

ESCHATOLOGY

Divine Judgments of the Tribulation

It must be remembered that even though, at times, these judgments are carried out by different beings during the tribulation, they are still God's judgments upon sin.

I. The seven-sealed judgments:

A. Rev 6.1-2 The first seal revealed a rider on a white horse symbolizes the Beast and his rise to world power.

1. The rider is said to be given a crown. The Greek word used here is *stephanos*, not *diadem*. This is a victor's crown.
2. As we look at the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, you will notice only this first rider has a crown, and He is the one who will win out in his rise to be the one world ruler.
3. He has a bow but no arrows, indicating he will rise to power using diplomacy and not brute force. He will eliminate any serious threat to his rise, but will not do it by war.
4. He represents man's attempt to create a world of peace and utopia apart from God.
5. This is the first on four judgments in which God will use man as a tool to carryout His wrath on sinful humanity.

B. Rev 6.3-4 The second seal revealed a rider carrying a sword, on a red horse, is a symbol of war, bloodshed, and anarchy.

1. We need to remember that the Beast will rise on the wings of peace. He has just signed a 7-year peace treaty with Israel and with Israel at peace; the world has a false sense of tranquillity.
2. Here we find a rider, commissioned by Christ Himself, sent to make sure the world understands there is no peace without the presence of God.
3. This rider will stir up all the things that has caused man to fight throughout the ages, nation will again rise against nation and men will rise against other men.
4. There are those who believe this rider represents a World War, where the Beast secures his position of power in the world.

C. Rev 6.5-6 The third seal revealed a rider on a black horse which is a symbol of mourning and famine.

1. Both of these are natural consequences of war.
2. This famine appears to be worldwide.

3. The rider of the black horse is carrying a pair of balances in his hand. The Greek word for balances used here primarily means "yoke" or "bondage". It is also used to describe a set of scales.
 - a. In the context of the passage, it appears there will be a great yoke of bondage placed on the world for the necessities of life.
 - b. In John's day, for a penny or *denarius* was an average daily wage. Normally three measures of wheat could be bought for a penny and nine measures of barley. Therefore, this means wheat will cost the world three times as much as normal.
 - c. This seal reveals a scarcity of required food in the world. This could be a direct result of the worldwide shortage of water for the 42 months the two witnesses walk the Earth (Revelation 11:6).
 - d. This will place the wage earner in great bondage. There will be no money for the essentials of life. All the money will go toward sustaining life. Those without a source of income will probably die from disease due to malnutrition.
 - e. As to oil and wine not being hurt, these represent luxuries in life. When there is no money to purchase the essentials in life, it leaves an excess of these items. The value of these luxuries goes down in a famine. It is a matter of supply and demand.
 4. This will also effect world economy. Those countries who depend on agriculture as the primary source of income, will be devastated by the breaking of this third seal. Countries like the United States could be economically crushed by such a worldwide famine.
 5. Whatever this third rider does will cause great mourning among the members of the human race.
- D. Rev 6.7-8 The fourth seal revealed a rider on a pale horse which is a symbol of death.
1. The rider of the fourth horse is riding on a green or pale yellow horse (Greek *chloros*).
 2. His name is Death! It is a word that does not simply mean pestilence that would naturally come after famine, but rather all forms of death.
 - a. Notice he has the power to kill with the sword (war), hunger (famine), death (pestilence), and with "the beasts of the earth".
 - b. The beasts mentioned here could be literal wild animals that proliferate after the depopulation of the Earth or more likely figuratively of men who prove to be savage beasts and enjoy the destruction of human life.
 3. There is no question that the rider of this horse receives his orders directly from Christ, because He is the One who has the "keys to Death and Hades".

4. This passage indicates that one-fourth of the world population will be killed during this period. This period would encompass the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation. With the current world population being over 6 billion, with only .5 billion Christians on Earth today, the death toll during this period could reach almost 1.3 billion people.
5. It appears that Hades, the place or abode of the dead, keeps up step for step with death. It acts as a bottomless pit seeking whom it may devour. Since Hades is the abode of those separated from God, it appears this judgment is specifically dealing with the unsaved dead (Revelation 20:14).
6. These first four seals judgments run concurrent. In these judgments, God uses man as His instrument of judgment.

