

Revelation 16:17–21

It Is Done — The Seventh Bowl and the Fall of Everything

THE SEVEN BOWL JUDGEMENTS

Revelation 16:17–21 (NKJV)

Revelation 16:17 | Seventh Bowl

"Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!'"

Revelation 16:18 | The Great Earthquake

"And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth."

Revelation 16:19 | The City Falls

"Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath."

Revelation 16:20–21 | Total Upheaval

"Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great."

Where are we? Final Bowl

We have reached the end. Bowls one through six have each been terrible in their own way.

Now comes the seventh and with it, a voice from the throne of God that pronounces the most significant two words in all of history: 'It is done.' Nothing follows but the end.

The Bowl Judgements	What Happens
Bowls 1–2 (Revelation 16:1–3)	Sores on beast-worshippers; seas turn to blood.
Bowls 3–4 (Revelation 16:4–9)	Fresh water becomes blood; scorching heat from the sun.
Bowl 5 (Revelation 16:10–11)	Darkness falls on the beast's throne; they gnaw their tongues.
Bowl 6 (Revelation 16:12–16)	Euphrates dried; three spirits gather armies to Armageddon.
Bowl 7 — THIS PASSAGE	'It is done.' Greatest earthquake; cities fall; Babylon judged.
What follows (Revelation 17–22)	Babylon's fall (Ch. 17–18), Christ's return (Ch. 19), the Millennium (Ch. 20), the New Creation (Ch. 21–22).

Introduction— The Last Word

◆ Hiroo Onoda — The Last Soldier, 1974

*Japanese soldier **Hiroo Onoda** continued fighting in the **Philippine jungle until 1974** — nearly **thirty years after World War II ended in 1945**.*

His commanding officer had never formally surrendered, so Onoda kept on. He ambushed patrols, burned crops, and fought on alone, convinced the war was still being waged.

When his original commander was finally found and flown to the Philippines to issue the formal order of surrender, Onoda wept.

He had been fighting a war that was already over. The seventh bowl is God's declaration that the war is over. Not eventually. Now. 'It is done.'

The most consequential five verses in human history, because they announce the end of the age as we know it.

The voice from the throne does not say 'It is nearly done,' or 'It will soon be done.' It says: It is done.

This is the seventh and final bowl. What began with a voice from the temple (V 1) ends with a voice from the throne (V 17). The whole chapter is bracketed by divine speech. God opens the judgements and God closes them.

Why this passage is the hinge of history:

- It is the only bowl that targets the air itself — the domain Satan claims as his own (**Ephesians 2:2**).
- It contains the only divine declaration in the entire chapter: 'It is done.' God speaks from the throne.
- It describes the greatest earthquake in human history — a geological reset of the entire earth.
- It seals the judgment of Babylon — the symbol of all human civilisation built in defiance of God.
- It is the final occurrence of the refrain 'they blasphemed God' — the last confirmation that judgment does not produce repentance in the hardened.
- It opens the door to everything that follows: Babylon's fall, Christ's return, the New Creation.

Bowl 7 — Revelation 16:17–21

BOWL 7 Poured into the Air. 'IT IS DONE'

Revelation 16:17–21

Unlike the first six bowls, which were poured on the earth, the sea, rivers, the sun, the beast's throne, and the Euphrates — the seventh bowl is poured into the air.

This is deliberate. In **Ephesians 2:2**, Satan is called '*the prince of the power of the air*.' God is reclaiming the atmosphere itself.

The bowl is followed immediately by the most extraordinary atmospheric and geological events in recorded history: voices, thunders, lightnings, and the greatest earthquake the world has ever experienced.

Then comes hail each stone weighing a talent (approximately 75–100 pounds). A single hailstone of that size would demolish buildings, collapse bridges, and kill every living thing it struck. These fall not on a city, not on a region but upon men everywhere.

Yet even now, even under a bombardment of 100-pound hailstones men blaspheme God.

This is the **third time in Revelation 16** the phrase appears (**V 9, 11, 21**). It is the final confirmation of what we saw in bowls 4 and 5.

No quantity of physical suffering can produce repentance in a heart that has finally, fully chosen against God.

