

Session 9 Seven Bowls of Wrath (Rev. 15-16)

I. FOURTH CHRONOLOGICAL SECTION: SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH (REV. 15:1-16:21)

- A. The fourth chronological section of the book of Revelation reveals the seven judgment events that Jesus will release on the Antichrist's empire. The events in this section occur immediately after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which begins Jesus' second coming procession with the rapture and the rewarding of all the saints.

¹⁵The seventh angel sounded...loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord...¹⁸The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time...that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints...and should destroy those who destroy the earth." (Rev. 11:15-18)

²⁹"Immediately after the tribulation of those days...³⁰...the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven...then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming...with power and great glory. ³¹...He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect...from one end of heaven to the other." (Mt. 24:29-31)

- B. The rapture will take place at the last trumpet, which is the seventh trumpet.

⁵¹We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—⁵²in a moment...at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible... (1 Cor. 15:51-52)

¹⁶The Lord...will descend from heaven...with the trumpet of God...¹⁷...we who are alive...shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thes. 4:16-17)

- C. Jesus raptures the Church to initiate His second coming procession, which has three stages:

Stage 1: Jesus' procession across the sky—to rapture the Church (Mt. 24:30-31; Rev. 1:7)

Stage 2: Jesus' procession on the land—through Edom (Jordan) to Israel (Isa. 63; Hab. 3)

Stage 3: Jesus' procession into Jerusalem—to the Mount of Olives, followed by His coronation

- D. The saints will be delivered at the rapture and the Antichrist will continue for another thirty days.

- E. The fourth chronological section in Revelation reveals the seven judgment events that Jesus will release on the Antichrist's empire as He marches through Edom (modern-day Jordan) to make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This drama is part of your love story with Jesus your King.

¹Who is this who comes from Edom [modern-day Jordan], with dyed garments from Bozrah [ancient capital of Edom], this One [Jesus] who is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength?—"I [Jesus] who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."²Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ³"I have trodden the winepress...in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the

year of My redeemed has come...⁶I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, made them drunk in My fury, and brought down their strength to the earth.” (Isa. 63:1-6)

- F. John referenced Isaiah’s passage in describing Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The bowls will be poured out as Jesus marches through Jordan to fight the final battle in the Armageddon campaign in Jerusalem and rescue the unsaved remnant of Israel.

¹¹Behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him...He judges and makes war...¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood...¹⁴The armies in heaven...followed Him on white horses...¹⁵He should strike the nations...He treads the winepress of...the wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶He has on His robe...a name written: KING OF KINGS. (Rev. 19:11-16)

- G. Habakkuk prophesied that when the Messiah came, He would march through the land in victory. He described Him releasing the seven bowls of judgment similar to Moses’ ten plagues of Egypt.

³God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran [near modern-day Jordan]. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise...⁴He had rays flashing from His hand, and there His power was hidden. ⁵Before Him went pestilence, and fever followed at His feet...⁶He...startled the nations...the mountains were scattered...¹¹The sun and moon stood still...¹²You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled the nations in anger. ¹³You went forth for the salvation of Your people. (Hab. 3:3-13)

- H. David prophesied that when Messiah comes to earth to receive the nations as His inheritance He would need to break them and dash their infrastructure to pieces, as described in Rev. 16. On His journey, Jesus will dash the nations to pieces, destroying the infrastructures of the Antichrist-empire that have been permeated by evil (Ps. 2:8-9; Isa. 11:4, 15; 19:22; Rev. 2:26-27; 19:15).

⁸“I [the Father] will give You [Jesus] the nations for Your inheritance...⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.” (Ps. 2:8-9)

- I. Isaiah prophesied that when the Messiah comes, He will strike the earth (see Revelation 16).

⁴He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and...shall slay the wicked. (Isa. 11:4)

II. THE CONTEXT FOR THE PREPARATION TO RELEASE THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

- A. John sees those who are victorious over the Antichrist; they are singing on the sea of glass (Rev. 15:1-4).

¹I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. ²I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast [Antichrist]...standing on the sea of glass...³They sing the song of Moses...and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints...⁴...all nations shall...worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.” (Rev. 15:1-4)

- B. After the rapture, the saints will be with Jesus in all that He does in the final days of this age.

- C. The saints are pictured after the rapture at the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:5) as standing on a sea of glass. Paul assured us that we will always be with Jesus after the rapture.

¹⁷Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up [rapture] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (1 Thes. 4:17)

- D. After the rapture, all the saints may not be on the ground with Him marching into Jerusalem, but may be in a “grand amphitheater” in the sky as a great cloud of witnesses with transformed, resurrected bodies near Jesus, so as to watch all that is occurring.

- E. Ezekiel saw a firmament, or expanse of awesome crystal, before Jesus’ throne. This may be the same sea of glass that John saw in Revelation 15:2.

