"THE BOWLS ARE POURED OUT"

Revelation 16:1-21

8-28-2022



A Practical Key Truth -- * WARNING: *The most severe judgment ever experienced on earth is yet ahead!* <u>Flee from the wrath to come!</u>**



I. Bowl # 1 - Great Affliction (v. 2)



II. Bowl # 2 - Great Destruction (v. 3)



III. Bowl # 3 - Great Thirst (v. 4-7)



IV. Bowl # 4 - Great Burning (v. 8-9)



V. Bowl # 5 - Great Darkness (v. 10-11)



VI. Bowl # 6 - Great Battle (v. 12-16)



VII. Bowl # 7 - Great Earthquake & Hailstorm (v. 17-21)

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V. 1

"I heard a great voice out of the temple" - the Apostle John heard the voice of God who alone is in the Temple during the bowl judgments (15:8). [cp. Christ's powerful voice - Rev. 1:15]

The greatness of the coming wrath of God is a sobering thought. [SEE Mt. 24:21-22]

Contemporary (modern day) afflictions (AIDS), natural and man-caused catastrophes (oil spills, etc.), battles (WW I & II), earthquakes (San Francisco), and storms (Hugo) are nothing ("child's play") compared to what is yet ahead.

"A great voice" = this chapter emphasizes the word "great," which occurs eleven times. --

"a great voice"	(v. 1, 17)
"great heat"	(v. 9)
"great river"	(v. 12)
"great day"	(v. 14)
"great earthquake"	(v. 18, twice)
"great city"	(v. 19)
"great Babylon"	(v. 19)
"great hail"	(v. 21)
"great plague"	(v. 21)

--The Bowl Judgments are certain.

The certainty of the bowl judgments is seen by the past tense verbs throughout the chapter. From John's perspective the judgments were as if they had already occurred because he is seeing a panoramic preview picture of what will for sure be fulfilled.

--The Bowl Judgments are swift.

The bowl judgments evidently occur in rapid-fire succession because:

1. Their brief descriptions suggest their speed of fulfillment.

2. Their horrible effects suggest speed of fulfillment. The major catastrophic proportions of these judgments do not allow for a great deal of time to lapse between them.

3. God prophesied of the judgment of Armageddon to be completed very quickly (actually --"in one day") (Is.29:5; Zech.3:9; 14:7; Rev.18:10,17,19).

--The Bowl Judgments are final.

The vial (bowl) judgments are the grand finale (ILLUS: fire works display) of the wrath of God.

They are called: ***"the seven last plagues"*** (15:1) because they conclude the judgment of God. The word "last" proves that the trumpet judgments come before (precede in time) the vial (bowl) judgments.

The 7 trumpet judgments involve the first state of God's out-poured wrath, whereas the 7 bowl (vial) judgments describe the final stage of God's out-poured wrath (15:1).

--The Bowl Judgments are <u>great</u>.

The 7 trumpets serve as a final warning and foreshadowing of what immediately follows.
NOTE: The parallels between the 7 trumpets and 7 vials (bowls) [The major difference between the trumpets and the vials is the **intensity and extensiveness** of the judgments]
For example: The trumpets describe <u>partial</u> destruction ("the third part" - 7:7-12; "not kill them" - 9:5; "slay the third part of men" - 9:15) whereas the vials describe <u>total</u> destruction.

Trumpet	#1 -	1/3 burning (8:7)	
Vial	#1 -	Sores on <u>all</u> with the mark (16:2)	
Trumpet	#2 -	1/3 sea becomes blood (8:8)	1/3 sea life dies (8:9)
Vial	#2 -	All sea becomes blood (16:3)	
Trumpet	#3 -	1/3 of fresh water smitten (8:10)	
Vial	#3 -	All fresh water smitten (16:4)	
Trumpet	#4 -	1/3 of sun darkened (8:12)	
Vial	#4 -	Sun scorches men with fire (16:8)	
Trumpet	#5 -	Torment for five months (9:10)	
Vial	#5 -	Intense torment (16:10-11)	
Trumpet	#6 -	1/3 men killed (9:15)	
Vial	#6 -	Armageddon (16:16)	
Trumpet	#7 -	"Thy wrath is come" (11:18)	
Vial	#7 -	"It is done" (16:17)	

