

## Revelation 15-16 • The Bowls

### Introduction

{Small Group Leaders: This is a longer study than usual. Since this study compares the Bowls to the Trumpets, an additional handout of the parallel Scriptures involved is also available for download for the members of the group.}

A common feature found in most attempts to graphically chart the book of Revelation is to give the greatest amount of time to the Seals, quite often the whole first half of Daniel's 70th Week, then a shorter span of fulfillment to the Trumpets and an even more compressed period to the final sequence of the Bowls. In the Pre-Wrath camp in particular, it is not unusual to find the assertion that the Bowl judgments will all take place in the final days of Daniel's 70th Week. The greater point, however, is that most readers seem to come away with the sense that what began as a boulder at the top of a hill, slowly starting out but picking up speed while covering more and more ground, has now achieved its greatest velocity as it reaches the bottom of the hill, or in this case, with the final sequence of the eschaton.

It is additionally worth taking particular note of the parallels between each Trumpet and Bowl. It is easy to forget that the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal is actually comprised for ALL of the Trumpet and Bowl judgments, and their parallel activities directly reflect the ultimate and final expression of God's wrath. We find a parallel to the Seals/Trumpets/Bowls sequence to the last days of Judah when God used Babylon in a similar fashion, effecting three separate invasions to progressively bring about her destruction. A time came when through His Prophets God declared all that was left was His wrath, and that there was nothing which could prevent final destruction from coming in the same character as the Bowls.

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

<sup>2</sup>And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. <sup>3</sup>And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

"Great and marvelous are Your works,  
O Lord God, the Almighty;  
Righteous and true are Your ways,  
King of the nations!

<sup>4</sup>Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify  
Your name?

For You alone are holy;

FOR ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND  
WORSHIP BEFORE YOU,

FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN  
REVEALED."

<sup>5</sup>After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, <sup>6</sup>and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. <sup>7</sup>Then one of the four living creatures gave to the

### [Read 15:1-16:1]

<sup>1</sup>When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. <sup>2</sup>And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. <sup>3</sup>Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. <sup>4</sup>And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand

<sup>5</sup>Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake. <sup>6</sup> And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. (Rev. 8:1-5)

**Q: What is the overall situation on earth at this point as a result of all the previous judgments? What has happened to the population?**

A: The Seals reduced the overall population of the earth to 75% and the Trumpets brought it down to at least 50%. (Not taking into account all those removed by the Rapture.) At this point, it is likely that what remains, other than those previously sealed by God, comprise the consolidated kingdom of Antichrist. The Bowls seem to provide a picture of pouring out God's wrath on the consolidated remains.

**Q: What has preceded each sequence of judgments?**

A: The Seals were preceded by a heavenly interlude (Rev. 4-5), the Trumpets as well (Rev. 8:1-5), and finally here again with the onset of the Bowls. The heavenly is first revealed to show its relationship and effect on the earthly, which is the overall structure of Revelation.

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seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. <sup>8</sup>And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

<sup>1</sup>Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

**Q: What is common in the heavenly preludes for both the Trumpets and Bowls where those who participated in the Episcopate are concerned? (That is, the gathering of the raptured and resurrected.)**

A: At the beginning of the Trumpets they have come out of the great tribulation and are found to be serving God before His throne and Temple; in Revelation 15:1-4 they are at first worshiping God in the character of when Moses brought Israel through the Red Sea out of Egypt and victory over the Antichrist figure of Pharaoh, but then the heavenly Temple becomes temporarily uninhabitable as all things are brought to finality.

**Application:** This is also called "the song of the Lamb", bridging a strong connection between what was first effected in Moses' time with the Passover lamb, and Christ's literal fulfillment as "the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world". (Jn. 1:29) This is a textual example of the fulfillment of **BOTH** the Old and New Covenants, Moses representing the Old and Christ the Lamb the New.

