of the east and their massed armies. MacArthur is careful with the word "battle": Armageddon is better understood as a *campaign*, the war of the great day of God Almighty, staged at Megiddo and consummated when Christ returns in chapter 19. The demonic miracles explain the madness of it — only supernatural deception could persuade the nations, under the very plagues of God, to march out and fight Him. It is the lying spirit of Ahab's day, scaled to the whole world.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik distinguishes the three great prophetic battles — Gog and Magog against Israel (Ezekiel 38–39), Armageddon against the returning Christ, and the final revolt after the millennium (Revelation 20) — and insists Armageddon is a real place: the valley of Megiddo, soaked in decisive battles from Deborah and Sisera to Josiah and Pharaoh. The frogs are evil's own caricature — what men fear as mighty proves at last a "ridiculous spawning of sickly creatures of the night." And the garments of verse 15 are righteousness worn: given by Jesus, and put on in practical holiness.

IV
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 16:17-21

"It Is Done" — the Seventh Vial

The greatest earthquake, the heaviest hail, the hardest hearts

> *"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air[G109]; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done[G1096]. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake[G4578], such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance[G3415] before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness[G2372] of his wrath[G3709]. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent[G5006]: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."*
>
> REVELATION 16:17-21 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Gegonen G1096 — "It is done": one Greek word — "it has come to pass." The judicial twin of *tetelestai*, "It is finished" (John 19:30). At the cross grace was completed; here wrath is.

Talantiaios G5006 — "the weight of a talent": another hapax — hailstones of roughly 75–100 pounds, beyond any storm in recorded history.

Thymos* + *Orgē G2372 · G3709 — "the fierceness of his wrath": both anger-words stacked in one cup (16:19) — boiling fury poured from settled indignation: the strongest possible expression of divine judgment.

Aēr G109 — "the air": the very domain of "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). The last bowl empties onto Satan's own realm.

CROSS REFERENCES John 19:30; Ephesians 2:2; Hebrews 12:26–27; Revelation 6:12–14; Revelation 11:19; Exodus 9:22–26; Joshua 10:11; Ezekiel 38:19–22; Isaiah 28:2; Zechariah 14:4–5; Revelation 17–18 (Babylon detailed).

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

"It is done" from the throne answers "It is finished" from the cross. Jeremiah sets the two shouts side by side: at Calvary, the wrath our sins deserved was finished in the Substitute; here, the wrath the world insisted on keeping is finished on the world. Every person will stand under one of those two declarations. Even now — with cities collapsing and hundred-pound hail falling — the human heart's final answer is blasphemy, proving that hell is not furnished by God's cruelty but by man's unbending rebellion.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

The seventh bowl is creation's undoing: the greatest seismic event in human history levels the cities of the nations, islands flee, mountains vanish — the earth being shaken in preparation for the renewal to come, exactly as Hebrews 12 promised. MacArthur notes that "great Babylon came in remembrance": nothing in God's ledger is forgotten or hurried; her cup is poured at the appointed hour. The hundred-pound hailstones recall the stoning penalty for blasphemy — and men respond to the last plague as to the first: cursing, not repenting.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik calls Revelation 16 the "great" chapter — great city, great river, great earthquake, great hail, great Babylon — and over it all a great God and His great day. "It is done" means no more delay: seals gave way to trumpets, trumpets to bowls, and in mercy God stretched the sequence as far as it could go — but there are no judgments after this. Hail has always been His weapon against His enemies — Egypt, the Canaanites, Gog — yet Spurgeon's warning stands: suffering is no evangelist; pain, by itself, purifies no one.

V
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 17:1-6

The Great Whore on the Scarlet Beast

False religion in purple and gold, drunk on holy blood

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment[G2917] *of the great whore*[G4204] *that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication*[G4203]*, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk*[G3184] *with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness*[G2048]*: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured*[G2847] *beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations*[G946] *and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY*[G3466]*, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs*[G3144] *of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration*[G2295]*."*

REVELATION 17:1-6 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Pornē G4204 — "whore, harlot": throughout the prophets, harlotry is the standing picture of idolatry — covenant love sold for hire (Hosea, Ezekiel 16, 23).

Mystērion G3466 — "mystery": a sacred secret now unveiled. Not literal brick-and-mortar Babylon only, but the hidden spiritual system behind every Babel since Nimrod.

Bdelygma G946 — "abominations": detestable things — the Old Testament's word for idols; the same root as the "abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15).

Methyō G3184 — "drunken": she does not merely persecute the saints; she revels in their blood as a drunkard in wine.