A Practical Key Truth -- * WARNING: The most severe judgment ever experienced on earth is yet ahead! Flee from the wrath to come!**

I. Bowl # 1 - Great Affliction (v. 2)

"A noisome and grievous" =
"Noisome" - lit. bad (the opposite of good); describes the harmful <u>nature</u> of the sore. An ugly, loathsome sore.
"Grievous" = lit. evil; malignant. Describes the harmful <u>effects</u> of the sore. An <u>incurable</u>, <u>painful</u> sore.
SEE verses 10 & 11 for the severity of pain caused by the sores.

"Sore" = an abscess or boil. A puss-filled, oozing, dripping, painful, inflamed sore
(SEE: Exod. 9:8-12 - sores on Egyptians. LXX "sore" = same word as Rev. 16:2)
ILLUS: Job's sores inflicted by Satan were severe but not terminal, as these will be.

Such physical suffering and affliction is limited to those who took the Antichrist's mark, or bowed to his image. Remember God's warning in Rev. 14:9-11.

II. Bowl # 2 - Great Destruction (v. 3)

"Sea" = the world's oceans; all salt water
(Cp. Rev. 8:8 - upon the blowing of the second trumpet, 1/3 of the sea became blood)
"It became as the blood of a dead man" = lit. "It became blood as of a dead man." The word "as" should be moved after the word blood. The point is not that the waters became like blood (but in fact were not) but that the waters became literal blood (cp. 8:8), not like the blood of a living person, but like the rotten, putrefying blood of a dead man.

"Every living soul died" = every living creature died.

"Soul" (psuche) refers to a species that has life. Technically all animate creatures have a "soul" (or life principle), but only man has a spirit (pneuma).

NOTE: Such a judgment will not be the result of acid rain, oil spills, or any other human or natural disaster. This judgment will clearly be the finger of God (SEE: the first plague on Egypt - Exod. 7:14-21). Everything in the sea will die as blood fills its gills and respiratory system, robbing the life-giving oxygen supply. Every shark, whale, squid, octopus, clam, every sort of fish, etc., will die.
Can you imagine the stench and disease that will accompany such a judgment? The shore lines of the world will be lined with billions of rotting, stinking fish. The coastal breezes will blow this toxic odor inland.

III. Bowl # 3 - Great Thirst (v. 4-7)

V. 4
Rivers and fountains (springs) feed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs with fresh water. Therefore, when these water supplies are smitten, every body of water on earth will be polluted.

V. 5
"Thou art righteous" - lest anyone should question the fairness (equity or justice) of God; the Angel declares that God has every right to judge in such a way.
Who dares to question the actions of God.
When puny, pea-brained man questions the veracity of God, he does not realize who he is bringing into trial.
Should anyone think to question God's fairness in meting out such judgments, they had better remember who God is!

1) God is ***"Lord"*** - as the sovereign ruler and master over all - who can question His dealings with His creation?

2) God is "eternal" - ***"which art, and wast and shall be"*** - God, unlike man, was not "born yesterday," as the saying goes. He has been around for eternity; He knows the score; He has kept the records; and He knows that the world is worthy of such judgment.

V. 6

God's fairness (righteousness) in judging the world in such a bloody manner is seen by the fact that the people living during this time are guilty of bloodshed.

"They shed the blood..." - those who cooperated with Antichrist in opposing and killing God's people. Those tied in with the escatological "Mother of harlots" - Rev. 17:5-6, 18:24.

"The blood of saints" = believers living in the Tribulation.
"Prophets" - such as God's two witnesses (Rev. 11:7-10).