E. Rev 6.9-11 The fifth seal reveals the death of many tribulation saints.

1. The total death toll during the first 42 months of the tribulation will be higher than 1/4th of the world population, because this figure does not take into account the number of believers who will be killed during this period. It seems there is a great number of believers who have already be martyred for their faith in Christ at this mid-point of the tribulation.
2. Since all believers on the face of the Earth are raptured before the tribulation begins (1 Thes 4:16-17), the believers mentioned here would have to be those who come to Christ after the rapture (Revelation 7:9-11).
3. This great revival and soul harvest comes from the activity of the Two Witnesses of God (Revelation 11:3-4) and the 144,000 Israelites "sealed" for the service of God during this period (Revelation 7:4, 9).
4. These are the tribulation saints who will be persecuted and brutally killed for their faith in Christ (Mark 13:11-13; Luke 21:12-16). The word "slain" used in Revelation 6:9 means, "to put to death by violence", "to slaughter or butcher".¹ These believers will experience very violent deaths at the hands of the Beast and his armies, to try and silence their witness.
5. Notice that when they die, they do not go to Hades; but rather to a place of rest in Heaven under the Altar of God (Leviticus 4:17-18; Revelation 6:11). These have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb, which has made them Holy (2 Corinthians 5:21; Revelation 7:14).
6. From here, these believers cry out to God for vindication so the killing of God's people will stop (Revelation 6:10). But God reminds them there would still be more martyrs to come (Revelation 6:11). The question is why (2 Peter 3:9)?
7. These tribulation saints who cry out before God, will be comforted by the presence of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14-17).

F. Rev 6.12-17 The sixth seal reveals a physical catastrophe on earth.

1. This is the first seal that God did not use man to carryout His wrath. Here the Lord Jesus Christ literally shakes the Earth and its inhabitants because

¹ Online Bible, 2002.

of the great slaughter of those who have trusted in Him alone for salvation. This earthquake is called the Wrath of the Lamb (Revelation 6:16).

2. A giant earthquake, stars falling to the earth (meteors), and volcanic eruptions cause great changes in the earth's land scape (Revelation 6:12-14).
 - a. The early prophets and Christ gave forewarning about this event (Joel 2:30-31; Isaiah 13:9-10; Luke 21:10-12).
 - b. This will be a worldwide earthquake, because the Bible proclaims that "every mountain and island" will be moved out of their places (Revelation 6:14).
 - c. The earthquake and meteors will trigger volcanic eruptions that release tremendous amounts of dust and ash into the atmosphere, which will cause the sun to be darkened and the moon to appear blood red (Zephaniah 1:14-15).
 - d. On August 27, 1883, Krakatau (Dutch East Indies) exploded. The explosion was heard 3000 miles away in South America. 150 miles from the volcano (Bondune), the sun was blotted out and the moon appeared red.
 - e. The Earth will be shaking so violently that the stars will appear to be falling from the sky (Revelation 6:13); and the great cloud of dust and ash moving outward from volcanos will make the heavens appear to be rolled back like a scroll (Revelation 6:14).
 - f. These meteorites and volcanos will also produce massive tidal waves that will cause great damage to coastal low lands. When Krakatau blew, the tidal waves traveled for over 7000 miles (Cape Horn). 36,000 people lost their lives.
3. This judgment will get the attention of every living creature and great fear will arise in the hearts of men (Revelation 6:15). Men will understand they are at the mercy of an omnipotent God (Revelation 6:16-17).
4. Though this event will prove to every unsaved person on Earth that there is a God and He is omnipotent, the majority will still refuse to turn to Him for forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ (Romans 1:18-23; 28-32).
5. Notice who these unbelievers pray toward during the Wrath of the Lamb Earthquake (Revelation 6:16). Their god of nature cannot remove them from the face of the mighty wrath of the one true God. All they want to do is hide from this angry God, just like Adam.
6. Immediately after this judgment, an eerie calmness will settle upon the Earth (Revelation 7:1).

