

Revelation 15 & 16

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[0:00] I'm going to look at the two chapters tonight. Now if you've read them before you came, some of you might do that. You all want to know about Armageddon, don't you? Verse 16 of chapter 16, there it is. And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

If you do a Google search, how many hits did you get on Armageddon? Anybody know? 18 million. 18 million hits on Armageddon. It's remarkable to say it. Do you know how many times you've mentioned it in the Bible? Once.

It's incredible, isn't it? Films, mad films, lots of books, but here it is, one place, a battlefield. Now battlefields always fascinate human beings, don't they? I say to you, Hastings, Battle of Hastings, Battle of Trafalgar, Battle of Waterloo, Battle of Waterloo, the Somme, Gallipoli, Australia, Zealand. People visit battlegrounds, don't they? It's a big thing in the US to visit battlegrounds. Sacred sites, they're significant. Places where wars have been fought and won, lives have been lost. And Armageddon is like that.

It's up there as one of the great battlefields of world history, except this one thing. The battle hasn't yet taken place, is it? The battle is in the future, as we'll see.

[1:30] And really, this war is the war to end all wars. It's the final showdown between good and Egypt. And that is what you've got in chapters 15 and 16. So in verses 1 to 4 of chapter 15, we're given a vision of the final security of the saints on the seashore.

Singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. Then from chapter 5 in verse 15, you've got the final severity of God's judgment upon the earth. Seven bowls of wrath are poured out. And then at the end, from chapter 16, from verse 12 on to the end, you've got the final showdown. You've got Armageddon, the battle between good and evil. So that's my three points. It's so good tonight to be able to start with the final security of the saints.

After last week. The final security of the saints. Look at verses 1 and 2. What does this sea of glass remind you of? Verse 1 and 2. Then I saw another sign in heaven. Great and amazing. Seven angels for seven plagues, which are the last. For with them the wrath of God is finished. And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire. And also those who conquered the beast in its image and the number of its name.

[2:37] Standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hand. What does that remind you of? What would a sea of glass mixed with fire look like? A red sea.

That's what John is being shown. Standing beside this fiery sea are those who have been victorious. Look at verse 3. Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty. Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations. They were singing the servant, the song of Moses, the servant of God and the song of the Lamb.

John wants you tonight to think about the Red Sea. That is the key, I think in some ways, to understanding the book of Revelation. Do you remember what I've said? John's body is in prison. In Patmos.

His heart is in the church. He's really concerned for the seven churches, isn't he? But it's mine, it's in the Bible. So as you read the book of Revelation, there are hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of allusions to the Old Testament in the book of Revelation.

[3:37] And the reason why we don't understand the book of Revelation, the reason why there are so many nutcases out there with all sorts of theories is because they don't know their Old Testament. If you read the Old Testament, you'll know what Revelation is about, especially in these two chapters.

John wants us to understand what is happening to us in the light of what happened at the Red Sea. That was Israel's, wasn't it? Defining moment. You can read these chapters 15.

You can't read these chapters 15 and 16 without thinking about the Exodus. If you've got any Bible knowledge at all, even the last seven plagues that it talks about, they're just like the ten plagues of Egypt, aren't they?

Painful swords, rivers of blood, frogs, darkness. It's all reminiscent, reminding you of Exodus from Egypt. And here and now are the people of God standing on the shore of the sea, the sea of glass which is red, and they're singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

It is Israel's defining moment. In other words, there is the same event which brings salvation to God's people, also brings ruin to God's enemies.

[4 : 45] That is the message here. That is what John wants us to see and understand. The same event brings salvation and it brings ruin.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians chapter 10, 1 Corinthians chapter 10, describes this, refers to this. Let me read that to you. For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. He reads the red sea, doesn't he? As a baptism. The only problem for you is if you're a Baptist, like I was brought up to be, the wrong people are immersed, aren't they, in Exodus.

It was a baptism in this sense. It is a sign of our union with Christ. The red sea experience was a symbol of God's people with Moses.

They were united with Moses through that experience. They passed through the red sea. And that experience was at one and the same time salvation for God's people and yet it was judgment for Pharaoh and his chariots.