"Blood to drink" = Is. 49:26 - *"And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."*

"For they are worthy"
"Worthy" - to balance the scales; the godless world will measure up to such a judgment.

V. 7

"I heard another out of the altar" - a reference to the martyrs themselves (Rev. 6:9 - "Souls under the altar"). Those martyred echo back a confirming reply: "Even so" - or Yes it is exactly as the Angel said - "You are right to do what you do."

> God's penal judgments are true (God, unlike our present court system, does not condemn any innocent person).
>
> God's penal judgments are righteous (for God to judge unrighteously would be for God to commit sin - an impossibility)(SEE: Rev. 19:1-2, 11)

IV. Bowl # 4 - Great Burning (v. 8-9)

V. 8

Psalm 121:6 says, *"The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night."* This verse is perplexing (since the moon never smote anyone with any injury). However, when compared with Isaiah 30:26 it makes sense. Isaiah 30:26 foretells how the moon will be as the sun and the sun will shine 7 times more intensely.
Throughout history, God has restrained the sun from such an intense scorching flame. He has kept the earth far enough away from the sun that the earth does not melt, and close enough that the earth does not completely freeze.
One day, however, God will evidently either move the earth somewhat closer to the sun, or He will supernaturally turn the sun's thermometer up 7 times hotter so that the scorching heat becomes unbearable.

"Scorch" = to intensely burn. No mere sunburn, but a scorching foretaste of the "lake of fire."

V. 9

"Power over these plagues"
"Power" = authority (Christ has this authority - Mt. 28-19).
All God has to do is say the word and the Angel would withdraw his bowl.
There will be no agnostics or atheists when God interrupts the present course of nature.
The ungodly will know that such torments are not mere coincidence or natural catastrophes, but that God is behind it.
However, despite such judgment, rather than asking God for relief from the scorching heat, men will blaspheme His name (v. 9) and His person (v. 11).
Three times in chapter 16 men choose to blaspheme God because of the plagues, rather than repent (v. 9, 11, 21).

V. Bowl # 5 - Great Darkness (v. 10-11)

V. 10
"The seat of the Beast" = the throne of the Antichrist.
This bowl is aimed specifically at the Antichrist and his kingdom.
"Darkness" = cp. the darkness that swept across Egypt for 3 days during the ninth plague (Ex. 10:21-29).
It was described as "darkness which may be felt" (v. 21) (an eerie, pitch-black darkness).

"They gnawed their tongues for pain" - indicative of the intensity of the pain felt. When pain becomes unbearable, in an attempt to brace themselves, man automatically grinds his teeth together.
This is why in the old days, before anaesthesia, when someone would perform surgery, they would have the patient "bite a bullet" - so as not to bite his tongue or grown his teeth down to nothing during the operation.

Such gnawing of the tongue is merely a foretaste of the eternal torments of hell and the lake of fire, which will be places characterized by "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 24:51, 25:30).

* The darkness actually intensifies their pains as their senses are now more keenly focused on their agony.
Since they will see nothing with their eyes, there will be less distractions to take their minds off of their pains.
As a blind man has a keener sense of touch, due to his not being able to see, so the Antichrist and his unbelieving followers will more keenly be aware of the misery they feel.

Even the "great" Antichrist--the self-proclaimed (II Th. 2:4) and world-acclaimed (Rev. 13:4, 12) "god" will suffer as a mere mortal, since this is all he is.

"Blasphemed the God of heaven" - they will recognize that God is the source of such judgment. Blasphemy often occurs among the ungodly when pain strikes.
EX: People take His name in vain and use fool language when undergoing pain.
V. 11
"Repented not" - repentance will be impossible for those who worship Antichrist (cp.Rev.14:9-11).

VI. Bowl # 6 - Great Battle (v. 12-16)

V. 12

The drying up of the Euphrates (Is. 11:15) will allow tanks, artillery, and soldiers to enter Palestine from the eastern world.

"The kings of the east" lit. "the kings of the rising of the sun" (the great armies of the Orient")

Japan today is called the "Land of the rising sun."

