

Revelation 15-16

Revelation 15-16:1

The Scene in Heaven

Seven Angels with seven last plagues (v. 1)

- Hendriksen sees them as coming after the other plagues throughout the time between Christ's two comings; while other plagues called all to repentance, these leave no room for repentance. [Hendriksen p. 190]
- The trumpets have a partial affect ("a third") and the bowls, a universal affect. [This] may merely suggest that the trumpets are part of a larger process of judgment, which at the same time strikes the world. Therefore, the difference in effect does not necessitate seeing the trumpets as different judgments or as chronologically preceding the bowls. [Beale p. 808]

Song of Moses sung in heaven (vv. 2- 4)

- Are a prophecy of the coming of God's kingdom—pictures the beast's defeat as completed and the saints enjoying the result of that victory and praising God for it.
- Sea of glass could refer back to power of evil (often picture by the sea) calmed by divine sovereignty. (In the OT the Red Sea was the abode of the evil sea monster, which is a picture of the Egyptian king—Isaiah 51: 9- 11, Psalm 74: 12- 15, Ezekiel 32: 2)
- Seas has become the place where the Lamb has judged the beast
- The saints standing in front of the sea shows that they have been involved in the battle [Beale p. 790]
- Saints praise the lamb with the "Song of Moses" (a song of victory like the one in Exodus 15; actual words refer to verse throughout the Old Testament like Jeremiah 10: 7, Psalm 86: 9- 10, Psalm 98: 2)

Resumption of the Introduction of the Angels and Bowls

- Angels come out of the Temple—shows that they are God's agents
- Given the bowls of wrath by one of the cherubim, acting as a priest
- By the altar where the golden bowls of incense, representing the prayers of saints for justice, had come. The bowls of wrath are a direct answer to those prayers.
- *"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed."* Rev. 15: 8 NIV indicates several important truths
 - God presence is so awesome in expressing wrath that not even the heavenly beings can stand in his midst.
 - The bowl of plagues came from God not the angels
 - No one is able to stop God's hand when he decides to execute judgments
 - The saints' prayers for vindication against their persecutors are no longer needed because God is answering the prayers.

Seven Bowls

¹*Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth."*

By "earth" is meant here the whole of the created world in relation to heaven as God's place. Its constituent parts—land, sea, rivers, stars—are now to encounter God's wrath (Roloff p. 188)

Correspond with the Seven Trumpets:

- "This is not a one-to-one correspondence. But they are similar enough to be considered parts of the same overall program of divine judgment occurring in the same general period. "They, like the trumpet correspond to the ten plague against Egypt.(Beale p. 810)
- "Whoever is refuses to be warned by the trumpets is "destroyed" by the bowls of wrath" (Hendriksen p. 194)

Bowl 1

Revelation 16:2 (NIV)

The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image.

Trumpet 1: Hail, fire, and blood
fall on the *earth*, one third
of which is burned up

Bowl 1: A bowl is poured on the *earth*
Malignant sores come on those
who have the mark of the
beast and who worship his image

corresponding to Exod. 9:22ff. (trumpet), 8ff. (bowl)

Bowl 1: God causes suffering for the idolatrous followers of the world system (Those who go along with and support the persecuting governments and false teachers are made to suffer sores.

- Based on the boils the Egyptians suffered
- Deuteronomy 28: 27, 35 describe an "evil sore"
- Beale: could be "spiritual and psychological" suffering)

Bowl 2

Trumpet 2: A blazing mountain
falls into the sea. One third of the
sea becomes blood, a third of sea
creatures die, and a third of all
ships are destroyed.

Bowl 2: A bowl is poured on the
seas, which become *blood*, and
every living thing in them dies

corresponding to Exod. 7: 17ff. Water of the Nile turned to Blood

Bowl 2: God punishes the world system economically

- people depending on maritime economy suffer and die because of famine and maritime disaster [Beale, pp. 814- 815]
- Or...The worshippers of the beast have shed blood; now they will have to drink their own blood (Isaiah 49: 26). They will kill each other (Rev. 6: 4) [Van Hartingsveld p. 66]

Bowl 3

Trumpet 3: A blazing star (Wormwood) falls on a third of *rivers and fountains*; their waters are poisoned and many die.