CROSS REFERENCES Genesis 11:1–9 (Babel); Jeremiah 51:7, 13 (a golden cup, many waters); Ezekiel 8:14; Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17–19; Nahum 3:4; Hosea 1–3; Revelation 12:1–6 (the other woman); Revelation 13:1; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Proverbs 7:10–27.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

Two women dominate Revelation: the sun-clothed woman of chapter 12 and the scarlet woman of chapter 17 — true Israel and the false church, the bride and the harlot. Jeremiah traces the harlot's pedigree to the plains of Shinar: from Babel onward, counterfeit religion has offered a way to heaven without the blood of the Lamb. After the true church is caught away, this apostate super-church will unite the world's religions in glittering ecumenism — wealthy, tolerant of everything but truth, and lethal to tribulation believers. She sparkles with gold, but her cup is full of abominations.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

This is the final form of false religion — the devil's last and most successful lie. MacArthur notes that she rides the beast: for the first half of the tribulation, the Antichrist's political machine carries and supports the world church, while she in turn lends him legitimacy. Her attire is deliberately priestly and royal at once — purple, scarlet, gold — and her name is written where a Roman prostitute wore hers, on a headband. John's stunned amazement is instructive: the last deception will not look pagan and monstrous; it will look religious, respectable, and irresistible.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Babylon appears 287 times in Scripture — second only to Jerusalem — and always as the seat of organized hostility to God. Guzik sketches the old religion of Babylon — the queen of heaven, the mother-and-child cult echoed in Jeremiah and Ezekiel — and warns against making the harlot merely Rome: she is bigger than any one institution, the embodiment of Satan's own ecumenical movement. A world convinced that it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe is already rehearsing her seduction. False religion, he notes with Walvoord, is always the worst enemy of true religion.

VI
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 17:7-14

The Mystery of the Beast Explained

Seven kings, ten horns — and the Lamb wins the war

> *"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her… The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit*[G12]*, and go into perdition*[G684]*… And here is the mind which hath wisdom*[G4678]*. The seven heads are seven mountains*[G3735]*, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings*[G935]*, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind*[G1106]*, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war*[G4170] *with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome*[G3528] *them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called*[G2822]*, and chosen*[G1588]*, and faithful*[G4103]*."*
>
> REVELATION 17:7-14 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Abyssos G12 — "bottomless pit": the abyss, prison of demons (Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:1–2). The beast's power is not merely political — it rises from the pit.

Apōleia G684 — "perdition": utter destruction, ruin — stated twice (17:8, 11). The beast's itinerary is published before he boards: out of the pit, into perdition.

Nikaō G3528 — "overcome": conquer — the verb of the seven letters and of 15:2. The war's outcome is announced before a shot is fired: the Lamb *shall* overcome.

Klētos, eklektos, pistos G2822 · G1588 · G4103 — "called, and chosen, and faithful": the Lamb's army described in three words — summoned by grace, elected by grace, and proven true.

CROSS REFERENCES Revelation 13:1–8; Revelation 11:7; Daniel 7:7–8, 24 (the ten horns); Daniel 2:41–44 (the ten toes); 2 Thessalonians 2:3–8; Deuteronomy 10:17; 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:16, 19–21; Psalm 2:2; Luke 8:31.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

The angel's riddle — was, is not, yet is — marks the Antichrist as Satan's counterfeit of resurrection, a dark parody of the Lamb who was slain and lives. Jeremiah reads the seven kings as the parade of world empires that have trampled Israel — Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome — with a final revived form still to come, and ten kings who reign "one hour" with the beast. But the verse he underlines is 14: before the war is even fought, its outcome is filed in heaven. The Lamb wins. And His companions are not celebrities but the called, chosen, and faithful.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

The focus of the interpretation is the beast, not the woman — because he, not she, is the real power. MacArthur takes the seven mountains as seven successive world kingdoms (mountains are empires in prophetic imagery, Daniel 2:35), five fallen in John's day, Rome then standing, a final world empire yet to come — and the Antichrist himself an eighth who springs from the seven. The ten horns are a still-future confederation that hands its sovereignty to him "one hour." Verse 14 is the mountain peak: Lord of lords and King of kings — the title worn again in 19:16 when the announcement becomes an event.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik calls 17:10 one of the most difficult verses in Revelation and refuses to force it: the best reading takes the five fallen kings as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, the "one is" as Rome, and the one to come as a revived Roman empire — with honest acknowledgment that every scheme has problems. The ten kings echo Daniel's ten toes; Alford's 1866 remark still stands — in the precise number and form here indicated, they have not yet arisen. What is certain is their unanimity, their surrender to the beast, and their defeat by the Lamb.

