



A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 73: The Bowl Judgements, Part 3

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Review:

- A. This week, we return to our series, “A Biblical View of the End Times.” By my calculation, we have roughly 5 or so lessons left in this series. Then we will begin our study in Jude.
- B. The last time we had a lesson in THIS series was December 10. Between that point and now, we’ve had a Sunday off and a couple of “special lessons.” As well, we’ve had Christmas and New Years, so it’s been a busy time.
- C. A quick review is in order:
 1. We’re in **Revelation Ch. 16** where the final series of judgements in The Tribulation are presented. These are The Bowl Judgments.
 2. As we’ve learned from our past lessons, The Trumpet Judgements probably end around the midpoint of The Seven-year Tribulation.
 3. We looked at various passages which support this. That means The Bowl Judgments comprise the last 3 ½ years, generally that timeframe also referred to as “The Day of the Lord.”
 4. This makes sense. It is the last half of The Tribulation that is the worst portion of the Tribulation, and The Bowl Judgments are the worst of all the judgments.
 5. Jesus Christ Himself called this second half the “Great Tribulation.” In **Matthew 24:21**, He says, *“For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.”*
 6. The Bowl Judgments are unlikely to occur in a nice neat systematic order. For that matter, that is also true with The Trumpet Judgments before them. Chances are far greater that there will be differing time intervals between these judgments.
 7. It is quite possible that several of The Bowl Judgements will take place towards the very end of The Tribulation. The reason I say this is they categorically affect “life on earth,” meaning, these judgments make life on earth unsustainable.
 8. This should not surprise us. Again, Jesus said in **Matthew 24:22**, *“Unless those days be shortened, no flesh would be saved...”*
- D. This is not difficult to grasp when we consider the Bowl Judgments we’ve studied to this point:
 1. Bowl Judgment #1 causes all who have taken the Mark of the Beast and worshipped his image to break out in loathsome, painful, draining, disfiguring, and putrid sores.
 2. This supports the premise that the Mark of the Beast impacts its recipients physiologically, and there is every indication that these sores persist throughout the remainder of The Tribulation.
 3. Bowl Judgement #2 literally turns the seas into congealed blood. Everything in them dies.

4. Bowl Judgment #3 turns all earth-based resources of fresh water into blood. The context makes it clear that this is literal, for the saints in heaven state that God has given the earth dwellers *"blood to drink."*
5. Bowl Judgement #4 introduces scorching heat that results in people being *"seared with fire."* It is dangerous to be exposed and the text suggests people will actually burn up under this intense heat.
6. We talked about how the Earth, up to this point, has been unnaturally cool as a result of some of the prior judgments which have resulted in volcanic disruptions and other similar phenomena.
7. This has caused massive dust and debris clouds to obscure the sun, which is why the Earth turns *"black like sackcloth"* and the moon turns *"blood red."*
8. Several prior judgments have had the result of producing enormous volumes of smoke, atmospheric debris, dust and volcanic emissions, etc.
9. That's why Trumpet Judgment #4 describes 1/3 of the sun, moon, and stars being struck. It describes *"a third of the day as being without light."*
10. It's these kinds of events that have been cumulative to this point. Again, a solid argument can be made that the earth has become uncharacteristically cool or cold as a result.
11. As well, several excellent and reputable prophecy scholars have made a cogent case that the earth experiences a dramatic pole shift during the 6th Seal Judgement all the way back in **Revelation Ch. 6.**
12. That's perhaps why *"every mountain and island was removed from its place,"* according to that passage. All of earth's topography will dramatically change early in the equation.
13. It also changes the usual phenomenon of day and night, and it perhaps partly explains why **Zechariah. 14:7** says of the Day of the Lord, *"It will be a unique day, a day known only to the LORD, with no distinction between day and night. When evening comes, there will be light."*
14. This is perhaps partly why the antichrist in **Daniel 7:25** seeks to *"change the times and seasons."* Some scholars have suggested all the conventional parameters for times and seasons will be disrupted profoundly by this point as a result of the judgments which have taken place.
15. Therefore, the earth is MOST LIKELY greatly cooled by this point, and ice and snow have built up. That's why the 4th Bowl Judgment with the supernatural scorching heat is likely to result in massive worldwide flooding.
16. As I shared in that prior lesson, the net effect of all these judgments will be akin to taking a sauna alongside a four-week old dead cow. The world will be a hot, moist, and stench-filled place.
17. Lastly, we looked at the 5th Bowl Judgment which plunges the world into darkness that is greater than any darkness before it. Probably much like the "Plague of Darkness" on Egypt in Exodus where *"it was a darkness that could be felt."*
18. The darkness will be so bad that it will confine people. The text adds the insight that *"men gnawed their tongues in agony."*

