

The Beginning of Final Judgment (Message #37)

Revelation 16: 1-9

Tonight we have come to the last of God's judgments in the Revelation. The judgment of God is separated into three separate phases: **1) The 7 seals 2) The 7 trumpets 3) The 7 vials** or bowl judgments.

Throughout the tribulation judgment has been mingled with mercy, but now all mercy has been withdrawn; the day of opportunity has ended. The wrath of God is **filled up**, "it is complete, final, and satisfactory." His wrath is **full**, "ready to burst forth with all His fury."

Remember that God is just in all His ways. These have heard the truth, they have been given opportunity to repent, but they have rejected God's offer of salvation. When grace is rejected, judgment is all that remains. **Heb.10:26-27 – For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.** Let's look into the future tonight as we consider: **The Beginning of Final Judgment.**

I. The Affliction of the Sores (1-2) – **And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. [2] And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.** As the final judgment begins, the first vial is poured out bringing sores upon man.
Notice:

A. The Reality of the Sores (2a) – They are described as **noisome**, "injurious and destructive." The word **grievous** describes the "intense pain that they will bring." These sores are literally ulcers – *open, festered, oozing wounds upon the skin.*

▪ This plague is eerily similar to the plague that God brought upon the Egyptians in **Ex.9:8-11**. In the book of Job God allowed Satan to afflict Job and it was boils that Satan chose to afflict him with. Satan could've smitten him with any type of affliction, but he chose boils. I can't begin to imagine the pain and suffering these will endure covered with sores.

B. The Recipients of the Sores (2b) – **The sores came upon all who had received the mark of the beast.** The word **men** is inclusive of the entire human race, male and female alike. There will be no escape for those who have rejected God and chosen to follow the Antichrist. All who have denied the Lord will be afflicted and tormented in judgment.

- God is no respecter of persons. All who come to Him in repentance find forgiveness and salvation, while all who reject His mercy and grace will face His judgment regardless of age, color, creed, or gender. Can you imagine the entire human race left upon the earth being covered in oozing sores? This alone is bad enough, but the plagues have just begun.

I. The Affliction of the Sores (1-2)

II. The Corruption of the Seas (3) – *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.* The second vial is poured out upon the seas of the earth, *corrupting them with the blood of a dead man.* We can't begin to imagine the turmoil that this plague will bring. There are a couple of things that we need to consider regarding this corruption of the seas.

A. Corruption will be Global (3a) – If you remember, when the 2nd trumpet sounded, one third of the earth's seas were turned to blood. Here in this 2nd vial, all of the seas will be smitten with the wrath of God, turned to blood. As the reality of their suffering from the sores begins to set in, another calamity will strike.

- We can't begin to imagine the enormity of this catastrophe. Man has never experienced this type of judgment. When you consider that 70% of the earth's surface is covered in oceans, imagine all of that water being turned to blood. There won't be any sun bathers on the shorelines as the tide brings in wave after wave of putrid blood.

B. Corruption will be Fatal (3b) – As the plague is poured out, *every living thing in the sea will die.* Think about the millions of fish, sharks, whales, and other sea life that inhabit the depths of the sea. It is believed that there are depths that Mt. Everest could be placed in and be under water. All of the sea creatures, great and small, will die and begin to rot amidst the seas of blood. All around the world shorelines will be filled with stinking, rotting flesh. No doubt disease and bacteria will abound due to the enormous contamination.

- This plague won't just be fatal to the sea life; it will bring devastating effects to men. Much of the world is dependent upon the oceans as a means of survival. With one stroke of God's almighty hand, the food source for millions will be gone. Starvation will reach unprecedented levels. Ships used to transport cargo and supplies will be hindered by the great calamity that has come upon the seas and shipping lanes. Harbors will literally be floating in decaying flesh!

- Can you imagine the vastness of the Pacific Ocean alone being turned to blood and all the sea life that it supports dead in an instant? Seventy percent of the earth's surface will serve as a vast graveyard, holding tons of dead flesh. Surely this will bring terror to the hearts of men. All of this is hard to imagine, but there is more to come.

