

REV. 16: [19] And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. [20] And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

[21] And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

We are now in the final verses of chapter 16. For those who need to catch up, please listen to the sermons so far in this series at <http://reformation.sermonaudio.com>.

We're now seeing the results of the 7th and last vial or plague of God's wrath poured out by the angel. To review, the first vial was poured out on the earth and afflicted those who had the mark of the beast or worshipped his image. We saw that many Protestant theologians throughout history have identified the target of the first vial as those who were allied with the Papacy in the Middle Ages. The second vial was poured out on the sea which symbolizes nations, people. The Lord himself tells us that in Rev. chapter. 17. Again, many Protestant theologians identify the target of the second vial as the Turkish and Mongol invasions of Europe in the late Middle Ages. The third vial is poured out on the rivers and fountains of waters, which again many Reformed scholars think refers to the rivers and fountains of Biblical truth, the waters of life, which had been so severely distorted and suppressed by the Papacy and Eastern Orthodoxy. The fourth vial is poured out upon the sun The Holy Roman Empire may be in view here.

[10] And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, [11] And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

The 1599 Geneva Bible points out that this fifth vial "signifies that the Pope's doctrine is a horrible plague." This is in agreement with virtually all Reformed theologians

throughout history. They say the v. 10 “seat of the beast” is the Vatican. In fact, Jonathan Edwards, whom many regard as the greatest theologian America has ever produced, believes that the 5th plague represents the outpouring of the Protestant Reformation, which was a “plague” against the beast, the Papacy, whose kingdom was, and is, “full of darkness,” holding people in darkness until the light of Jesus Christ’s gospel beamed through the Reformation.

12] And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

Now we are probably looking at events yet to come. There is a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy in history that is the key which unlocks this verse. We’ve looked at it before, but it is so remarkable, so demonstrative of the fact that this book, the Bible, is unlike any other book in the world, written not by men but by the Lord speaking through men, that we should all know the facts by heart. Among other things, you should know this account well because it is a wonderful witnessing tool. The Lord, speaking through Jeremiah, in Jer. 20:4, said, “I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon...” This happened. Hold your finger in Jer. and turn to Dan. 1:1, "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon" came "unto Jerusalem, and besieged it." Jerusalem was conquered and the people of Israel were taken to Babylon as slaves. But the Lord also promised that this captivity would have an end. It would last 70 years, Jer. 29:10: “after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return” to their homeland. And precisely after 70 years an amazing set of circumstances occurred. The Euphrates was dried up, Babylon was conquered from the east, and Israel was delivered. This happened in history. And it is the key to unlocking Revelation 16:12.

In Isa. 44 and 45, the Lord said He would use “his anointed” “his shepherd” Cyrus, the founder of the Persian Empire, to conquer Babylon. Nearly **150** years before Cyrus was born, the Lord told the prophet Isaiah to write about Cyrus what work the Lord would have him do. Now, unlike some predictive prophecies, this wasn’t somewhat vague, there wasn’t any doubt to whom this applied. Keep your finger in Jer and turn to **Please turn to Isa. 44:28-45:1-7.** Some 150 years before Cyrus was born, the Holy Spirit caused Isaiah to write Cyrus’ very NAME in the Scriptures! Again, about 150 years before Cyrus was even born!!

Now, let's compare Rev. 16:12 with Jer. 50: [38] A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. This describes exactly how Cyrus conquered Babylon. He put his men to work diverting the Euphrates River out of its bed and into an old dry river bed that went, not into Babylon, but around it. When they were finished, the water stopped flowing through the city. When that happened the bottom of the bars of the huge gates that went down into the river were exposed. Cyrus and his army simply marched under the gates through the dry river bed and easily captured the city. And the Israelites, in Babylonian captivity, were delivered just as the Lord said they would be. Just as the literal Euphrates River was for the literal Babylon, the symbolic Euphrates is for spiritual Babylon. It is its sustenance, what keeps it alive. And the Lord is telling us that He will dry up that source of life, and thus spiritual Babylon, the Papacy and its allies, will dry up and die.

Now we come to the seventh and final vial or plague, and it is the worst of all for the Lord's enemies. We looked at v. 19 last time. To review, I said that the great city, of course, is spiritual Babylon, also called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, Rev. 11:13, symbolizing Papal Rome and its allies. The earthly ancient city of Babylon was the central source of paganism; the Babylonian Mystery Religion is the mother of all false religions. Spiritual Babylon, the Papacy, is today the central source and headquarters of paganism. Historically paganism is traced to the first King of Babylon, Nimrod, possibly influenced by his father, Cush, the son of Ham who was the son of Noah. Cush was also known as Bel, and he founded the city of Babylon. So you can see how early in earth's history that paganism developed, within a couple of generations after the flood. What short memories we fallen humans have! Their grandparents and everyone else were killed in the great flood because they were in gross rebellion to the Lord, and a couple of generations later they turn right around and do the same kinds of things that got their grandparents killed. Truly demonic. In fact, the modern popular picture of the devil with horns, a tail and cloven feet is actually a very ancient symbol which can be traced back to Nimrod himself. There is an ancient Babylonian two-panel drawing of Nimrod. In the first panel he is battling a bull. SHOW. In the second panel he has defeated the bull and wears the bull's horns, which is an ancient symbol of power, and his lower torso has been replaced with the bull's torso, complete with a tail and cloven feet. Because Nimrod developed paganism, which, stripped of all its trappings is pure Satan worship, this image of Nimrod became the popular representation of Satan we know today. You may also know