Bowl 3: A bowl is poured on *rivers* and fountains, and they become blood

corresponding to Exod. 7:17ff Water of the Nile turned to Blood

Bowl 3: God punishes the persecutors of his people economically. (severe economic suffering)

- Like the second bowl, the third probably also refers to severe economic suffering. (Beale, p. 816)
- Or could be, bloody wars (see Van Hartingsveld on Bowl 2)

Bowl 4

Trumpet 4: A third of *sun, moon, and stars* are struck. Darkness results for a third of a night and day.

Bowl 4: A bowl is poured out on the *sun*, which scorches people with fire.

corresponding to Exod. 10:21ff. Darkness covers the land (trumpet); 9:22ff. (bowl) hail???

Bowl 4: God punishes the ungodly because of their idolatry

- The light of the sun normally provides warmth and comfort to all living beings, especially the human race; now the sun has become a destructive power [Kistemaker, 444]
- The symbolism cosmic (sun, moon, stars, etc.) alteration indicates that people are judged because they have altered God's moral laws, usually through idolatry [Beale. P 821]
- This woe includes suffering involving deprivation of earthly security, likely with an economic focus. This is apparent since in Revelation 7: 16 the same imagery—reversed—depicts hardships that the redeemed have also experienced in the world but will be freed from when they are before God's throne. [Beale, p. 822]
- Frequently, the Lord uses the sun to smite the wicked. (Deuteronomy 8: 22) [Hendriksen, p. 195]

Bowl 5

Trumpet 5: The shaft of the pit is opened. Sun and air are *darkened* with smoke from which locusts emerge to *torment* people without

- the seal of God.

Bowl 5: A bowl is poured on the throne of the beast. His kingdom is *darkened* and people are in *anguish*.

corresponding to Exod. 10:4ff. (trumpet), 21ff. (trumpet and bowl)

Bowl 5: God punishes the hardened idolaters by causing them to suffer, revealing to them that they are separated from him and can do nothing about it.

- The darkness...metaphorical for all ordained events designed to remind the ungodly that their persecution and idolatry are in vain. [Beale p. 824]
- As with the Egyptians, this darkness induces anguish, figuratively expressed by the phrase "they gnawed their tongues because of the pain." [Beale p. 824]
- The first four bowls affected nature, the fifth one acts upon a spiritual realm...Last, all the citizens in the kingdom of the beast are stricken with fear, despair, and pain. [Kistemaker, p. 446]
- The wicked lose courage. They despair. [Hendriksen p. 195]

Trumpet 6: Four angels bound at *the Euphrates* are released, with their cavalry of two hundred million, which kills a third of humanity.

Bowl 6: A bowl is poured on the *Euphrates*, which dries up for kings deceive the kings of the world to assemble for battle at Armageddon

corresponding to Exod. 8:2ff. (bowl)

Bowl 6: God gathers together ungodly forces in order to punish them decisively at the end of the age.

- The woe of the sixth bowl is depicted according to the description of God's judgment of Babylon, and Israel's restoration, which itself was patterned after the drying up of the Red Sea at the exodus. [Beale p. 827]
- I regard the term Armageddon as symbol by which God delivers his people from harm and demonstrates that he has the power and might to overthrow his enemies. It is for this reason that the Armageddon is the sixth bowl. The seventh is the judgment day. [Kistemaker p. 453]

Trumpet 7: *Loud voices in heaven* announce the coming of the kingdom of God and of Christ.

Lightning, thunder, earthquake,
and *hail* occur.

Bowl 7: A bowl is poured into the air, and a *loud voice from God's throne* announces "It is done."

Lightning, thunder, and an unprecedented
earthquake, occur and terrible hail falls.

corresponding to Exod. 9:22ff.
and the Sinai theophany (19:16-19)

Bowl 7: God punishes the ungodly world system with final judgment.

- The seventh bowl describes the final destruction of the corrupt world system, which follows on the heels of the battle of Armageddon. The bowl being poured out on the "air" is best understood as part of the exodus plague imagery present in the trumpets and the preceding bowls and alluded to in "plague of hail" in Revelation 16: 21 (Exodus 9: 22- 34)
- The great city, Babylon, is broken into three pieces; it falls apart. Thus the entire antichristian empire, view as a center of seduction, the whole kingdom of the world, falls apart, is destroyed. [Hendriksen p. 198]