19. They are dying of extreme heat and thirst. There is no indication the heat element has abated.
20. The floods of water from melting ice and snow are present (and are certainly WAY more attractive to drink than blood), but they are unable see anything to get to it. (The “gnawing tongues in agony is often used in the Bible in conjunction with great thirst and distress.”)
21. Despite all this, the text says in **Revelation 16:11**, “...they refused to repent.” These various judgements from God are winnowing out those populations of people who cannot and will never repent and get right with God.

NOTE: That’s a quick recap. Each of the previous lessons on these matters goes into greater detail, and you can hear those lessons and read those lesson notes on our website.

NOTE: Now we proceed with Bowl Judgement #6, and all indications are by this point that we are near the very end of the seven-year Tribulation.

I. THE 6TH BOWL JUDGEMENT – drying up the River Euphrates (*Cf. Revelation 16:12-16;*)

- A. This is not the first time the River Euphrates has been mentioned in these Tribulation Judgments:
 1. At the sounding of the sixth trumpet, (also called the second woe, and clearly placed within the first 3 ½ years), four angels were released who had previously been bound at “the great river Euphrates.”
 2. These four angels slaughtered one-third of mankind. It was worldwide killing.
 3. However, here instead, the Euphrates is dried up so that kings from the east may cross over it to the west.
 4. This movement is associated with the upcoming Campaign of Armageddon which signals that we are quite near the endpoint of these seven years.
 5. Unlike the demonic horsemen of the sixth trumpet judgment, the intent of these kings of the east is not the slaughter of mankind in general.
- B. The Euphrates River is one of the oldest and most notable rivers in history.
 1. It is one of the four rivers which was fed from Eden in the pre-flood world (***Cf. Genesis 2:10***).
 2. The Euphrates was also one of the boundaries of the full Promised Land which God gave to Abraham and his descendants (***Cf. Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; Joshua 1:4***). Those boundaries have never yet been fully realized, and they will not be until the arrival of the Millennial Kingdom.
 3. Some prophecies have a near-far fulfillment. That is to say, they see some application in past events, but they gain fullest fulfillment in future events.
 4. There is a prophecy in **Jeremiah 50:38** concerning the River Euphrates which may have this near-far application. That passage says of the Euphrates, “*A drought is against her waters, and they will be dried up.*”

5. According to the historian Herodotus, Babylon was overthrown when Cyrus diverted the Euphrates which allowed the Persians to wade into the city unexpected. This may be the near-term reference.
 6. But in this future case, that prophecy in *Jeremiah* may also speak of the ultimate Day of the Lord and the drying up of the Euphrates described here.
 7. The Euphrates River is mentioned likely because the events of The Tribulation will also involve the literal city of Babylon on its banks. More on that later....
 8. Here, the waters of the Euphrates are dried in this 6th Bowl Judgment so that God's enemies can be gathered for their final destruction. Which is why **vs. 16** says, "*(these) kings were gathered together to the place that is called Armageddon.*"
- C. QUESTION: Who are these kings from the East?
1. Many scholars equate these kings as being from the Orient areas of China, or perhaps India. They do this because of the current populations of those parts of the world, and perhaps more specifically because of the military ascent of China and India these days.
 2. However, that is just conjecture. The Bible makes no such case. "*From the east*" here simply means they are kings representing nations east of the Euphrates.
 3. The terms 'east' and 'west' are given with Jerusalem and the nation of Israel as a starting point. This is how we need to interpret this prophecy, and NOT from any standpoint of modern news.
- D. Now we must gain a new appreciation of the judgments which have preceded this 6th Bowl Judgment.
1. Again, the argument that the world has just experienced unprecedented flooding needs to be considered.
 2. The Euphrates River is snow-fed from the mountains of Turkey, and the intense scorching heat of the 5th Bowl Judgment has likely caused all that snow to rapidly melt and dramatically flood the plains through which the River Euphrates flows.
 3. All over the world, unprecedented floods are rampant because of this heat. But here, they are especially bad, and so for the kings from the east to make it from where they are to where they need to be. God must supernaturally dry up the River Euphrates.
 4. This will be a localized or regional phenomena. It is called out here in the text as involving the River Euphrates because it will be apparent that this area specifically is supernaturally impacted apart from other places.
- E. These kings from the east are summoned by three unclean spirits.
1. They are described in the text as: '*evil spirits which come out of the mouths of the dragon (Satan), the antichrist, and the False prophet.*' It would appear that one evil spirit emanates from each source.
 2. Their comparison to frogs underscores their uncleanness. From a Biblical perspective, they are categorically unclean, lacking scales (**Cf. Leviticus 11:9-12; Deuteronomy 14:9-10**). Once again, this also recalls the plague of frogs in Egypt.