**Q: How has the condition of the sea in the Temple of heaven changed?**

A: Whereas in Revelation 4:6 it was described as "crystal", something clear like "a sea of glass", here it is "a sea of glass mixed with fire". No pun intended, but things are heating up, or perhaps stated more stoically, escalating from judgment to wrath.

**Q: What is common to both the Trumpets and Bowls where their mechanics are concerned?**

A: Both include a formal distribution to specific angels of each Trumpet and Bowl, and each is preceded by a period of preparation before being given the command to execute their assigned tasks.

**Q: What is similar yet ultimately different in each case where the smoke and incense is concerned?**

A: In the first case with the Trumpets it is combined with the prayers of the saints and cast down to earth in a censer, but in the second case of the Bowls it is fill the heavenly Temple "with smoke from the glory of God and from His power". This indicates that there is absolutely no further opportunity for intercession.

**Q: Is this a new, biblical precedent?**

A: No, this comes in the character of when Ezekiel was told not even the intervention of Noah, Daniel or Job could save the nation (Eze. 14:12-20), or when things were so bad in Jeremiah's time God commanded him twice, "do not pray for this people". (Jer. 7:16; 11:14)

**Q: Is this the first opening of the heavenly Temple?**

A: In Rev. 11:19 we are told, "the temple of God which is in heaven opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple". Here in Rev. 15:5 it is called, "the temple of the tabernacle of testimony". This is emblematic of God's Word being fulfilled both in heaven and on earth.

**Q: What is special about the "golden bowls" issued to these angels?**

A: The only other instance in Scripture of this word, "phiale" in Greek, is what was found in possession of the four living creatures and twenty-four elders in Rev. 5:8, which were there said to be "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints". Here they are filled with "the wrath of God".

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**Observation:** In the Old Testament we see bowls made of bronze, silver and gold which are used for the Temple rituals and sacrifices, all intended as part of man's reconciliation to and worship of the One True God. In their use in Revelation to bring about God's wrath upon the unrepentant, we have an example of the biblical principle that the exact, same thing which is used to encourage and work to the benefit of God's people in turn works judgment against the hardened of heart.

**Point:** What began as a partial fulfillment of God's wrath in the sequence of the Trumpets is brought to complete and final fulfillment with the sequence of the Bowls.

<sup>2</sup>So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

**[Read v.2]**

<sup>7</sup>The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. (Rev. 8:7)

**Q: What are both judgments squarely aimed at?**

A: The earth.

**Q: How is the target actually different in each case?**

A: Whereas it was a third of specific physical attributes of the earth destroyed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet, the 1<sup>st</sup> Bowl is hyper-directed at "the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image". It ties into the previous message of the third angelic announcement:

<sup>9</sup>Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, <sup>10</sup>he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. <sup>11</sup>And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." (Revelation 14:9–11)

**Q: Why might this particular plague sound familiar?**

A: It is not only reminiscent of the sixth plague in the Exodus account when boils were inflicted on Egypt alone, but in the Mosaic Law this is the plague God promised to send upon Israel if they rebelled against Him. (Dt. 28:27, 35) This rebellion is replayed in its most extreme form with the kingdom of Antichrist.

**Point:** The 1<sup>st</sup> Bowl and Trumpet is an earthly foreshadowing of the eternal consequences to come in the form of fire and suffering.

<sup>3</sup>The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.

**[Read v.3]**

<sup>8</sup>The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, <sup>9</sup>and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed. (Rev. 8:8-9)

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**Q: What are both judgments squarely aimed at?**

A: The sea. That which first effected only a third of the sea and everything in and on it, is now brought to 100% destruction.

**Point:** *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bowl and Trumpet bring to an end all of the earth's food sources, a spiritual representation of God's Word where the remaining followers of Antichrist are concerned.*

<sup>4</sup>Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood.

<sup>5</sup>And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; <sup>6</sup>for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it."

<sup>7</sup>And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

**[Read v.4-7]**

<sup>10</sup>The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. <sup>11</sup>The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter. (Rev. 8:10-11)

**Q: What are both judgments squarely aimed at?**

A: The sources of fresh water.

