

LESSON 5

THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH

Our God is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth” (Ps. 86:15). His patience is well known (Rom. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:20). Because of this fact, at times it may appear that God has forgotten about mankind’s flagrant disobedience, but God has not forgotten. Chapters 15 and 16 illustrate graphically the truth of Galatians 6:7: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.” When the wrath of God is poured out, sinners will be given no more opportunities to repent.

1. Do chapters 15 and 16 tell of temporal judgment of the final judgment?
2. What three applications can we make of chapter 16?

THE FIRST BOWL (16:1, 2)

In 16:1, the seven angels were commanded to pour out the seven bowls on the earth. The remainder of chapter 16 pictures the emptying of the bowls.

3. What common elements do the seven trumpets and the seven bowls share?
4. What differences between the two are significant?

THE SECOND BOWL (16:3)

At the sounding of the second trumpet, a *third* of the sea had been turned to blood (8:8), but now *all the sea* became blood like that of a dead man—coagulating and rotting.

5. How does verse 3 emphasize the terrible effects of sin?

THE THIRD BOWL (16:4–7)

When the Nile turned to blood, the Egyptians dug wells to get water (Ex. 7:24), but during the third plague in Revelation 16, even the springs—the sources of water—turned to blood. No water could be found.

6. Who was the “angel of the waters” (16:5)?
7. What two great truths are reflected in verse 6?

THE FOURTH BOWL (16:8, 9)

At the sounding of the fourth trumpet, the sun and other heavenly bodies had been *darkened* (8:12). Now the rays of the sun were *intensified*.

8. Although the fourth bowl does not parallel an Egyptian plague, what about it is reminiscent of the plagues as a whole?

THE FIFTH BOWL (16:10, 11)

The fifth bowl also demonstrates the painful effects of sin. The bowl was poured “on the throne of the beast” and his kingdom (16:10).

9. What effect of sin does this bowl demonstrate, and how was God’s punishment appropriate for this effect?
10. What might the statement “they gnawed their tongues because of pain” (16:10) mean?
11. What does it mean to blaspheme God?

THE SIXTH BOWL (16:12–16)

The concept of “the battle of Armageddon” is so popular and gets so many hearts pounding, that it is almost regrettable to say: *There is no battle of Armageddon*. By any commonly accepted definition of the word “battle,” there will be no literal battle of Armageddon. Even in the vision found in Revelation 16, no battle of Armageddon occurred.

12. What might be the significance of the Euphrates drying up?
13. What were the “unclean spirits” in 16:13, and why was the imagery of frogs used for them?

14. What in verse 14 makes obvious that everything the unclean spirits were doing fit in with God's overall plan?
15. Why did God tell Christians not to "walk about naked" (16:15)?
16. What is known about Megiddo from elsewhere in the Bible?
17. What concepts might the Holy Spirit have wanted to impress by referring to the "Mountain of Megiddo"?

THE SEVENTH BOWL (16:17–21)

After the announcement that the forces of evil were forced to the one spot where they could not win (Har-Magedon), it was time for the seventh angel to empty his bowl.

18. What happened when the army of evil was gathered together for what so many people call "the battle of Armageddon"?
19. Why is it significant the "great city" was split into three parts (16:19)?
20. What does the word translated "one hundred pounds" in 16:21 mean?