

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #39
5/30/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

As we continue with the Bowl Judgments it is important to note that these judgments are **cumulative** with each judgment continuing and the following ones being added to the previous ones. In addition to being cumulative the judgments are **ascendative**, i.e., that is, they ascend in intensity and severity and each judgment is worse than the one that precedes it. Besides being **cumulative** and **ascendative** the Bowl Judgments are **fulfilling** in nature. God has both provided specific oral warnings and a typical sampling of each judgment prior to this time. No man can say that God has not been fair and righteous in His judgments. Those who have taken God seriously and studied His written Word will find that in these judgments God is doing exactly what He said and showed He would do if man rejected Him and chose other gods.

The previous lesson cited verses from Deuteronomy, the last book in the Pentateuch. Deuteronomy contains God's commandments and instructions to His people, Israel, just prior to their entrance into the promised land. To have a sense as to how what we are reading in Revelation relates to the very beginning of Israel in their promised land it is helpful to note a few matters found in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy four presents God's introduction of His message to the Israelites as they prepare to depart from the wilderness and enter the promised land. In Chapter four Moses spoke specifically about idolatry, the apex of which is practiced in the worship of the beast, and said, ***"Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee. For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God"*** (Deu. 4:23-24). In that passage God related this to the Tribulation Period by saying, ***"when thou art in tribulation and all these things come upon thee, even in the latter days"*** (Deu. 4:30). Towards the end of his address to the Israelites is found the summary of **"blessings and cursings"** from Chapter twenty-eight from which we quoted in the previous lesson. Moses concluded his address with his well known plea to the people to take God seriously and obey Him.

"¹⁵See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; ¹⁶In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. ¹⁷But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; ¹⁸I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to record this day against

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #39
5/30/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:²⁰That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” (Deu. 29:15-20).

The first Bowl Judgment affected each individual who had accepted the **“mark of the beast,”** thus engaging in a form of idolatry that was the culmination of the rebellion of men who openly chose idolatry over the worship of Jehovah God, the Creator, Owner, and Lord of this creation. Those courageously faithful to the Lord God were not touched by this horrible disease, these incurable **“sores.”**

One can only attempt to imagine the scene upon the earth with the masses of people, trying to function and just get through the day, unable to rest at night and finding it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out their normal everyday tasks of life. Pain can be totally debilitating and, though people have varying thresholds of pain, the type of pain produced by these boil-like, oozing sores has not been experienced by man previously. Even the strongest of the myriad of painkillers available would be totally ineffective and the plague, with all of its debilitating pain, could not be healed or alleviated and would continue until the end of the Tribulation Period.

The Second and Third Bowl Judgments have to do with water which is absolutely necessary for life.

First, all of the seas, which make up more than two thirds of the earth's surface, of the world are affected.

3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

The statement is brief as if the more simple the statement the more serious its meaning. As mentioned above, the effects of the judgments are **(1) cumulative**, i.e., continuing, **(2) ascendative**, i.e., increasing in severity, and **(3) fulfilling**.

Though the statement is brief, the effects encompass the whole world. This is a fulfillment of two sample warnings provided by God.

First, in Exodus seven, when Moses and Aaron first appealed to Pharaoh to let God's people go, God told Moses:

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #39
5/30/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

“¹⁷Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. ¹⁸And the fish that is in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians shall lothe to drink of the water of the river. ²⁰And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood” (Exodus 7:17-18,20).

This was a temporary plague, lasting only seven days, and limited to the land of Egypt. God even allowed Pharaoh's magicians to produce some sort of illusionary copy of this supernatural act, but the act of God through Moses, and its message, was real.

Then, in Revelation eight, where we have the second series of judgments, the **Trumpet Judgments**, when

“the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed” (Rev. 8:8-9).

It is likely that the effects of this plague lingered upon the earth. We know from modern-day accidental spills of oil into the sea that the devastation can be enormous and lasting, taking several years and huge sums of money and effort to remove the effects upon nature, and those are restricted to very limited areas.

