

THE SEVEN BOWLS

REVELATION 15:5 - 16:21

Once the seven signs have completed, Johns sees the angels of the final sign receive seven bowls to pour our the plagues of Egypt on the earth in judgement again. This last seven cycle focuses on God's final judgement of evil and the justice with which he judges the world.

GIVING OF THE BOWLS / 15:5 - 8

The tabernacle (tent of witness) is opened and seven angels emerge clothed in bright clothes and golden sashes. The four living creatures from chapter 4 give these angels bowls to pour our God's wrath on the earth. The sanctuary is filled with smoke and no one can enter until the angels are finished.

Evil has to be punished and purged from the earth before God's Kingdom can come and his people be reunited with him.

These bowls are symbolic of the final judgement that God will bring upon evil on earth and in heaven.

THE FIRST THREE BOWLS / 16:1 - 4



Painful Sores
6th Plague
Poured on the Earth
(See 1st Trumpet)



Blood
1st Plague
Poured on the Sea
(See 2nd Trumpet)



Blood
1st Plague
Poured on Rivers
(See 3rd Trumpet)

The bowls are similar to the trumpets but are much more comprehensive in their scope. All of the earth is being judged—signifying the final judgement.

INTERMISSION: IS GOD'S WRATH TOO MUCH?

The action pauses in verse 5 through 7 to ask the question: Is God's wrath too harsh, too drastic? But an angels sings the praise of God's justice. God is just in his punishment of evil because he is holy. The nations have offended his holiness and they are facing the right punishment for doing so.

God's wrath is described as a cup of blood that the nations must drink. God is giving the nations what they want. They want blood (v 6) so it is blood they will get. The prophet Jeremiah talks of this cup that the nations will drink. The violence and oppression the nations have unleashed on the world, especially on the church, will come upon them. They have shed the blood of the church, so blood they will drink.

THE SECOND THREE BOWLS / 16:8-16



Fire from the Sky
7th Plague
Poured on the Sun



Darkness/Sores
9th/6th Plague
Poured on the Beast



Frogs
2nd Plague
Poured on Euphrates

The angels continue to pour out God's wrath through these Exodus-like plagues, but, like Pharaoh, the nations don't repent and give God glory.

THE WARNING FROM JESUS / 16:15

Jesus interrupts the action and warns us that he is coming again soon and that we better be ready for his coming!

See Matthew 24:43 / Luke 12:37 / 1 Thessalonians 5:2-8

ARMAGEDDON

It's literally 'Mount Mediggo' but the place is actually a plain.

John is probably mixing two ideas together when describing evil's final war against God.

The Plain of Mediggo was a place where Israel often battled enemies. (See Judges 5:19 / 2 Kings 23:29)

And it's close to Mount Carmel where God defeated Baal through the prophet Elijah.

John's point: God will defeat the rebellious kings of earth and the rebellious kings of heaven.

THE FINAL BOWL 16:17-21



Poured out on the Air
All of the Earth is Judged
God's Judgement Is Finished

But the people refuse to repent and curse God in the end because the judgement (described as 100 pound hail) is so bad.

And we see lightning, thunder, and earthquakes signifying that we've come to the end of the story once again.