[5 : 58] And now John telescopes history to show the final salvation of God's people. And the ultimate overthrow of evil. And he wants us to understand it's the red sea all over again.

It's *deja vu*. He telescopes it with our own Christian era. Now let me try and illustrate this. The American slaves, you know, the cotton plantation. They were brilliant at doing this thing.

Linking Old Testament themes with their struggles. So think of the famous Negro spirituals. They're so vivid, aren't they? Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

You're transported there, aren't you? Right there to the foot of the cross. You don't like this one?

Swing low, sweet chariot. You know that song? It's the story of Elijah, is it?

Being whisked away on his chariot. It's not about Chris Ossie back in 1988. But anyway. Go down, Moses. Let my people go. Here's a verse from one of the songs.

[6 : 55] It says this. Oh, Mary, don't you weep. Don't you mourn. Mary, don't weep. Don't mourn.

Pharaoh's army was drowned. Mary, don't you weep. Don't you mourn. Now, I don't know who Mary was. But she was drawing comfort, wasn't she?

They're saying, draw comfort from the story of the Exodus and the story of the Red Sea. That's what John is doing here in Exodus 15 and 16. Linking the crossing of the Red Sea and the Exodus with the plight of the people of God.

In the last days. He's dragging the story from Exodus. This well-known story about the Red Sea and the crossing of the Red Sea. He drags it through the cross and the resurrection of Jesus in order to apply it to the Christians in Rome.

Who are being persecuted by the Seasur. That is what he's doing. And that is what all good preachers should do. He's taking the story of Exodus and he's dragging it through the cross and the resurrection to apply it here to where we sit.

You see, think of the Israelites at the Red Sea. The sea is in front of them, isn't it? They're standing there. They've gone to the sea. The sea is in front of them.

[7 : 58] The mountains are around them. And Pharaoh and his chariots are behind them, coming at braking at speed. They're trapped. Imagine what is going through their mind. This is it.

There's no way out, is there? That's the point. And that is where John's readers are in Rome in the first century. They are trapped. There's no hiding place for them anymore.

There was a time, wasn't there, when Christians first came out as Christians. That they were kind of protected. Regarded as a Jewish sect. There was a certain amount of protection for them. For Judaism in the Roman Empire.

And Christians were not persecuted at the start. There was kind of an immunity for them. But those days are now over. And it looks like Christianity is about to be wiped out of the face of the map.

Caesar is after them now, not Pharaoh. Caesar is after them and there's no escape. Or so it seems. And what about you?

[8 : 54] Haven't you been in situations like that? Doesn't it look impossible at times to continue as a Christian? Don't some of you feel trapped in your circumstances? I know you do.

Does there sometimes appear to be no way through your problems and your difficulties? And instead of getting better things, just keep getting worse. And there's no light at the end of the tunnel. But for the people of God, whatever the circumstances.

There is always a way through. That's what John wants to show you tonight. So for example, let's go to 1 Corinthians 10. If you can go there. Look at what he says in 1 Corinthians 10.

And verse 13. See what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians. He takes again the story of the Red Sea. Drags it through the cross and applies it to the Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 10.13 Do you know what the word literally is?

The way of escape? Exodus. So again and again, I meet Christians and this is what they say to me.

[10 : 09] They say I'm in a unique situation. But they don't say it. It's what we feel, isn't it?

Nobody's ever had to face what I've had to face. Well you're wrong. Absolutely wrong. Nothing has happened to you that hasn't happened to other people before.

And God doesn't promise you immunity from the pressures and the problems of life in this world. You have to face them like everybody else does. God doesn't promise you exemption. But he does promise you 1 Corinthians 10.13 Exodus.

He promises you a way out. In the gospel. That's literally the word there is. Perhaps you're at the Red Sea now. Perhaps you are in between a rock and a hard place. Perhaps you're a new Christian or a newish Christian.

God has set you free. You've renounced the world, the flesh and the devil. And you're on your way to heaven. But all hell seems to be let loose against you. And the devil is in your back.

And everyone and everything seems to drive you to despair. And you're beginning to wish you'd never become a Christian in the first place. You're beginning to wish you'd never come out of Egypt. Life was so much less complicated before I became a Christian.