V. 13

"Like frogs" - the false lies will leap forth from the lips of the Satanic trinity.

1)	The dragon...	=	1)	Satan
2)	The Beast...	=	2)	Antichrist
3)	False Prophet	=	3)	religious promoter of the Antichrist

Satan's trinity - Satan, who always wanted to be like God (Is. 14:14) will duplicate in corrupt fashion the Trinity. [Cp. 13:4, 19:20, 20:2, 10]

V. 14

"Working miracles" = doing signs. Beware of lying wonders (SEE: II Thes. 2:9-12). Test the spirits today (I Jn. 4:1).

"To gather them" - This gathering will evidently occur prior to the Bowls, since the Bowls will prevent anyone from doing much of anything, except worrying about their intense agony. The world, no doubt instigated by Satan, will equate the plagues of God with God's people, the Jews. Since they cannot strike out against God Himself, they will against God's people. One final attempt to destroy the Jew will be made. [SEE Zechariah 12:3-4; 14:1-5, 12]

V. 15

An interjected admonition to be ready for the Rapture so as to not face the Bowl judgments.

Christ's coming as a thief is a reference to His coming for judgment (Rev. 20:11-16). He will come for His saints and then come down for Armageddon. Christ will return "from the wedding" (Luke 12:36). This wedding (Rev. 19:7) occurs before Christ's return to rescue Israel and fight her battle (19:11-21).

V. 16

"He gathered them" - a reference to God.

Cp. v. 14 - "Spirits of devils...to gather them."

The point is: God will allow demons to accomplish His purpose.

VII. Bowl # 7 - Great Earthquake & Hailstorm (v. 17-21)

V. 18

"A great earthquake" = SEE Rev. 6:12

v. 19

"The great city" - evidently Jerusalem (Rev. 11:8 - Jerusalem is called "great")

"and great Babylon" - religious (Rev. 17) and commercial Babylon (Rev. 18).

V. 20

When an island sinks, a tremendous tidal wave occurs as the water seeks to level itself, to fill the space of the missing body of land.

V. 21

"Talent" - anywhere from 60 lbs to over 100 lbs.

The out-pouring of God's bowl judgments teach us truth about God and man:

A. The Truth About

1. God <u>hates</u> and must punish sin (v. 1)

"The wrath of God" - "Wrath" = the intensely hot fury of God; the explosive anger of God. God hates sin, as evident by His anger toward it.

2. God is <u>right</u> to punish sin (v. 5-7)

Gal. 6:7 - "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." God would not give the world such a judgment if it were not worthy of it.

God's Law of Retribution:

--Deut. 19:21 - *"And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."* This law was applied under the O.T. theocracy - Mt. 5:38.

--Prov. 26:27 - *"Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him."* (cp. Prov. 28:10; Eccles. 10:8)

--EX: Haman's gallows (Esther)

3. God <u>never</u> <u>forgets</u> to punish sin (v. 19)

B. The Truth About

"<u>They repented not to give Him glory</u>." This phrase shows:

1. Man has a stubborn, proud, hard-hearted nature (v. 9)

Some people would rather get burned than to admit the error of their way. Men would rather suffer and take God's name in vain, than to repent of sin.

They refuse to repent because such repentance would give God glory -- and God's glory is the last thing unsaved people want to be part of.

Whereas God's people want God to be glorified (I Cor. 10:31; Rev. 5:13), the lost do not want Him to be glorified (EX: Herod, Acts 12:23).

2. Man's repentance brings glory to God (v. 9b)

Whenever someone repents of sin, God is glorified.

How does repentance give God glory?

1) When someone repents, they are admitting: "God, you were right, I was wrong."
2) When someone repents, they are humbling themselves and elevating the holiness of God.

Every time you repent, you are glorifying God.

For a Christian to repent of wrong words, thoughts, motives, and deeds is not a shame. Rather, it would glorify God. It is a shame NOT to repent.

To not repent is to refuse to glorify God.