

## THE REVELATION

### LESSON 25: THE SEVEN BOWLS- THE FULLNESS OF WRATH

**Intro:**

**Pattern of Revelation:**

Proclamation => \_\_\_\_\_ => Perseverance & Purification => \_\_\_\_\_ (of persecutors)

“In the Exodus story, the plague was a direct attack upon Pharaoh who was believed to be an incarnation of the sun god Ra.” **Derek Thomas**<sup>92</sup>

BIG IDEA: God’s \_\_\_\_\_ judgment will affect all of \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>Plagues of Egypt</b>	<b>7 Trumpets</b>	<b>7 Bowls</b>
Nile turns to blood, killing all life.	Hail, fire and blood fall upon the earth. 1/3 of the earth destroyed.	Boils upon all who worship the Beast.
Frogs	Destruction of the sea, again with blood. 1/3 of the sea destroyed.	Sea turned to blood, all sea life dies.
Gnats	Destruction of the rivers and springs as a heavenly body falls to the earth.	Rivers and springs turned to blood.
Flies	Heavenly bodies (1/3) destroyed.	The sun burns men.
1/3 of the livestock dies.	Demons (locusts) from the Abyss to torment people.	The throne of the Beast is destroyed and darkness falls on its kingdom.
Boils on man and beast.	Invasion from the East, crossing the Euphrates. 1/3 of the people killed.	The Euphrates dries up, allowing armies to gather for battle- an unprecedented battle (6:15; 9:14; 16:14; 20:7-10). There is the symbol of frogs, an unclean creature.
Hail killing people, animals and vegetation.	Kingdom comes with lightening, thunder, earthquakes and hail.	Creation crumbles- lightening, earthquakes, hail.
Locusts		
Darkness falls upon the Egyptians, but not the Israelites.		

<sup>92</sup> Thomas, pp. 129.

## THE REVELATION

Death of the firstborn.		
-------------------------	--	--

### Bowl #1

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.”<sup>2</sup> So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

- John hears the command & instruction to the \_\_\_\_\_ angels coming from the \_\_\_\_\_.
- These bowls represent the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
- Those who bear the \_\_\_\_\_ of the beast, who \_\_\_\_\_ the image, suffer immensely from the plague of \_\_\_\_\_.

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
<p>This is a series of calamities that befall the papacy. Robert Flemming predicted this would occur in 1793-4, using a year-day scheme beginning with the decree of Justinian (533), saying it would begin in Italy or France. This is when the French Revolution began, which resulted in end of papal power worldwide. Moral corruption, atheism and the collapse of society occurred where the beast and his image were worshiped. The French Revolution lasted 5 years, and 2 million people were killed, including 24,000 priests. The power of the papacy was shattered in</p>	<p>There is a division concerning the recipient of these judgments. Some (mostly full preterists like Russell) believe it remains Jerusalem in AD 70. Others, like Jay Adams, recognize the shift to “Rome”, the 2<sup>nd</sup> great persecutor of the church. Which view you take determines who has the mark- apostate Jews, or all who reject the gospel worldwide. If it refers to besieged Jerusalem, such sores would be normal in unsanitary conditions.</p>	<p>Ryrie thinks that these plagues happen in quick succession. They are parallel to but more intense than the trumpets. Dispensationalists follow a more literal understanding of the plagues. This would be literal boils on people. Sometimes they are explained by radiation poisoning (Lindsey) after an explosion. These plagues come immediately before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ.</p>	<p>The evil world under the Beast resembles Pharaoh’s oppressive regime. Henricksen, with others, think that these are parallel to the trumpets, occurring at the same time throughout the time between Jesus’ advents. These sores could be incurable ulcers. Some spiritualize them to the corruption of the world breaking out.</p>

## THE REVELATION

France.			
---------	--	--	--

“The beast’s mark is useless to shield its servants from coming divine wrath.” **Dennis Johnson**<sup>93</sup>

### Bowl #2

<sup>3</sup>The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.

- God now strikes the sea, with a plague like \_\_\_\_\_.
- All \_\_\_\_\_ dies.