'IT IS DONE' — The Voice from the Throne

A. Three words that end an age (v.17)

"Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!'"

The Greek is two words: **Gegonen** meaning 'It has happened' or 'It is done.' The perfect tense in Greek indicates a completed action with ongoing results. This is not simply 'it finished' but 'it is finished and remains finished.' There is no undoing this moment.

John 19:30 where Jesus cries 'Tetelestai' ('It is finished') from the cross — the same theological weight, the same irreversibility. The cross finished redemption; the seventh bowl finishes judgment.

This voice comes 'out of the temple of heaven, from the throne.'
It is not an angel's voice.
It is not a prophet's voice.
It comes from the throne — from God Himself.

This is the second time in Revelation that God speaks these words from the throne. The first is in **Revelation 21:6**, when He makes all things new.

*At the cross: 'It is finished' — the work of redemption complete.
At the seventh bowl: 'It is done' the work of judgment complete.
The same God.
The same finality.
The difference is the one you are on.*

THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE — Revelation 16:18

A. An Earthquake unlike any before (V 18)

"And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth."

Scripture qualifies this earthquake in the most emphatic terms available. Every earthquake in recorded human history including the **1556 Shaanxi earthquake that killed 830,000 people**, the **2004 Indian Ocean**

WORLD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP | Revelation 16:17–21 | Seven Bowl Judgements
event that moved the earth on its axis every one of them is dwarfed by what is described here.

The standard pattern of divine theophany in Scripture includes thunder, lightning, and earthquake (**Exodus 19; Revelation 4:5; 8:5; 11:19**). Each occurrence in Revelation intensifies the previous one. This final earthquake is the culmination of that progression.

Earthquake in Scripture	What It Marks
Exodus 19:16–18	Mount Sinai — God gives the Law. Smoke, fire, earthquake. The people tremble.
1 Kings 19:11–12	Elijah at Horeb — earthquake, wind, fire — then the still small voice.
Revelation 6:12	Sixth seal — great earthquake; sun black, moon red; mountains moved.
Revelation 8:5	Seventh trumpet prepared — earthquake accompanies the incense offering.
Revelation 11:13	Two witnesses raised — a great earthquake; 7,000 killed in Jerusalem.
Revelation 11:19	Seventh trumpet — lightning, voices, thunder, earthquake, great hail.
Revelation 16:18–20	Seventh bowl, the greatest earthquake in human history. Islands flee. Mountains gone.

B. Every Island and Mountain Removed (V20)

V 20, *'every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.'*

This is not poetic hyperbole it is literal points to is no less devastating.

The tectonic framework of the earth is redesigned. The familiar landmarks of human civilisation **the Alps, the Himalayas, the Pacific islands** are gone.

This prepares for the new creation of **Revelation 21**, where the old order passes away entirely.

- The earthquake is not mere destruction, but preparation.
- God is clearing the ground for something no eye has seen.

Isaiah 40:4, *"Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth."*

THE FALL OF BABYLON — Revelation 16:19

A. What is Babylon? (V19)

V 19, *"Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath."*

'Great Babylon was remembered before God.'

The city of Babylon appears here for the **first time in Revelation 16**, though the full account of **her judgment occupies chapters 17 and 18**.

But the mention here is decisive. God has not forgotten Babylon. He has been watching. Now the cup is full.

Babylon is one of the most complex and layered symbols in all of Scripture. She is not simply ancient Mesopotamia.

She is the principle of human civilisation organised in proud defiance of God wealth, power, commerce, and culture built on the throne of self.

What Babylon represents in Scripture:

- **Genesis 11:1–9, The Tower of Babel.** The first Babylon. United humanity building upward to make a name for itself, without God.
- **Isaiah 13–14 The pride of Babylon.** 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.' The spirit of Babylon is the spirit of self-deification.
- **Jeremiah 50–51 Babylon as the instrument and then the object of God's judgment.** 'Flee from the midst of Babylon.' God's people are always called out of Babylon.
- **Daniel 1–5 Babylon as the world system** that pressures God's people to conform, to bow, to compromise.
- **Revelation 17–18 The final Babylon.** The great harlot who has made all nations drunk with the wine of her immorality.
Commercial Babylon.
Religious Babylon.
Political Babylon.

