

Getting Bowled Over

Revelation 16:1-11

(preached Pine Grove 6/25/17; Sunday AM)

Introduction

Take your Bibles and turn with me to Revelation 16...

Let's read the first 11 verses of this chapter this morning...

Then I heard a loud voice from the [a]temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out [b]on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl [c]on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the [d]people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living [e]thing in the sea died.

4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; 6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They [f]deserve it."

7 And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. 9 Men were scorched with [g]fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, 11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

If someone just walked off the streets and came into Pine Grove over the past few weeks, they would swear that I was nothing but a doom and gloom preacher...

Because for the past few months, we have been in the book of Revelation and it has been nothing but doom and gloom...

And there's good reason for that because the world is coming to an end....

God has reached the point of judgment with an unbelieving world...

And in these final 7 years, his wrath against unbelief rejection of the gospel will grow until the Lord can wait no more and the end must come...

No for us, it has been a painful journey....

Week after week of judgments and wrath on the pages of the book of Revelation...

And bless your hearts, you have endured weeks of hard preaching and difficult verses to thin about and imagine...

Yet, we have reached the end of that as we come to Revelation 16...

This week and next week, we will look at the final 7 judgments of God, known as the bowl judgments...

And these will be rapid successive widespread judgments over the whole face of the earth as God deals justly with all who have rejected the gospel...

These 7 will also be hard to watch and imagine, but we must get through them if we want to get to the glorious return of Jesus Christ to this earth...

So, this morning we will look at the first 5 of these bowl judgments before finishing up the final 2 next week...

I have these 5 bowls into 4 types of judgments...

The first judgment is found in verses 1-2...

I. A Bowl of Sores (1-2)

Let's look back at verses 1-2....

1 Then I heard a loud voice from the [a]temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out [b]on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl [c]on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the [d]people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

The majority of the book of Revelation is made up of things that John saw and wrote down after he was told to do that by a resurrected Christ...

The phrase, "And I saw," appears often in the book of Revelation, but this time, John is going to begin this scene by telling us what he heard...

And that is none other than the voice of God directing 7 angels to pour out 7 bowls of his wrath upon the earth...

If you weren't here last week, we met these 7 angels in Revelation 16, where they were carrying 7 plagues and were then given 7 bowls for those plagues...

And now we get to see these bowls began to emptied upon the earth...

Now, John doesn't give us an exact time frame, but it is best to see the 7 bowls being emptied at the very end of the 7 years...

In fact, this final pouring out of wrath may happen over a matter of weeks or just a few months at the most...

And it seems best to see this a rapid machine gun like pouring out...

Now, conditions on the earth at this time will be at an all-time low...

Over the past 7 years, earthquakes have crippled the earth...

Meteors and asteroids have crashed into the earth...

Disease has spread over the earth...

Water supplies are at all time lows...

And a world wide drought is most likely happening as well...

So as we get to the final months of the world as we know it, things are miserable..

Now on top of that, the governments of the world are under the control of the Antichrist...

The economy of the world is also in his hands, and he is also the center of a worldwide false religious system..

So, the earth is crumbling around the people who have survived....

Now, not everyone left is an unbeliever, but many are...

And just when you think the hard conditions of the world would soften their heart to God, the opposite happens...

They are getting harder and harder to God...

This is the danger of saying, "well, I will get saved one day."

If you are someone that says that, you need to understand that the direction of the human heart is not to get softer toward God but rather to harden more against God...

You see that here in the book of Revelation....

As the world comes to an end and is slowly being destroyed, people are getting more and more opposed to God...

So, God must deal with this hard hearted unbelief and with only months or weeks to go until the return of Christ, the first bowl of wrath is poured out on the world in verse 2...

And this bowl of wrath causes sores on the people who have taken the mark of the beast and worshipped the idol of the Antichrist...

This word for sore could also be translated ulcers...

But the idea is the same, - followers of the Antichrist will break out in painful blister like sores..

You could call this the second mark of the beast, but this mark won't allow you to eat, it will be nothing but pain...

Once the first angel pours out the bowl of painful sores, the second grabs the second bowl and begins to dump it out in verse 3..

I call this...

II. A Bowl of Blood (3)

Verse 3...

***3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea,
and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every
living [e]thing in the sea died.***

Bowls 2 and 3 will be bowls of blood that will be dumped into the salt water and freshwater all over the earth...

