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Revelation

Chapter 16 - Revealing that Which Angers God The Warfare Against Divine Purity (vs. 12-16)

Revelation 16:12-16: The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. (“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.”)

Really, when we come into this Chapter 16, it is about the wrath of God and specifically what makes God angry. As we've been going through this particular chapter and been watching the bowls of wrath, it has become very clear that the very things that He's angry about are the things that hurt us.

If we were to go down the list, and if you just kind of go down the list with me in verses 1 and 2, it's loathsome and malignant things; more specifically, awful things. God is angry against awful things; things that are terrible and hurtful and painful and destroy.

He goes into in verse 3, the sea of violence and the things that are hurtful in our pursuits. You go after things. The things that oftentimes man goes after are the very things that bring pain and sorrow and suffering to his family. Lives have been lost. People have died over man's pursuit for more. And we know that it goes from the Crusades all

the way to just discovering places. But many people have lost lives for the pursuit of more. God is angry over that. We also understand that God is angry over hateful hearts; those that hate His people; those that devise hurt for his people. God is angry towards them. We see that as the next bowl. We also know that God is angry over a defiant spirit; those who will shake their fists of God when reprimanded, when they clearly do that which is wrong and then suffer for it, they begin to get angry at God for it. And then there are those that have a deceptive ego and they blame God for all their problems. The ones that they bring on themselves, they begin to shake their fists at God. I think the psychologists actually have a name for that. It's called "responsibility deficit disorder". So, these are people that like to blame people. So, in case you don't want to say, "You're just blaming me," just say, "Well, you have a disorder, right?" They actually say that it is derived from a narcissist. And we know that according to 2 Timothy 3, that men will be lovers of self, "Oh, I couldn't

be wrong." So, you blame somebody else, right? And man has a tendency to blame others for his own misdeeds.

It is this next bowl that we're going to be looking at, verses 12 through 16, that is a pretty intense one because it begins with a warfare battle. It actually is about a warfare and a battle. And what we begin to see is that God is angry over the adversarial intent that the world has against God's people. Sometimes, there's a great confusion when people wonder, "Why is it that the righteous suffer? Why is it that good people get hurt?" And the answer is very simple. This is not a complicated answer. The answer is, it's because the world hates you. I mean, why did they crucify Jesus? They hated Good. So, the world hates that which is good. And we're going to see it within the passage. So, why do all these good people suffer? Because evil's hating good. And we're in the prince of the power of the air that is trying to snuff out that which is good. But God says, "Don't be afraid of the one who can destroy the body. Be afraid of the one

who can destroy the body and the soul." He says, "They can't get you because I'm going to resurrect you. So, don't worry about this. We've got this." And of course, Jesus portrays this in this. But you're going to be hated. Jesus turns to His disciples, and He goes, "Look, they hated Me. They're going to hate you." And as far as we know, all 12 of the disciples except for John suffered a martyr's death. So, it's pretty clear that good people are going to suffer. And if you read through 1 Peter, it's very clear that's what God has called you to do. God's called you and me to suffer for doing what's right. The world is willing to suffer for doing what's wrong, but we are willing to suffer for doing what's right and suffer you will if in fact you follow Christ. Just a warning.

So, as we come into the passage, what we begin to see is this battle that begins to ensue. Now, look, I've got to deal with the elephant in the room, and we have a word in the text, and it is "Armageddon." And so, I've got to deal with that first, and then we'll come back and begin to

understand. What's amazing to me is that the word is not used very much in Scripture, but it's funny how man can make movies out of one word. Let's see, where was that word mentioned? One passage in Revelation, and he has built the whole thing around the one text. What is this about? Well, If I can describe to you, first of all, the place. The place is a real place.

In fact, if you look in verse 16,

(Revelation 16:16) "And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon."