[11 : 09] Well let me say to you what Moses said to the people on the shores of the Red Sea. Do not be afraid. Stand firm. Don't give up. You will see the salvation of our God. And that's John's message isn't it?

In Revelation. The church is an Asian minor. And that's your message in the book of Revelation to us. Don't be afraid. Stand firm. See the salvation of our God. It's very, very significant isn't it?

At the transfiguration. Which we don't think about enough. They're on that mountain top. Where Moses and Elijah appear to talk with Jesus and the disciples. You know the disciples are in the background.

They don't really know what's going on. But they do understand that something's happening as Jesus talked with Moses and Elijah. But Luke tells us in Luke 9.31. That Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the mountain top.

And what do you think they were talking about? Well Luke tells us what they're talking about. His departure. What is the word? Exodus. They talk about what he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

[12 : 07] Through Jesus and his death on the cross is our Passover lamb. There is a way out of our difficulties. And our struggles. Through Jesus and his death on the cross. He is our Passover lamb.

Because he takes the wrath of God upon himself. He takes the punishment that our sins deserve. And we go free. By offering himself in our place we are set free.

Do you remember what John says? He says whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. But there's another side to that coin isn't there in John's Gospel. Whoever refuses to believe is condemned already.

And will perish just like Pharaoh. And just like the chariots. So first of all see the saints on the seashore. Listen to the song they're singing. The song of Moses and the lamb.

Make sure you can sing it too. Because you can sing that song. If you can sing that song then you're safe. Come what may this week. If Jesus is your saviour.

[13 : 05] You'll pass on the lamb. If he's taken the wrath. Your sin deserves. And you know that. And it's a song in your heart this evening. You are safe. But if you can't sing that.

You need to know that you're in terrible danger. So secondly. See the final severity of God's judgment on the world. The final severity of God's judgment on the world.

Seven bowls of wrath are poured out. So let's go back to Revelation 15 if you're not there. Revelation 15 verse 1. Let me read it. Then I saw another sight in heaven. Great and amazing. Seven angels with seven plagues.

Which are the last. For with them the wrath of God is finished. Verse 5. After this I looked in the sanctuary. The tent of witness in heaven was opened. And out of the sanctuary came the seven angels.

Of the seven plagues. Clothed in pure bright linen. With golden sashes around their chest. And one of the fallen creatures. Gave to the seven angels. Seven golden bowls. Full of wrath. Of God who lives forever and ever. And the sanctuary was filled with smoke.

[14:04] From the glory of God. And from his power. And no one could enter the sanctuary. Until the seven plagues. Of the seven angels were finished. Chapter 16 verse 1. Then I heard a loud voice from the temple. Telling the seven angels.

Go and pour out on the earth. The seven bowls of the wrath of God. Seven bowls of God's anger. Are poured out on the earth. It's just another one of the sevens. Isn't it? We've seen the revelation. Seven churches. There are more churches in Asia Minor. Are there? Than the seven. It's a symbolic number. It speaks of completeness. God's number. Seven seals. Seven trumpets. And those seven bowls. It's all covering the same ground. Isn't it? Revelation from a different angle. There's a difference you see. Not in the time sequence. You're looking at the same thing. Again and again and again. All the time. We're going back to the beginning. Between the time of Jesus' first coming. And second coming. And that's what we're looking at. From different angles. In these seven. So we come back again.

[14:59] There's a difference. Isn't there? Now there's a difference between trumpets and bowls. Isn't there? Trumpets warned. I was. Mark asked me.

He tried to blow the trumpet outside. But when somebody blows a trumpet. You listen. You perk up. You say. What was that? What is it saying?

You've been walking up from your sleep. When a trumpet blows. Trumpets warned. Bowls. Well that poured out. That's what you do with a bowl. There's a difference between a trumpet and a bowl. Trumpets are for warning.

Bowls are for pouring out. There's something final about that. In this passage. And the same series of events. Can be both at the same time.

They can be a trumpet. And a warning. And at the same time. It can be a final pouring out of the bowl. So let me think about that with you. Think of Pharaoh for a moment. Of the ten plagues.

[15:55] There's a clear allusion to that here. Pharaoh was warned. Wasn't he? Again. And again. And again. God even allowed Moses. To form miracles. So that Pharaoh would be warned.