G. Rev 8.1-2 The seventh seal revealed seven angels with seven trumpets. Each trumpet represents a judgment of God.

1. Before this last seal judgment is revealed, God will seal His servants on Earth with a mark on their foreheads (Revelation 7:3). Here, it appears this seal is visible; however, it does not indicate what the seal will look like. Many theologians believe it will simply be the name of God written on the forehead of those who are His (Revelation 14:1; 22:4).
2. This mark is needed to separate the unsaved from the redeemed before the coming of the Trumpet Judgments (Ezekiel 9:3-6; Exodus 12:21-23). Many of the trumpet judgments will be direct judgments on those who refuse to accept Christ.
3. As this seal is about to be open by Christ, all of Heaven is silent. The angels are not singing, the saints are not praising, instead all eyes are fixed on the Lamb with awful anticipation of what the Wrath of God will bring next to the Earth and her inhabitants (Revelation 8:1). Remember with the opening of the fifth seal, God had told the martyred saints there was more to come.
4. Again, there is an eerie calmness that has enveloped the Earth (Revelation 7:1). It is the calm before the storm.
5. As the seal is broken it reveals seven angels with seven trumpets (Revelation 8:2).
 - a. Again, the trumpet was used in Israel to either gather to people for worship or war. Here in the context of the events, it will be used to call Heaven to war against evil.
 - b. It appears these angels are the archangels that continually minister before the Throne of God and are always ready to do whatever God assigns (Luke 1:19-20; 26; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7).
6. The silence is broken as another angel, who apparently leads Heaven in worship, brings a golden censer full of the prayers of the saints before the Throne of God (Revelation 8:3-4).
 - a. Many theologians believe this is the Lord Jesus Christ, since he is the only mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), and as High Priest, He lives to make intercession for believers (Hebrews 7:23-25).
 - b. However, here it does not imply that this is an act of mediation; instead it is simply the prayers of the saints going up as incense before the Throne of God.
 - c. This act should be encouraging for every believer who offers up prayers before God. Sometimes these prayers seem to go unanswered, but we must remember God answers prayer in His time, not ours. These are the prayers of the saints throughout the ages who have pleaded with God to bring an end to the evil that has dominated the Earth since the fall of Adam. This is the moment those prayers will be answered by God.
 - d. We must always remember that our prayers are not limited to our lifetime. We have the opportunity to lift up and intercede for future

generations (John 17:20). Our prayers do not fall on deaf ears; God always answers Yes, No or Wait.

- e. When God answers wait, it appears these prayers are placed in golden bowls held by those who minister before the Throne of God, waiting for the cue from God to bring them forward so He can answer them at the appropriate time (Revelation 5:8).
 - f. The angel mentioned here seems to have the ministry of gathering the golden bowls full of prayers from those who are holding them and bringing them before God when He is ready to answer them.
7. Revelation 8:5 The same instrument that brought the sweet fragrance of the prayers of the saints before God, is now used as an instrument of His wrath upon the Earth. “The altar fires which consumed the divine sacrifice for sins now become the flames of God’s wrath on a world of sinners”.²
- a. Luke 12:49-51 Christ warned humanity that the cross would become an instrument of division upon the face of the Earth. The Trumpet Judgments will be directed against those who have rejected God’s provision of salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - b. At this point, the silence after the Wrath of the Lamb earthquake, may have given humanity a false sense of security that the worst has passed.
 - c. The silence in Heaven and on Earth is broken as this golden censer strikes the Earth. A great world storm comes upon the earth with the sound of thunder and great lighting bolts, yet no rain.
 - d. The inhabitants of Earth quickly realize the Wrath of God is not complete as another earthquake shakes the world.
8. Revelation 8:6 In Heaven, the seven archangels prepare to sound their trumpet as God directs.

II. The seven trumpet judgments:

- A. Rev 8.7 When the first trumpet sounds, "hail and fire mixed with blood" fell upon the earth.
 1. Remember, there has been no rain since the appearance of the two witnesses at the beginning of the tribulation period (Revelation 11:6). The earth is very parched and dry. Today, we see the effects of what can occur in nature when fire breaks out under these conditions (San Diego Fire of 2003).

² Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, IL., 1983, p. 143.

2. As these hail stones plummet to Earth, worldwide fires will breakout. These fires will consume 1/3 of all the trees and all the green grass on the face of the Earth.
 3. This will be an ecological disaster which is unparalleled in human history. The economic impact of this disaster will be greater than anyone can calculate. Many agricultural nations that survived the seal judgments will in all likelihood experience an economic collapse with this judgment.
 4. Many have speculated how the hail stones could have both fire and blood. Some think it will be the Earth consumed by the tail of a comet. Others believe the worldwide earthquakes have released so much volcanic ash into the atmosphere that burning lava is mixed with ice and comes down in the form of hail.
 5. The blood red appearance could be either actual evaporated blood, which is 90% water, of those who lost their lives during the sixth seal judgment; or more likely, the atmospheric gases will make the hail stones appear blood red, like the moon in Revelation 6:12.
 6. Whatever the cause of this phenomenon, it will be a horrifying sight for those who are living on earth at this moment.
- B. Rev 8.8-9 When the second trumpet sounds, "a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea and a third of the sea became blood," resulting the death of 1/3 of the marine life and a loss of 1/3 of the ships in the sea.
1. Since John uses the words "something like a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea" it would indicate that this was something that came from the atmosphere and landed in an ocean. Therefore, this appears to be a giant meteor, an asteroid, or even a comet.
 2. The impact of this blast will be greater than any atomic bomb, possibly on the scale of a hydrogen bomb that is 10 times greater in magnitude.
 3. Even though the impact is isolated to one location, the effects will be experienced worldwide.
 - a. It will be seen from space approaching the earth by astronomers.
 - b. It will light up the sky as it hits the atmosphere.
 - c. These events will more than likely be televised all over the world via satellite.
 - d. When the object hits the ocean, it will cause massive tidal waves that begin to move over 700 miles an hour in all directions from the point of impact. With an object this large, these waves could be over 100 feet high.
 - e. The waves will destroy 1/3 of the ships in the world's oceans and destroy any coastal lowlands in their path.
 - f. The results of the impact will destroy a third of all the life in the sea. Much of this life will die instantly on impact. The Bible also says that 1/3 of the sea will be turned to blood. The Greek word used for blood

here can refer to actual human or animal blood, or anything that takes on the appearance of blood.

- 1) This could be actual blood from the animals that die on impact; or more likely,
 - 2) The rotting flesh of the dead marine life with the chemical change brought on by the presence of the object, will cause what is known as a “red tide”. This “red tide” will kill all marine life in its wake as it moves out from the point of impact.
 - 3) The stench from this judgment will be unbearable.
4. The first trumpet judgment destroyed much of the agricultural land and this judgment destroys a third of the world’s marine produce. These two judgments alone will have a great impact on the world’s food supply.
 5. This will be another judgment that will remind all humanity that there is a God and He is omnipotent. The results of this judgment should turn the hearts of the lost to Christ, but instead will further harden the majority.

C. Rev 8.10-11 When the third trumpet sounds, a star named Wormwood will fall and pollute 1\3 of the rivers.

1. Again, astronomers will see another projectile on a direct collision course with the earth. This will cause great fear and anxiety for those living on the earth with the recent memory of the second judgment.
2. Unlike the mass that hit in the second trumpet judgment, this object appears as a burning lamp when it hits the atmosphere. It will apparently be busted into millions or billions of tiny fragments that will settle upon the face of the earth.
3. These fragments will pollute 1/3 of the rivers. Apparently this pollution even affects the underground water supply in these areas because 1/3 of “the springs of water” are affected.
4. These rivers will become so polluted that those who depend on them for water will die. John indicates that a great number of people will die in this judgment.
5. In this judgment we see God affecting 1/3 of the water supply for mankind. The two basic ingredients required for life are now affected by the first three judgments, food and water.
6. Notice again the portion is only one third. Since these judgments only affect 1/3 of the items mentioned, it should be great evidence to lost humanity that these are not random acts of nature, but judgments controlled by a sovereign God. They should be convincing evidence that the beast is not the true Messiah, because he will not be able to stop these great catastrophes.