It's actually a compound word. "Har" making reference to "mountain". "Magedon" is a word which, there was a city in the particular region, but the word "Magedon" makes reference to crowds. So, what's interesting is what it really takes on to represent, and that is the "mountain of the masses." So, it's a picture of the masses of humanity. Our perception even today is that the majority rules. But God says, "No, I rule." So, there's a lot of confusion with

this because if you get enough people thinking a certain way, then it must be right. No, it's not right. And we know that to be true. But the masses have their own mountain, so to speak, and they have their own sense of superiority. And if in fact you can begin to move great bodies of humanity together, then you're going to win, right? And the answer to that is no; you're not going to win.

So, as we come to this, and let me just give you a couple of Old Testament passages that make reference to this particular region. Judges 5:19 talks about the kings that come and fight against Barak. And in that particular passage, it actually makes reference to the kings of the world came to fight against him, which is an interesting text, which is kind of a playing out. What you're going to find is in the Old Testament, many of these things were played out several times as God was pointing to the final day. So, it was sort of a pre-filment of the fulfillment that was going to come. So, in Barak's time, there was a war in this particular region.

Now, the Valley of Megiddo is a huge valley. It is actually a place. If I were to kind of put you there, geographically, you have the Sea of Galilee. You go off southwest, and you begin to head towards this huge valley called Jezreel or the Valley of Megiddo. Basically, one and the same. The mountains surrounding, and if in fact I was to refer to a mountain, "Har," making reference to "mountain," the mountain of Megiddo, it'd probably be Mount Carmel. And if you remember, it was where Elijah went and fought against the hundreds of Baal worshippers. And he says, "You sacrifice to your gods, I'll sacrifice to mine and we'll see whose works." And then he slays all of them on this mountain. So, it's an interesting place in which the gods of this world have been warring against God, the Creator of the universe from the beginning of time.

Another passage that's seen in Judges 6:33, with Gideon and the Midianites, it says, and the Amalekites. And it actually uses this phrase, "and the sons of the east came against him." What we're going to see within the passage

is that they're actually coming from the east, coming from and through the Euphrates. And so, we're going to see that within the text. It was in Jezreel. It was in the region of Megiddo that this is seen.

There's another battle that's taken place in which Egypt is coming up to war against Babylon. It's found in 2 Kings 23, I think in verse 29 in particular, in which Egypt is coming to fight against Babylon. On the way to go to Babylon, which is going to, actually headed towards the Euphrates, is Megiddo, and it was where he ultimately killed the king of Judah, because he tried to stop it. But what you begin to understand is that literally the path coming down from Babylon, coming from Assyria, is the path coming in, and it would sort of be kind of like a midway between Jerusalem and it's just this great big, huge battlefield in which all of this is being prepared for.

We know that according to Zechariah 14:1, that the day is coming when all the nations, and it literally states this, will gather themselves together against Jerusalem. Of

course, this great huge valley will be the place in which that's done.

And Zephaniah talks about it specifically in Zephaniah 2:1, Zephaniah 3:8. Joel will talk about it in an interesting way as he talks about multitudes and multitudes and multitudes of people. And he uses the phrase, "the valley of decision," which is an interesting phrase that makes reference to that final day. But the day is coming.

Now, the point that I want you to take home with you is this, there's this great battle. And of course, we've seen movies and people see things and there's a lot of misnaming, misnomers going on about what Armageddon is all about. If you see it on TV, it's probably wrong. Let me just put it that way. But what this is about is humanity going against God. And the point you have to ask yourself is, what's causing Armageddon? I can tell you. Man's hatred for God. So, the question is, who's starting the war? Not God. See, man's thinking, well, if you watch everything, "Oh, God's bringing Armageddon." It's not

God bringing Armageddon. Man's bringing Armageddon. Man's the one that's coming against God, wanting to war against God. And so, it's an interesting picture as we come into the text. The question is, what is God angry about? And I would say, God is angry that you want to attack Him.