And he was warned. Again. And again. And again. But what did he do? He refused to repent. He would not change his mind. I will not let. Your people go. For him.

The trumpets are sounding. Aren't they? In the exodus. The trumpets are sounding. But is he heeding the warning? Does he listen? No. He tries God's patience. Until finally.

The trumpets become balls. And the same is true for you and I. That is how God deals with the world. He doesn't. He doesn't desire the death of the wicked. Isn't that a wonderful verse?

He doesn't desire the death of the wicked. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He takes no delight in seeing people perish. Hell is such a difficult subject.

[16:51] But one thing I thought about this week. Hell. Is not for human beings. Just think about that for a moment. Hell is not for human beings.

Hell is the ultimate tragedy. That people. Human beings will end up there. Depart from me. Jesus says. So that place. Prepared for. I'd never spotted it until this week.

Prepared for the devil and his angels. Hell is not made for men and women. Made in the image and the likeness of God. That is not where we're meant to end up.

It is for the devil and his angels. God takes no delight in seeing people perish. And so he sends. We saw last week. He sends these flying angels. Into the world. With the everlasting gospel.

Calling on people to repent. And believe before the end comes. That's our job isn't it? That's our commission. As God's people. Now sound that note. But the end will come. And one day the trumpets.

[17:50] Will turn to bowels. And God's repeated warnings. Will become final judgments. See what we're being shown here. Is that these judgments. These bowels of wrath.

They are full. They are fair. They are final. Look at verse 1. As John sees this. He's been given a running commentary. As you watch. It's 15 verse 1.

Then I saw another sign in heaven. Great and amazing. Seven angels. For seven pleas. Which are the last. For with them. The wrath of God is finished. No more warnings. It's finished. It's done. Or verse 5 to it.

Verse 5. After this. I looked. And the sanctuary. The tent of witness in heaven. Was opened. And out of the sanctuary. Came the seven angels. With the seven pleas. Clothed in pure bright linen. Golden sashes. Around their chest.

And one of the four living creatures. Gives the seven angels. Certain golden bowls. Full of the wrath of God. Who lives forever and ever. And the sanctuary was filled. With smoke from the glory of God.

[18:45] And from his power. And no one could enter the sanctuary. Until the seven pleas. And the seven angels were finished. Notice where they come from. It says. The sanctuary. Isn't it? That's the tabernacle.

They come out of the tabernacle. The angels with the bowls of wrath. Where do they come from? They come out of the presence of God. The tabernacle of the testimony. The sanctuary. That is the place where God lives. It is God's dwelling place.

It is very important to see that. Some people have tried to avoid. Some people do try to avoid. The idea of an angry God. It offends them. So it is nothing personal.

With God. It is nothing personal. It is cause and effect. It is. It is. It is like if you fall out of a tree. You fall out of a tree. You break your neck. It is nothing personal. It is just the law of gravity. And they say.

Well God's anger is like that. It is not so much God being angry. It is man being stupid. Flouting the laws of nature. Suffering the consequences of his stupid behaviour.

[19:43] I want to say to you. If that is the case. That is terrible news. Don't believe that. If that is what God's anger is. Simply cause and effect. Where is there any room for forgiveness?

In that. As you are careering down from the tree. To the ground. You cannot plead with the law of gravity. Can you? To give you a soft longing.

You can't do that. It is just the law of gravity. If you fall out of that building. You don't say. Oh gravity. Please have mercy. It is just. It is nothing personal. It is not cause and effect.

With God. There is no hope of being rescued. If it is cause and effect. No. God's anger is personal. And it flows from his presence. It emanates from his temple.

It is an expression of who he is. He is an angry God. He does not sit cross-legged like Buddha. With a funny smile on his face. As though it has got nothing very much to do with him.

[20:37] He is angry with the wicked everyday. The Bible says. Thank God he is that kind of God. But the Bible reveals this. Because a God who cannot be angry. Is a God who cannot love.

Love. Anger is not the opposite of love. Is it? When I go and see a married couple. And they are in trouble. In their marriage. If they are angry.

I think there is hope. The big problem in marriage relationships. When you go and see them. And they are indifferent. That is the big problem. Let me tell you that. Indifference is the opposite of love.