²²The likeness of the firmament [“expanse,” NIV]...was like...awesome crystal...²⁶...above the firmament...the likeness of the throne was...a Man [Jesus] high above it. (Ezek. 1:22-26)

III. THE SEVEN ANGELS COMMISSIONED TO RELEASE THE BOWLS (REV. 16:1)

- A. We must keep the continuous story line in view—the last events on earth in chronological order were Revelation 11:15 and especially Revelation 11:19, where the temple opened in heaven.

- B. Immediately after the sounding of the seventh trumpet and after the saints gather on the sea of glass to worship Jesus as the King of saints, the angels are commissioned to pour out the bowls.

¹I 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.” (Rev. 16:1)

- C. Immediately after the rapture, Jesus will march across the land of Jordan (Isa. 63:1-6; Hab. 3:3-13) as the greater Moses, going through the wilderness to deliver the unsaved remnant of Israel. At that time, Jesus will release the first five bowls to destroy the resources of the Antichrist’s empire. The sixth and seventh bowls will be released just before Jesus enters Jerusalem.

IV. SEVEN BOWLS OF GOD’S WRATH (REV. 15-16)

- A. First bowl (sores): Painful sores on those who worship the Antichrist (Rev. 16:2)

²The first went and poured out his bowl...and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast. (Rev. 16:2)

- B. These sores will be foul with a terrible odor, like foul meat is rotten or putrid. They will be loathsome in being so painful that men will loathe them. Only during the seals and trumpets does John mention believers having a divine seal of protection (Rev. 7:3; 9:4). The saints were raptured at the seventh trumpet. The sixth plague of Egypt was sores, or boils (Ex. 9:8-11). Moses warned that rebellion toward God would bring judgment of severe boils (Deut. 28:35).

- C. Second bowl (food supply): Destroying the sea with blood, killing all sea life (Rev. 16:3). In my opinion, this is focused on the Mediterranean Sea from Daniel 7. The sea will become like the congealed blood of a dead man with an unimaginable stench. There will be complete destruction of marine life, not just one-third destruction like in the second trumpet.

³Then 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. (Rev. 16:3)

- D. Third bowl (water supply): Poisoning the earth's fresh water with blood (Rev. 16:4-7). The third trumpet (Rev. 8:10) is similar to the third bowl in defiling the drinking water. The first plague of Egypt struck the Nile with a similar impact (Ex. 7:19-21).

⁴Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵...I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord...because You have judged these things. ⁶For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due." ⁷...I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments." (Rev. 16:4-7)

- E. Fourth bowl (torment): Scorching heat and fire from the sun (Rev. 16:8-9) is a supernatural act, not merely a natural one. Men blaspheme God (v. 11, 21). This bowl will intensify the heat of the sun. The fourth trumpet affected the sun in the opposite way by making it less intense.

⁸The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And 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. (Rev. 16:8-9)

- F. Fifth bowl (destruction): Darkness on the Antichrist's global empire (Rev. 16:10-11).

¹⁰The 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. ¹¹They blasphemed God...because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds. (Rev. 16:10-11)

- G. The Antichrist's throne is the geographic seat of his government (Rev. 13:2). Isaiah prophesied that deep darkness would cover the earth (Isa. 60:2). This darkness will have a supernatural, demonic element to it. The ninth plague of Egypt caused darkness for three days (Ex. 10:21-23).

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come! The glory of the LORD is risen upon you [remnant of Israel]. ²For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. (Isa. 60:1-2)

- H. The Antichrist's worshipers will blaspheme God (v. 9, 11) showing their deep hatred of Him. As God's judgments increase, their hatred and blasphemy increase and come out fully into the open.

V. SIXTH BOWL (GLOBAL GUILT): DEMONS LURE THE NATIONS TO ARMAGEDDON

- A. Sixth bowl (global guilt): Demons lure the nations to gather to fight Jesus (Rev. 16:12-16).

¹²The 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...I saw three unclean spirits

like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon [Satan], out of the mouth of the beast [Antichrist], and out of the mouth of the false prophet.¹⁴ ...they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth...to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...¹⁶ ...they gathered them together to...Armageddon.
(Rev. 16:12-16)