There's an interesting passage in the Old Testament, Isaiah 10, that talks about the Assyrians coming down through the Euphrates to come to war against Israel. And God says, "I've let them come down." But He says, "Let Me tell you what the intent of the king is. The intent of the king is, 'I'm going to destroy Jerusalem. I'm going to wipe them out. I'm going to obliterate them. There's not going to be a body left.'" But He says, "I'm not going to let him go that far." And of course, you know the story. I mean, Assyria comes, they surround them, and then God sends an angel and 185,000 of their soldiers die that night; they go back home. So, the point is, this battle has been played out time and time again, whether it was the

Assyrians, the Babylonians. And they come down the same route. So, what we're going to see in the passage is something that historically has been happening, and God has been saying, "Just watch how this happens because this is how it's going to happen." And He gives us that interesting picture.

As you come into Revelation 16:12, the way it's described is it actually is telling us the motivation behind and the forces behind this warfare. It is important to also understand this, and let me just interject this, that paralleling this is the battle that's going on in our hearts; that the same warfare, the same battle of the world hating righteousness, hating what is good, is going on in our hearts. See, what the world wants to do is it wants to confuse and it wants to convolute truth. So, what it does is, according to Isaiah 5, it calls evil good and good evil. See? Right? Remember the passage. So, the point is, if we can just erase the absolute of what is right and wrong. Well, one of the endeavors to do this was Greek

philosophy. Because Greek philosophy is all about... Let's see if we can figure this one out... Philosophizing. So, it's not about truth. It's about philosophizing, just like mythology... Let's see... Myths. So, it's not like we're searching for truth. And if we can just confuse the whole thing, if we can make God look humanistic, and if we can cause truth to be nebulous and convoluted, then hey, you know, we can say like Pilate, "What is truth?" And we can all become agnostics and feel good about it. So, the point is that there's been this battle. And you know how the battle works because it works in your heart. I mean, one of the things that Paul says in Romans 7:23 is that "There's this war waging inside of me." What's the war? The members of my flesh. Because I know what the right thing to do is, but there's something inside of me that says, "It can't be that bad. Maybe God doesn't really mean that." And you know, if you can start erasing the absolutes, then you, of course, rational-"lie". And you begin to move away from that which is truth. And before

long, the ambiguity of it makes you feel good. Because "I don't have to really feel convicted anymore because I don't know if that's really a sin or not." Well, the world's been doing this and our heart's been doing this. This battle is waging on. And there's a sense of evil that just literally hates good. What was interesting about that war with the Assyrians coming down, and God says, "Your intent is to destroy." When you see the general and he goes up to the wall of Jerusalem and Rabshakeh is his name, which we'll have a test on that. But when he comes at the walls, he starts yelling out, and he says something like, "Come on over to our side. We'll let you do whatever you want to do." And I can hear the world going, "Look, just lighten up. You can do what you want to do." Well, you think that's true? Let me tell you what's going to happen. What's going to happen is when you lower your guard, they're going to come in and they're going to take over and they're going to say, "No, you do what we tell you to do." If you don't believe that's true, have you not

seen that begin to happen in our society? It's no longer that they just want you to be tolerant. They want you doing what they do. They want you thinking like they think. And if you don't, they consider it an assault, and they get angry at you. "What are you hitting me for?" "We don't like the way you think." "Well, I thought you guys were open-minded." "Only on our side are we open-minded. We're not open-minded on your side." So, there's a sense of hostility that just won't go away. And it's hostility against that which is righteous, against that which is good. And once again, that's why Jesus says, "That's why they crucified Me." Because, of course, He's the epitome. He is the conglomerate of righteousness. That's who He is. So, as you come into this passage, what you're going to see is God's anger towards that hostile intent or adversarial mindset in which the world hates righteousness.

So, you pick up in verse 12,

(Revelation 16:12) "The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates..."

Why Euphrates? Well, once again, if you go back into Genesis, and if you want to know the beginning of something, you probably need to go back to Genesis. You go back to Genesis 2, and you look in the garden, and there are these rivers that are mentioned. And one of them actually is the Euphrates River.

If you understand, in Genesis 2, it starts off in the Garden of Eden where it began to flow. I don't know how large Eden was, but according to the geography of this text, it was huge.

And so, we pick up in Genesis 2:10,

(Genesis 2:10) "Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers."

(Genesis 2:11) The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold."