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
<p>Again they are applied to the destruction of the Papacy. This is the destruction of the navies that supported the Papacy (France, Spain &amp; Portugal). In the naval war, largely with Britain, from 1793-1815 well over 1,000 ships were sunk.</p>	<p>The shift from the destruction of Jerusalem to the destruction of the Beast explains the greater level of devastation with the bowls. No place is safe in a world in rebellion. Others, like Chilton and Russell, think this is still dealing with Jerusalem. Either way, it refers most likely to the result of war on the high seas.</p>	<p>Some think the seas represent the Gentiles, so this is a plague on the Gentiles or the nations. Others see the oceans transformed into a red, putrid substance. Stedman thinks this is “red tide” which can kill sea life in affected areas. Lindsey continues his nuclear holocaust theme- the seas are poisoned.</p>	<p>Since the beast arose from the sea, or the nations, some think this symbolizes all of humanity. Society putrifies! Others think this points to the sea as an instrument of judgment, with some sea disasters in view. Other that the source of life- food, water, commerce- is destroyed.</p>

### Bowl #3

<sup>4</sup> The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. <sup>5</sup> And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say,  
 “Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was,  
 for you brought these judgments.  
<sup>6</sup> For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,  
 and you have given them blood to drink.  
 It is what they deserve!”  
<sup>7</sup> And I heard the altar saying,  
 “Yes, Lord God the Almighty,  
 true and just are your judgments!”

---

<sup>93</sup> Johnson, pp. 225.

## THE REVELATION

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> bowl affects the \_\_\_\_\_ water supply: rivers and springs. Again, it is \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>94</sup>
- The angel declares the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of God from bringing these judgments upon humanity.
- The punishment is appropriate since they spilled the \_\_\_\_\_ of the saints and prophets.
- God's wrath is \_\_\_\_\_ as well as just.

“The gruesome implication is that the persecutors will drink their own blood, as the allusion to Isaiah 49:26 shows.” **Dennis Johnson**<sup>95</sup>

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
This judgment upon the Papacy occurs inland. This is fulfilled in Napoleon's campaigns east as he tried to conquer Europe. Significant rivers in these campaigns include the Rhine, the Po and numerous Alpine streams in the regions of Piedmont and Lombardy. In those regions, many saints had been killed by the Papacy (Lutherans, Hussites, Moravians, Walenses and Huguenots).	<p>Jerusalem: Rome poisoned water sources during the siege of Jerusalem.</p> <p>Fall of Rome: No corresponding event.</p> <p>Future: God brings judgment by contaminating the sources of fresh water.</p>	Some see this as symbolizing the joys of life contaminated by sin. Others see it quite literally.	The focus is not so much on what the judgment actually is, but its meaning- just retribution of the killing of God's people. God does this in response to the cries of the martyrs.

### **Bowl #4**

<sup>8</sup> The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire.  
<sup>9</sup> They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory.

- The sun, a heavenly body, is the object of the 4<sup>th</sup> bowl of wrath.
- Instead of being extinguished, it grows in \_\_\_\_\_ burning humanity.
- Creation is \_\_\_\_\_ as part of the judgment.
- Like the beast they worship, the people \_\_\_\_\_ God for his just judgments.

<sup>94</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/scitech/2011/08/02/end-times-texas-lake-turns-blood-red/>

<sup>95</sup> Johnson, pp. 227.

## THE REVELATION

- They refuse to \_\_\_\_\_ for their sin.

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
The sun serves as a symbol for a prominent leader, perhaps Napoleon who devastated Europe.	There is no record of such an event in either the fall of Jerusalem or Rome. This passage could point to oppressive tyranny exercised by zealous sects. Chilton, who thinks this refers to Jerusalem, sees this as a reversal of the covenant blessing of protection from the heat of the day by God (Ps. 91, 121). This was promised in Deut. 28:22.	This is the opposite of the 4 <sup>th</sup> trumpet- extreme heat. Some take this symbolically, so that the government begins to torture those under their dominion. Others see this as God's great blessings turning into great curses and suffering. Some take it more literally: solar flares exacerbated by a depleted ozone layer. Lindsey sticks with the nuclear holocaust theme. Soon we'll have someone talking about global warming.	No detailed attempts are made to explain how the fulfillment will take place.

