

Pouring Out the Vials (Bowels)

Rev. 16:1-12

11/18/2020

At the end of the previous chapter we saw the folk that have gotten victory and were able to sing songs of deliverance. We have here pictured the nation of Israel in the Great Tribulation, of which the bondage in Egypt under Pharaoh was a type and a shadow. Here the nation is once more delivered from their cruel Gentile oppressors and the wrath of the Antichrist. God having shown us those will not be overcome by the terrible judgments of the seven vials of wrath, John resumes his account of what will occur when these (bowls) of wrath are poured out. God will not bring His judgments upon the earth until He has made safe those who belong to Him. This is true also of the Church. He will not permit the Tribulation until after the Church has been caught away. He will not pour out the vials of His final wrath until His ancient people Israel have been removed, the judgments will fall swiftly and terribly.

V1. "And" Here is the indication of the change taken place.

"A great voice": God is the one running this program of the end times and His Son Jesus Christ is in full charge. Jesus was the only one worthy to open the seals of the book and He is the one marching to victory. The Father has committed all judgment unto Him. This world in which we are living in is under the wrath of God.

V2. "The first": Each angel, as his turn comes, withdraws from the heavenly scene of the mercy seat to pour out the wrath of God.

"Sore": These indicate corruption from within. This is a picture of the corruption of mankind. This compares to the 6th plague in Egypt (Exod. 9:8-12). Deut. 28:15 "But it shall come to pass, if thou will not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee." These are the prediction of Moses to Christ-rejecting people.

Deut. 28:35 "The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch (a large ulcerous affection) that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head."

"Upon the earth": This time the boils will be a worldwide event and not just in Egypt.

"Men which had": We have already seen what a terrible time it was for those who refused to take the mark of the beast or worship his image. Now those who went with Satan's program and benefited from it will be the focus of God's wrath poured upon them with every one of them worldwide being afflicted with terrible sores all over their bodies.

V3. "Sea": During the 2nd trumpet there was only 1/3 of the sea turned to blood. During the second vial (bowl) pouring all the waters of the earth will turn to blood.

"Of a dead man": Not only blood but pacifically dead blood. This means it is no longer a liquid but more to the way of congealed. The ocean waters are a source of life for our world but now become a grave of death. Every creature within these waters is dead and stinking. All commerce is gone.

V4. "Upon the rivers and fountains of waters": The 3rd vial (bowl) is changing of all fresh water into blood worldwide. During the 3rd trumpet 1/3 of the fresh water was affected but here the total supply of water is cut off.

V. 5-6. "Shed the blood": This is poetic justice with a vengeance. These who are being judged had made martyrs of God's people, and now God is forcing them to drink blood for the righteous blood they spilled.

V7. "Out of the altar": This appears to be referring back to Rev. 6:9-11 Rd. Here their prayer is answered.

V8. "Upon the sun": The 4th vial (bowl) is poured out. Our Lord predicted there would be signs in the sun during the Great Tribulation. Luke 21:25Ref.

There are multiple prophecies in the Old Testament concerning judgment due to excessive heat from the sun. Deut. 32:24; Isa. 24:6; 42:25Ref.

Mal. 4:1 "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that is shall leave them neither root nor branch."

V9. "Blasphemed the name of God...repented not": This reveals that the human heart is incurably wicked. No amount of punishment will purify it and change it. These people knew these judgments come from God, because they curse Him for sending them. But they still refuse to recognize God's authority and repent of their sin. Even when the power of God is fully and completely revealed, many will still refuse to repent. Back in Rev. 9:20,21 we saw that the people involved there were so hard hearted that even plagues did not drive them to God. People don't usually fall into immorality and evil suddenly—they slip into it a little at a time until, hardly realizing what has happened, they are irrevocably mired in their wicked ways. Any person who allows sin to take root in his life will end up in this predicament. Temptation entertained today becomes sin tomorrow, a habit the next day, then death and separation from God forever. To think it will never happen to us may be the first step toward a hard heart.

(James 1:12-16 Rd.) Temptation comes from an evil desire within, not from God. It begins with an evil thought. It becomes sin when we dwell on the thought and allow it to become an action. Like a snowball rolling downhill, sin grows more destructive the more we let it have its way. The best time to stop a temptation is before it is too great or moving too fast to control. Mat. 4:1-11; I Cor. 10:13; II Tim. 2:22Ref. We can resist temptation to sin by turning to God for strength and choosing to obey His Word.

V. 10-11. "The seat": This is indicating the throne of the beast. This is clear evidence that the 1st beast is a man. The teaching is clear that this concerns the beast of Chapter 13 about his throne and his kingdom.

"Full of darkness": When the sun's wattage is increased it grows darker instead of lighter. This is similar to the darkness of Egypt during the 9th plague. (Exod. 10:21-22). Isa. 60:2 "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Joel 2:1-2, 31. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations....The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come."

"Chewed their tongues": The pain so great that every effort is made to handle it.

"Blasphemed the God of heaven": The original word used here means to speak blame to God in a way of irreverence to Him. Let us be reminded of the fact that these plagues will last for 3 ½ years. Over and over we see the result of this Christ rejecting crowd being to continue rebelling and not repent. Rom.2:4-5: "Or despises thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering: not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after they hardness and impenitent heart treasure up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." This is exactly what is before us as we study this portion of Revelation, the righteous judgment of God.

V12. "Euphrates....dried up": The Euphrates is called the "great river" in the Bible. Its prominence is amazing to examine. It is first shown to us in Gen. 2. It can be found 25 times in the Bible. As we are seeing its mention here it plays a prominent role at the end of man on earth as well as man in his first state. It was the cradle of man's civilization and will be the grave of man's civilization. It is the order between east and west. It spans over eighteen hundred miles in length. It from 10 to 30 feet deep and at many places miles across.

"The way of the kings prepared": The Euphrates River is a natural barrier against the empires of the east. (Babylon; Assyria; Persia). When it is dried up nothing will hold back invading armies. The bulk of the world population is in the East and only a few have any knowledge of the Gospel indicating that most will choose Antichrist during this period of time we are study. This is all in preparation to the Battle of Armageddon.

Today there are movements at work in the world preparing for the events which we have been studying. The spheres of influence are being definitely circumscribed as the King of the North seeks to dominate all of northern and central Europe. The King of the West will come from the countries surrounding the Mediterranean, while the King of the South will push upward from Africa and the Eastern Empire will approach through the bed of the Euphrates River. We are seeing all this ramping up before us. The hatred of Israel is extreme and will reach its climax during this time. Nothing that I can find makes me think that our country will come to aid of Israel during this time. It might be because we are no longer a factor as we are today either by weakness or by being not who we are today. Think about what we are viewing. There is nothing to stop our Lord from coming after His Bride at any moment. Chapter 4 the church is found in heaven. The next series of events will be what we are studying meaning the Great Tribulation. This section of course is describing the last 3 ½ of that period. If the things are lining up to this even today how close must we be.

The student of the Bible understands these truths. They are not new and disturbing. II Pet. 3:10 "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up". Revelation discusses in detail the last days of this age, which will end in violence and war, and the greater part of the book is devoted to a description of the last great battle of all time ending in Armageddon, when the Lord alone will prevent man from completely exterminating himself. This battle will be more fully described in Rev. 19.