I. The Affliction of the Sores (1-2)

II. The Corruption of the Seas (3)

III. The Pollution of the Streams (4-7) – The third vial affects the rivers and fountains of water. Notice:

A. The Conditions Described (4) – [And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.](#) All of the rivers, streams, wells, and springs of fresh water are also turned to blood. Every available source of fresh water will be polluted and turned to blood.

- In [Rev.8:10-11](#) as the 3rd trumpet sounded, one third of the earth's fresh water became bitter and many died who drank it. Now imagine all of the earth's drinking water turned to blood. Imagine going to the faucet for a cool drink of water and getting a cup of thick blood. Consider the misery of the sores upon their bodies without even a place to take a clean bath.
- There will be no water for cooking or cleaning. I am told that we can only survive about three days without water. There is coming a day when fresh water upon the earth will be unavailable.

B. The Consideration Declared (5-7) – [And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. \[6\] For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. \[7\] And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.](#) As this plague is poured out, the angels rejoice and praise the Lord for His righteous judgment. Countless Christians have suffered, bled, and died at the hands of Antichrist and sinful men. These rejoiced at the suffering and death of God's servants, hungry for the blood of the righteous. They desired blood and God granted their request.

- We live in a day where wickedness abounds. It grows darker with each passing year. Often we find ourselves discouraged at the abundance of sin. Satan may be the ruler of this earth, but the Lord will have the final say. God will return to judge the sins of this world. The

righteousness of God will prevail! One day those who have lived to indulge in sin will face a holy God and give an account for the lives they have lived.

I. The Affliction of the Sores (1-2)

II. The Corruption of the Seas (3)

III. The Pollution of the Streams (4-7)

IV. The Devastation of the Sun (8-9) – The fourth vial will be poured out upon the sun bringing devastating effects. Notice:

A. The Affliction of Men (8-9a) – [And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. \[9\] And men were scorched with great heat.](#) The Lord will touch the sun with His power. He is the One who created it and He is in control. It is apparent at this time the Lord will cause the sun to intensify in its heat.

- This brings to mind the wonder of creation. The sun is the largest star in our solar system, so large that 1.3 million planets the size of earth could fit within it. We are 93 million miles from the sun, which has a surface temperature of 10,000 degrees. If we were any closer we would burn up, and any farther away we would freeze to death.
- During this part of the Tribulation, the sun will bear down upon the earth as never before. Its heat will be so intense that it will scorch men with great heat. They will be tortured by the intensity of the sun.
- Most of you have likely experienced bad sunburn. These will be unlike any man has ever known. I can't imagine being covered with sores, the drinking water turned to blood, and then dealing with intense sunburn. The men of the earth will suffer greatly at the hands of a holy God. [Heb.10:31 – It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.](#) Finally, let's consider how men will respond to the intensity of God's wrath.

B. The Attitude of Men (9b) – [and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.](#) With the fullness of God's wrath being poured out, men still blaspheme the name of the Lord and refuse to repent. Their hearts are so hard that they will not acknowledge God in any way other than to curse His holy name.

- This is a sorrowful picture, men facing the undiluted wrath of God and still standing in open defiance to Him. These are so bound in their sin that they refuse to give God glory for who He is.

- Our world is filled with men like that today. God has shown Himself in many different ways, but they still refuse to believe and submit to Him. We are simply a work of His hand and we stand at His mercy. As I said for those who reject His grace, judgment is all that remains.

Once again we have discussed a portion of Scripture that is troubling. I want to remind you that these are not fairy tales; these events will one day be a startling reality for thousands left upon this earth.

As I ponder these events, I rejoice that I've been redeemed. Thank God that I will miss the horrors of the Lord's judgment in tribulation. Can you say with certainty that you will be able to avoid the judgment of God for your sin? Being washed in the blood of Jesus is the only way to avoid being accountable to God. Don't be as these will be and resist the mercies of God. Come to Him today.