D. Rev 8.12 When the fourth trumpet sounds, 1\3 of the light from the heavens will be diminished.

1. The Greek word used for “sun” in this passage is *helios*, and can mean the literal sun, rays of the sun, or the light of day. As a result, there are many theories as to how the sun will be struck by God.
 - a. Some believe it means God will reduce the energy produced by the sun by 1/3. It is interesting that on the fourth day of creation, God created the sun to provide light for the earth. Here it is not impossible for the same God to reduce the energy produced by this great light.
 - 1) If God did reduce the energy produced by the sun by 1/3, there would be a dramatic change in the ozone layer and solar winds, which are directly affected by the energy produced by the sun. These would trigger massive weather changes in the upper and lower atmospheres.
 - 2) The temperature of the earth would be reduced drastically, placing the earth in another ice age if the event lasts for any length of time.
 - 3) The weather changes and the colder temperatures will have an effect on whatever produce is still growing on the earth.
 - b. Another theory is that God will simply reduce the light produced by the sun by 1/3. This would in turn affect the light of the sun reflected off the moon and stars to make them appear dimmer. God has done this on other occasions to allow the world too understand He is the One true God (Exodus 10:21-23; Matthew 27:45).
 - c. However, since the trumpet judgments seem to progressively become worse for the inhabitants of the earth, it is more likely the actual energy of the sun will be reduced to prove to humanity there is only one God who controls the environment of man. This reduction in solar flares or decrease in sun spots, will also reduce the amount of light given off by the sun.
 - d. The next three judgments are know as the three “woe” judgments (Revelation 8:13). Notice the angel or eagle flying in the heavens says, “woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth.” In the Greek language, repeating a word is the strongest way of expressing emphasis on a statement.
- E. Rev 9.1-12 The fifth trumpet is the first of the "woe" judgments.
1. Revelation 9:1 says a star fallen from heaven to earth had been given the key to the bottomless pit. Who do you think this star represents (Revelation 1:17-18)?
 2. Revelation 9:2 The earth has just experienced what happens when the energy of the sun is reduced and here smoke is released which blocks the light of the sun once again.
 3. Revelation 9:3 Out of the smoke will come an army of fully armored demons released from the pit of hell.

4. They are led by a demon named *Abaddon* which means "destroyer." (Revelation 9:11).
5. These demons are given power to inflict destruction upon the face of the earth, through their tails, for five months (Revelation 9:7-10).
6. These demons are still under the control of God. They are limited as to what they can attack and destroy (Rev 9.4-5). These five months of torment should be proof that the beast is not God. Even he will be affected during this judgment.
7. Those unbelievers who are stung by these demons will be in such pain that they will long to die, but no unbeliever will die during this judgment.

F. Rev 9.13-21 The sixth trumpet is the second "woe" judgment.

1. Vs 13-14 When the sixth trumpet is sounded by the angel in Heaven, it appears God commands the sixth angel to "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates".
 - a. Notice the voice comes "from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God".
 - 1) This is significant because at the bronze altar, the priest would offer the sin sacrifice upon the altar. The priests hands would get blood on the horns of the altar, but the eternal fire in the altar would consume the sin offering (Leviticus 4:13-18; 5:11-13).
 - 2) The bronze altar is a vivid reminder of God's judgment upon sin. Either a person will be justified by the shed blood of Christ, or he will be consumed by the eternal Lake of Fire prepared for those who reject Christ (John 3:36).
 - 3) In the Old Testament, men would cling to the horns of the altar seeking mercy but this time the voice of God does not offer mercy for those who have rejected Christ upon the earth (1 Kings 1:50).
 - b. Since these angels are bound, they seem to represent demons. The Scriptures do not say how they have been bound or held in captivity, but it appears to be a long period.
 - 1) The Bible speaks of angels that are so bad, that God has literally bound in a place so they could not have access to man (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6).
 - 2) If these demons have been bound since the fall, imagine the anger and hatred they will display toward man upon their release.
2. Vs 15-16
 - a. These four demons will lead an army of 2,000,000 demon horsemen.