The first bowl is dumped into the saltwater seas and oceans of the world...

Now, whether the sea becomes actual blood is up for debate, but whatever causes the oceans and seas to look red has devastating affects...

The first is the death of all sea life...

So, you would have oceans of dead animals floating and rotting and stinking up the entire world....

Coastlines where a many people live would be ruined and uninhabitable...

But if that was bad, the third bowl is worse as it is poured out in verse 3 and all the freshwater of the earth now becomes like blood...

In other words, the freshwater drinking supply is gone...

And this would be devastating...

Just think about this...

What is the first thing that people need after a natural disaster strikes?

Well, they need fresh water...

When the Red Cross rolls into town, they are always carrying fresh water...

People need it to survive...

The world in this day will be one big natural disaster, yet there won't be fresh water to give relief to the trouble that is all around them...

People in pain with oozing sores will not find water to help give them relief...

And in case, you are tempted to think that God is heartless or cruel or evil here, the angel who infected the waters has something to say to you...

Because in verse 5, he reminds us all that God is perfectly right in pouring out these bowls of wrath upon the world...

He even says that God is right for judging the world in this way..

And the reason is that the unbelievers of the tribulation had poured out the blood of the saints, so it is only right that they be judged in blood as well...

You see Christian martyrs will explode in the tribulation period...

It will be open season for all who follow Christ in the tribulation period, and many will be killed for the faith at the direction of the Antichrist and his armies..

Yet their blood will no flow without notice, and in the end the people the shed the blood of these believers will be done in by a bowl of blood that infects the oceans and freshwater..

And then notice what the angel says at the end of verse 6..

“They deserve it.”

And this principle reaches back to the blood for blood principle that God told Noah after the flood...

If you shed man's blood, your blood will be required of you..

And we see that right here at the very end of time...

Then in case you didn't hear the what the angel says, a voice from the altar of God repeats the same truth in verse 7...

“Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

We now move to the 4th bowl of wrath that is poured out in verses 8-9...

I call this...

III. A Bowl of Sun (8-9)

Verse 8...

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. 9 Men were scorched with [g]fierce heat;

John's attention now goes to a fourth angel who pours out his bowl not on people and not on the sea and not on the rivers and lakes...

But instead, he pours his bowl of wrath on the sun...

And the result of this wrath is that the sun begins to arrive on earth with scorching heat...

In fact the sun's heat is so hot that people on the earth are scorched with the fire of the sun...

Now you may not remember this, but this past April, NASA warned the world of a solar flare which is a small explosion of the sun that heads to earth...

The threat is not to people but to satellite communications, internet, TV...

But NASA has also warned that a big enough solar flare could do damage to the earth's atmosphere and even to people...

That may be what the Lord uses in the tribulation to send scorching heat to earth...

Whatever it is, the unbelievers on the earth will suffer incredible burns as the 4th angel pours out this bowl of wrath on the sun....

Now notice something that may seem unbelievable at the end of verse 9, yet it will be true...

and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

At this point in the tribulation and probably even before this point, the unbelievers of the earth will know that God is responsible for this judgment...

Yet guess what?

They will still refuse to repent and give glory to God...

Now couple things to see here...

First, the offer to repentance was still open even at the very end of days...

That once again shows the long suffering, ever patient, merciful nature of God...

Here He is sending judgment not just for the sake of punishment but to push people to repent, yet guess what?

Sin has such power that you will refuse to do what you know you should do...

And in the end, men who know that God is responsible will still refuse to bow a knee of repentance to Him...

I was just telling our youth group at VBS of the incredible power of sin...

We only see the pleasure of sin, but the ugly side is that while sin seems to satisfy, it also blinds us and binds us...

And it hardens us to the point that what makes sense begins to look foolish to us...

How you get to a point in your life where you know God is real and calling you to repent, but instead refuse to repent to Him?

Well, you see it right here, but you also see it today in so many people...

The even speak of the God that blesses them and takes care of them, but they refuse to submit to his authority over them...

It is sad, but that is the power of sin at work in the heart that refuses to bow to its Creator...

It will be at work in the end of days, but it is at work today...

Please don't let be true about your heart...

We have a fifth bowl judgment to look at to end our time this morning, and it is found in verses 10-11...

I call this...

IV. A Bowl of Darkness (10-11)

Verse 10...

