

REVELATION – SERMON 63

IT IS DONE

Revelation 16:17-21

INTRODUCTION

- For man, this earth is the most stable and fixed physical object we have.
- It is regarded as fixed, permanent, unmovable – it is *terra firma*
- But earthquakes destroy that notion – they shake the foundation of people’s lives
- If the earth is not fixed, then is anything fixed?
- Our text today brings us to the last of the judgments or plagues of God’s wrath that will be poured out during the seven-year tribulation period
- They began in chapter six, with the opening of the first of the seven seals; they continued with the seven trumpets, and conclude with the seventh vial here in chapter 16
- The tribulation is God’s just anger against an ungodly world
- Believers today will be kept from this “hour of temptation which shall come upon the world” Revelation 3:10)
- During this time, God’s focus will come upon the children of Israel (Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:24), when they will be

chastened and refined, and will receive Jesus as their Messiah

- The tribulation will conclude with the destruction of the unbelievers and the establishment of Christ's 1000 year reign on earth
- The sixth vial (16:12-16) saw the gathering of the world's armies to the land of Israel for the final battle of Armageddon, where Christ himself will intervene and destroy his enemies at his coming (19:11-21)
- The seventh vial shows the unprecedented natural upheavals that God will employ against the wicked at the coming of Christ

I. THE VOICE CERTIFYING THE END (17)

A. The seventh vial poured into the air

1. The air is the domain of Satan (Ephesians 2:2)
2. Satan was previously cast out of the third heaven (12:9), but at this point he will be judged and bound in the bottomless pit (20:1-3)

B. The great voice from heaven

1. This voice from the throne of the temple is God's (16:1)
2. This is the fifth of eleven times "great" is used in this chapter

3. At the seventh seal there was silence (8:1); at the seventh trumpet there were great voices announcing Christ's coming (11:15)

C. "It is done"

1. The Greek word *gegonen* is in the perfect tense, indicating it has been, and will remain done
2. This moment marks the completion of many things
 - a. The end of the plagues of God's wrath (15:1)
 - b. The finishing of the mystery of God (10:7)
 - c. The quashing of man's rebellion
 - d. The beast and false prophet cast into the lake of fire (19:20)
 - e. The devil bound in the bottomless pit (20:1-3)
3. There will be another "it is done" (21:6), as God's redemptive plan will be completed at the end of the millennium, when the devil will be finally defeated (20:7-10); man's final judgment will take place (20:11:15); the new heaven and earth are made (21:1)—then cometh the end (1 Corinthians 15:24)

II. THE VIOLENT CONVULSIONS UPON EARTH (18-21)

- A. Voices, and thunders, and lightnings

1. These same manifestations of judgment were seen at the prelude to the tribulation (4:5), the seventh seal (8:5), and the seventh trumpet (11:19)

B. The great earthquake

1. The Scriptures record numerous earthquakes that marked momentous events of divine operation (Numbers 16:31-32; 1 Kings 19:11; Matthew 27:51)
2. Earthquakes are a manifestation of God's almighty power (Psalm 18:7; 46:2; 104:32)
3. Earthquakes in our present day are "the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:8), signifying that the end is nigh
4. At the ascension of the two witnesses, there is a great earthquake at Jerusalem (Revelation 11:13)
5. The sixth seal precipitates a great global earthquake that moves every mountain and island out of their places (6:12-14)
6. This final earthquake will be greater than any other, not only *moving* the mountains and islands, but *levelling* them (Isaiah 40:4-5)
7. The prophets foretold of this global quake preceding Christ's return (Isaiah 24:17-21; Ezekiel 38:20; Joel 3:16; Haggai 2:6-7; Hebrews 12:26-27)
8. The great city (Jerusalem) will be divided at this time

- a. The prophet Zechariah prophesied that at Christ's coming, the mount of Olives will cleave, creating a great valley, from which living waters will flow both east and west (Zechariah 14:4,8)
 - b. What will bring destruction to the rest of the world's cities, will bring blessing to Jerusalem (Psalm 46:5)
9. Babylon will fall (cf. 14:8)

- a. She "came in remembrance before God" – though opposing and subverting God's plan for over 4000 years, corrupting mankind and slaughtering the saints, God has not forgotten, and will "give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath"
- b. The following two chapters detail "Mystery Babylon", her works and her downfall – ch.17 dealing with *religious* Babylon, and ch.18 dealing with *commercial* Babylon

C. Great hail from heaven

1. The weight of these stones is about 30-50kg
2. Some think that they may not be of ice, but rock, the result of volcanic eruptions accompanying the global earthquake
3. God previously cast down stones from heaven
 - a. Upon the Egyptians (Exodus 9:23-25)

- b. Upon the Amorites (Joshua 10:11)
 - c. He will send hail upon Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38:22)
4. Stone is a fitting instrument of punishment for these idolaters
- a. God's commandments were written in stone, and they violated them (15:5)
 - b. They constructed idols of stone (9:20)
 - c. In the sixth seal's earthquake, the terrified earthdwellers requested of the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us!" (6:15-16)
 - d. The punishment for blasphemy is stoning (Leviticus 24:16)

III. THE VILE CURSES OF THE EARTHLINGS (21)

A. They continue to blaspheme God (cf. 16:9,11)

- 1. To blaspheme God is to defame, rail on, revile, speak evil of him
- 2. As the beast blasphemes God, so his worshippers take upon them the character of their god (13:1,5-6)
- 3. In 6:15-17 and 11:13 the response to judgments was fear of God, but here it is hatred of God
- 4. They blame God for their affliction, rather than their own sin

5. There is no place for repentance – their disposition against Christ is fixed
6. This demonstrates the myth that sinners would repent if they could but see a manifestation of God's power and judgment, or even hell itself (cf. Luke 16:19-31; Proverbs 27:22)
7. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Romans 2:4), and if men are not won by God's grace, they will not be won by his wrath
8. Those who continually and wilfully reject God's mercy in Christ will reach the point where they become reprobates, and their hatred of God becomes their eternally fixed disposition (Daniel 12:9-10; Revelation 22:11)

CONCLUSION

1. This world and all that is in it will be shaken and finally dissolved (2 Peter 3:10-11)
2. It is folly to place our confidence in anything in this world
3. The only sound foundation that can withstand the storms of this life and the judgment of the next is the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 7:24-27)
4. Those who put their trust in the Lord shall never be moved (Psalm 16:8; 62:6; Hebrews 12:28; cf. Daniel 2:44)
5. Affliction either melts or hardens the sinner (2 Chronicles 28:22; Isaiah 8:21; Jeremiah 5:3)

6. "Men would not have the Saviour's 'It is finished!' on Calvary; so they must have the awful 'It is done!' from the Judge." (William Newell)
7. Just as God will not forget Babylon's sins, so he will recall the sins of every unbeliever to account on the great day
8. Only those who are redeemed by Christ's blood are promised, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 10:17)