Actually, it's believed that Havilah is the region of the Caspian Sea. And the river, Pishon, it's hard to make at this juncture, but if you could find it, you'd probably find a lot of gold. You're going to have a hard time buying a ticket. Forget about it.

It says,

(Genesis 2:12) "The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

(Genesis 2:13) The name of the second river is Gihon..."

I actually believe this is the Nile River. The reason why I believe that is it flows around the whole land of Cush. Cush is Ethiopia.

(Genesis 2:14) "The name of the third river is Tigris..."

You know where that is. And probably more on the Nineveh side in Assyria, more than in Babylon, although the Tigris and Euphrates will start coming closer together as you get down to Babylon. Which the name itself seems to make reference to "rapid".

"... it flows east of Assyria..."

Now, understand verse 14 when it says, "east of Assyria." Assyria had not existed at that time. But when Moses wrote this, it had. So, he's given a point of reference. He's saying where Assyria is. Of course, there was no Assyria at that time.

"... And the fourth river is the Euphrates."

Now, "Euphrates" in the Hebrew makes reference to fruitfulness and has a sense of prosperity, promising prosperity. What's interesting is, if you were to put Tigris and Euphrates together, it would be "rapid fruitfulness". In other words, clearly, man's endeavor to self-aggrandize himself and to get more.

If you look in Chapter 10 of Genesis, you drop on down, it says,

(Genesis 10:8) "Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth."

(Genesis 10:9) He was a mighty hunter before the LORD..."

Just to interject,

"... "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD.""

It's making reference to not hunting animals but hunting man. And it was really with Nimrod that he began the slave trade.

But anyway, if you look at the text,

(Genesis 10:10) "The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar."

The land of two rivers. What are the two rivers? Tigris and Euphrates.

(Genesis 10:11) "From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh..."

So, Nineveh would really be off the Tigris, and Babylon, more of the Euphrates.

And then if you look in Chapter 11, it starts off,

(Genesis 11:1) "Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words."

(Genesis 11:2) It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar..."

The land of the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates. Now, the point is, and you know the text here where they're building the tower of Babel, was that was a tower of defiance against God. And "Babel" at first, interesting twist of the words, because it can mean "mixed up," or it can mean "gate of the gods". So, originally, the tower was to build a gateway to the gods, not God. And God says, "No, we're going to make it confusion." So, He basically used the same word, sort of twisted to mean what it should have meant to begin with. The point of the passage is that this is where it all started. Man's rebellion against God. And really when you think about it, Babylon was man's endeavor to reinvent the garden of Eden. See, he had sinned. He thought, "Well, I'll go back to that same region. I'll reestablish it." And of course, Nebuchadnezzar

would make within the city of Babylon what were called the "Hanging Gardens". And the point was that he was going to make a garden of Eden in his great city. It's man basically saying that "I'm good without God and leave us alone." And the tower itself, the way the tower is built, of course, we know it was after the flood, so they're putting tar in the mortar so that in case it rains heavy, they'll at least be waterproof. The defiance of man is seen all through this whole thing. And God says, "Lest they in unity defy Me, I'm going to break up their language." And so, He does. So, Euphrates becomes this picture of a sense of fruitfulness without God. In fact, "We'll be better off without God." And so, man begins to go down this path.

If you look with me in Jeremiah 2, the concern of Jeremiah was that God's people, instead of turning to the Lord, would turn towards other nations.

And as you drop on down to verse 18, his question is,

(Jeremiah 2:18) “But now what are you doing on the road to Egypt, To drink the waters of the Nile?

Or what are you doing on the road to Assyria, To drink the waters of the Euphrates?”

Isaiah will make the same cry, if you look at me in Isaiah 8; you'll see the same thing being conveyed in Chapter 8 of Isaiah, verse 6.

(Isaiah 8:6) “Inasmuch as these people have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah

And rejoice in Rezin and the son of Remaliah; (following other gods)

(Isaiah 8:7) Now therefore, behold, the Lord is about to bring on them the strong and abundant waters of the Euphrates, Even the king of Assyria and all his glory; And it will rise up over all its channels and go over all its banks.