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, 11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

This 5th bowl is poured out on the Satanic kingdom that has come to earth led by the Antichrist...

The system of global government, global economy, global false religion has dominated life on earth for nearly 3 1/2 years at this point...

IT has persecuted Christians...

It has murdered millions...

It has led people to sin against God..

Yet now, that kingdom must fall and God sends a judgment of darkness upon that kingdom..

It is appropriate that the kingdom of darkness will be judged by a bowl of darkness...

Satan who blinds the hearts of unbelievers will in the end be unable to see to do his evil work upon the earth...

This will a darkness unlike any other...

You will not be able to see your hand before your face...

Maybe this is an ultimate solar eclipse...

Maybe the sun is hidden by God...

It doesn't really matter, all we know is darkness will cover the earth

So from the 4th bowl to the 5th bowl, we go from extreme sunlight to no sunlight...

And the darkness only adds to the pain of the sores of the 1st bowl as people began to bite their tongue to help them forget the pain of the sores...

And the 5th bowl only increase their hatred of God, as they continue to curse God and refuse to repent to Him...

Let's stop there for today, and let me offer a few closing thoughts on what we see here in these first 5 bowl judgments of Revelation 16....

Conclusion

#1 - Judgment is deserved.

Though people look at judgment and think less of God for sending it, everyone wants justice in their own life...

It shocks me the people that accuse God of being hard hearted, yet guess what?

They seek justice the minute they themselves are wronged...

Let me remind you of something when it comes to the justice of God...

If God handed out his justice when we truly deserved it, guess what?

We would all die when we commit our first sin...

That is what immediate justice would look like, but God is rich in mercy so he puts up with our sin much longer than we would ever put up with the sin of others...

#2 - Environmentalists are deceived.

Please notice this...

The seas will turn to blood and all marine life will die with bowl judgment 2...

Look, I love to fish, so I understand a need to keep lakes and river clean and free and free of pollution, but I also know this...

This world is fallen and one day, God is going to bring it to an end and remake it...

And there is nothing that I can do about that...

It is His world.

He created it and he can end it according to his desire and need.

I chuckle at people who say the earth has warmed half a degree over the past 25 years...

It is going to warm up many more more degrees in a matter of minutes when the fourth bowl is poured out on the sun....

And guess what?

We will have global warming, and it will be real bad...

Look, there is nothing wrong with stewardship and caring for the creation as a way to honor God who gave it to us...

But to worship the earth is foolish....

First, that is idolatry because we are worshipping the creation rather than the Creator of it...

But second, we are worshipping something that is destined for destruction...

I don't care how many law you pass...

The seas are going to become blood and the earth is going to get real hot...

That is the plan of God and nothing you can do will stop that...

God created the heavens and earth and in the end of time, he will demonstrate his ownership of it to do whatever he wants to do with it...

People who hug the earth, the sky, and the trees will one day have nothing to hug because God is the one they should have been hugging...

Finally, the last thing we see here is this...

#3 - God is right.

This goes without saying but God always does what is right...

Now you see, we struggle with that don't we..

We may want to do what is right, but even sometimes we can't be assured that what we chose is exactly right...

But God is always right...

That is the angel here and the voice at the altar say out loud during these bowl judgments that what God is doing is right...

We have assurance that everything that God does is right...

However, we have a sort of a problem here...

Because not everyone on the earth will have the judgment of sores fall on them....

Not everyone on the earth will be scorched by the sun or suffer from a poisoned fresh water supply...

You see even in the end of the world, these judgments won't fall on some people because not everyone on the earth is an unbeliever....

So, I would ask you....

Is it right for God to pour his wrath out on some but not on others?

And many people in the people in the world would say no...

But they don't understand the gospel at all...

Because the true gospel says this....

Christ took on the wrath of God in our place....

Christ got the pain of the sores, the heat of the whip, the darkness in the sky from 12-3...

Christ's blood was poured out so that blood wouldn't be poured on you in judgment...

You see God is right is shielding some from his wrath, because Christ has already taken on God's wrath for those who believe in Him...

You see, we get to the same place once again....

Who will bear your wrath for your sin?

And dont think that God is going to not deal with it...

You see God is perfectly right and perfectly fair...

Therefore, everyone's sin will receive God's wrath...

So you must decide?

Do you want to take the wrath of God?

Or would you rather repent and trust in Christ to have him receive the wrath due to you?