Nimrod through mythology as Kronos or Saturn. The pagan gods are based on real people. His wife Semiramis was his partner in creating this new pagan demon worship, the Babylonian Mystery Religion, and she has become known by many names down through the ages: Ashtaroth, Astarte, Cybele, Rhea, Artemis, Despoina, Diana, and in our own day is worshipped by some pagans as Sophia, the feminist goddess.

These pagans include some in the Presbyterian Church (USA), the largest denomination in the world that claims to be Presbyterian, and some in the United Methodist church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Don't take my word for it — just Google “sophia presbyterian” for example and see what you get. One group is Voices of Sophia, which says it is “a community of women and men in the larger community of the Presbyterian Church (USA) : “The annual Voices of Sophia Gathering held from March 1-4 was a great success, drawing record attendance especially from young people....Young adults made up almost a quarter of participants, including some current members and alumnae of the National Network of Presbyterian College Women. In addition, a group of students from Louisville KY Presbyterian Theological Seminary were in attendance. Theological students from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago and Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York were both participants and leaders in the Tucson Gathering....Participants recognized the importance of spreading the good news of Voices' of Sophia's message to the **rest of the church**, in effect stating that it is time that Voices members become more evangelical.” Remember, like the neo-orthodox, these people use the same words we do but have a different meaning. Evangelical does not mean sharing the Gospel, for example. One participant made that clear: “To evangelize is to spread the good news, and we have great news about Jesus' call to free all people from systems of injustice” I don't know of any instance in the Bible of Jesus freeing anyone from any system of injustice, although He certainly could have, since the Roman Empire was in charge. This sounds more like something the Jews of His day, expecting the Messiah to overthrow the Romans, would say.

Part of the prayer offered by Meredith White-Zeager, “who is currently studying at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary,” was: “we are our grandmother's prayers, we are our grandfather's dreamings, we are the breath of our ancestors — whatever all that gibberish is supposed to mean, it's not Biblical — but listen to this one — “we are the spirit of God.” Remind you of anything? Gen. 3:5: “Ye shall be as god” or shall BE god. Her prayer

gets even worse: “Sophia, mother of the journey; today, as we listen, learn, and celebrate; we know that we are blessed and we thank you.” Remember, this is a group of PCUSA (Presbyterian Church, USA, the largest Presbyterian denomination) leaders and seminary students, PCUSA pastors of tomorrow, approving of and actually cheering this demonic prayer.

According to the website cultlink.com, “The Presbyterian Layman magazine quoted several of the speakers at a PCUSA dominated gathered called the ReImaging Conference "who insisted that Christians are under no obligation to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of the world. In their view, Jesus is not particularly unique, being only one among many ways that Sophia has made herself known."

“Another (PCUSA) Union Theological Seminary professor of Feminist Theology Delores Williams, according to the Layman magazine, said to the crowd of ReImaginners, "I don't think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff... We shouldn't be persecuted for being heretics." She added, "In the heart and soul of the **deities**, we are all loved, and it doesn't matter who we're sleeping with," adding support to the lesbian and sodomite Presbyterians.” Here is a professor (of “Feminist Theology” no less!) at the major PCUSA’s seminary in the nation admitting her belief in multiple gods. And the saps in the pews of PCUSA churches pay her salary.

Here’s a picture of this lovely lady:



“One conservative woman critic who wrote of her observations while attending the gathering warned her fellow Presbyterians: "You must not be lulled... into thinking this is merely a fringe movement... I sat at tables with pastors, Christian educators, seminary professors, and... PC (USA), United Methodist and Evangelical Lutherans (ELCA) were the most represented denominations, in that order. These were not fringe people."

“When one of the speakers denied Jesus Christ's uniqueness as the Son of God, she was heralded with a standing ovation, drum beating, whistles and cat calls from the audience. And

their communion consisted of honey and milk, supposedly representing female sexuality. "We are learning that to be ecumenical is to move beyond the boundaries of Christianity, said Mary Ann Lundy, one of the speakers.