VII
MOVEMENT

REVELATION 17:15-18

The Harlot Hated, God's Hand Revealed

The beast devours his own rider — on God's schedule

> *"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate[G3404] the whore, and shall make her desolate[G2049] and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put[G1325] in their hearts to fulfil his will[G1106], and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words[G4487] of God shall be fulfilled[G5055]. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."*
>
> REVELATION 17:15-18 · KJV

KEY WORD STUDY

Erēmoō G2049 — "make desolate": to lay waste — the same root as the *wilderness* (***erēmos*** G2048) where John saw her. The woman enthroned on many waters ends stripped in the desert her vision began in.

Miseō G3404 — "hate": the alliance of convenience curdles into loathing. Evil is a self-devouring kingdom — the beast burns the church that crowned him.

Teleō G5055 — "fulfilled": the same "completed" word of 15:1, 8. Even the conspiracies of hell run only "until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

CROSS REFERENCES Ezekiel 16:37–41; Ezekiel 23:25–29 (the harlot's sentence enacted); 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35; Psalm 76:10; Judges 7:22; 2 Chronicles 20:22–23; Revelation 18 (commercial Babylon falls); Galatians 4:26.

DAVID JEREMIAH · Escape the Coming Night

The harlot's reach is global — peoples, multitudes, nations, tongues — and her fall is sudden. At the midpoint of the tribulation, the Antichrist no longer needs a church to carry him; he demands worship himself, and his ten kings strip, devour, and burn the system that enthroned him. Jeremiah's pastoral takeaway is sobering: every alliance with the world ends this way, because the world loves nothing — it only uses. But behind even hell's treachery stands verse 17: God put it in their hearts. Evil destroys evil, and heaven's calendar never slips.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Because the Time Is Near

Here is the death of the world church — described in the Old Testament's formula for the execution of a harlot: desolated, stripped, devoured, burned (Ezekiel 16, 23). The man of sin will tolerate no worship but his own (2 Thessalonians 2:4), so religion's usefulness expires the day his power is consolidated. MacArthur presses the doctrine of verse 17 without flinching: God sovereignly directs even the plots of His enemies to fulfill His will — the kings freely conspire, and every step lands exactly on the stones God laid. Wrath itself is on a leash, running only until His words are fulfilled.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

This has always been the tyrant's playbook: use religion, then discard it. God here uses one wicked power to judge another — the ten kings become the unwitting executioners of religious Babylon. In John's day the great city that reigned over kings was unmistakably Rome; but Babylon as world system has ruled hearts in every generation — and Guzik turns the chapter into a question aimed at us: does that great city reign over *me*, or am I a citizen of a better one, the Jerusalem above? The world in rebellion still glitters; its end is still written.

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

The three voices side by side

MOVEMENT	DAVID JEREMIAH	JOHN MACARTHUR	DAVID GUZIK
I · 16:1–7 Vials 1–3	Judgment delivered to the address of the mark; heaven worships God's justice	Total, literal plagues; blood for blood — the sentence fits the crime	Punishment and chastisement; "earth" means earth
II · 16:8–11 Vials 4–5	Evidence doesn't save; the heart's love decides eternity	Antichrist's throne goes dark; judgment reveals but cannot renew	Literal darkness like Egypt's; carnal repentance vs. real penitence
III · 16:12–16 Vial 6 · Armageddon	Demons herd the kings; Jesus interrupts to bless the watching saint	A campaign, not one battle; deception explains the madness of fighting God	A literal Megiddo; frogs are evil's own caricature
IV · 16:17–21 Vial 7	"It is done" answers "It is finished"	History's greatest earthquake; Babylon remembered on schedule	The "great" chapter; no judgments remain after this
V · 17:1–6 The harlot	The bride's counterfeit — religion without the Lamb, from Babel on	The final world church rides the beast's power — respectable and lethal	Bigger than Rome: Satan's ecumenical movement in every age
VI · 17:7–14 The beast explained	Satan's counterfeit resurrection; the outcome filed before the war	Seven world empires, an eighth king, ten horns — and the Lamb's title	Honest difficulty in 17:10; certainty in the Lamb's victory
VII · 17:15–18 The harlot burned	The world only uses; God's calendar never slips	Executed by the harlot's own formula; sovereignty over the plot	The tyrant's playbook; which city reigns over me?