When **“the second angel sounded,”** one third of all the seas of the world turned to blood. Billions of creatures of the sea would die and float to the surface, ending up on the beaches, emitting a stench previously unknown. Almost every aspect of life on this earth would have suffered traumatically since the seas play such a vital role in the life cycles of almost everything on this earth. The salt water of the seas serves as filter for the poisons and pollutions, as well as a critical role in the hydrologic cycle of the climate of the earth, and the environmental scientists of the world would still be frustrated and struggling in their efforts to find a solution to this trauma.

Now, when the second bowl of God's wrath is poured out the whole world is affected. **“The sea became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul (living creature) died in the sea.”**

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #39
5/30/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

God does not explain how this happens. If He did we probably could not comprehend it. Nor does He describe the effects, but man has already had sufficient sampling of how devastating such a thing might be. Whereas the accidents of men have traumatically affected some very limited areas, killing millions of sea creatures, and the previous plague of one third of the seas, now trillions upon trillions of sea creatures die, float to the surface and then float to the shore.

The stench would totally saturate the atmosphere. The climatological cycle of the earth, so wonderfully set in motion when God created this world, would end. There would be no evaporation of moisture to form the clouds and drop the rain with which God sends to water the earth for He sends the rain to all, *“the just and the unjust”* (Mat. 5:45), and He *“covered the heavens with clouds and made the grass to grow”* (Psalm 147:8). He has done it all with little or no recognition or appreciation from mankind. Rather, egotistical man, thinking that he has the ability to affect the climate of this world is suddenly thrown into panic and helplessness. Life, as it has been known, experienced, and taken for granted, comes to an abrupt halt.

The water of the seas, every last drop of it, is suddenly replaced with coagulated blood. Blood, which He had given for life (Leviticus 17:11), God now uses to poison life!

While men are still struggling with the debilitating pain of their oozing ulcerated sores covering them from *“the top of their head to the bottom of their feet”* and frantically trying to do something about this worldwide disaster in the seas, the third angel pours out his bowl of God's wrath.

4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

When Moses turned the waters of the great Nile River, as well as all of the water the Egyptians had stored in containers, into blood (Exodus 7:7-21) the Egyptians had panicked and started digging around the river trying to find water to drink. Man can live without a lot of things, but he cannot live long without water. However difficult the situation in which the Egyptians found themselves was, it only lasted seven days. The effects of each of these plagues continues until the end. The **cumulative** and **ascendative** effects are beyond our comprehension. **First**, the sores. **Then**, the seas turning into coagulated blood. **Now**, all fresh water turns into blood. God is specific with His choice of words. Not only do the rivers, with the lakes they feed, turn into blood, but also all of the **“fountains,”** springs, wells and other sources of water are included.

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #39
5/30/2007

The Judgment of God, The Great Tribulation, The Great Day of God's Wrath
Chapter Sixteen - The Bowl Judgments
The Last Series of Judgments, The End of The Tribulation Period

In Revelation 8:10-11, when the **“third angel sounded,”** one third of all the rivers and fountains had been made poisonous and undrinkable, but only one third! However, knowing a little bit about how desperate people can get when there is shortage of “essentials” such as food and fuel, it is possible for us to visualize some the trauma and panic already felt around the world when one third of the fresh water suddenly becomes unusable. We have seen riots and mass killings several times in our world when some critical shortage existed. Drinking water is an even more critical element of life. Reduce its supply by one third and the situation would be chaotic. Take away ALL sources of drinking water and it is almost impossible to visualize the panic and chaos, particularly when the rule of God has been rejected and it's total anarchy, “Every man for himself”!

Over the centuries an audience of angels in heaven has been observing the rebellion of mankind and the seemingly endless patience of our Holy and Righteous God. No longer can they restrain themselves and cry out:

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.

6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

When God gave us a preview of this time of God's righteous judgment in Chapter fifteen, we read where the angel urged God to take action: **“And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe”** (Rev. 14:15). Men today foolishly think that they want justice and reject God's grace and mercy. The angels say; “Give them justice, it's what they deserve.” Added to the angels' cry is a voice coming from under the altar:

⁹And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ¹⁰And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ¹¹And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled” (Rev. 6:9-11).

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

It is time for justice. Finally what has long been deserved is done!