Another was the 1993 PCUSA-heavy Re-imagining conference featuring a prayer and supplication to "Our Maker Sophia," calling for Sophia's aid in replacing Biblical Christianity. According to Christianity Today, Mainline Methodist seminary professor Thomas Oden recalled how a highly visible feminist leader led a communion service at the school singing hymns to and invoking Sophia as "a deity distinguishable from the Triune God". She then invited everyone to the table not in Jesus' name, but in the name of the goddess Sophia, who she claimed was speaking through Christ.

Voices of Sophia has published its "95 Illuminations," which includes such gems as:

* "We affirm God-Sophia, Woman Wisdom who fashioned us in the image of the divine as women and men."

* "We affirm Jesus-Sophia, wisdom incarnate in the person of Jesus of Nazareth."

* "Woe to you who fear diversity of gender and sexual orientation."

For those of you who don't know the code words, let me translate: If you oppose the homosexual agenda, if we have to we will kill you.

And don't think they're not deadly serious about that.

* "Woe to you who deny women the freedom to make reproductive decisions, particularly regarding abortion."

* "Blessed are you who affirm the calls to ministry of persons of all sexual orientations." (including lesbians, sodomites, even transvestites — perfect for those congregations made up of some people who don't want a woman preacher, and some who do — with a transvestite in the pulpit, you can convince yourself they're whatever you want).

* “We are open to new ways of being reformed by the wild and untamed Spirit.”

I can't find anywhere in the Bible where the Holy Spirit of God is called “wild and untamed.” Rather, I Cor. 14:33: “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” A wild and untamed God? No thank you. That would mean an unpredictable God, one whose promises you couldn't believe, couldn't depend on. A wild and untamed god could change His mind at any moment. That is not the god of the Bible, who says, Mal 3:6, “For I am the LORD, I change not.” This statement, “We are open to new ways of being reformed by the wild and untamed Spirit” clearly expresses their loyalty not to the spirit of God, but to the evil spirit, Satan. So the PCUSA, United Methodist Church, ELCA, etc.-inspired goddess movement makes their loyalty, the object of their worship, crystal-clear. It is Satan.

As you know, I believe the book of Revelation is clear that one sign of the approach of the end times is when the apostate pseudo-Protestant churches align themselves with paganism. Let's go on in chapter 16.

[19] And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

There are differing views among Reformed expositors as to what the three parts means.

The 1599 Geneva Bible comments here, that the great city to be divided includes, “the whole number of them that shall call themselves ‘Christians’ — of whom some are indeed so; some are Papists (but under pretense of Christ, serve Antichrist); and some are neuters (which are neither on the one side nor on the other)...The cities of the nations or of the heathen gentiles, signify “all strange religions — of the Jews, Turks (Moslems) and others who shall then fall together with that great whore of Rome.” Many of the great Puritans, such a Brightman, John Cotton, John Owen, Matthew Henry, Jonathan Edwards and others, say the same thing. Matthew Henry expands on it, writing, that the Papacy is made up of three parts, incorporating something of the Jewish, something of the pagan and something of the Christian religion, she is as three cities or nations in one.

[20] And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

[21] And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

This is symbolic language, not to be taken literally as describing the destruction of the world. How do we know? Because the book of Rev. describes events that take place on earth AFTER this. It is figurative language that the spiritual battle, war of Armageddon will turn the world upside down — rather, rightside-up. But it does not mean the end of time, the final return of Christ on the last day. Time and earth's history hasn't run out yet.

The pouring out of the seventh vial, says both John Cotton and Matthew Henry, destroys Antichrist and ushers in the Millennium, the years of the triumph of Christianity over all the nations., which will be developed in the following chapters.

Note in v. 21 that even though the judgments of God fall on them are like great hailstones, idolators still refuse to repent and turn to Christ — they blaspheme God all the more. There is no more irrational and vicious hatred than hatred of Christ and His people.

Let us close with taking a lesson from this, for there but for the grace of God we go — as Franciscus Junius the author of the 1599 Geneva Bible notes on the book of Revelation, puts it so beautifully in his 1596 commentary,

“Where fore seeing we are so faithfully admonished of the infinite power, justice and patiences of God, whereby He guideth things here below to the consolation and quiet of His children, and to the utter confusion of His enemies, let us have always before our eyes this infinite majesty of God sitting in His temple to sanctify us, and in His throne to do judgment: let us acknowledge how richly He is furnished with servants and means to execute His judgments in heaven and earth...and the more we see that poor idolators harden themselves and dwell in their stiffneckedness, against which the Lord striveth daily with great patience by a thousand testimonies of grace and forewarnings of His rigor, the more let us frame ourselves to use well this patience and fatherly goodness, that

we blaspheme not against His judgments as other do, but humble ourselves under His mighty hand, and walk in a holy faith and obedience, waiting for deliverance our of our afflictions, and for the accomplishment of the glory promised in Jesus Christ our Lord.”