

# Revelation: The Seven Bowls

Lesson 21

# Bowls, The Completion of Divine Wrath During The Tribulation

- The third series of judgments, which complete the outpouring of divine wrath, are the bowls.
- Although four of these bowls are poured out on the same areas as the trumpets, they do not seem to be the same judgments.
- The bowls of wrath seem to cover a very brief period at the end of the tribulation just prior to the return of Christ.
- Remember, the seventh seal ***includes*** the seven trumpets AND the seven bowls. This supports the idea above of the bowls of wrath covering a very brief period.
- These bowls seem to have particular reference to unbelievers, as they undergo the special wrath of God, and have special reference to the Beast and his followers
- Daniel indicated that these closing days of the Tribulation will be a time of world war ([Daniel 11:36-45](#)). World events are now pictured as rapidly coming to their climax.

# Bowl #1: Land

- Read [Revelation 16:1-2](#)
  - A loud voice from the temple.
  - The first angel poured out his bowl poured onto the land
  - Ugly and painful sores broke out on all the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped the beast
- The first bowl is poured out upon the earth, as in the first trumpet.
- In this judgment God is pouring out wrath on all Beast-worshippers.
  - The judgments being poured out are greater, more severe, more intense than anything that has happened in the preceding events.
- The loud voice is undoubtedly the voice of God speaking from His heavenly temple.
- The question is often raised as to whether the bowls of the wrath of God are chronologically subsequent to or identical with the seven trumpets of the angels.
  - Unfortunately, similarities do not prove identity, and a comparison of the trumpets with the bowls of God's wrath reveals striking differences.

# The Trumpet Judgments Differ From Bowls

	Trumpets	Bowls	Striking Differences
1	Earth	Land	With Trumpets, only a third of the earth or heaven is affected whereas bowl judgments affects the whole world and are much more severe and final in character.
2	The Sea	The Sea	If the judgments were the same than it would negate the premise that the trumpets are included in the 7 <sup>th</sup> seal and the bowls are included in the 7 <sup>th</sup> trumpet.
3	The rivers and springs of water	Rivers and Springs of water	The order in bowls is climatic and the judgments become more intensive and extensive as the second coming of Christ appears
4	Sun, Moon, Stars	Sun, Moon, Stars	All indications are that the bowl judgments fall with trip-hammer rapidity on a world that is reeling under previous judgments and a gigantic world.
5	Demon possession with the sun and sky darkened	Darkness covering the earth and agonizing sores	Some bowl judgments are selective and extend only to the wicked and several affect parts of nature (sea, rivers, sun, etc...)
6	Deals with river Euphrates	Euphrates Dries up	
7	Implies Second Coming happens	It is done. Second Coming.	

# Bowl #2: Sea

- Read [Revelation 16:3](#)
  - The second angel poured out his bowl onto the sea
  - The sea turned into dead men's blood.
  - Everything in the sea died.
- The second bowl, as in the second trumpet, is poured out upon the sea. The result of this judgment is spiritual death.
- The sea here is seen to become lifeless, “as the blood of a dead man.”
- The blood here is analogous to the first plague in Egypt ([Exodus 7:20-25](#))
- As most of the earth's surface is covered by the seas, this is a worldwide, tremendous judgment.

# Bowl #3: Fresh Water

- Read [Revelation 16:4-7](#)
  - The third angel poured out his bowl onto all the rivers and springs
  - They became blood
  - The angel in charge of the waters said the judgment was just, for those who had shed the saints' blood deserved to drink blood.
  - To which the altar agreed.
    - In the 5<sup>th</sup> seal, the altar is the place where sacrifice is offered and blood is spilled
- The third bowl, like the third trumpet, is poured out upon the rivers and fountains of waters and they lose their power to nourish or satisfy or sustain life. The trumpet caused 1/3 of the fresh water supply to become bitter. The third bowl causes all fresh water to turn into blood.
- It seems to have reference to removing the possibility of finding life from those who followed the Beast.
- God is turning the waters to blood in response to the shedding of the blood of His saints and prophets.

# Bowl #4:

## Sun

- Read [Revelation 16: 8-9](#)
  - The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun
  - The people on earth were scorched with fire
  - Even though seared by the heat, they cursed the God who they knew had power over the plagues and refused to repent and glorify Him
  - It is interesting to note that the redeemed multitude in [Revelation 7:16](#) will never again be subject to scorching heat
- The fourth bowl, like the fourth trumpet, falls upon the sun.
- Again, by contrast the fourth trumpet darkened a third of the heavens but did not include additional heat.
- That an individual is envisioned is seen in that the sun is referred to as “him.” This may have reference to the judgment of God that imposes blindness upon the Beast’s followers.

