

## **23. The third woe - the Seven Bowl Judgements**

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Municipal Judge David Hostetler of Coshocton, Ohio ordered a man to jog for an hour every other day around the block where the jail is located. The man had run away from police after a traffic accident.

Hostetler routinely turns to alternative punishments to keep first time offenders out of an overcrowded local jail. He received nationwide attention in 2001 when he ordered two men to dress in women's clothing and walk down Main Street as a sentence for throwing beer bottles at a car and taunting a woman.

In my opinion, these decisions are rather humorous and good. However, all of us have heard some moronic court decisions from the American judiciary branch. Especially the 9th Circuit Court is well known for its extreme liberal stands. When we hear those pathetic court decisions, we couldn't help ourselves wondering if those judges were thinking. Actually, not thinking.

But praise God, our heavenly Father is the ultimate Judge of the universe and He does not hand down any ugly and unfair decision from His throne. All the decisions and judgements He makes are the final and they are good.

### **A. PROLOGUE OF THE SEVEN BOWL JUDGEMENTS**

*Revelation 16:1 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."*

Some Bible students argue that the chapter 16 should be interpreted in allegorical manner. To them it is not real bloody sea, or water or earthquake.

But from what we have studied, these bowl judgements are real and literal.

### **B. THE FIRST BOWL - LOATHSOME SORES**

*Revelation 16:2 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.*

Initially, taking the mark of the beast would seem to be so logical, so technologically sophisticated and so cool. Why mess with credit cards that can be stolen, checks that can be forged, or cash that can be lost when you can enter into a brand new economic order where you can buy and sell with simple waves of your hand?

In Chapter 13, we have learned that the U.S. F.D.A. approved 'Verichip' to be inserted in human arms to carry the entire medical history and more.

Applied Digital Solutions in FL has developed this product called 'Verichip'. Verichip is a microchip implanted in the body powered by the body's own biomechanical electricity and able to communicate with satellites. I also mentioned that the scientist who developed this microchips answered to a reporter's question that in case the lithium battery of this VeriChip leaks, the person will have a sore or boil as this verse prophesied almost two thousand years ago.

Those who worshiped the beast and wanted to receive the mark of the beast are now "marked" by God with loathsome sores.

## **B. THE SECOND BOWL - THE BLOODY SEA**

*Revelation 16:3 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.*

When the second trumpet sounded during the first half of the Tribulation in chapter 8, the one third of the oceans around the world became blood. However, this time the entire oceans on the earth turned into blood and killed all the sea creatures, including the Shamu, dolphins and barracudas. Can you imagine all those fish rotting in the ocean? No more sushi!!!

## **C. THE THIRD BOWL - THE BLOODY WATER**

*Revelation 16:4-7 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."*

As hard as it is to imagine, every stream, lake, and river will turn to blood. Every faucet, every hose, every drinking fountain will run blood instead of water. Again, this complete contamination is in contrast to the partial (one-third) pollution of fresh waters shown in Revelation 8:10-11.

Nothing like a glass of fresh cool water to quench our thirst. But it is completely fitting that those who delighted in shedding the blood of the saints should now be forced to drink "blood." They have refused the Living Water, Jesus from God the Father, and now will be given the water of death.

Not only God's justice is fair, it is also pure and appropriate. There is no "vigilante justice" with God.

In God's government, the punishment fits the crime. Pharaoh tried to drown the Jewish boy babies, but it was his own army that eventually drowned in the Red Sea. Haman planned to hang Mordecai on the gallows and to exterminate the Jews, but he himself was hanged on the gallows, and his family was exterminated. King Saul refused to obey God and slay the Amalekites, so he was slain by an Amalekite.

In our own times of trial and tribulation, there can be a tendency within us to question the fairness of the Father. But the altar, the place of sacrifice, the Cross speaks just the opposite. If you don't see this, you'll go through life one day blessing the Lord in the church sanctuary and the next day cursing Him because of your troubles at work or at home. God demonstrated His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

How can we dare to ask God for being fair or demand our right? Do we know what we deserve? Without Jesus our Savior, we deserve eternal death in hell. Only by His grace, mercy and love alone, we can call ourselves Christians. Anything above our salvation, it is icing.

*Romans 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

Because God loved me enough to hang on the Cross in our place, to pay our sin, to die for us, I know everything He does in my life – whether I understand it at the time or not – is absolutely right.

#### **D. THE FOURTH BOWL - THE SCORCHING SUN**

*Revelation 16:8-9 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. 9 And 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.*

If you thought the summer time in Sahuarita, Green Valley and Tucson is too hot, stay for the Tribulation time. You will know what the meaning of the scorching sun.

All earthly life depends on the light of the sun. With the fourth trumpet judgments, a third of the sun had been dimmed in Rev. 8:12. But now the heat of the sun is increased. Remember that the water system is now useless, you can imagine how people will suffer from thirst. Even this judgment will not bring men to their knees!

Because men turned their backs on the Son of God Jesus, they will experience the burning of the sun.