**Q: Is God's handing out what someone deserves unprecedented in Scripture?**

A: It fits with past examples such as when Pharaoh ordered the drowning of the Hebrew children and God drowned his army in the Red Sea, or when Haman built a gallows on which to hang Mordecai which was used in turn to hang Haman and his sons; here is the reciprocal response to what took place with the martyrs of the 5<sup>th</sup> Seal. (Rev. 6:9-11)

**Point:** *The 3<sup>rd</sup> Bowl and Trumpet reveal God's intention to visit upon non-believers exactly what they deserve in the character of the biblical principle that one reaps what they sow, particularly in their treatment of God's people.*

<sup>8</sup>The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. <sup>9</sup>Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

**[Read v.8-9]**

<sup>12</sup>The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. (Rev. 8:12)

**Q: How is each judgment slightly different from each other, yet ultimately targeting the same thing?**

A: In contrast to withholding light with the 4<sup>th</sup> Trumpet, the 4<sup>th</sup> Bowl turns up the heat. Both are but a fractional foretaste of what is about to come for non-believers.

**Q: What is the earth-dwellers response to this plague?**

A: Not only does it specify "they did not repent", but they went so far as to actually blaspheme "the name of God".

**Point:** *Two common elements of hell described in Scripture are the seemingly contradictory elements of eternal fire and eternal darkness. As with each of these plagues, they represent both the main literal and spiritual aspects of eternity in hell.*

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<sup>10</sup>Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, <sup>11</sup>and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

**[Read v.10-11]**

<sup>1</sup>Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. <sup>2</sup>He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. <sup>3</sup>Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. <sup>4</sup>They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup>And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. <sup>6</sup>And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.

<sup>7</sup>The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. <sup>8</sup>They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. <sup>9</sup>They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.

<sup>10</sup>They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. <sup>11</sup>They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.

<sup>12</sup>The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things. (Rev. 9:1-12)

**Q: What are both judgments squarely aimed at?**

A: The 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet is directed at “the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads”, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Bowl at “the throne of the beast, and his kingdom”. In both cases they are physically tormented. This replays the ninth plague in Exodus when the Egyptians alone found themselves in darkness.

**Q: What additional element is added to the response of the earth-dwellers?**

A: In the previous plague they “blasphemed the name of God...and they did not repent so as to give Him glory”, and here they “blasphemed the God of heaven...and they did not repent of their deeds”. (Rev. 16:11) They are responsible not only for their sins against God, but their sins against others as well.

**Q: With what do the Prophets identify with darkness, such as Joel (Joel 2:2, 10, 31), Amos (Am. 5:18) and Zephaniah (Zeph. 1:15)?**

A: “The day of the Lord”. What is used metaphorically throughout God’s Word ultimately becomes a literal event in the final sequence of God’s wrath.

**Point:** God’s wrath embodies the extremes of unbearable scorching, fierce heat giving way to the pain and anguish of darkness in a further illustration of what is to come for non-believers in eternity.

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<sup>12</sup>The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.

<sup>13</sup>And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; <sup>14</sup>for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. <sup>15</sup>“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.” <sup>16</sup>And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

### **[Read v.12-16]**

<sup>13</sup>Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup>one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” <sup>15</sup>And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. <sup>16</sup>The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. <sup>17</sup>And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. <sup>18</sup>A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. <sup>19</sup>For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. (Rev. 9:13-19)

#### **Q: What are both judgments describing?**

A: The 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet addresses a large earthly army which will kill a third of mankind, but the 6<sup>th</sup> Bowl describes not just “the kings from the east”, but identifies a spiritual deception which will be used to “go out to the kings of the whole earth”. Whereas the first army, although large, is not inclusive of all the nations of the earth, it is but a precursor to the second worldwide gathering which does exactly that.

**Observation:** 2 Chronicles 18 documents what a single deceiving spirit wrought in a localized incident involving Ahab and Jehoshaphat to bring armies into a conflict; here we see the multiplied effects on a global scale.

