

Revelation 16: The Bowl Judgments, Part 2

4) The Fourth Bowl (vs. 8-9): Another form of bitter agony tied to the downfall and collapse of the economy. Perhaps, the realization of the truth, which they have denied and rejected comes back to burn their consciences, as all that they have trusted in, has fallen apart. And rather than repent and respond to the truth, they still blatantly blaspheme God in light of it. Rather than plead for mercy and turn in repentance, the realization of their wicked error leads them to further rebel against the very light, which scorches their conscience (kind of like Pharaoh, when he was being hardened by the Egyptian plagues---remember, the tabernacle sanctuary is closed, no more intercession, no more repentance granted). (Relate to the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit- As the clear light of Christ through His miracles, struck the consciences of the religious leaders, they only hated Him all the more, and blasphemed). In this case, the light burns their consciences and their minds. The realization of their shallow confidence in the world and in the beasts has begun to settle in, but they only blaspheme God all the more. Notice who has power over these plagues (vs. 9). Illustrated by the 7th Egyptian plague (hail mixed with fire).

5) The Fifth Bowl (vs. 10-11): The kingdoms of the world (centered upon the beast) and the unredeemed are given over to complete darkness. They are hardened to the utmost extent, wholly prepared to be given over to the beast. They are universally tormented (in the spiritual sense) and ripened to be destroyed with the beast and the whore, in whom they have put their confidence and trust. The agony of their spiritual lostness and their inevitable, irreversible destruction further leads them to blaspheme God, as they gnaw their tongues because of the inner anguish and pain. Probably about as close to hell on earth as is possible. Even common grace is gone (God's kind presence). If the fourth bowl scorched them with fiery light, the fifth bowl sent them plunging into the worst form of darkness imaginable (felt darkness). The living unredeemed of that day will recognize and process their utter hopelessness before they are cast into hell. They will see the fire before they meet it, as it were. And rather than lead them to repentance, it will lead them to have a further, animalistic rage against God. They will be further

solidified in their evil commitment, and under complete subjection to the beast. Illustrated by the 9th Egyptian plague.

6) The Sixth Bowl (vs. 12-16): When the Persians defeated the impenetrable Babylon, they had diverted the Euphrates river into a nearby canal, greatly lowering the water level and thereby enabling their army to penetrate and attack the Babylonians at night and by stealth. The Babylonians were completely taken off guard and defeated. What the Babylonians saw as their great source of protection and strength, became their utter weakness and downfall. We are meant to have this great defeat in mind as we consider what happens in the pouring out of the sixth bowl.

For, the enemies of God put out the light of the church and they are deceptively gathered together as a means of completely annihilating the remaining people of God, in their opposition to Christ. Deceptive spirits are sent out by the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet (the second beast), performing signs, as a means of deceiving the kings of the earth and the whole unbelieving world, leading them to gather together to destroy the people of God altogether. And as they gather together and surround the people of God, utterly darkened and assuming that they are within reach of their goal, they fail to realize that they have actually been gathered unto their own defeat. This is *the* great battle of Armageddon (Megiddo was the place of significant war for the Jews), where the end will take place. And just when the enemies of God will think they have utterly defeated the people of God, Christ will return. And the affect of His return; the utter shock of His return will be to His enemies, like an unexpected thief in the night. This reality leads our Lord to provide His churches with yet another warning; the common warning of Revelation, for those who have ears to hear, lest that Day should take them by surprise (verse 15).

Before moving on to the seventh and last bowl judgment, we must consider a few key things here, which confirm yet again, the recapitulating nature of the Book of Revelation. This great battle has been referred to already, and we are brought to this scene at different times throughout the Book of Revelation. Note, the definite article, "The," here, speaking of the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty (vs. 14), indicating that this battle has already been spoken of, previous to this. [See Rev. 11:7-13; 13:7; 19:19 & 20:7-10].

7) The Seventh Bowl (vs. 17-21): It is the end. Christ has returned and brought utter destruction to the world. Babylon has fallen (split in three), the beasts have been defeated along with the dragon...the end has come. Chapters 17-20 will bring out the magnifying glass and open up the details of the destruction of the whore, the beasts and the dragon (especially the whore of Babylon). In other words, all that is implied here will be shown in greater detail. The emphasis here, however, is on the utter destruction of the world. Each enemy has its own emphasis, though they are all ultimately defeated together.

Note the progressive revelation of this "Day of God's wrath" (noises, thunderings...etc) from Rev. 6:12-17 & 8:1-5, to Rev. 11:15-19, to Rev. 16:17-21 [See last column on chart].

Conclusive Thoughts

[See Rev. 16:5-7 & 9/11/21 blaspheming & 15 blessing---see also 1:3, 14:13,16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7 & 22:14)

Amen!!!