B. The Cup of Wrath (V 19)

'To give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.'

The image of the cup of wrath runs through the entire Old Testament as a symbol of God's judgment poured out on the nations.

(Psalm 75:8; Isaiah 51:17; Jeremiah 25:15–16).

What was poured out partially and temporarily on historical nations is now poured out finally and fully on Babylon.

Jeremiah 25:15–16, *"For thus says the Lord God of Israel to me: 'Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. And they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them.'"*

THE GREAT HAIL — Revelation 16:21

A. Hailstones of a Talent (V 21)

And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great."

A talent in the ancient world weighed approximately **75–100 pounds (34 to 45 kg)**.

For perspective: a standard house brick weighs around 5 pounds.

A 100-pound block of ice falling from the sky would penetrate reinforced concrete. This is not a storm it is a bombardment.

Hail as divine judgment has deep roots in Scripture.

In the **seventh plague of Egypt (Exodus 9:13–35)**, God sent hail that killed every man and animal left in the open.

Joshua 10:11 records hail stones from heaven killing more Amorites than the sword of Israel.

This final hail is infinitely greater in scale.

Joshua 10:11, *"And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the Lord cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword."*

B. They Blasphemed God (v.21)

'Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.'

This is the final occurrence of the blasphemy refrain in Revelation 16 (**V 9, 11**). It is the last thing said about unredeemed humanity before the narrative moves to the fall of Babylon.

It is a portrait of the terminus of human rebellion.

No repentance.

No confusion.

No silence.

Blasphemy.

Under hailstones of 100 pounds each, with Babylon falling around them, with every mountain and island removed still they curse God. This is what the hardened heart does with suffering. It deflects accountability outward, onto the God who is judging, rather than inward, toward the self that chose this path.

What this passage Reveals about God?

1. God completes what He begins.

'It is done.'

God does not leave things unfinished. The seven bowls were announced in **Revelation 15:1** as 'the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.'

What God said He would complete He completes.

This is not only a warning for the unbeliever, and it is a comfort for the believer.

The God who completes His wrath also completes His salvation.

Philippians 1:6, *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

2. God's Judgment is proportionate and just.

Babylon *'was remembered before God.'*

The word remembered is crucial.

God does not forget. Every act of exploitation, every corrupted institution, every life destroyed for profit and power God has kept account.

The bowl of wrath is not arbitrary, but it is exact.

Revelation 18:6, *'Repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her.'*

Revelation 18:5–6, *"For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her."*

3. God's Judgment makes way for Renewal.

The removal of islands and mountains is not only destruction, but also preparation.

Revelation 21:1 describes 'a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.'

The seventh bowl clears the old creation so the new creation can come. Every act of divine judgment in Scripture points forward to restoration.

Romans 8:21–22, *"Because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now."*

4. God's Final Word is not wrath — It is New Creation.

Revelation 16 ends with the seventh bowl.

But Revelation does not end with chapter 16.

The very next movement of the book is

- the removal of Babylon,
- then the marriage supper of the Lamb,
- then the return of Christ,
- then the Millennium,
- then the New Jerusalem descending from heaven.

The seventh bowl is not the last word. It is the clearing of the stage for the last word which is grace.

*God's wrath is the penultimate word. The ultimate word is:
'Behold, I make all things new.' — Revelation 21:5*

Application.

Revelation 16:17–21 is not an abstract prophecy about a distant future. It is a mirror that reveals the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of the choice every human being faces.

1. Live in the light of 'It is Done.'

The declaration from the throne is also a declaration about the cross.
'It is done' at the seventh bowl echoes 'It is finished' at Calvary.

The wrath that fills these bowls is the same wrath that Jesus absorbed at the cross on behalf of every person who trusts in Him. The Christian does not face the seventh bowl because the Lamb faced it first.

1 Thessalonians 5:9, *"For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

2. Come Out of Babylon.

Revelation 18:4, *"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.'"*

One of the most urgent commands in Scripture.

Babylon falls. The question is not whether but whether you are inside her when she does.

