**round their breasts with golden girdles**(being in this like our Lord Himself as  
seen in vision, ch. i, 13). {7} **And one from  
among the four living-beings** (appropriately to the symbolic meaning of these  
living-creatures as the representatives of  
*creation*, see notes on ch. iv. 7, 11, inasmuch as the coming plagues are to be  
inflicted on the objects of creation) **gave  
to the seven angels seven golden vials**(the *phialé* was a shallow bowl or cup,  
usually without a stand or foot, in which  
they drew out of the *crater* or goblet),  
**full of the wrath of God who liveth for  
ever and ever** (this addition serves, as in  
ch. i, 8, to give solemnity to the fact  
related). {8} **And the temple was filled with  
smoke from** (arising from) **the glory of  
God and from His might** (i.e. from His  
presence, in which His glory and His  
might were displayed. ‘The "description  
calls to mind similar ones in the Old Test.  
e.g. Ps. xviii. 8 f.; Isa, lxv. 5. See also  
below), **and no one was able to enter  
into the temple** (compare 1 Kings viii. 10,  
11; Exod. xl. 34, 35) **until the seven  
plagues of the seven angels should be  
finished** (the passages above referred to  
give the reason: because of the unapproachableness of God, when immediately  
present and working, by any created being.  
See Exod. xix. 21. When these judgments  
should be completed, then, the wrathful presence and agency of God being withdrawn,  
He might again be approached. Many other  
meanings more or less far-fetched have  
been given, but where Scripture analogy  
is so plain, the simplest is the best).

**CH XVI. 1—21**.] THE SEVEN VIALS.  
See the general remarks on ch, viii. 1 for  
all questions common to the three great  
series of visions. The following special  
particulars are here to be noticed: 1) In  
the description, ch. xvi., which first introduces these plagues, they are plainly called  
**the seven plagues which are the last.**  
There can then be no doubt here, not only  
that the series reaches on to the time of  
the end, but that the whole of it is to be  
placed close to the same time. And this  
is borne out by the particulars evolved in  
the course of the visions themselves. For  
we find that they do not in point of time  
go back, but at once take up the events of  
the former visions, and occur during the   
times of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the mystery of God should be  
finished. 2) As in the seals and in the  
trumpets, so here again, there is a marked  
distinction between the first four and the  
following three. As there, so here, the  
objects of the first four are the earth, the  
sea, the springs of waters, and the sun.  
After this the objects become more particularized : the throne of the beast, the  
river Euphrates, with the reservation of  
that peculiar and vague character for the  
*seventh*, which seems to belong to it in all  
the three series, 3) As before, so now,  
there is a compendious and anticipatory  
character about several of the vials, leading us to believe that those of which this  
is not so plain, partake of this character  
also. For example, under the *third* vial  
we find an acknowledgment of the divine  
justice in making those drink blood who  
shed the blood of saints and prophets.  
This, there can be little doubt, points on  
to the judgment on Babylon, in whom, ch.  
xviii. 24, was found the blood of saints and  
prophets, and of all that had been slain on  
the earth, Again, under the *sixth* we have  
the same great gathering to battle which  
is described in detail, ch. xix.17—21. And  
finally, under the *seventh*, we have a compendious anticipatory notice of the judgment of Babylon, hereafter, ch. xvii., xviii.  
to be described in detail,—and of the great