3. A point is made here that these evil spirits are sent out because of the words or proclamations of this unholy trinity of: Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.
 4. The mouth is the means by which one's will is expressed or reflected. We cannot disassociate our words with the condition of our heart. **Luke 6:45** tells us that: "the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."
 5. This principle is seen in other places in **Revelation**. The fire of judgment came out of the mouths of the two witnesses (**Cf. Revelation 11:5**), and a sword comes out of the mouth of Jesus (**Cf. Revelation 1:16+; Revelation 19:15+**), these latter passages undoubtedly being references to the Word of God.
 6. So here, that which comes out from these three 'anti trinity' mouths is: empowered, influenced, and advanced by these unclean spirits. All three work together with a unified goal of drawing the nations to battle.
 7. This clearly makes the case that there will be persuasive and deceptive propaganda in these very last days which will lead humanity to totally commit to the cause of destruction and to the agenda of evil. That's not hard to imagine as we see the start of these same deceptive processes in our own times.
 8. We are further told in **vs. 14** that these evil spirits are "*the spirits of demons.*" So, it's not just picturesque speech here; these are actual demons going out to advance a deceptive agenda.
 9. We are also told in **vs. 14** that these unclean demonic spirits perform '*miraculous signs.*' In other words, they buttress their deceptive message with deceptive powers. Sadly, the world becomes convinced by it all.
 10. This recalls **2 Thessalonians 2:9** and the original rise of the antichrist on the world stage. That passage says, "*The coming of the lawless one will be accompanied by the working of Satan, with every kind of power, sign, and false wonder.*"
 11. People are easily deceived, and when false miracles are added to the equation, they become convinced even more readily.
 12. The future deception by these three evil spirits will be so powerful that it will be irresistible by those who lack God's protection and God's wisdom. No amount of sophistication, education, power, position, or knowledge will prove adequate to resist this deceptive message.
 13. The manipulation of these kings will be so complete that they themselves will think they are following their own will and strategies, even though God is drawing them into their own destruction.
 14. Note in **vs. 14** that "*the kings of the whole world*" are all ultimately gathered for the great final battle by this deception.
 15. Even though the Euphrates River has been supernaturally dried up to permit the kings of the east to be a part, in the bigger picture, this is about a deception which impacts and draws in all the world.
- F. It is clear from **vs. 16** what this deception is all about. It's about drawing all the world's leadership and people to Armageddon.
1. It's about gathering them for final destruction.

2. They think, as a result of this demonic deception, that they can fight the Lord and win, however, they are going to be nothing more than a feast for all the birds (**Cf. Revelation 19:17**).
 3. A study of the Greek words and phrases in this text of the 6th Bowl Judgment reveals the Battle of Armageddon is an extended engagement rather than a single battle.
 4. As both myself and Dr. Dan Starcevich have taught: the final Battle of Armageddon is better seen as a series of conflicts that begin in Petra when the Lord physically returns there first to defeat His enemies – then proceeds to Jerusalem – and then on to the plains of Megiddo.
 5. This 6th Bowl Judgment is about drawing all the nations of the world to these final locales where they will be ultimately destroyed.
 6. So again, it's clear from the text that there is little time left. This is all about setting the stage for the very end of human history. This is all about preparations for the final events that will see the antichrist destroyed.
- G. This is why **vs. 15** is dropped into this context the way it is.
1. Here, we have a reminder from previous passages in Scripture that the Lord will return as a 'thief,' and therefore 'staying awake' is the urgent order of the day.
 2. This is primarily an appeal to surviving saints of this future time to hang in there and to remain alert.
 3. Jesus Christ is about to physically return, and these events that are taking place are necessary last-minute developments before His arrival.

