

Third Bowl (v.4)

VERSE 4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood (Καὶ ὁ τρίτος ἐξέχεεν τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ εἰς τοὺς ποταμοὺς καὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων, καὶ ἐγένετο αἷμα [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. tritos third + aor.act.ind.3s. ekcheo pour out + art.w/noun acc.f.s. phiale bowl + pro.gen.m.s. autos "his" + prep eis + art.w/noun acc.m.p. potamos river + conj kai + art.w/noun acc.f.p. pege spring + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. hudor water + conj kai + aor.act.ind.3s. ginomai become + noun nom.nt.s. aima blood*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 4

1. The contamination of the fresh waters follows that of the sea as is the sequence with the second and third trumpet judgments (8:8-10).
2. The wording prophesying of the third bowl's contents is practically identical with that of the falling star's destination under the third trumpet (8:10).
3. The first Egyptian plague affected the Nile River principally, but this third bowl will affect all rivers, and to frustrate earth-dwellers from doing the same thing as the Egyptians did to find drinking water (cf. Ex. 7:24; cf. Ps. 78:43-44), it will turn the fountains or springs of water into blood too.
4. It contaminates all fresh water sources.
5. This blood is just as literal as the blood of the saints mentioned as a reason for the punishment in the verse 6.
6. The havoc caused throughout the world by the absence of drinking water is unimaginable as is pay-back the many must pay for persecuting and killing saints throughout the tribulation.
7. In the first Egyptian plague the fouling of the Nile led to the mass fish kills that further fouled the air and made life miserable.
8. This plague was stopped by the supernatural power that started it.
9. So it will be with these plagues in preparation for the Millennium.

Angelic Affirmation and Explanation (vv. 5-6)

VERSE 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying (καὶ ἤκουσα τοῦ ἀγγέλου τῶν ὑδάτων λέγοντος [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.1s. akouo hear + art.w/noun abl.m.s. angelos angel + art.w/noun gen.nt.p. hudor water + pres.act.part.gen.nt.p. lego say*]), **"Righteous are You, who are and who were** [Δίκαιος εἶ, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν, ὁ ὅσιος [*adj.nom.m.s. dikaios righteous + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + art.w/pres.act.part.voc.m.s. eimi + conj kai + art.voc.m.s. "who" + imperf.act.ind.3s. eimi "were"*]], **O Holy One, because You judged these things** [ὁ ὅσιος, ὅτι ταῦτα ἔκρινας [*art.voc.m.s. ho + adj.voc.m.s. hosios holy, devout, dedicated + conj hoti for (this reason) + pro.acc.nt.p. houtos "these things" + aor.act.ind.2s. krino judge*]]);

VERSE 6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets (ὅτι αἷμα ἁγίων καὶ προφητῶν ἐξέχεαν πλεῖν [*conj hoti for + noun nom.nt.s. haima blood + adj.gen.m.p. hagios holy; saint + conj kai + noun gen.m.p. prophetes prophet + aor.act.ind.3p. ekcheo pour out*]), **and You have given them blood to drink** [*conj kai + noun acc.nt.s haima blood + pro.dat.m.p. autos "them" + aor.or perf.act.ind.2s. didomi give + aor.act.infin. pino drink*]). **They deserve it** (*adj.nom.m.p. axios worthy + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi*)."

ANALYSIS: VERSES 5-6

1. In conjunction with this visitation of misery (3rd bowl) John heard another pronouncement (song?).
2. The speaker is the angel who oversees the earth's seas and freshwater, a different one than the one who poured out the third bowl.
3. Rev. 7:1 has four angels who influence the winds, and in 9:11, and angel who has authority over the abyss.
4. In 14:18 we saw the angel who is over fire.
5. The angel of the waters is of the same category as these.
6. Angelic ministry connects with the elemental forces of nature (cf. Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7).
7. This accords with Jewish thought as per 1 Enoch 66:1-3, where there is angels of punishment with powers over the waters to release them and bring destruction on people.
8. This angel's song is somewhat of a repeat of the one sung by the overcomers in 15:3-4.
9. The justice of God is one of those echoes (15:3; cf. 19:2).
10. God's righteousness and justice assert themselves on behalf of His beleaguered people in vindication.
11. Rather than complain to God for what He has done to the waters, the angel of the waters confirms the justice of the punishment inflicted.
12. The expression "who is and who was" addresses God in the same way as the song of 11:17 (cf. 1:4,8; 4:8).
13. This is a title recalling God's eternity which was expressed in similar terms in Ex. 3:14 when God revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush.
14. Soon after this, God used Moses to bring the principle of *lex talionis* in delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage.
15. The bowls apply the same process in a far more extensive and final context.
16. A second mode of address can God "Holy One" another echo of 15:4.
17. "Righteous and "holy" apply to God in 15:3-4 as they do here (cf. Titus 1:8).
18. The closer understanding of the term "Holy One" is "the Sacred One."
19. In the third bowl judgment God maintains His sacredness by sending a judgment that perfectly fits the crime.
20. The "because" clause gives the reason for calling God "righteous/just."
21. He judged "these things" in the natural realm, meaning He contaminates the fresh water sources as a punishment against humans who rely on clean water for life itself.
22. "These things" excludes the judgments of bowls one and two because the subject is the shortage of drinking water (cf. v.6) not sea water.
23. "These things" has as an antecedent "rivers and springs of waters."