And God is not indifferent to you tonight. God is not indifferent to what you are doing in your life.

And into other people's lives. God is not indifferent to what is happening in this world. He is angry. And his anger is personal.

But it is perfect. And one of the reasons that we don't like the idea of an angry God. Is we don't very much like ourselves. Do we when we get angry? You're in the school playground.

[21:35] Or you're in the park. And somebody gets angry with their child in the park. There is nothing more embarrassing. Is that? So embarrassing. When that happens.

The parent loses it in front of the child. You're a coward. And anger brings up the worst of us. We fly off the handle. We kick the cat.

We lash out at the wife. We lose our temper. But God's anger is not like that. God's anger is not like that. God's anger is perfect. God's anger is never vindictive.

It's never malicious. It's never spiteful. It's never out of control. As the bowls are poured out. That is what we're being shown here. John is being given this running commentary. Look at verse 3 of chapter 15.

And they sing the song of Moses. The servant of God. And the song of the Lamb. Saying great and amazing are your deeds. O Lord God the Almighty. Just and true are all your ways. That is what we'll see when we get to eternity.

[22 : 33] We'll see that God has always been just. And always been fair in his dealings with human beings. And the angel in charge of the waters. In chapter 16 and verses 5 and 60. See what he says. Just are you.

O holy one. Who is and who was. For you brought these judgments. For they've shed the blood of saints and prophets. And you've given them blood to drink. It's what they deserve. You are just in the way that you deal with people of God.

As they deserve to be dealt with. And the altar chimes in. Doesn't it? Verse 7. Yes Lord God the Almighty. True and just are your judgments. No one. No one.

Will ever be able to say it wasn't fair. God's anger is always perfect. It is never petty. He's not going to destroy cities. And uproot civilizations.

And send people to hell. Because of a mood. He'll do it only because it is right. And only after repeated warnings. Trumpets warn. Bowls are poured out. And these judgments are full.

[23 : 32] And they are fair. And they are fine. Look at verse 8 of chapter 15. The sanctuary. The tabernacle of the temple. Was filled with smoke from the glory of God.

And from his power. And no one could enter the sanctuary. Until the seven plagues. And the seven angels are finished. What do you do? What do you go to? What do you go into a temple to do? You have three needs.

But what do you go into a temple to do? You go to pray don't you? That's what you do. And you go to a temple to make atonement for your sins. It's to intercede. And what John is saying there.

Is a terrifying thought. There will come a time. There will come a day when you won't be able to do that anymore. The day of grace will be over. The day of salvation will be at an end.

And it will be no use calling out for God to save you then. And it will be no use praying for your unconverted relatives then. It will be too late. The trumpets will have become bowls you see. And when trumpets become bowls.

[24 : 30] Well that's what happened to Pharaoh. What happened to Pharaoh. He was warned and he was warned. And warned and warned. And he hardened his heart. And for him the day of grace ended.

I don't know whether you've met anyone like that. I often meet people like that. Preaching around in churches. It's a terrifying thing. When you meet somebody. You have hardened their conscience. Against the gospel.

I'm doing a week of four weeks of talks. In Morgan's. Morgan talks have been gone for four years. There's one guy who has come every week. He listens to the messages.

They've said to him. Every visiting speaker. He grabs them afterwards. And basically pins them off the wall. But he doesn't want his question answered. Well I suppose the fact that he still is asking questions is a good thing.

But it's such a dangerous thing to come cynically. Because when you harden your conscience against the gospel. You no longer hear the warnings. And when the trumpets stop sounding.

[25 : 32] Then the bowl is poured out. And the day of grace is closed. It's very solemn. And I don't leave it too late. How do you know.

When the day of grace. Will run out for you. When the grumbler. Who's been warned again and again. About his grumbling. Becomes a grumble.

And will be nothing else for all eternity. When the lecher. Who's been warned and warned and warned. About his lechery. And he becomes filth.

And he'll remain filth for all eternity. When the self-absorbed person. Who's got no time for anyone else. Who's been warned and warned and warned. Becomes nothing but an. Inward looking absorbed.

Windbag. That's hell isn't it. Forget about toasting folks. Little devils prodding people. That's far more scary isn't it than that.

