

Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 3:17 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Revelation 16:1-16

"And I heard the altar (a voice from the altar) saying, 'Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments!' (Revelation 16:7)

Last week we learned (from Revelation 15) that John "saw another sign in heaven" that he could only describe as "great and marvelous"! Seven angels holding seven bowls of judgment which were about to be poured out on the earth to "finish God's wrath," in the final days of the "tribulation period," and set the stage for the Second Coming of Christ and His Millennial reign! But he also saw "those who had been victorious over the beast, standing on something that looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire... holding harps of God and singing" the "song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," songs of praise and worship to "the Lord God, the Almighty"! These were probably Tribulation martyrs, the so-called "overcomers," who didn't go along with the rest of the world in worshiping and submitting to the blasphemous demands of the "beast" but, instead, remained faithful to God unto death! A victory that lay in the fact that their persecution from Satan delivered them to heaven where they could now rejoice and have no fear or pain and observe what was happening back on earth!

But there's more! John saw the "temple of the tabernacle of testimony," the holy place in heaven where God dwells, "opened," with the seven angels coming out and given "seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God by one of the four living creatures;" but then, the temple filled with smoke from the "shekinah" glory of God with "no one able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished"!

And that set the stage for our lesson last night on Revelation 16:1-16, on the outpouring of six of the seven bowls.

Revelation 16:1 says, "John heard a loud voice from the temple" (presumably the voice of God) commanding the seven angels to "pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God"! And so, the first angel poured out his bowl and it "became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image! (The word "sore" is the same Greek word used for "boil" in describing the plague on the Egyptians, in Exodus 9:9-11; and the sores on the body of the beggar Lazarus, in Luke 16:20! Deuteronomy 28:27 says, "The Lord will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed!" Ouch!)

Interestingly, in Revelation 14:9-10, another angel earlier had announced that "if anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger..."? This seems to fulfill and reflect that decree! And so, as Shepherd's Notes notes, now those with the mark of the beast were "given an additional distinguishing mark"! (And they deserve it!)

Well, the second and third bowl judgments (in Revelation 16:3-7) involve the sea and the "rivers and springs of water" being turned into blood! Just like when Moses, in Exodus 7:20-21, "lifted up his staff and struck water of the Nile and the water was turned to blood"! And like when, in

Revelation 8:8-11 (with the second and third trumpet judgments), "a third of the sea" and a third of the rivers and springs were turned into blood, and "a third of the creatures in the sea died"! But here, with the second and third bowl judgments, the extent and severity of the judgments was global in nature, and verse 3 says, "every living thing in the sea died"! Then verse 5 says, John heard the "the angel of the waters" (probably referring to the angel who poured out the third judgment) saying how those who received the judgment "deserved it"! (And speaking of "just deserts"--Jesse called it--or retribution, and the ways of God, Wiersbe wrote: "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 King Saul refused to obey God and slay the Amalekites, so he was slain by an Amalekite"! Wow! Don't "try" God!

Then, John says, he "heard the altar" (probably Tribulation martyrs "below the altar," as noted in Revelation 6:9) saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments!"

But there's more! The fourth bowl "poured out upon the sun" (according to verse 8) and causing men to be "scorched with fierce heat"! And then, as if that wasn't enough, the fifth one (in verse 10) poured out, bringing "darkness on the throne of the beast and his kingdom"! In the latter case, just like the judgments of the fifth trumpet judgment (in Revelation 9:2) and the ninth Egyptian plague (in Exodus 10:21-22), but, again, on a much larger scale!

Shepherd's Notes notes (somewhat ironically), concerning this passage: "Satan, who transforms himself into an angel of light (1 Corinthians 11:14) and blinds people so they can't see the light of the glorious gospel, has his kingdom shown for what it is! The kingdom of darkness! And one day he will be thrown into the 'outer darkness' where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!" (And he deserves it!)

Darkness! Associated in the Bible with judgment! Recall the judgment placed on Christ when He died for us on the cross! Matthew 27:45 describes how "darkness fell upon all the land from the sixth hour to the ninth hour," and how Jesus "cried out with a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani' My God, My God. Why have you forsaken Me'! Then "yielding up His spirit; and behold, the veil of the temple being torn in two from top to bottom"!

Zephaniah 1:14-15 says, "Near is the great day of the Lord, near and coming very quickly. Listen, the day of the Lord! In it the warries cries out bitterly. A day of wrath is that day; a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and thick darkness!"

And yet, John writes (in Revelation 16:11), "They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and they did not repent of their deeds!" Wow!

On to the sixth bowl, poured out not directly on people but on the Euphrates River, verse 12 says, causing it to dry up "so that the way would be prepared (by God, of course!) for the kings from the east" to join together with "the kings of the whole world for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty"! The coming war to end all wars! Armageddon! This could only happen as

a result of world leaders being influenced and persuaded by the deceptive words and miraculous signs and wonders of the "unholy alliance" of the dragon (Satan), the Antichrist, and the false prophet, pictured here with "unclean spirits like frogs" coming out of their mouths! Revelation 17:17 puts it all in context! "For God has put within their hearts to execute His purpose, by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled!" (We'll be learning more about this in our upcoming lessons!)

But we can't close out this lesson without reflecting on the third of seven beatitudes given by our Lord and placed here (in parenthesis!) in verse 15 of our text (beginning with another noteworthy "behold"!): "Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will see his shame!" Wow! Think about it!

Jesus said, in Matthew 24:42-44, in response to His disciples' question about His return to the earth and signs of the last days: "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming! But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason, you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not think He will!"

Enough said! May our Lord God, the Almighty, be with you all!

Lowell