(Isaiah 8:8) Then it will sweep on into Judah...”

That's exactly the path in which if they were coming from the Euphrates, if they were coming from Babylon, if they

were coming from Assyria, that they would come down and Megiddo would be that halfway place in which God says, "Enough, stop, we'll have it out here." So, interesting picture.

If you go back to Revelation 16:12, the point is that this great river Euphrates and its water is now dried up. Well, that's the picture is of God saying, "You thought the world was promising you success by following and rejecting Me. Let Me show you what it's like." And He dries up the water. Now, in the drying up the water, He also creates a path. And if you remember, the way the Medes and Persians actually took over Babylon was the drying up of the Euphrates, and they marched under the walls. So, it's an interesting picture that He's revealing, but the point is that which promises fruitfulness is really a place that promises destruction. And you begin to see these demonic spirits that are coming out of the region of the Euphrates. Of course, we know that was right where the garden was, and that's also where the serpent was. And

God was preserving by not letting him go into the garden, but man keeps going back and trying to perceive that he can have euphoria, he can have a utopia without God. And Babylon is kind of that picture and the Euphrates. But God really demonstrates it that the river is dried up.

And now, if you look at the phrase,

(Revelation 16:12) "... so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east."

Kings of the east being from Babylon, from Assyria; they're now coming in.

What's the point? Well, the point seems to be that they're getting ready to take over and to reign. The way is getting prepared for the kings to come in. And what are the kings going to do? Reign. That's what kings do. They reign. So, man's going to take over this area that God has ordained for His people. The one little spot left on the earth. And they say, "We're not going to be happy until we own all of it." Look, we'll give the world half, "But we're not happy

with half; we want 3/4. We're not happy with 3/4, we went everything." And that's what evil's about. It's just very destructive. It has an insatiable desire.

And it says in verse 13,

(Revelation 16:13) "And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet..."

Now, that's the tripartite, right? God has a trinity, but the evil has its own trinity.

And if you look within the passage, the dragon, "*drakōn*," would probably be the way it's pronounced in the text, actually gives this interesting picture of fascination. I often wondered as a kid, why would a girl want to talk to a snake? And I never could understand why, because all the girls I knew didn't like snakes; maybe spiders were even worse. But the point is that the serpent was fascinating. And "*drakōn*" actually refers to a fascination, a grand being that is alluring. So, what He's going to do

within the text is He's actually going to show us how the world is sucked into this war. And the text makes reference to "*drakōn*" is obviously involved. The beast, which is a picture of insatiable cravings and desires, a desire to devour; beast having the connotation to devour. And then if you look, what's the last one? False prophet. False, a lie, but he's going to represent himself as, well, it's like an angel of light. As Paul says, "Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." So, it's once again, man elevating himself, and it's the picture literally of self-righteousness. It's like 2 Timothy 3 says, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." So, in the last days, this is what's going to happen. And of course, Jesus says in Matthew 24, there are going to be many false prophets in that last day declaring themselves as God. And if you really look at it, I mean, basically this is what humanity has been doing, especially as of late, "We're the Savior. We're the guys that are going to save you. We're the ones that are going to help you. If there's any hope,

it's with us. Finally, something to hope in." I'm going, "Finally? I've had something to hope in right from the very beginning." But anyway, so you have this tripartite within the text. Now, what I want you to see is the description of what's coming out of their mouth.

And so, it reads this way,

(Revelation 16:13) "And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits..."

I just want to remind you in Revelation, pay close attention to "like" or "as". So, if you're dealing with "like" or "as," it's sort of like a figure of speech or a metaphor or something like that. It's not even referring to necessarily appearance in the text. What it could be is probably that which deals with the habits of a frog, or the way that a frog lives. So, what it's really talking about is the way that a frog operates, if I could put it another way. And so, their speech is going to be like that. Now, the question is, well,