- b. Notice nothing takes God by surprise. God will use the rebellion of these demons as an instrument of His wrath upon fallen humanity. These demons will do the killing, but only as God permits.
- c. They will be allowed to kill 1/3 of the unsaved left on earth. Possibly up to one billion people will die during this judgment. Many will receive what they desired during the fifth trumpet judgment (Revelation 9:6).
- d. It appears only unbelievers will die at the hands of these demons (Revelation 9:20-21).

3. Vs 17-19

- a. When these demons are released, God prepares bodies of His wrath for them to indwell.
- b. John describes horses with riders.

- 1) The riders appear to resemble an army from hell. They have breastplates with fiery red (shiny like fire), hyacinth blue (a dark red almost black in appearance) and sulfur yellow (like brimstone)³. If hell had a football team, these would be their colors.
- 2) The horses had heads like lions and tails like serpents.
- 3) With their mouths, they will spew out fire and sulfurous gas upon lost humanity.
- 4) With their tails, they will bite unbelievers injecting their venom into the victims.
- 5) Since the seventh trumpet judgment announces the bowl judgments, which are carried out during the last 3 1/2 years of the tribulation, it appears this judgment will continue until the mid point is reached. Most theologians believe this will be a period of about 13 months.

- 4. Vs 20-21 Those who die in this judgment are all unbelievers. Those who are believers will again be untouched. Even with all this evidence that there is a God who is protecting the redeemed, the rest of the unbelievers on earth will not turn to God after this judgment. Instead, they continued in their lives of sin.

H. Rev 11.15-19 The seventh trumpet will not initiate anything on the earth. It is the signal that begins the seven vial or bowl judgments toward the end of the tribulation period. It is called the third “woe” judgment.

- 1. The seven bowl judgments represent the completion of God's wrath unleashed upon the earth (Revelation 15:1, 5-8).

³ Online Bible, 2002.

2. As John is about to witness the last half of the tribulation, a mighty angel with a little book in his hand appears in Heaven (Revelation 10:1-7).
3. John is instructed to eat the little book in his hand (Revelation 10:8-10).
4. This is a symbol of how God's Word is taken into a believer's life. God's Word is sweet to believers because it brings encouragement to live in a world system controlled and dominated by Satan; however, it also makes us sick when we proclaim its judgments and a lost world rejects the truth.

III. The Seven Bowl Judgments of God's Wrath:

A. Revelation 15 A prelude to the pouring out of the seven bowl judgments.

1. Vs 1 As the period known as the Great Tribulation begins, God allows believers another glimpse into Heaven. God is about to pour out His complete wrath upon the earth in the third “woe” judgment.
2. Vs 2 Those tribulation saints who made a stand for Christ and lost their lives in the first part of the tribulation are seen here at peace in Heaven (Revelation 12:11; 7:13-17). This is a stark contrast to what is happening on the earth.
3. Vs 3-4 Unlike their stay on earth, these saints are free to worship God unhindered in Heaven.
4. Vs 5 Here the Holy of Holies is opened to expose the testimony against man. Inside the Holy of Holies, the Ark of the Covenant resided, which contained the Ten Commandments. The Law of God stands as a testimony against all those who will reject God’s provision for salvation (Hebrews 9:2-5; Galatians 2:15-16; James 2:10; Galatians 3:24). It is opened here as a testimony against the unrepentant who are living on the earth at the time of the bowl judgments.
5. Vs 6-7
 - a. When the temple is opened, seven angels appear with seven plagues. Since the definite article is present, these angels carry the last seven plagues to be poured out upon the earth. Since these angels emerge from the temple, they would have to be holy (Leviticus 16:11). They are dressed in the same apparel as the saints of God.
 - b. These angels are given seven golden bowls that are full of the wrath of God. Gold represents purity. God is just to pour His wrath out upon a world who has broken His Law and rejected Him and His Son. Here we are reminded there is an end to the love and mercy of God (Genesis 6:3; 7:16). One day, His anger toward sin will climax and be poured out upon unrepentant man.
6. Vs 8 Smoke has always stood for a symbol of the presence and power of God in His dealings with man (Exodus 13:21-22; 24:16-18; 40:34-35; Isaiah 6:4). In this case, it represents the power of God to unleash His just

wrath upon those who have taken the mark of the beast and rejected the love God demonstrated to them through His Son.