† Key Findings

- **Same verb, both directions.** *Ekcheō* (G1632) is "pour out" for the vials (16:1) and "shed" for the martyrs' blood (16:6): what the world poured out on the saints, God pours back. WORD STUDY
- **Total, not partial.** The trumpets struck a third (Revelation 8); the bowls strike everything — every sea creature, every river, the whole kingdom of the beast. The bowls are the trumpets brought to completion. MACARTHUR
- **Three refusals.** Three times chapter 16 records "repented not" (vv. 9, 11, 21) — under the strongest judgment ever seen. Judgment exposes the heart; only grace changes it. ALL THREE

- **Exodus echoes.** Sores (Ex. 9), water to blood (Ex. 7), darkness (Ex. 10), frogs (Ex. 8), hail (Ex. 9) — the bowl judgments replay Egypt's plagues at world scale, as God again delivers His people from a persecuting empire. GUZIK

- **A promise mid-battle.** Revelation 16:15 — "Behold, I come as a thief" — is Christ's own voice interrupting the Armageddon mobilization to bless the watching, clothed believer. JEREMIAH

- **Har-Megiddo.** Armageddon (G717) is the mount/valley of Megiddo — over 200 recorded battles from Pharaoh Tuthmosis III (1468 B.C.) to Allenby (1917); the campaign there is consummated by Christ's return in Revelation 19. GUZIK

- **Two women.** Revelation's two women stand opposed: the sun-clothed woman of chapter 12 (Israel, bearing the Man-child) and the scarlet harlot of chapter 17 (false religion, drunk on the saints' blood). ALL THREE

- **Babylon by the numbers.** Babylon appears 287 times in Scripture — more than any city except Jerusalem — from Babel (Genesis 11) to her fall (Revelation 18): the standing name for the world system organized against God. GUZIK

- **Sovereignty over the plot.** "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will" (17:17): even the beast's coalition and the harlot's destruction run on God's schedule, "until the words of God shall be fulfilled." MACARTHUR

† Questions for the Table

1 **Three times Revelation 16 says men "repented not" (vv. 9, 11, 21). What does this teach about what judgment can and cannot do — and what actually produces repentance?**

Judgment exposes and hardens the unrenewed heart; only the goodness and grace of God leads to repentance.

ROMANS 2:4; REVELATION 16:9, 11, 21

2 **The angel of the waters says "they are worthy" of blood to drink (16:5–7) — using the same verb for "shed" and "poured out." How does this vindicate the justice of God's severest judgments?**

The sentence precisely fits the crime — nothing arbitrary, nothing excessive; heaven's altar answers "true and righteous."

REVELATION 16:5-7; GENESIS 18:25

3 **Why does Jesus break into the Armageddon narrative with "Behold, I come as a thief" (16:15) — and what are the "garments" the blessed man keeps?**

Prophecy is given to keep saints watchful, not fearful; the garments are Christ's righteousness given and practical holiness put on.

REVELATION 16:15; 3:18; GALATIANS 3:27; EPHESIANS 4:24

4 **The harlot rides the beast (17:3), then the beast's ten horns burn her (17:16). What does this teach about false religion's partnership with political power?**

The world uses religion and then destroys it; every church that rides the beast's power is finally devoured by it.

REVELATION 17:16; 2 TIMOTHY 3:5; JAMES 4:4

5 **Revelation 17:14 announces the Lamb's victory before the war is fought, and 17:17 says God put His purpose in His enemies' hearts. What do these verses give the believer facing a hostile world?**

Settled security: the outcome is already decreed, evil runs on God's leash, and the Lamb's companions are called, chosen, and faithful.

REVELATION 17:14, 17; PSALM 76:10; ROMANS 8:31

❖

Revelation 16 empties the last cup of wrath; Revelation 17 unmasks the woman who filled her own cup with abominations. The vials are poured, the kings are gathered, the harlot burns — and standing over it all is one unshaken title: the Lamb is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES
Smith For Christ
SMITHFORCHRIST.COM

Scripture quotations are from the King James Version (public domain). Strong's numbers follow Strong's Exhaustive Concordance (public domain), keyed to the KJV interlinear text. The teacher sections are faithful summaries and paraphrases of each man's published teaching — David Jeremiah (Escape the Coming Night; Agents of the Apocalypse; Turning Point Ministries), John MacArthur (Because the Time Is Near; The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Revelation 12-22; Grace to You), and David Guzik (Enduring Word Bible Commentary, enduringword.com, ©1996-present, used with reference) — not verbatim quotation. Prepared for personal and small-group study.