what is a frog like? I mean, not many of us hang around the pond that much. So, the thing about frogs is pretty interesting, besides the fact that their eyes bulge out and they make noise. But the thing about a frog is that they're very indiscriminate about what they eat. In fact, scientists say frogs will literally eat anything. They're indiscriminate in the things that they swallow, the things that they take in. And they actually say that the most poisonous creature on the face of the earth is a frog. It's a yellow golden frog that they have actually people make darts and kill big animals with these darts that they actually get the poison from these yellow frogs. From my understanding, it's not that the yellow frog is poisonous, it's what he eats. And so, it gets in his skin, and he becomes highly toxic. They say one small little yellow frog has enough poison to kill 10 men almost instantly. So, it's a pretty intense poison. The point of the whole poison thing is not that all frogs are poison, but that they'll eat anything. And that's the habit. We know they're carnivorous, but they're

indiscriminate in their diet. They'll eat their own excrement. I don't want to get into too much detail, don't ask me. But it does not matter. The point is that out of the mouths of these three is going to come indiscriminate speech; that it doesn't matter what they say, whatever they have to say, to get you, to get man to come on their side. And look, they'll defame God. Scripture tells us that the thing that makes us different as Christians is that we're holy. Now, the word "holy" means that we're not common. And when it says that we're not common, it actually means that we're discriminating about what we do. We actually believe that there's a right and a wrong. We actually believe that. So, that's kind of unique in the world. Because the world is very indiscriminate. So, we have these things called situation ethics. We have these things called "our way" and "my way". But the point is there's only "one way." And this is what makes us holy, what makes us different, what makes us unique. So, the passage is making reference to the fact that they're going

to be saying things. Whatever it takes to get you to get man to follow, they're going to say it. It doesn't matter. Politician.

But if you look with me in verse 14,

(Revelation 16:14) "for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world..."

What are the signs doing? Well, they're luring, you know? I mean, we're coming out of the Euphrates, the great alluring hub of the world. And what's the purpose? Look at the text.

"... to gather them together for the war..."

Now, once again, I can't overemphasize this, because next time you see "Armageddon's coming," it's not God attacking man. The text is man attacking God. He's going to war against God. Look at the text.

"... for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty."

They're coming against Him. And they're saying whatever it takes; they're doing whatever it takes to make it happen.

(Revelation 16:15) "(“Behold, I am coming like a thief...”

"I'm going to take away all the things that you value so much. You think that these things are worth fighting for, they're not." Look, the people that aren't following God see Him as somebody that takes away the most valuable things of their life. The people that follow God realize that He's taken out all the things that are hurtful to their lives. We see Him very different. And that's why 1 Thessalonians 5 says He's not a thief to you. He's just a thief to everybody who loves this world.

So, He goes,

"... Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes..."

What He's going to basically say is, "Maintain the purity of your garments." That's what He's talking about.

"... so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.")"

You've been saying that you are different, that following God is different. Don't let the world see anything different.

So, the passage then goes on to say in verse 16, (Revelation 16:16) "And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon."

Or the "mountain of the masses"; in which the masses come together against God, and say, "Our way, we want our way." And you say, "Well, what allured you?" "Well, this guy said this to me. This guy said this to me." And the allurements are different.

If you look with me in 1 John, the answer is really said within this particular passage in Chapter 2, 1 John 2.

It says in verse 15,

(1 John 2:15) "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

(1 John 2:16) For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh..."

That would be the beast. So, what are the indiscriminate things that are coming out of the mouth of the beast? He's saying, "You can have anything that you desire, things that you crave, that your flesh craves," and he's going to tempt them by that. And you can just see people, "I'll join if I can have anything."

It goes on, it says,

"... and the lust of the eyes..."

Well, that would be "*drakōn*"; that would be the dragon. The things that are fascinating; the things that are alluring. And usually, this is directly equated with, and you'll see it in Matthew, greed; which is referred to as an evil eye. So, it's alluring with great treasures or great

riches. "How much are you going to give me?"

"Everything." He'll say whatever. You know, frogs are indiscriminate. They don't care about whatever they say.

What's the next one?

"... and the boastful pride of life..."

