

## Chapter 16: The 7 Bowl Judgements (vs. 1-21)

We have now come to the beginning of the end or our “final act of the play”. This chapter pronounces the 7 bowl judgements which are God’s final and complete judgements on the earth. There are many similarities between the Trumpet judgements and the Bowl judgements. So lets make 3 distinctions between the two sets:

- 1) The Bowl judgements are **complete** whereas the Trumpet judgements are partial
- 2) The Trumpet judgements allow time for unbelievers to still come to Jesus, the Bowl judgements **DO NOT**.
- 3) Mankind is indirectly affected by the other judgements but the Bowl judgements have a **direct** effect on mankind

What John saw:

**The First Bowl:** (vs. 2) Ugly and painful sores breakout on those people who have taken the Mark of the Beast and worshipped his image.

**The Second Bowl:** (vs. 3) The sea turns to blood like that of a dead man and everything living in the sea dies.

**The Third Bowl:** (4-7) The rivers and the springs turn to blood. There is now no more drinkable water flowing on or in the earth creating a water shortage. The angel then decrees that the Lord is just in His judgement because they have killed your saints and prophets or your people and your messengers. Then the altar itself responds acknowledging that everyone and everything will be praising God, His righteousness, and justice.

**The Fourth Bowl:** (vs. 8-9) The Sun is now given power to scorch people with fire. Many scholars believe this is referring to destruction of the O-zone layer. Notice in verse 9 that humanity KNOWS these are divine plagues and still they will curse God and refuse to repent!

**The Fifth Bowl:** (vs. 10-11) The fifth angel pours out his bowl directly on the throne of the Beast and his kingdom is plunged into darkness. Scholars argue on this point. Some believe in a literal darkness overtaking the city and area of his rule by supernatural means. Other scholars believe that the darkness is a result of volcanic ash from earthquakes or dark smoke from burning oil fields.

**The Sixth Bowl:** (vs. 12-16) The sixth bowl is poured out, this time on the Euphrates River itself, drying it up. This act will make way for the “Kings in the East” to come and prepare for Armageddon. When the river dries up, the Antichrist, False Prophet, and the Dragon release from their mouths three frogs that perform miraculous signs and go out to the rest of the leaders of the world and convince them to join the Antichrist in the final battle. These frogs are actually evil spirits or demons and will deceive, overpower, manipulate and/or win over the kings of the earth to unite them against the Lord.

Verse 15 is a priestly metaphor: Written in words of red in our Bible, Jesus is speaking to readers, not just a Jewish remnant hiding in cliffs at this point. The metaphor is this: in the Jewish Temple, the most difficult watch for the priest was the fourth watch, from 3:00am until 6:00am because of a wanting to fall asleep. If the captain of the guard caught a priest sleeping on his watch, he would be stripped naked and his clothes burned to illustrate the shame of not keeping the watch. Jesus’ point being Be Ready no matter when or what circumstances we are in. Recognize the signs of the time and prepare ourselves by living the Gospel, not hunkering in the basement! (His parable of the 10 Virgins)

Verse 16 leads us to Armageddon. It’s a valley in Israel near the city of Megiddo. It guarded a large plain in northern Israel. Most of the kings of the earth will unite underneath the Antichrist rally cry here and declare war on God.

**The Seventh Bowl:** (vs. 17-21) The angel pours his bowl into the air initiating God saying, “It is done.” A severe earthquake hits the earth causing Jerusalem (scholars argue Babylon) to split into 3 parts, other cities to collapse, and the islands disappear and the mountains are gone. An earthquake this big could easily cause a planet size catastrophic event sending floods, tsunami’s, and general chaos swallowing up islands and mountains. What do we mean? There is a 25,000 mile horseshoe-shaped basin in the Pacific ocean containing 450 plus volcanoes and 90% of the world’s fault lines. Geography calls this the “Ring of Fire” (a.k.a. the Circum Pacific belt). In short, an area ranging from the South American region of Chile all the way up to the Aleutian Islands of Alaska over to Russia and back down to Australia around Tonga and French Polynesia. Major cities and countries along this route include San Diego, Los Angeles, Seattle, Vancouver, all of Japan, all of Hawaii, all of French Polynesia, and the Pacific coasts of Australia, Russia, India, and China. And then there is the hail stones 100 lbs. in weight falling on top of men and still we reject Him! It’s like Pharoah’s heart be hardened in the Old Testament, a complete utter cursing of God and rejection of Him.