

69. The Book of Revelation—16:8-12

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(2-9-22)

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We have come to Chapter 16 in our study in the Book of Revelation.

In this Chapter, the final judgments of God (the 7-Bowl Judgments) will be poured out upon this rebellious, Christ rejecting world during the second half of the 7-year tribulation period (great tribulation period—Matt.24:21) leading up to the return of Christ, the Battle of Armageddon, and the establishment of the Kingdom Age.

The First Bowl—Malignant Sores

Revelation 16:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth." ² So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

Second Bowl—Salt Water Seas Turns to Blood

Revelation 16:3 (NKJV)

³ Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died.

Third Bowl—Fresh Waters Turn to Blood

Revelation 16:4-7 (NKJV)

⁴ Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵ And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things." ⁶ For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due." ⁷ And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments."

Fourth Bowl—Men are Scorched

Revelation 16:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him [the sun] to scorch men with fire.

As we said last time, the worship of the sun is the oldest form of idolatry in the world—primarily because, all earthly life depends on the light of the sun.

This gave ancient pagan cultures the belief that the sun was the most powerful god in the universe.

In previous judgments, a part of the sun had been dimmed (Revelation 8:12)—but now the heat of the sun is increased—possibly the result of the sun going into a supernova state, the stage directly preceding the death of a star.

Anyone who has been in the desert knows how merciless the sun’s heat can be—remembering too that the fresh water sources on the earth have been turned to blood—you can imagine how people will suffer from thirst.

I believe this will be a preview of hell. (Luke 16:19-31)

Another serious consequence of the sun’s intense heat will be the melting of the polar ice caps.

One author had this to say—

“The resulting rise in the oceans’ water level will inundate coastal regions—flooding areas miles inland with the noxious waters of the dead oceans. Widespread damage and loss of life will accompany that flooding, adding further to the unspeakable misery.”

God has much to say about using the sun to judge people on the earth during this period of time—

Luke 21:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;

Isaiah 24:4-6 (NKJV)

⁴ The earth mourns *and* fades away, The world languishes *and* fades away; The haughty people of the earth languish. ⁵ The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, Because they have transgressed the laws, Changed the ordinance, Broken the everlasting covenant. ⁶ Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, And those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, And few men *are* left.

Malachi 4:1 (NKJV)

¹ "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch..." [The elderly and young will die first.]

(Mention D.L. Moody story of the night of the Chicago Fires—October 8, 1871)

The expression **“and power was given to him to scorch men with fire” (v.8)**—is rendered, according to the best manuscripts, **“and it was given to him [the sun] to scorch the men with fire.”**

The use of the definite article **“the”** with **“men”** seems to connect this judgment to those mentioned in verses 2, 5, and 6.

Revelation 16:2, 5-6 (NKJV)

² So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image...

⁵ And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. ⁶ For they [‘the men’] have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due."

The definite article is also used in connection with “men” mentioned in verse 9—the implication is that saints in this period who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ will not suffer from this plague.

And yet even this judgment will not bring the ‘earth-dwellers’ to their knees—

Revelation 16:9 (NKJV)

⁹ And [the] men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.

Everyone on the earth knows that these judgments are from God—there is no confusion or ambiguity about it.

Despite all of this—instead of turning to God for mercy—they blaspheme His name! This reveals that the human heart is incurably wicked and that—no amount of punishment will purify it and change it—if there is no desire to change.

Albert Einstein once observed, *"It is easier to denature plutonium than to denature the evil spirit of man."*

Fifth Bowl—Darkness and Pain

Revelation 16:10-11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. ¹¹ They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

So once again, the first bowl judgment (‘loathsome sores’) didn’t go away—which means these judgments will be *accumulative* (each one staying and being added to by the next judgment).

Some believe this darkness is *worldwide* and some believe that the scope of this bowl judgment is *limited*—in other words, focused solely upon the regional headquarters of the Antichrist (the revived Roman Empire of Western Europe).

I believe that this judgment encompasses a great area of the earth, causing a sudden and unexplainable darkness to fall. This will be a judgment from God—but that doesn’t mean that God can’t or won’t use some kind of natural phenomenon in a supernatural way to bring about this judgment.

I say that because unexplained darkness has happened before—

One author said concerning this—

“This is not the first time such a phenomenon has occurred. In the middle of the day on May 19, 1780, the entire region of New England was covered by darkness — a day which has become fixed in New England history as ‘The Dark Day’. The mysterious blackout lasted for several hours.

In the early afternoon of March 19, 1886, a similar zone of darkness moved across central Wisconsin, causing the sky to turn from a bright cloud-dappled blue to midnight black in the space of about a minute. This darkness blanketed several villages and towns to the west of Lake Winnebago and lasted about ten minutes.

Similar unexplained occurrences of sudden darkness have occurred in Memphis, Tennessee (December 1904), Louisville, Kentucky (March 1911), and other places and times in the United States and around the world.

All of these events have two things in common: (1) No one was ever able to explain these events in terms of a known phenomenon such as an eclipse, and (2) Most of the people who experienced these events were filled with terror, believing the end of the world had come.”

Of course, this parallels the plague of darkness that God brought upon Egypt—

Exodus 10:21-23 (NKJV)

²¹ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness *which* may even be felt." ²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. ²³ They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells us that the darkness in Egypt was so *'thick'* that it could be *'felt.'* In other words, it was not just an ordinary darkness—it seems to have an almost *physical* quality to it that *'smothered'* those who loved and coveted darkness (spiritual and moral darkness) rather than light (John 3:19).

Yet the Bible tells us that in Goshen (where the Jews lived)—there was sunshine.

Whether the darkness of the fifth bowl is *localized* or *worldwide* it is nonetheless a preview of hell itself, which is described by Jesus as being in the *'outer darkness'* ([Matthew 25:30](#)).

Sixth Bowl—Euphrates Dried Up

Revelation 16:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

As the longest and most significant river in the Middle East, the **Euphrates** deserves to be called the *'great river'* (Revelation 9:14; Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; Joshua 1:4).

The Romans considered the Euphrates River a secure barrier against invasion from the empires of the east (it was 1800 miles long and 300-1200 yards wide depending if it was flood season).

In ancient times the Garden of Eden was located in the vicinity of where the **Tigris** and **Euphrates Rivers** were (Genesis 2:10–14) —I say *'were'* because the Flood changed the topography of the area. (Comment)

The **Euphrates** also formed the eastern boundary of the land God gave to Israel (Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; 11:24; Joshua 1:4).

Along with the nearby **Tigris**, the **Euphrates** is still the lifeblood of the Fertile Crescent. The source of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers is in the snowfields and ice caps high on Mount Ararat located in Turkey. Mount Ararat (the greater) is almost 17 thousand feet high.

It is the ice and snow melt in the spring and summer that feeds the Tigris and Euphrates rivers which then flow some eighteen hundred miles before emptying into the Persian Gulf.

As the sun is allowed to scorch the earth it will cause the snow and ice on Mt. Ararat to melt (the source of the Euphrates Rivers) and eventually (after severe flooding) to cause the Euphrates River to dry up.

But there will be another interesting result from this.

As the snow and ice on Mt. Ararat melts—it will leave Noah's ark completely visible and out in the open for the first time since the last time God judged the entire earth.

This will no doubt be a reminder to the people of this world that as God judged the world once for its immorality and idolatry, He is doing it again—but not with a flood as He promised (rainbow)—this time with fire!

2 Peter 3:3-7 (NKJV)

³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, ⁶ by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. ⁷ But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

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