That's a false prophet, self-righteousness. It's amazing how man will make an ungodly act a righteous calling. It's amazing to me. And of course, we know that this was going to happen. So, all of these allurements are going to be broadcast in such a way, it doesn't matter if it's true, but it just matters if they can promise it, and it matters if in fact it allures, and they're going to find whatever button they need to push to bring in these nations so that they'll war. I mean, how do you talk somebody into warring against God? How do you do that? Well, think about it. What causes you to war against God? What causes you to fight against righteousness? The point is that this world is against God.

And that's why, if you look with me in James, you see the same point within the passage. James 4. You want to know why people are warring, why people fight?

(James 4:1) "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures..."

Well, there's the beast calling out.

"... that wage war in your members?

(James 4:2) You lust and do not have; so you commit murder..."

Pleasures that wage war. Isn't that interesting?

"You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask."

Then he says this in verse 4,

(James 4:4) "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

Why is it that God is telling you, "Get rid of these things that are so important to you"? I can tell you why. Because those are the very things that are going to keep you from embracing Him when He comes. And the whole point is that when Christ comes to many people, He's going to be perceived as a thief because He's taken away everything they love. But to those who love Him, He's going to be looked at as the Savior of their lives. For their home is not here; it's in heaven. The cry of the text is, make sure you're dressed in this sense of holiness.

Now, the question is, what does that look like? And probably the best Scripture that I can give you is found in Colossians if you look with me in Colossians 3. And we'll end with this passage that kind of gives us that clarity of how to keep ourselves in the right place so that we're not finding ourselves loving the wrong things. Because I can tell you this, if you love the wrong things, you can be

allured away from God. "Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me," Paul says. So, if you love the wrong stuff, you're easy prey.

It says this in Colossians 3, if you look with me in verse 12, (Colossians 3:12) "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy..."

Different; not like the world.

"... and beloved, put on a heart of compassion..."

So, you're putting on, so you're not to be found naked. So, you're putting on compassion. Well, look, it's very difficult to be compassionate and kind if you're greedy and self-indulgent. But if you're wearing compassion and kindness and humility and gentleness and patience and you begin to bear with one another and you forgive one another, then what you're saying is that people and their souls are more important than your stuff. And people are going to wrong you, right? Sometimes they're even going to take your stuff. Now, here's the question. Do you love your

stuff more than the people? Or do you want to see the people saved? Sometimes these things will happen in our lives to test, to see what's the most important thing. But if you're loving the right thing, you'll never be drawn away by the evil one. If you love the wrong thing, you'll ever be drawn away. And this is an interesting picture in which the masses form this power. And I would say that on the final day, the other thing that's going to be alluring people is a sense that the majority are there. Now, his point isn't necessarily that we're all going to go through this tribulation. This isn't the point of the church. The point of the church is to demonstrate to us the power of the world and what it's trying to accomplish and how it's moving us and how hateful it is towards that which is righteous and that which is good and that which is truthful and benevolent and like Christ. As Paul will later on say, "Put on Christ, and you'll be okay." When you consider the difficulties in your life and that some of these things are being taken away from you, it's a good thing because God

is preparing you to be ready for Him. Be dressed in readiness is basically what the Scripture is telling us. And we know that day is going to come. There's a real day that's going to come in which the world is going to gather together. And you wouldn't think that the whole world, really, the whole world is going to be against God. That's why it says, "Love not the world; neither the things in the world." If the majority are thinking it, it's probably wrong.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your words and the encouragement that we receive through it. We just pray that You work on our hearts, that we would be thinking about loving You and about the stuff that's valuable, that we would not be attached to the things of the world because the loving of the world makes us not only adulterers but enemies of God. It's the very thing that

causes us to war against You. It's the thing that wages war within ourselves. It's where battles begin. Once we begin to embrace the fruitfulness of man without God, it's not long before we're thinking of ways to defy and fight against You. You become a barrier to the very things that we want instead of You being the very one that we want and all these things becoming barriers in our lives.

Your head's bowed and your eyes closed, I'm just asking you to examine your heart. That's what Revelation is about. It's unveiling the things that are manipulating us and the things that would so easily dissuade us from the One who loves us so much. Get rid of them.