#### **Q: But what is different as to what actually takes place between the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet and the 6<sup>th</sup> Bowl where each army is concerned?**

A: The army in the 6<sup>th</sup> Trumpet attacks and destroys a third of mankind; the armies of the nations in the 6<sup>th</sup> Bowl are, at this point, gathered together to a single staging place identified as “Har-Magedon”. The actual battle is yet to come.

#### **Q: How does the reference to staying awake speak to Christ’s previous teachings?**

A: It refers to all the previous examples, particularly in the Olivet Discourse, to avoid deception, remain grounded in God’s Word, and remain sensitive to the times in the character of a fig tree about to bear fruit.

#### **Q: How does the reference to “keep his clothes” and avoid nakedness likewise refer to Christ’s teachings?**

A: It is the scriptural metaphor for faithfully carrying out God’s work and deeds according to His standards.

**Application:** Revelation 16:15 is a stark contrast and comparison to those experiencing the final outpouring of God’s wrath. The consequences for not remaining awake and faithful are the worst possible.

**Point:** Just as all those rebelling against God will be ultimately gathered together in hell, so they are literally gathered in one place on earth in a final act of overt rebellion.

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<sup>17</sup>Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done." <sup>18</sup>And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. <sup>19</sup>The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. <sup>20</sup>And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. <sup>21</sup>And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.

**[Read v.17-21]**

<sup>20</sup>The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; <sup>21</sup>and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts. (Rev. 9:20-21)

<sup>15</sup>Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,

*"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."*

<sup>16</sup>And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, <sup>17</sup>saying,

*"We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign."*

<sup>18</sup>And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

<sup>19</sup>And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm. (Rev. 11:15-19)

**Q: What is different about the 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl from all the others where its target is concerned?**

A: Each of the previous Bowls were poured out on physical objects or areas in the physical realm such as the earth, sea, rivers, sun, the throne of Antichrist and even the Euphrates River; this final one is "poured out...upon the air".

**Q: How might this relate to Satan directly as well?**

A: Scripture designates that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air". (Eph. 2:2)

**Observation:** The explanation and events provided in the following chapters of Revelation 17-20 are actually the specific details of what is taking place here. It will be further explained that although God wrought judgment on mankind and nature, we will be shown how He judges the chief personality behind all and the institutions supporting him.

- Revelation 17 explains the judgment of Satan's religious system.
- Revelation 18 explains the judgment of Satan's political system.
- Revelation 19 explains the judgment of Satan's forces.
- And finally Revelation 20:1-3 the judgment of "the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan" (Rev. 20:1-3) personally.

However, it begins here with the 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl.

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**Q: How many earthquakes have been identified in the course of Revelation?**

1. As part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal. (Rev. 6:12)
2. In the prelude to the Trumpets. (Rev. 8:5)
3. In the wake of the resurrection and rapture of the Two Witnesses. (Rev. 11:13)
4. As part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet. (Rev. 11:19)
5. And the ultimate, most devastating one as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl.

**Observation:** *It is interesting to note the pattern in these milestones, as well as the fact that at Christ's First Coming, an earthquake accompanied his rising from the grave. (Mt. 28:2)*

**Q: How might what here occurs to every mountain and island be the conclusion of something previously seen?**

A: In Rev. 6:14 in the course of the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal, "every mountain and island were moved out of their places"—a seismic relocation, but here "every island fled away, and the mountains were not found", a complete end. The partial serving as a warning gives way to final, total destruction because of God's wrath.

**Q: What else makes a final, repeated appearance here?**

A: Hail previously accompanied the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpets (Rev. 8:7; 11:19) to both inaugurate and finalize that sequence, replaying the seventh plague of the Exodus account, which in Moses' time was described "as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now". (Ex. 8:19)

**Q: What might the hail be a greater representation of?**

A: The fulfillment of the Law requiring blasphemers to be stoned.