7. Revelation 16:1 God Himself gives the command for these angels to go and pour His wrath out upon the earth.

B. Rev 16.2 The first bowl judgment comes upon the worshipers of the beast. Only those who have accepted the mark of the beast will be affected by this judgment, because they have rejected the warnings of God (Revelation 14:6-11). Those affected will have painful boils come up on their bodies that will not respond to medical treatment. These sores will cause great pain and do not appear to subside for the remainder of Great Tribulation (Revelation 16:10).

1. Remember that the trumpet judgments are levied against only 1/3 of whatever was affected. This is because there was still a hope of redemption for all those who had not accepted Christ to this point. Here there is no hope for redemption for those who take the mark of the beast. The pain caused by these sores is a preview of what is in store for these throughout all eternity.
2. Those who are undecided at this point will not be affected by this judgment. These will still have the opportunity to accept Christ. The Bible indicates there will be a "great multitude" who will be saved even during the period known as the Great Tribulation (Revelation 7:9-10).

C. Rev 16.3 The second bowl will see all the sea turn into red-black color of dead blood. Every living thing in the sea will die. Whether this is actual blood or a chemical change in the oceans, the oceans will no longer be hospitable to life. This event symbolizes the fact that all those who have taken the mark of the beast are spiritually dead.

D. Rev 16.4-7 The third bowl reveals that all the sources of good water left on the earth are turned to blood. They are no longer able to nourish the body with the much needed commodity of water. There is an indication that only those who have taken the mark of the beast will be affected by this judgment (Revelation 16:6). This judgment may symbolize that all hope for eternal life has passed by those who have taken the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11).

E. Rev 16.8-9 The fourth bowl reveals enormous heat is generated by the sun. It begins to scorch men living on the earth (Malachi 4:1; Isaiah 24:5-6). How intense will the heat become (Isaiah 30:26)? This is almost like a picture of hell where the fire is not quenched and thirst never ends (Mark 9:42-44; Luke 16:23-24).

1. This heat will intensify the pain and torment of those who have been afflicted by the sores during the first bowl judgment.

2. The sun beating down upon the earth will scorch men. This word "scorch" means, "to torment with extreme heat".⁴
 3. There will be little relief at night during this time, so it will become difficult to sleep.
 4. Critical water supplies will begin to evaporate.
 5. However, water quantity will not be a problem, since heat of this magnitude will begin to melt the great polar ice caps and glaciers. It is estimated that if the great polar ice masses were to melt at once, it would raise the water level of the oceans over 200 feet. This would virtually destroy low lying cities like Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Calcutta, ect..⁵
 6. This judgment will be horrifying for all those who are alive at this time.
 7. Knowing this judgment is from God, those who are scorched will blaspheme God and not repent. Revelation 16:9 may give an indication that believers will not be affected by the heat. However, they will be affected by the changes caused by this judgment upon the face of the earth.
- F. Rev 16.10-11 The fifth bowl reveals darkness being poured out upon the beast and his kingdom.
1. This judgment falls directly on the beast and his seat of authority in Babylon.
 2. While the rest of the world is experiencing light from the sun seven-times brighter than usual, Babylon will be encapsulated in total darkness. Darkness that can be felt.
 3. Although there is no light, there is no indication the inhabitants of Babylon have any relief from their sores, sunburns or the heat. Instead, the darkness will make them concentrate more on their pain and suffering (Revelation 16:10b-11). There will be nothing to take their mind off the pain.
 4. This judgment is a picture of spiritual death and the physical and mental torment awaiting those who will be cast away from the presence of God into the Lake of Fire.
 5. Notice the hearts of the lost become harder toward God with every bowl judgment.
- G. Rev 16.12-16 The sixth bowl reveals that the river Euphrates will be dried up.
1. This judgment will serve two purposes.
 - a. One, it will bring the great city the beast has created to her knees. Since the Euphrates and Tigris rivers both have their source beginning

⁴ Online Bible, 2002.