What is 'Babylon' for you?

It is whatever in your life is built on the throne of self — wealth pursued without God, comfort chosen over obedience, reputation protected at the expense of faithfulness.

Come out.

3. Do not interpret suffering as evidence that God has failed.

The people under the hailstones blaspheme God.

They interpret their suffering as evidence of God's cruelty or injustice.

The Christian knows that suffering, even undeserved suffering, is never evidence of God's absence or failure. The cross of Christ is the definitive proof.

The worst suffering in history was the greatest act of love in history.

Romans 5:3–4, *"We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope."*

4. Hold fast to the New Creation.

The seventh bowl is not the final image in Revelation.

The final image is a city with gates that are never shut, a river of life, a tree of healing, and a throne with the Lamb at the centre.

The new creation is coming, and it is worth everything required to reach it. Fix your hope there.

Revelation 21:4–5, *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'"*

5. Urgently proclaim the Gospel — before the Bowl is poured.

The voice from the throne says: 'It is done.'

There will come a moment when that declaration closes history.

Until that moment, the gospel goes forth. The church is not a spectator of the bowls. She is the instrument God uses in the time between the bowls.

Every person you know who does not know Christ is one heartbeat away from facing what these chapters describe. Go to them.

2 Corinthians 5:20, *"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."*

Conclusion — After the Thunder

✦ The Moment After Nagasaki — 9 August 1945

*When the second atomic bomb fell on **Nagasaki**, those who survived described the eerie silence that followed the initial blast.*

The noise of the explosion was so vast that the silence after it felt like a different kind of sound. Observers many miles away reported that the sky went peculiar.

A chaplain who ministered to survivors said he spent the days after simply sitting with people in the rubble because no words seemed adequate.

What do you say after the worst has happened?

Revelation 16 ends in just such a silence — the air thick with hail and blasphemy, Babylon falling, mountains gone. And then, into that silence, Revelation 17 begins to speak — not of more destruction, but of explanation, judgment, and ultimately of a wedding.

The seventh bowl is not the end of Revelation. It is the end of the world as it was.

What follows is not silence it is announcement.

An angel shows John the judgment of the great harlot. Then the heavens open and a rider on a white horse appears. Then the marriage supper of the Lamb. Then the New Jerusalem.

'It is done' is the final word of the old creation. 'Behold, I make all things new' is the first word of the new. And that new creation is where every person who knows Christ is headed.

A personal appeal:

- If you are in Christ, the seventh bowl is not your sentence. It is the background against which your hope shines most brightly. Live accordingly. Boldly. Generously. With eternity in view.
- If you are hearing this and you do not yet know Christ, the voice from the throne that says 'It is done' has not yet spoken. There is still time. Repent. Believe. Receive the mercy that the cross of Christ has made available to you.
- For everyone in this room: 'Come out of Babylon.' Examine your life. Where are you building on the throne of self rather than the throne of God? Come out. Come to Christ.

Revelation 21:5–6, *"Then He who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' And He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' And He said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.'"*

Is the fall of Babylon here the same as in Revelation 17–18?

- Yes, they are the same event viewed from different angles. Revelation 16:19 announces the judgment; chapters 17–18 give the full account.
- This is a common pattern in Revelation: a brief announcement followed by an extended vision. Compare the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15–19) followed by the detailed visions of chapters 12–14.
- Babylon in chapters 17–18 has two dimensions: a religious/spiritual dimension (the great harlot) and a commercial/political dimension (the great city). The seventh bowl judges both.

Does the earthquake in verse 18 destroy Jerusalem or Rome or a future city?

- The 'great city' divided into three parts (**V19**) is almost certainly Babylon/Rome — the same city called 'great Babylon' in the same verse.
- Some interpreters identify the 'great city' with Jerusalem (Rev. 11:8 where Jerusalem is called 'the great city' figuratively). Most understand it here as Babylon.
- The key point is not the geography but the theology: every human city built on the pride of self-sufficiency falls under God's judgment. The specific identity of Babylon is expounded in chapters 17–18.
- What is certain: 'the cities of the nations fell' (v.19). This is a global collapse of human urban civilisation.