24. The angel's song continues from v.5 with an elaboration of the appropriateness of the judgment.
25. Some want to begin a new sentence with "for" or "because" clause the opens v. 6: "Because they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, You have also given them blood to drink."
26. To punctuate the verse this way breaks the continuity in emphasis on the theme of the song, which is the righteousness and sacredness of God.
27. This leaves the thought of v. 5 somewhat incomplete.
28. In addition, the position of the *kai* before "blood" also argues against this meaning.
29. It is better to see this *hoti* clause as parallel to the *hoti* clause of v. 5.
30. Parallelism is perhaps not the best way to express the relationship between these two clauses, though this is the way the first two *hoti* clause of v. 4 are taken.
31. Actually, the second clause explains the first: "God's judging of these things is defined as God's giving the persecutors blood to drink in response to their pouring out the blood of saints and prophets."
32. The doubling of the noun "blood" as direct objects in the forward emphatic positions highlights the correspondence between the crime and its punishment. (cf. Isa. 49:26).
33. This illustrates the principle of *lex talionis*.
34. It is the blood of "saints and prophets" that the oppressors poured out (cf. 6:8; 11:18; 13:7).
35. The prophets refer to the two prophets of Rev. 11.
36. So God "pours out" the third bowl in response to their "pouring out" of the blood of His people.
37. His action deprives them of drinking water and gives them the thing they have been guilty of shedding.
38. The angel ends his song in a rather abrupt manner by adding the blunt assertion: "They deserve it."
39. Those loyal to the beast get exactly what they deserve up to and including their death.
40. This law of *lex talionis* is the law of reaping and sowing, an eye for an eye, falling into the pit which you dig for another, and so forth.
41. The guilty are in this case the worthy ones.

The Altar Speaks (v. 7)

VERSE 7 And I heard the altar saying (καὶ ἤκουσα τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λέγοντος [*conj kai + aor.act.ind.1s. akouo hear + art.w/noun gen.nt.s. thusiasterion altar + pres.act.part.gen.nt.s lego say*]), **"Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments** [*Ναί, κύριε ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ, ἀληθινὰ καὶ δίκαιαι αἱ κρίσεις σου* [*part. nai yes + noun voc.m.s. kurios lord + art.w/noun nom.m.s. theos God + art.w/noun voc.m.s. pantokrator all-powerful, omnipotent + adj.nom.f.p. alethinos true, correct + conj kai + adj.nom.f.p. dikaios righteous, just + art.w/noun nom.f.p. krisis judgment + pro.gen.m.s. su "Your"*]]."

ANALYSIS: VERSE 7

1. Next John hears the altar speaking.
2. Here the golden altar of incense is personified as the prayers of the saints for vengeance.
3. The altar concurs with the song of the angel that these prayers will now be answered.

4. A voice from the four horns of the altar in 9:13 has prepared for personification of the altar such as this.
5. Other objects of speech from inanimate objects are Gen. 4:10; Lk. 19:40; Heb. 12:24.
6. The altar addresses God by His title “Lord God, the Almighty” (cf. 15:3).
7. It then voices agreement with the words of the angel in 16:5-6 through a “yes.”
8. God’s actions are “true and righteous” they are never vengeful or capricious like those of the pagan deities.
9. They are in harmony with His perfect essence (cf. Ps. 119:137; cf. Ps. 19:9).
10. In this verse “judgments” replaces “ways” of 15:3, and the order of adjectives describing the judgments is the reverse of that in 15:3.
11. His “acts of judgments” are an integral part of His “ways.”
12. This verse asserts that all God’s judgments are “true and just/righteous.”