⁵ Henry Morris, The Revelation Record, Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, IL., 1983, p. 304.

with Mount Ararat, it is possible that both these rivers will dry up at the same time (Revelation 16:12).

- 1) These two rivers are the only fresh water supplies for modern day Iraq, where ancient Babylon rested.
 - 2) The damming of these rivers also provides power for this region of the world. If these rivers are incapacitated, the city would be without water and power in scorching temperatures.
 - 3) This will force the beast and his armies to leave Babylon and move toward Israel for the battle of Armageddon.
- b. Two, the drying up of these rivers would also allow the armies from the East to launch a land assault against the armies of the beast in Israel (Daniel 11:40-45).
2. The beast will entice all the armies of the earth to come together for judgment at Armageddon (Revelation 16:13-14, 16). The beast thinks he has gathered the nations against Jerusalem, but he is used by God to bring them together for their own destruction (Zechariah 12:1-3).
 3. This judgment foreshadows the ultimate judgment of evil, because the sun rises in the east. Just as the sun rises in the east, so shall the Son return to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords from the east (Matthew 24:27).
 4. When Christ comes again, He will supernaturally destroy all those who have sided with the beast and rejected Him; so that the Kingdom of God can be established on earth (Zephaniah 3:8-9; Revelation 19:19-21).
 5. Notice in verse 15 that Christ encourages believers who are living witnesses of these horrible catastrophes to remain faithful until the end. This is the message for believers of all ages (1 Corinthians 15:58).
- H. Rev 16.17-21 The seventh bowl is poured into the atmosphere, which means it will affect the entire earth. With this judgment, God Himself says, "It is done". This judgment will see the consummation of God's wrath poured out upon sin. This is quite different from the first time God said "It is finished". In John 19:30, Jesus proclaimed to the world that the purchase price required to redeem man back to God was complete through His sacrifice. The way had been made available for anyone who would come to God through Christ (Acts 16:30-31). In this verse, God proclaims His wrath is complete the only thing left will be final judgment (Isaiah 2:10-11; Zephaniah 1:14-18; Zechariah 14:12-15).
1. It opens with a violent storm proceeded by the most severe earthquake the world has ever known (Revelation 16:18; Jeremiah 4:23-26).
 - a. In this earthquake, the cities of the world will fall, Babylon the center of the beast's power will be destroyed (Revelation 16:19; Jeremiah 25:30-33).

- b. There will also be major changes in the earth's topography (Revelation 16:20: Zachariah 14:4).
 - c. Men will try in vain to hide from the presence of God (Isaiah 2:17-21).
2. During this judgment, hail stones the weight of a talent (135 pounds) will fall upon the earth.
 3. This one judgment will throw the entire world into total confusion.
 4. Those who are lost and survive this judgment will shake their fist in the face of God (Revelation 16:21).
 5. The saying, "it is done," by God shows that God's wrath has been completely poured out on sin.
 6. Notice the reaction of the lost to this judgment (Revelation 16:21). This proves there is no end to the depravity of man.
 7. This judgment prepares the earth for the return of Christ, so that He can take back what is rightfully His and setup His Kingdom on earth (Zechariah 14:8-9).

IV. Conclusion:

- A. Both the sealed judgments and trumpet judgments are designed to prove to a lost world that there is a sovereign God who is in control of the universe. While these judgments represent the wrath of God unleashed upon the earth, they also demonstrate His mercy to draw a lost world to Himself.
- B. The bowl judgments represent God's fierce wrath poured out upon those who have rejected His offer of salvation. There is no redemption in view for the recipients of these judgments. They are designed to purge the earth of all ungodliness and prepare the world for the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. Understanding these truths, the believer living in the Age of Grace should be moved to warn those without Christ about the coming judgment of God. Today there is hope, one day there will be no hope for those outside of Christ. Pray that God will open opportunities for you to share the love of Christ with a lost world.