### Bowl #5

<sup>10</sup> The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish <sup>11</sup> and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

- Now God's wrath falls on the corrupt \_\_\_\_\_ that serve the Devil.
- Like the land of Egypt, they are plunged into \_\_\_\_\_: confusion, \_\_\_\_\_ and blindness.
- The people begin to \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ themselves in their anguish.
- They still \_\_\_\_\_ God & refuse to \_\_\_\_\_ of their sin which brought this judgment.

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
The beast's throne is Rome, so the judgment must be on Rome and its surrounding regions. Confusion, disorder,	Most see this as a reference to the city of Rome. Some think this refers to the time after the death of Nero, when Rome	The kingdom of the antichrist is affected. The power of the beast is judged. The judgment on the Beast is not yet complete or	This symbolizes antichristian government. When major powers fall, the world is thrown into chaos.

## THE REVELATION

<p>is symbolized by the darkness. France invaded this region in 1797-8, stripping the Vatican of its power and wealth. The Church of Rome was not extinguished, but continued its blasphemies.</p>	<p>nearly fell to pieces. Others think this refers to the fall of Rome in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible to think Rome serves as a symbol for all oppressive governments who will see their end culminating in the return of Jesus.</p>	<p>final. Lindsey sees this as a literal blackout, allowing the 200 million Oriental soldiers to proceed into the Holy Land.</p>	<p>This darkness will cause such distress people will gnaw their tongues. Their pain only increases their hatred of God.</p>
--	---	--	--

### Bowl #6

<sup>12</sup> The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. <sup>13</sup> And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. <sup>14</sup> For they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. <sup>15</sup> (“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”) <sup>16</sup> And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

- The Euphrates dries up. It was a barrier between east and west. Gone, it allows \_\_\_\_\_ to flow west.
- The counterfeit trinity produces unclean spirits to go out to \_\_\_\_\_ the kings of the earth.
- They produce false \_\_\_\_\_ and gather them together to \_\_\_\_\_ against God.
- Jesus’ declaration indicates that this is not the destruction of \_\_\_\_\_, but His return in \_\_\_\_\_.
- This is the final \_\_\_\_\_ when the Gentiles who punished \_\_\_\_\_ Israel are themselves \_\_\_\_\_.

“Satan’s purpose is to assert his power; God’s is to prosecute his justice. The result is the same: Armageddon.” **Michael Wilcox**<sup>96</sup>

“The world’s rulers gather for war only because the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet have deceived them.” **Dennis Johnson**<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Wilcox, pp. 149.

<sup>97</sup> Johnson, pp. 233.

## THE REVELATION

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
<p>Some think this refers to the rise of the Turkish Empire in the 1820's.</p> <p>The 3 unclean spirits are seen as the spirit of infidelity from the mouth of the dragon, the spirit of popery from the beast, and the spirit of priestcraft from the false prophet. Others see them as paganism, the papacy and Islam.</p> <p>Some think Armageddon took place in WWI. Others speculate that the rise of the Bolsheviks was one of the unclean spirits to make war on Christianity.</p>	<p>Cyrus actually diverted the Euphrates once to move troops under the wall to take Belshazzar by surprise.</p> <p>Many, like Adams and Clark, think this is the preparation for the downfall of pagan Rome.</p> <p>Chilton, Russell and others see this a related to A.D. 70. Josephus reports that Titus brought in thousands of soldiers from the region of the Euphrates.</p> <p>Spiritual Egypt is judged by spiritual frogs. Meggido is at the base of Mt. Carmel where Elijah had his conflict with the prophets of Baal. The plain there was the sight of many famous battles. Clark sees this as the destruction of every great power, in its time. They all experience their Armageddon.</p> <p>Some see Jesus' words are referring to the Second Coming.</p> <p>Some, seeing the parallel with 3:3 believe this connection is not necessary.</p>	<p>This is the same as the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet. It is the final, climatic battle as the armies of the East (China, Japan etc.) enter the Holy Land.</p> <p>Why a world war when there is a one-world government? Some say the armies, loyal to the beast anticipate the return of Jesus. The other suggestion is that they gather to rebel against the beast.</p> <p>Most see the words of Jesus pointing to a strong connection with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.</p>	<p>Rome feared a Parthian invasion from beyond the Euphrates.</p> <p>Some see these forces as gathering to oppose Rome (the beast) and therefore fighting for God. This doesn't connect with the unclean spirits leading them into battle unless they, like Ahab, are being judged.</p> <p>This is the time of Jesus' return.</p> <p>This battle is seen as the same great battle in 11:7ff; 19:1ff; and 20:7ff.</p>

