

Revelation 16

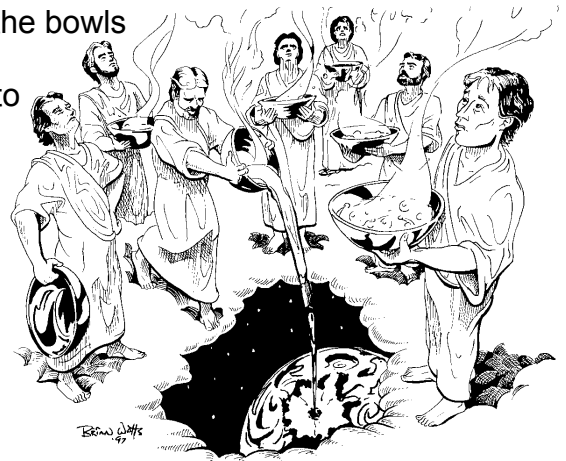
The Bowls of Wrath

I. The pattern of sevens

- A. The pattern in Revelation has been three groups of seven cycles, 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets, 7 Bowls
- B. Characteristics
 1. Each begins with 4 closely related events followed by 3 more loosely related ones
 2. Each cycle of sevens have an interlude between the 6th and 7th visions
 3. Each cycle closes with a demonstration of God's power

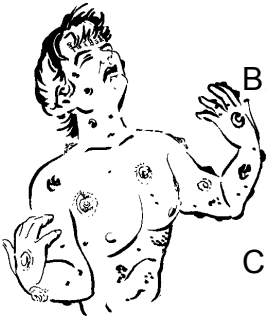
II. Similarities and differences between the trumpets and the bowls

- A. Common elements
 1. Earth
 2. Sea
 3. Rivers and Springs
 4. Sun and Heavenly bodies
 5. Torment
 6. Euphrates and the Army
- B. Differences
 1. Object of the action
 - a. With the trumpets, men are not mentioned until the 3rd trumpet. Object of the action begins with the earth
 - b. With the bowls, humans are targeted directly, specifically those with the mark
 2. Intensity
 - a. Trumpets only affect 1/3rd
 - b. There are no limitations on the bowls
 3. Swiftmess
 - a. A single command is given to the bowl angels
 - b. Men still had sores from the first bowl with the 5th bowl was poured out
 4. Purpose
 - a. Trumpets are designed to warn (9:21)
 - b. Bowls were for the purpose of punishment



III. The seven bowls of wrath (16:1-21)

- A. The bowls were called "plagues" in 15:8
1. These are reminiscent of the plagues against Egypt in Exodus
 2. 15:8 - Describes the temple as filled with smoke so that no one could enter until the plagues were completed
 - a. In other words, there is no chance for intercession
 - b. Trumpets had already warned and the time for mercy has passed.



- B. v.2 - The First Bowl - Sores
1. Sin brings pain and anguish on people
 2. This happened only to those with the mark, Christians were exempt from these plagues

- C. v.3 - The Second Bowl - The Sea turned to Blood
1. Everything in the sea died
 2. It becomes foul, dead, rotting
 3. Sea is the source of economy - Sin disrupts life



- D. v.4-7 - The Third Bowl - Fresh Water turned to Blood
1. Angel declares God's judgment just
 2. They reaped what they sowed
 - a. They killed the saints, God's people
 - b. God returned to them the blood they shed, poetic justice
 - c. Punishment fits the crime
 3. The altar responds that God is just
 - a. Altar is where the souls of the martyrs were
 - b. God avenges the blood of his saints

- E. v.8-9 - The Fourth Bowl - Sun is Intensified
1. With the 4th trumpet, it was darkened, now it is intensified
 2. The people were burned by the sun
 3. They cursed God even though they brought it on themselves
 - a. 13:1, 5, 6 - At first, only beast blasphemed
 - b. Prov 13:15 - The way of the treacherous is hard
 4. Heb 8:10-12 - God forgives sins under the new covenant
 - The only way to run from God is to run



to God

F. v.10-11 - The Fifth Bowl - Darkness

1. Poured darkness on the throne of the beast
 - If they loved the darkness so much, they shall have it
2. Gloom came over Rome, pain was intensified



G. v.12-16 - The Sixth Bowl - The Euphrates is Dried Up

1. The Barrier of the River is Removed
 - a. On the other side of the river were the feared Parthians
 - b. Now there is no barrier between Rome and its enemies
2. At the 6th trumpet, the 4 angels bound at the Euphrates released and became a massive army (9:13f)
3. Remember that one of the factors in the fall of Rome was external invasion (which happened due to a weakened state)
4. v.13 - Satan's Response:



- a. Out of his mouth, the beast, and false prophet comes unclean spirits
- b. 3 evil spirits that looked like frogs

- 1) Frogs were considered unclean animals
- 2) Frogs are not what you think of for West Point material
- 3) Frogs make noise, but little else
- 4) Intended to show the ridiculous nature of Satan's counter attack



- a) Colonel Kermit, General Green, Captain Croak
- b) Armies are not afraid of frogs
- c) Military plan a fiasco
- c. Gather forces at "Har-Meggido" (Mount Megiddo)
 - 1) Place where many battles fought
 - 2) Place where God's faithful won, and God's enemies lost
 - 3) God's enemies assemble where it was impossible for them to win
- d. Interruption at v.15 - God will demolish them, God tells them what they should do
 - 1) Stay awake spiritually
 - 2) Stay clothed spiritually

H. v.17-21 - The Seventh Bowl - On the Air

1. Eph 2:2 - Satan is the prince of the power of the air
2. Shaking the earth signifies judgment
3. City fractures into 3 parts, 3=Divinity, this is divine judgment
4. Cities of the nations collapsed
 - a. Rome could not fall without affecting others
 - b. The "Empire" is gone
 - c. Mountains could not be found - Mountains=Kingdoms
5. Hailstones=Judgement
6. They blamed God
7. Note: Most of the Rest of Revelation is an expansion of the later part of chapter 16



IV. Note on Armageddon

- A. Armageddon never took place
 1. They gathered for "the battle," then the 7th bowl is poured out
 2. Also in 19:19; 20:8 - "The battle" never happens
- B. Armageddon is Satan's Waterloo (he loses, never even gets to fight)
- C. Other battles that show Satan's Waterloo
 1. Jud 4-5 - Deborah and Barak
 2. Jud 7:1 - Gideon
 3. 1 Sam 31:1-6 - Saul and Jonathan are killed there
 4. 2 King 23:29-30 - Josiah is killed there

V. Lessons

- A. God is just in his wrath
- B. Do not blame God
- C. Sin brings "darkness" and "hardships" into one's life
- D. We should be awake and keep our clothes on. How?
- E. God's wrath, when it is full, is fierce