[26 : 31] The destruction of the personality forever. You say well I don't mind going to hell. All my friends will be there. Don't kid yourself. There is no friendship in hell. Friendship is good isn't it.

Friendship is a gift from God. Who is good. Is common grace. Your friends won't be your friends in hell. And you won't be friends with anyone else. And the greedy person. The envious person. And

it's eating away at them.

And gnawing at them. They can't go through a day. Without their day being spoiled. Because they must have that. Or they haven't got that. They've been warned and warned. And warned and warned. Until finally the day will come. And the warnings will stop.

And that is what you'll be forever. The worm will never die. God doesn't want that for you. He takes no delight.

In the death of the wicked. He says why will you perish. Why will you die. He sends angels flying through the earth. To preach the eternal gospel. He sends his son to the cross. So that it will not have to happen to you.

[27 : 30] So that whoever believes in him. Shall not perish. But have everlasting life. And that brings me to the final showdown. Between good and evil. What John calls Armageddon. Well we know it's going to happen. There is a sense in which we know.

When it's going to happen. Look at chapter 16 and verse 15. I'm not saying we know the date and time. But we're told it's going to happen. When Jesus comes back. Verse 15. Behold I'm coming like a thief.

Blessed is he is the one who stays awake. Keeping his garments on. That he may not go about naked. And be seen exposed. And they assemble them. At the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon. It's not that you can set the date.

And the time. Of Jesus returning back. Not even Jesus can do that. Only the Father in heaven. Not even the Son of Man. Knows when this is going to happen. You can't set the date and the time. But we know. Look at verse 15. He'll come like a thief in the night. And thieves. Don't say calling cards today. They don't ring him up.

[28 : 28] And say. Is it alright if I come up earlier house tomorrow? They don't do that. They just turn up when you least expect them. To turn up. And Jesus says. That's what it will be like. I'll be like a thief in the night.

So be prepared. Stay awake. Spiritually. Keep your clothes on. What's that in the living room do? That's it.

It's a full box. When the angel of death passed over. And the people had to daub their doorposts with the blood of the Lamb. They were told they'd read to the Passover. The Passover dressed. Ready to move. And that is what John is saying.

How we're to live as Christians in this world. Where to be ready. Prepared at a moment's notice. He could come back. Like a thief in the night. He could be there. And that's how we're to live. As we wait for Armageddon. We know when it will be.

It will be when Jesus returns. We even know where. It will be Armageddon. But where is Armageddon? Armageddon. Now there are literally thousands of books on this. Written about Armageddon. 18 million hits on Google.

[29 : 27] But all the Bible's got to say is one verse. And the word Armageddon is a Hebrew word. Chapters 16 and verse 16. Then in Hebrew it's called Armageddon.

Armageddon. Now Hebrew scholars tell us this. It is a Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word. Her Megiddo. Her Megiddo. The hill of Megiddo.

That's what it means. Giddo was the location of some of the most famous and decisive battles in the history of Israel. So for example in Judges 4.

That's where Barak defeated Sisera. It's a famous battle. In the battle of Cushing. The plain of Megiddo. Now what is that? It's a metaphor.

It's like what we talk about Waterloo. That's going to be your Waterloo. It was an Abbas song. It's a metaphor. For God's people.

[30 : 21] It's a kind of metaphor. And the last great punch up that is going to take place. Between good and evil. Between God and his enemies. The defining moment for God's people. That is what it means. The final showdown.

Now so you see the build up. Let's look at the build up of the big fight in verse 12. With the outpouring of the 6th and 7th bowels. Look at verse 12. The 6th angel poured out his bowels on the great river Euphrates.

And its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the east. Now don't get your maps out. Alright. Don't get bogged down with the geography. Revelation 16 is not a geography lesson.

It's theology. Alright. Don't try and find the Euphrates. And how close is that to the Megiddo. It's not about the geography. The whole point of the river Euphrates.

Again if you understand the Old Testament. Is it symbolically divides God's people from their enemies. It's the dividing line between Israel and Babylon. Between the church and the world. Between the redeemed and the impenitent.

[31 : 22] And what's happening is the 6th seed is poured out. It's dried up. The dividing line between the church and the world is dried up. And what happens then is this trinity of evil comes up. Look at verse 13. Verse 14.

