The Revelation to John

Chapter 16:1-21

I. **Introduction**

A. In a singular chapter, the seven angels which have been given bowls (vials) of God's wrath have been commanded to go and empty their contents.

B. Each of the angels has a specific "target" for the contents of his vial. The earth-dwellers have already suffered from the seal and trumpet judgments, but this final series of judgments will climax God's plan, ultimately leading to Jesus Christ's return to earth.[1]

C. The overwhelming picture of chapter 16 is one of disease, pain, and suffering. The ultimate causes of these conditions is not located in natural upheaval but in divine action. The crass rebellion of the human heart is also displayed since through all these tragedies, men do not repent.[2]

D. This chapter, therefore, is a lesson on the value of _____.

II. **The First Bowl**

A. It is an awesome thought to consider almost the entire population of the world suffering from a painful malady that nothing can _____. Constant pain affects a person's disposition so that he finds it difficult to get along with other people. Human relations during that period will certainly be at their worst.[3]

B. These painful ulcers remind us of the distressing boils that plagued the people of Egypt (Exodus 9:10f).[4]

III. **The Second and Third Bowls**

A. Irenaeus, in a famous passage, remarks that "the whole exodus of the people out of Egypt, which took place under divine guidance, was a type and image of the exodus of the Church which should take place from among the Gentiles; and for this cause He leads it out at last from this world into His own inheritance, which Moses the servant of God did not [bestow], but which Jesus the Son of God shall give for an

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[1] Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 609.

[2] Irenaeus of Lyons, "Irenæus against Heresies," in *The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Company, 1885), 504.

[3] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 609–610.

[4] Lewis Foster, *Revelation: Unlocking the Scriptures for You*, Standard Bible Studies (Cincinnati, OH: Standard, 1989), 233.

inheritance. And if any one will devote a close attention to those things which are stated by the prophets with regard to the [time of the] end, and those which John the disciple of the Lord saw in the Apocalypse, he will find that the nations [are to] receive the same plagues universally, as Egypt then did particularly"[5]

B. In God's government, the _____ fits the crime. Pharaoh tried to drown the Jewish boy babies, but it was his own army that eventually drowned in the Red Sea. Haman planned to hang Mordecai on the gallows and to exterminate the Jews; but he himself was hanged on the gallows, and his family was exterminated (Es. 7:10; 9:10). King Saul refused to obey God and slay the Amalekites, so he was slain by an Amalekite (2 Sam. 1:1–16).[6]

IV. **The Fourth Bowl**

A. Remembering too that the water system is now useless, you can imagine how people will suffer from _____ and the effects of intense solar activity. Even this judgment will not bring men to their knees! (see Mal. 4:1)[7]

B. The blasphemy shows that they have become like the false, beastly god that they worship, since elsewhere outside ch. 16 "blasphemy" is attributed only to the beast (13:1, 5, 6; 17:3).[8]

V. **The Fifth Bowl**

A. The progression in this plague seems to focus as its target on the very seat of Satan's _____, the throne of the beast, the center of his kingdom.[9]

B. In hallucinations men bite their own tongues in circumstances of great excitement; the confusion of images shows that the sense of pain on experiencing the vision was so strong that it could not find adequate plastic expression.[10]

VI. **The Sixth Bowl**

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[5] Paige Patterson, *Revelation*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 39, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2012).

[6] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 610.

[7] Ibid., 610.

[8] G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 823.

[9] Foster, *Revelation: Unlocking the Scriptures for You*, 236.

[10] Patterson, *Revelation*, 309.

A. At this point John beholds another phenomenal development. Three evil spirits, which to him appeared like frogs, came out of the mouth—one from the dragon, a second from the beast that came out of the sea, and the third from the false prophet or the beast out of the land. Frogs were unclean animals in the Bible and were always viewed with a certain loathing by most civilizations (Exod 8:2–15). Frogs constituted one of the plagues on Egypt and may be the background for these frogs, although clearly from the text the frogs only have the despicable nature of these amphibians and, in fact, are evil spirits.[11]

B. There is much discussion over the imagery of Christ coming as a thief (which would be secretive) and His actual return (which was not so secretive). One commentator suggests that the warning may be for those who are urged to constancy despite the incredible sorrows that they are experiencing on every hand in the tribulation period.[12]

C. It should be noted that the phrase "battle of Armageddon" never occurs in the _____. The term Armageddon, is a transliteration for the Hebrew phrase, "mount of Megiddo." In ancient Israel, Megiddo was a key city overlooking a major travel route between the great kingdoms of Mesopotamia and Egypt. Huge armies could assemble in the neighboring Plain of Esdraelon. Thus it is a fitting name for the location of the climactic battle.[13] Napoleon Bonaparte called this area "the most natural battlefield of the whole earth."[14]

VII. **The Seventh Bowl**

A. The seventh bowl is judgment upon the dominion of Satan and the beginning of the destruction of His religious _____: his religious system (the harlot, Rev. 17), his political and economic system (Babylon, Rev. 18), and his military system (the armies, Rev. 19).[15]

VIII. **Application**

A. Repentance is a heart issue, not necessarily a _____ issue.

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[11] J. N. Sugget, *Commentary on the Apocalypse,* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 142.

[12] J.A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 379.

[13] R. C. Sproul, ed., *The Reformation Study Bible: English Standard Version* (Orlando, FL; Lake Mary, FL: Ligonier Ministries, 2005), 1865.

[14] Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 610.

[15] Ibid., 611.

B. God's punishment is sin is a _____ matter. Therefore, the church's prescription for sin should be a more welcome alternative.
C. The Spirit world is a _____ world.