The Fourth Bowl (vv. 8-9)

VERSE 8 **The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun** (Καὶ ὁ τέταρτος ἐξέχεεν τὴν φιάλην αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν ἥλιον [*conj kai + art.w/adj.nom.m.s. tetartos fourth + aor.act.ind.3s. ekcheo pour out + art.w/noun acc.f.s. phiale bowl + pro.gen.m.s. autos “his” + prep epi upon + art.w/noun acc.m.s. hlios sun*]), **and it was given to it to scorch men with fire** [καὶ ἐδόθη αὐτῷ καυματίσαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐν πυρὶ [*conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3s. didomi give + pro.dat.m.s. autos him, it; “to it” + aor.act.infin. kaumatizo scorch, burn up + art.w/noun acc.m.p. anthropos men + prep en in; with + instr.nt.s. pur fire*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 8

1. The fourth angel directs his bowl upon the sun.
2. The preposition *epi* (“upon”) instead of *eis* as in vv. 2, 3, 4, indicates the different destination of this bowl.
3. The fourth trumpet had the sun as its immediate object, but that affliction was a darkening.
4. The form “there was given” shows that God is the sovereign power behind this widespread scorching of men.
5. He interferes with the processes of nature to bring this torment upon men.
6. The fully know who is responsible as evidenced by their blasphemy in v. 9.
7. The immediate agent of the burning was the sun as seen in the pronoun *auto* (“to it”).
8. God through this angel and his pouring out the contents of his bowl on the sun does something to the sun that makes this judgment possible.
9. Its effect, it is a miracle.
10. The victims of this scorching are “the men”.
11. The article could be taken as generic (e.g., mankind), but the repetition of *hoi anthropoid* in v. 9 raises the likelihood that it refers to the same class of men as the one in v. 2.
12. The sufferers of this bowl are the worshippers of the beast and his image.
13. Or it refers to all non-believers regardless of their affiliation with the Beast.
14. This seems the best way to take the noun “men” with the definite article.
15. Believers at least are protected with a sort of sunscreen!

Its Effect on Neg. Vol. (v.9)

VERSE 9 Men were scorched with fierce heat (καὶ ἐκαυματίσθησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ μέγα [conj kai + aor.pass.ind.3p. kaumatizo burn up, scorch + art.w/noun nom.m.p. anthropos man + noun acc.nt.s. kauma heat, scorching heat + adj.acc.nt.s. megas great]; **and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power [authority] over these plagues** [καὶ ἐβλασφήμησαν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἔχοντος τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐπὶ τὰς πληγὰς ταύτας [conj kai + aor.act.ind.3p. blasphemeo slander, revile; blaspheme + art.w/noun acc.nt.s. onoma name + art.w/noun gen.m.s. theos God + art.w/pres.act.part.gen.m.s. echo have + art.w/noun acc.f.s. exousia power + prep epi over + art.w/noun acc.f.p. plege plague + pro.acc.f.p. aute “these”], **and they did not repent so as to give Him glory** [καὶ οὐ μετενόησαν δοῦναι αὐτῷ δόξαν [conj kai + neg ou + aor.act.ind.3p. metanoeo repent + aor.act.inf. didomi give + pro.dat.m.s. autos “Him” + noun acc.f.s. doxa glory]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 9

1. A relentless misery accents the suffering associated with the scorching that comes to negative volition at this very late stage in the tribulation.
2. A cognate accusative “heat” with “were scorched” points to the severity of this judgment.
3. The adjective “great” strengthens the effect even more.
4. These features with the addition “with fire” in v. 8 have the effect of the terrible agony of the torment.
5. The human response is verbal maligning of who and what God is.
6. The same response comes in vv. 11 and 21 as well.
7. This chapter and Revelation 13 speaks of widespread slander of God.
8. They blame God for the plagues rather than take responsibility for their own maladjustment to the plan of God.
9. They are right in so far as they acknowledge Him as the One “who has the power (authority) over these plagues.”
10. But their unwillingness to honor Him is typical of those who are inherently negative to the truth (Rom. 1:28; 2:24).
11. “They did not repent” refers to their unwillingness to cast aside their unbelief for faith in Jesus Christ.
12. God’s severity (*apotamia*) no less than His kindness (*chrestotes*) calls men to a change of mind (Rom. 11:22; 2:4).
13. Like Pharaoh, they harden their hearts once again, fully knowing it is God who is behind all this temporal misery.
14. The expression “to give Him glory” points to the result that would have taken place had they repented of their evil human viewpoint.
15. The unbelievers in view here are probably those who could have repented at this late stage in the game, hence, excluding all those who have the mark of the beast.