- B. It is very surprising that the nations come to fight Jesus as He is marching toward Jerusalem. They are not gathering from around the world to fight Israel's small and poorly-armed army.
¹⁴These [the ten kings] will make war with the Lamb...for He is...King of kings.
(Rev. 17:14)
- ¹⁹I saw the beast [Antichrist], the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. (Rev. 19:19)***
- C. The kings of the nations have urgency to gather because of Jesus' sign in the sky. Jesus' sign in the sky will be understood as an open challenge to the Antichrist and his armies to war.
³⁰“The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven...all the tribes of the earth will mourn...they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds...with power and great glory.”
(Mt. 24:30)
- D. The Antichrist convinces them with miracles that defeating Jesus is necessary and doable. The kings will see the supernatural sign of the Son of Man in the sky (Mt. 24:30), but wrongly interpret it as a demonic sign of a false messiah coming to disrupt the kingdoms of the earth.
- E. The kings of the east will resist the Antichrist throughout the entire Great Tribulation period. The Antichrist receives troubling news from the Asian kings of the east. In other words, they resist his financial seductions, refuse his miracles, and stand against his threats (Dan. 11:44).
- F. However, in the Antichrist's final thirty days, he uses his greatest miracles to win them and other kings who had been resisting him. Why would the Antichrist prioritize mobilizing the nations to come to Israel for military reasons? Why would the kings of the east deploy hundreds of thousands of soldiers at billions of dollars to fight a weak Israeli army?
- G. The answer is that the kings of the east and the kings of the whole world come to Israel to fight Jesus, not the Israeli army. They will see Jesus as a Jewish king with demonic powers who can be defeated. Thus, they will view Jesus as we view the Antichrist: as having supernatural power but as one who will surely be defeated. They understand that Jesus has great power, but the Antichrist will convince them that Jesus is a demonic counterfeit or angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).
¹⁴For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14)
- H. In essence, the nations will attribute Jesus' power, coming in the sky, etc., to the power of Satan.
- I. The Pharisees accused Jesus of doing miracles by Satan's power (Mt. 12:24). Jesus taught them that to attribute the power of the Holy Spirit to being demonic was to blaspheme against the Spirit. This is only done by those who are hardened to such a degree that they will not repent.

³¹“Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ³²Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him.”
(Mt. 12:31-32)

- J. Blasphemy against the Spirit is a full and final rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Those who do this are reprobate, or have a heart that is permanently hardened without any inclination to repent. The greatest height of evil is for men to blaspheme the Holy Spirit (Mt. 12:31-32).
- K. This is global blasphemy against the Spirit as the nations receive “the lie” (2 Thes. 2:11).
⁹The coming of the lawless one [Antichrist]...with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception...because they did not receive the love of the truth... ¹¹...for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie.
(2 Thes. 2:9-11)
- L. Those who take the mark of the Beast have already blasphemed the Spirit. However, the Antichrist wants all the nations brought into this. Many unsaved resisters will yield to this and many will refuse it. At the end of the age, untold millions will be swept away into the lie (2 Thes. 2:10) that acknowledges Jesus’ power as being supernatural, yet demonic.
- M. Three sources of deception: Antichrist with demons’ help, Jesus’ Romans 1:24 judgment, and men who love darkness.
- N. Why make all nations guilty in the sixth bowl? Antichrist wants all nations involved, in a mixture of arrogance and destruction, so he can destroy his people as Hitler did. Antichrist wants all guilty and destroyed. Why? Hitler ordered the destruction of Germany in April 1945 when he knew he was going to die.
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.” (Rev. 16:15)

VI. SEVENTH BOWL (ANNIHILATION): EARTHQUAKES AND HAIL STONES

- A. Seventh bowl (annihilation): shakings by earthquakes and 100-pound hailstones (Rev. 16:17-21)
¹⁷...poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice...from the throne, saying, “It is done!”
¹⁸...there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. ¹⁹Now the great city [Jerusalem] 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. ²⁰Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent [100 pounds]. Men blasphemed God. (Rev. 16:17-21)
- B. This bowl poured out into the air is probably the cause of the plague Zechariah prophesied, which causes the flesh, eyes, and tongues of people and livestock to dissolve (Zech. 14:12, 15).

- C. This bowl releases the worst earthquake in history that shakes the cities of the nations. In Revelation 16:20, the last earthquake causes islands to flee (to sink in the ocean) and the mountains to fall. This earthquake will impact every city on earth as great skyscrapers collapse, causing fires. The earthquake sequence in Revelation (Rev. 6:14; 8:5; 11:13; 16:18-20) ends with this largest one (Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; 13:13; 29:6; Ezek. 38:19; Hag. 2:6, 21; Zech. 14:4-5; Heb. 12:26-27).
- D. Hailstones weighing 100 pounds (a talent) fall on the people who are seeking safety from earthquakes. A 100-pound hailstone hits the ground with the equivalent force of two tons. Hail was released in the first trumpet (Rev. 8:7) and the seventh plague with Moses (Ex. 9:23-24). God uses hail in His judgments (Josh. 10:11; Isa. 28:17; Ezek. 38:22-23).
²²“I will bring him [Antichrist] to judgment...I will rain down on...his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.” (Ezek. 38:22)
- E. Moses’ law required the stoning to death of idol worshipers (Deut. 17:2-5; Lev. 24:16). Since the Antichrist’s worship movement is idolatry, thus, Jesus will stone them to death from heaven.
⁶“If your brother...secretly entices you, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods’...¹⁰...you shall stone him with stones until he dies, because he sought to entice you away from the Lord...¹¹So all Israel shall hear and fear, and not again do such wickedness.” (Deut. 13:6-11)
- F. The next event after the seven bowls is Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Rev. 19:11-21).
*¹¹...behold, a white horse. He [Jesus] who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war...¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood...¹⁴The armies in heaven...followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations...He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron...¹⁶...He has on His robe...a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**...¹⁹...I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet...These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹The rest were killed with the sword. (Rev. 19:11-21)*