#### **E. THE FIFTH BOWL - THE DARKNESS UPON THE ANTICHRIST'S KINGDOM**

*Revelation 16:10-11 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.*

In Exodus 10:21-22, we find the ninth plague on Egypt was a literal darkness with spiritual overtones.

The darkness of the fifth bowl is a preview of hell itself, which is described by Jesus as the outer darkness in Matthew 25:30. Hell is a place for those who do not accept Jesus as His Savior and Lord and it is a place of utter darkness, everlasting pain and agony and complete isolation from God and from everyone.

*Matthew 25:30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Even in this horrible situation – a burning sore on a person's hand or head from the mark of the beast, stinking sea from all the dead sea creatures, no water to drink other than blood coming out from all the faucets, scorching burning sun and now the darkness over the antichrist's kingdom, yet people are not repenting from their sins.

Judgment may produce a carnal remorse. When the iron is cast into another mold, it changes into different shape. But it is not transformed into gold. This carnal remorse is caused by fear.

That is why our current prison systems, as known as correctional facilities cannot correct prison inmates' behaviors. Actually, they get worse inside. Only Jesus can change their lives inside out.

The goodness of God leads people to repentance. At this point, there is no turning back, because their minds were made up and shut off from God.

## **F. THE SIXTH BOWL - PREPARING FOR A WAR AGAINST GOD**

*Revelation 16:12-16 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. 13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.*

The Romans considered the Euphrates River a secure barrier against invasion from the empires of the east. In that day it was 1,800 miles long and anywhere from 300-1,200 yards wide.

If the Euphrates were dried up and became a road, massive armies from the eastern nations such as China, India, Korea and Japan could move westward with ease. I can imagine that the entire armies from the east will have serious identification problem. Because those oriental people all look alike.

Why do these armies come? Is it to wipe out Israel? Is it to rebel against a European-based world leader, the antichrist? Ultimately, they come to do battle against God and His Messiah Jesus. It is prophesied in Psalm 2:1-6.

*Psalms 2:1-6 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."*

The ancient Jewish people regarded frogs as unclean and repulsive, but the Egyptians revered a frog-goddess.

The name 'Armageddon' comes from two Hebrew words, 'har Megiddo', "the hill of Megiddo". The word Megiddo means "place of troops" or "place of slaughter." It is also called the Valley of Jezreel. The area is about fourteen miles wide and twenty miles long, and forms what Napoleon called "the most natural battlefield of the whole earth." Standing on Mount Carmel and overlooking that great plain, you can well understand why it would be used for gathering the armies of the nations.

Located sixty miles north of Jerusalem, the Jezreel Valley has been filled with warfare. When Gideon and three hundred men overcame the Midianites, it was at the valley below a little hill called Megiddo. When Samson took on the Philistines, one of the key battles was at Megiddo. King Josiah was killed at Megiddo. Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera at Megiddo.

This battle is not nation against nation, but the nations against God. This is one of three important battles mentioned in the end-time prophecy:

- 1) The battle of Gog, Magog and her allies come against Israel – Ezekiel 38 and 39
- 2) The battle of Armageddon, when the antichrist leads the world system against a returning Jesus – Revelation 17:12-16, 17:14, 19:19

3) The final battle, when satan and his allies, after the millennium, make war against God – Revelation 20:7-10

No matter what they do, the winner of this battle is apparent. It is the great day of God, not the great day of man, not the great day of the antichrist, not the great day of satan.

## **G. THE SEVENTH BOWL - THE BIGGEST EARTHQUAKE**

*Revelation 16:17-21 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. 19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. 20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.*

This announcement "It is done" coming from the throne itself tells us that there will be no more delay. In mercy, God has stretched out this scene as long as He could. The seals were followed by trumpets. The trumpets were followed by bowls. But there will be no more judgments upon the earth after this – it is done.

The fact that the bowl is poured into the air may show judgment against the prince of the power of the air and his allies that mentioned in Eph 2.

The great earthquake is ahead by great hail. Each hailstone weights about 100 pounds. When 100 pound hailstones are coming down from sky, where can the people on earth hide? Can you imagine the velocity of those hail stones? They would squash 18 wheelers like a paper cut out truck.

What was the Old Testament punishment for blasphemy against God? Stoning according to Leviticus 24:16. What's happening here? The blasphemers are being stoned by 100 pound hailstones.

Two mountains come to mind....

Both deal with the wrath of God as He pours out His wrath on men at Megiddo and upon His Son at Calvary.

Both deal with the rebellion of man as they blaspheme God at Megiddo and His Son at Calvary.

Both are bloodbaths as blood flows to the horses' manes at Megiddo and from the Son's veins at Calvary.

Both are completions, as "It is done," cries a voice from heaven at Mount Megiddo while "It is finished," cries a voice from the Cross at Mount Calvary.

## **H. APPLICATION**

**1) We must remember that anything God does for us is good for us, right for us and more than fair to us.**

While we see only the present situation, our God sees the whole picture. He has a better point of view from heaven above.