Verse 14. Verse 14. They are demonic spirits performing signs who go abroad to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for battle on the great day of the God of the Almighty. It's a trinity of evil isn't it? Verse 13. It's Satan and his hatred.

We saw in chapter 13. It signals an assault on the church. John sees the dragon and the beast of the false prophet. And they're stirring up the kings of this world for a great battle.

They're spoiling for a fight with God and his people. But this is the last point and the most important point. Look at verse 15. You get this massive buildup, don't you? Frightening things are happening. There's a breakdown of law and order. The distinction between God's people and the world seems to be blurred. The final onslaught of evil against God's people and then God's agenda. And then we read verse 15.

[32 : 30] It's such a letdown. Behold, I'm coming like a thief. The battle's over. Before it just begins. It's like an old Lee Harrison fight, isn't it? The boxer. You're on TV all the time, isn't it?

He doesn't even land a punch. He's knocked out. Huge buildup. It's nothing like an old Lee Harrison fight, actually. But it is this thing, isn't it? The battle's over before it began.

Just like the Red Sea. Do you remember? Isn't that what happens? Just when it looks like evil will triumph, Jesus comes and it's all over.

Just as Pharaoh and his chariots are about to pounce on Israel and wipe them off the face of the earth and eliminate them completely, what happens? God opens the waters of the Red Sea. It's no battle at all. Stand still, says Moses, and see the salvation of the Lord.

Look at how he's going to come and fight for you. The Lord will fight for you. You only need to be still and you will see it. Let me finish with this. There's a true story of one of the great battles.

[33 : 33] The Battle of Waterloo. It's before the time of mobile phones and the internet. So the only way you could communicate was through flags, wasn't it? And that is the way the message is of different parts of the world got transported around.

Flags. And the news of Wellington's victory was translated from France to Britain across the Channel. People were anxious to hear what has happened. And a signalman was placed on the top of which is the cathedral and he was given instructions to keep his eye on the sea.

When he received the message from one of the ships at sea he was to pass the message onto a hill and so it would go around all the UK particularly to London. The message would get there.

Eventually a ship was sighted in the Channel.

It was not a very clear day. It was a foggy day. And the signalman sent the first word. Wellington. The next word was defeated. Then the fog closed in. And the ship could no longer be seen.

That was the message that was sent around England. Wellington defeated. Wellington defeated. A great gloom descended over the country. A few hours later the fog lifted and the message came again.

[34 : 40] Wellington defeated the enemy. It's a different message altogether, isn't it? When Jesus died on that Good Friday Pharaoh and his chariots Satan and his henchmen they whooped it up didn't they?

They rejoiced. We defeated him. The kings of the earth have gathered together against the Lord and his anointed one. We've done it. Evil has triumphed. But Sunday's coming.

Three days later the fog lifted. And Jesus rose from the dead triumphant over sin and sin and death. Jesus has risen. That is the message of the book of Revelation.

It's the message of the Bible. However it looks to the contrary the Lamb wins. And at the resurrection Jesus defeated Satan.

He defeated Satan and his henchmen. Sometimes the fog comes in, isn't it? And sometimes we lose sight of what Jesus has done for us. That's why we need the Lord's Table. That's why we need it.

[35 : 48] That's why we need to be at the Lord's Table. because the fog encircles us. And we lose sight of what Jesus has done for us. And we lose sight of the victory. We lose sight of Zion's Hill. Of the decisive thing that God has done in Christ.

Look at verse 17. The seventh angel poured out his bone into the air and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, It is done.

Armageddon is no fight at all. There's no battle at all. The battle has already been done. It is finished.

Came the cry at Calvary verse 17. It is done. Why doesn't that surprise us? Because those of the world were the last words of Jesus on the cross.

What were his last words at the cross? I am finished. No. It is finished. It is done. It is done.

[36 : 52] So you get up tomorrow morning and you are not fighting and you are not hoping against hope for victory. We are fighting from victory aren't we? Because Jesus has already done it.

So do not be afraid. What does John want to say to you tonight? He wants to say to you, don't panic. Don't be afraid. Just be still. And you will see the salvation of the Lord.

Amen.