## THE REVELATION

“Armageddon, then, is a symbol of every battle in which Satan gathers his troops against the church.” **Kenneth Gentry**<sup>98</sup>

“But once we appreciate the thematic concerns of Revelation, and the pattern of seven cycles all leading up to the Second Coming, the thematic unity of the various passages becomes a strong pointer to their inward unity. After all, how many last battles can there be, **on the great day of God Almighty** (16:14; cf. 6:16-17; 15:1!)? **Vern Poythress**<sup>99</sup>

### **Bowl #7**

<sup>17</sup> The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” <sup>18</sup> And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. <sup>19</sup> The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. <sup>20</sup> And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. <sup>21</sup> And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.

- Even the \_\_\_\_\_, as a part of creation, is struck by God’s wrath.
- The earth \_\_\_\_\_ with lightening, thunder, earthquakes.
- The great city of \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_.
- Islands and mountains cease to exist.
- The people who remain are killed by \_\_\_\_\_.
- Still no repentance by the wicked.

<b>Historicist</b>	<b>Preterist</b>	<b>Futurist</b>	<b>Idealist</b>
This final bowl is still future for the historicist. Air signifies “a convulsion, vitiation, and darkening of the moral and political atmosphere of Western Europe.” Others see it as referring to storms. The natural phenomenon refer to war and all that follows. The hail	The split on the identity of the great city remains: Jerusalem and Rome. This brings the judgments to a completion on whichever city is in view. Full preterists point to an earthquake accompanying the dissolution of the covenant with Israel (Heb. 12:26-28) as	The air points to Satan’s sphere (Eph. 2). Lindsey returns to a nuclear holocaust to explain the earthquake. Stedman joins him. There are differing opinions as to whether or not the Great City and Babylon refer to the same city. Some say the Great City is Jerusalem, and	The air is often taken for Satan’s sphere of influence. This series of judgments is done. People could not escape to islands or mountains- God’s judgment was pervasive.

<sup>98</sup> Gentry, pp. 116.

<sup>99</sup> Poythress, pp. 156.



## THE REVELATION

<p>points to a judgment from the north. Russia, due to Ezekiel 38:9, is often seen as the best choice. All of the illegitimate gov'ts will tumble. The disintegrating city is the Papal empire</p>	<p>with the initiation of the covenant. So this refers to AD 70. Jerusalem was divided into 3 sections by the warring factions during the siege. The size the hail is about the size of the stones used by the Romans in catapults which appeared to be white while flying to the city. Speaking of the siege, Josephus records hearing "The Son Comes!" not stone as they came. It may have been an attempt to mock Christians. But judgment is always associated with earthquakes, as God comes down displacing the created order with his glory (weightiness).</p>	<p>Babylon is either Rome or a rebuilt Babylon. Oddly, the islands and mountains are seen as symbolizing what man has built by many dispensationalists.</p>	
--	---	---	--

**Talk it Out:** The main issue for this passage is the event this refers to. Is it the fall of Jerusalem, the fall of Rome, the fall of the Papacy or the end of the age? Why?

“Neither the backwash of sin’s bitter aftertaste nor the first fruits of its lethal harvest can soften hearts of stone. Only God’s Spirit, applying the gospel of grace, can turn stony hearts into hearts of tender flesh.” **Dennis Johnson**<sup>100</sup>

**Conclusion:**

---

<sup>100</sup> Johnson, pp. 239.