<sup>15</sup>"You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin. <sup>16</sup>Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death. (Leviticus 24:15–16)

Three times just within the account of the Bowls it has been progressively documented:

- "...they blasphemed the name of God" (v.9)
- "...they blasphemed the God of heaven" (v.11)
- "...they blasphemed God" (v.21)

**Observation:** *It is noteworthy that stones are used in Scripture as a metaphor for God's Word, derived from the original Ten Commandments being engraved on such, and the penalty for blasphemy to be literally stoned in a representation of how the Law can kill*

**Point:** *The last plague mirrors what the earth-dwellers will have in eternity—absolutely nothing; it is all gone forever.*

## Overall Application

*It is worth suggesting that just the fact that in the explanation of the Trumpet and Bowl judgments we do not see a happy ending where there is repentance and return to God. This is strong textual evidence that what is taking place is God's wrath at a point along the End Times timeline when every heart has made its final decision, be it for or against Christ.*

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Where believers are concerned, prophecy is much more about learning the right lesson concerning the value of faithfulness to God's Word and ways so as to avoid the consequences of unfaithfulness. We do not want to overlook the valuable lessons of what is taking place in the battle over men's hearts to simply chart a timeline. There is a contrast presented in the following passage from Isaiah 24 which is found in detailed parallel throughout the whole of Revelation reflecting the consequences of the righteous versus the unrighteous that has a valuable and powerful application at all times:

<sup>1</sup>Behold, the LORD lays the earth waste, devastates it, distorts its surface and scatters its inhabitants. <sup>2</sup>And the people will be like the priest, the servant like his master, the maid like her mistress, the buyer like the seller, the lender like the borrower, the creditor like the debtor. <sup>3</sup>The earth will be completely laid waste and completely despoiled, for the LORD has spoken this word. <sup>4</sup>The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. <sup>5</sup>The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. <sup>6</sup>Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. Therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left.

<sup>7</sup>The new wine mourns

The vine decays,

All the merry-hearted sigh.

<sup>8</sup>The gaiety of tambourines ceases,

The noise of revelers stops,

The gaiety of the harp ceases.

<sup>9</sup>They do not drink wine with song;

Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it.

<sup>10</sup>The city of chaos is broken down;

Every house is shut up so that none may enter.

<sup>11</sup>There is an outcry in the streets concerning the wine;

All joy turns to gloom.

The gaiety of the earth is banished.

<sup>12</sup>Desolation is left in the city

And the gate is battered to ruins.

<sup>13</sup>For thus it will be in the midst of the earth among the peoples,

As the shaking of an olive tree,

As the gleanings when the grape harvest is over.

<sup>14</sup>They raise their voices, they shout for joy;

They cry out from the west concerning the majesty of the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Therefore glorify the LORD in the east,

The name of the LORD, the God of Israel

In the coastlands of the sea.

<sup>16</sup>From the ends of the earth we hear songs, "Glory to the Righteous One,"

But I say, "Woe to me! Woe to me! Alas for me!

The treacherous deal treacherously,

And the treacherous deal very treacherously."

<sup>17</sup>Terror and pit and snare

Confront you, O inhabitant of the earth.

<sup>18</sup>Then it will be that he who flees the report of disaster will fall into the pit,

And he who climbs out of the pit will be caught in the snare;

For the windows above are opened, and the foundations of the earth shake.

<sup>19</sup>The earth is broken asunder,

The earth is split through,

The earth is shaken violently.

<sup>20</sup>The earth reels to and fro like a drunkard

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*And it totters like a shack,  
For its transgression is heavy upon it,  
And it will fall, never to rise again.  
<sup>21</sup>So it will happen in that day,  
That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high,  
And the kings of the earth on earth.  
<sup>22</sup>They will be gathered together  
Like prisoners in the dungeon,  
And will be confined in prison;  
And after many days they will be punished.  
<sup>23</sup>Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed,  
For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,  
And His glory will be before His elders. (Isaiah 24)*

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