# Bowl #5: The Beast's Throne

- Read [Revelation 16:10](#)
  - The 5<sup>th</sup> angel poured out his bowl onto the beast's throne and onto the beast's kingdom
  - The beast's kingdom was plunged into darkness
  - Men chewed their tongues in their pain
  - They continued to curse the God of heaven and still refused to repent of their deeds.
  - Compare the 5<sup>th</sup> bowl to the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet. In the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet, smoke from the Abyss darkened the sun and sky and locusts came down out of the smoke inflicting agonizing stings on those who served the beast.
- The fifth bowl has to do with the imposition of darkness on the center of the Beast's power, anticipating the destruction of the beast's empire that claims to be the kingdom of the Messiah
- This is the last reference in Revelation to a failure to repent.
- The fifth bowl is similar to the fifth trumpet, in that both will bring darkness, but the fifth trumpet has to do with demon possession rather than physical pain.

# Bowl #6:

## The Great River Euphrates

- Read [Revelation 16:12-16](#)
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> angel poured out his bowl onto the river Euphrates which immediately dries up to allow the Kings of the East to cross over.
  - The 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet signaled 200,000,000 million mounted troops to be assembled by the four angels who had been bound at the Euphrates.
  - Three evil spirits looking like frogs came out of the evil trinity; from the mouths of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet
  - The three frogs persuade gain the allegiance of the kings of the whole world and gather them for battle on the great day of God Almighty ([Revelation 19:19](#)).
  - It would seem that the mammoth army is readied to kill one third of the world's population (at least 2 billion dead) in the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet. This is on the great day of God Almighty at Armageddon
  - Jesus interrupts the narrative exhorting the saints to stay alert, faithful and pure. His unspecified time of arrival, called the "day of the Lord" in [1 Thessalonians 5:1-4](#) must not find them apathetic or uncompromising.
  - All the kings gather together at the place called Armageddon.
    - Armageddon may indicate the area around Megiddo in central Israel
    - The details of the anticipated battle are conspicuously absent in v16
    - Later in Revelation we learn it is a sword coming out of Jesus' mouth that strikes down the nations, he apparently speaks and it is done. ([Revelation 19:15, 21](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:8](#), [Isaiah 11:4b](#))

# Bowl #6:

## The Great River Euphrates (2)

- The great river Euphrates is the water boundary between the Holy Land and Asia to the east.
- The sixth bowl prepares the way for an invasion of kings from the east, that they with the Beast's armies, might come to judgment at Armageddon

# Interlude After Bowl #6

- Read [Revelation 1:13-16](#)
- Preparation for Armageddon
  - Unclean spirits (frogs) came out of the mouths of the Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet.
  - The demons go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the final war.
  - Jesus gives a warning that he is coming like a thief in the night and for all to stay awake for his arrival.
- This is a peculiar strategy.
  - Demonic forces are used to gather all the world armies to fight God.
  - Actually the war is a form of rebellion against the world ruler.
    - Why then should satanic forces be let lose to destroy the world empire which has just been created?
    - Satan, knowing his end is near, gathers all military might of the world into the Holy Land to battle the Son of Man. ([Zechariah 14:4](#))
    - The war is said to continue right up to the day of the Second Coming and involves house-to-house fighting in Jerusalem itself on the day of the Lord's return ([Zechariah 14:1-3](#))
    - The war of Armageddon will be going on for some time, but the climax will come at Christ's second coming.

# Interlude After Bowl #6 (2)

- Christ's return is often compared to the coming of a thief. It implies suddenness and unpreparedness as far as unbelievers are concerned.
  - Just as Christians are not to be surprised by the Rapture of the church ([1 Thessalonians 5:4](#)), so believers at the time of Christ's return will be anticipating His return.
  - Blessings are promised to the one who is prepared for the coming of the Lord by being attired in the righteousness or clothing which God Himself supplies.
- Taken as a whole, the sixth bowl is preparation for the final act of judgment before the Second Coming. The time factor between the sixth trumpet and the sixth bowl is comparatively short.

# Bowl #7:

## “It Is Done”

- [Revelation 16:17-21](#)
  - The 7<sup>th</sup> angel poured out his bowl into the air.
  - A loud voice from heaven cried out, “It is done.” ([Rev. 10:7](#) and [11:15](#))
  - Lightning, rumblings, and thunder followed with the greatest earthquake to ever shake earth. All cities collapse, except perhaps for the Holy Land
  - Babylon the Great city splits into three parts
  - God hurls onto Babylon the fury of His wrath.
  - Every island and mountain disappears. This indicates
  - Huge 100 pound hailstones fall from the sky.
  - Obviously there will be tremendous loss of life and destruction of what is left of the world empire.
  - In spite of the severity of the judgment and its cataclysmic character the hardness of human hearts is revealed in the following bullet item.
  - Man continued to curse God.
    - It is clear, in bowls 4, 5, and 7 that the people cursing God knew who God was and who was orchestrating the plagues, but were not willing to repent and serve Him.
    - Review [Revelation 9:20-21](#) in which the inhabitants of the earth defiantly refused to change their conduct.
- The seventh bowl has to do with a great convulsion that completely overthrows the ordered affairs of men as they experience the “fierceness of His wrath”

# Judgment Bowl Wrap-Up

- The question is sometimes raised why eternal punishment is eternal.
- The answer is....
  - That people in the hardness of their hearts will not change.
  - They deserve eternal punishment because they are eternally unrepentant
- With the final destruction coming from the seventh bowl of the wrath of God, the stage will then be set for the dramatic and climactic second coming of Christ.