NOTE: Now we come to the very last judgement of the seven-year Tribulation: The 7th Bowl Judgment.

II. THE 7TH BOWL JUDGEMENT – the judgment upon the air (**Cf. vss. 17-21**)

NOTE: I will loosely divide this judgment into two essential parts: (a.) the end of Satan's reign, and (b.) the assault from the air.

A. The End of Satan's Reign

1. Remember, Satan is described in **Ephesians 2:2** as *"the prince of the power of the air."*
2. Furthermore, we as believers are stated in **Ephesians 6:12** to *'wrestle against hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.'*
3. So, this judgment, being 'upon the air,' announces, in effect, a climactic end to Satan's domain and rule. Satan's realm is judged here.
4. There is also the proclamation in **vs. 17**, *"It is done!"* This corresponds to what we read in **Rev. 15:1** that at the conclusion of these Seven Bowl Judgments, God's wrath is complete.

B. Now we need to examine the effects of this 7th Bowl Judgment. There are several:

1. **FIRST**, there is a great earthquake, greater than any *"since man has been upon the earth."*

2. This is saying something significant because there have already been several great earthquakes associated with this future time of the end.
3. Earthquakes are a significant indicator of *“the beginning of sorrows”* (**Cf. Matthew 24:8**), and that includes the time we live in now all the way up to the very last point.
4. For example, a tremendous earthquake results from the opening of The Sixth Seal, and that is accompanied by cosmic signs in **Revelation 6:12+**. (That’s where every island and mountain was moved from its place.)
5. Then, there was the earthquake after The Seventh Seal, but before The First Trumpet, when the angel of the altar took the censer, filled it with fire, and threw it to the earth in **Revelation 8:7-10**.
6. At the resurrection and ascension of The Two Witnesses a great earthquake leveled one tenth of Jerusalem contributing to the conversion of those who remained alive in **Revelation 11:13+**.
7. And now, there is this great earthquake that exceeds all others since the time of Adam and Eve.
8. This earthquake splits *“the great city”* (this is Jerusalem; **Cf. Revelation 11:8**) into three parts, and it causes all the other cities of earth to fully collapse.
9. As one commentator notes, *“Jerusalem alone, of all the great cities of the earth, is thus to be spared destruction by the earthquake at the end of The Tribulation. It is the one eternal city and will survive as long as the earth endures in its present form, finally being replaced as the new Jerusalem, in the new earth.”*
10. **SECOND**, *“every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.”* This is the second effect of this 7th Bowl Judgment.
11. NOTE: This is more than every island and mountain being *“removed from its place”* in the 6th Seal Judgment. There, every island and mountain was moved or relocated but here, they disappear entirely.

NOTE: The specific dynamics of this event are mentioned by Jeremiah in **Jeremiah 4:23-28...**

“I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; and the heavens, they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, and all the hills moved back and forth. I beheld, and indeed there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all its cities were broken down at the presence of the LORD, by His fierce anger. For thus says the LORD: “The whole land shall be desolate; yet I will not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black, because I have spoken. I have purposed and will not relent, nor will I turn back from it.”

12. **LASTLY (and this is the ‘assault from the air’ I mentioned earlier)**, there are massive hailstones.
13. These are described as *“about a hundred pounds,”* and depending on what translation you have, you may read this description or *“about 75 lbs,”* or about the weight of *“one talent.”*

14. Depending on which commentator persuades you best, these hailstones are supernatural ice boulders from heaven weighing anywhere from about 80 to 120 lbs. I think the best arguments using the Jewish measure of a silver talent of 96 lbs, are the most credible arguments to rest on.
15. These hailstones are massive! By physics assessments, these are roughly 30 inches in diameter, and some academics suggest these would pummel the earth at approximately 284 MPH. The text suggests this is a worldwide event.
16. The text also makes it plain that these supernatural hailstones "*fell upon men*" in **vs. 21**, and the earth dwellers of that time will curse God "*because the plague of hail was so great.*"
17. It's interesting that **Job 38:22** mentions the '*storehouses of the hail.*' My takeaway is God has prepared this supernatural judgment already, and He will execute it when the time is right to employ the proper ammunition.
18. The amazing point of all this destruction and carnage is mankind will still not repent. They are doomed by their choices to eternal destruction, and God will close their door of opportunity.