

END TIMES & THE RETURN OF CHRIST (PART 5)

Sunday, April 7, 2019

The Bowl Judgments

The bowl judgments are the final series of judgments and are directed against Antichrist and his kingdom. They are located in the second half of the Tribulation (the final 3 ½ years). The bowl judgments seem to be connected with the third woe, which is the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:14-15; compare 11:19 with 15:8, which precedes the bowl judgments).

- Bowl 1 (Rev. 16:2): Festering sores
- Bowl 2 (Rev. 16:3): Death of earth's oceans and marine life
- Bowl 3 (Rev. 16:4-7): Pollution of sources of fresh water
- Bowl 4 (Rev. 16:8-9): Solar intensity and atmospheric heat
- Bowl 5 (Rev. 16:10-11): Darkness over Antichrist's kingdom (Pain)
- Bowl 6 (Rev. 16:12-16): The river blocking the East from the Holy Land is dried up (see Isa. 11:15): Preparation for the battle of Armageddon
- Bowl 7 (Rev. 16:17-21): Earthquakes, massive hail – global disaster

²⁹ "Immediately after the distress of those days

"the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

³⁰ "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other." (Matt 24:29-30)



The Return of Christ

¹¹ I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (Rev. 19:11-16)

1. The return of Jesus Christ will occur in Palestine, outside of Jerusalem, and will initiate a battle in the place known as Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21; 14:14-20; cf. 16:16; Isa. 63:1-6).
2. At the conclusion of the battle, the beast and the false prophet will be the first people cast into the lake of fire (19:20).
3. A 75-day transitional period will occur between the end of the tribulation and the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (Dan. 12:11-12).
 - Antichrist's reign (during the second half of the tribulation) is 1260 days or 42 months (42 months x 30 days = 1260) (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6)
 - 1290 – 1260 days: 30 days between the end of the tribulation and the time the abomination of desolation is removed from the temple.
 - 1335 – 1290 days: 45 days after the abomination is removed, the Messianic Kingdom is established.

¹¹ "From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. ¹² Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days. (Dan. 12:11-12)

4. The judgment of the Gentile nations (i.e., those who are alive at the end of the tribulation period) will occur during the transition period (Matt 25:31-46). Saved Gentiles who are alive at the end of the tribulation will pass into the Millennial Kingdom without receiving resurrected bodies. Those who received the mark of the beast will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 14:9-11). The judgment of the Jews will occur in the same time frame (Ezek. 20:34-38; see Matt 25:1-30). Only saved people will pass into the kingdom (Isa. 60:21; Dan. 7:18, 22).

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ...

⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.” (Matt 25:31-33, 41-42)

5. After the battle of Armageddon (during the transition period), those who died during the tribulation are resurrected (Rev. 20:4) as well as faithful people from the Old Testament period (Dan. 12:2) and they will reign with Jesus (together with the church – 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 20:6) for a thousand years, during which time Satan is imprisoned (20:2-3).
6. After the thousand years, Satan is released again, and once more deceives the nations (esp. Gog and Magog in Rev. 20:8; cf. Ezek. 38:18; 39:11). He brings another army against Jesus, but is defeated again, and joins the beast and false prophet in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).
7. At this point a general resurrection occurs known as the *Great White Throne Judgment* (which includes all unbelievers, including those who died during the Millennium), and people are judged based on the book of life, in connection with their deeds (20:12-13). Those whose names are not found in the book of life join Satan, Antichrist, the False Prophet, and those who followed them in the lake of fire (20:15).

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

The Millennium

The Millennium refers to a coming thousand year reign of Christ upon the earth, during which Satan will be bound and thrown into a bottomless pit. At the end of the thousand years, Satan will be freed to deceive the nations, after which he will be cast into the Lake of Fire. The following passage outlines the time frame.

¹And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time. (Rev. 20:1-3)

The Millennium is the direct administration of divine government on the earth by Jesus Christ. Since the millennial kingdom is the reign of the Messiah, it is the fulfillment of countless Old Testament

prophecies concerning the Messianic kingdom. It will also be the final divine trial of sinful humanity on this earth before the earth is destroyed and remade.

Features of the Millennium

1. Christ will reign over the whole world as Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:10; Jer. 23:5-6; Zech. 6:12-13; 9:10; 14:9; Dan. 7:13-14; Luke 1:30-33; see 2 Sam. 7:12-13). He will rule from Jerusalem, which will function as the center of world government (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 6:13; Mic. 4:6-7).
2. Jerusalem will be raised up topographically, so that it is the highest mountain in the area (Isa. 2:2; Zech. 14:10; Mic. 4:1), and there will be other amazing topographical changes in Judea (Zech. 14:4, 8).
3. God will make a new, everlasting covenant with Israel (Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 16:60-63). God will keep every promise He has made to Israel (Abrahamic, Davidic, etc.) during this time period, and every Jew will personally know the Lord (Jer. 31:34; 33:24-26; Rom. 11:26-29).
4. The reign of Christ will be a time of unprecedented peace (Ps. 72:3, 7; Isa. 2:4; 60:18; 66:12; Ezek. 28:26; 34:25, 28; Hos. 2:18; Mic. 4:3; Zech. 9:10).
5. Jerusalem will be the center of worship for the entire world (Isa. 66:18-23; Zech. 8:23; 14:16; Mic. 4:2). A new temple (of enormous dimensions) will be built in Jerusalem as the center of worship of Jesus Christ (Isa. 40-48; Ezek. 37:26-28). It will be built under the direction of Jesus (Zech. 6:12-15). Only the Lord God will be worshipped throughout the world (Isa. 52:10; Zech. 13:2; 14:9).
6. The damage wrought during the Tribulation will be removed and the earth will be fruitful (Ezek. 36:29-35). Deserts will blossom (Isa. 35:1-2), rain and food will be plentiful (Isa. 30:23-24), and animals will live in peaceful coexistence with people and each other (Isa. 11:6-7).
7. There will be no more sickness or deformity (Isa. 29:18; 33:24; 35:5-6; Jer. 30:17). People will live to be centuries old (Isa. 65:20).
8. The Millennium will end with a final revolt, led by Satan (Rev. 20:7-9). When this revolt is crushed, Satan is thrown in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). After this, the final judgment of unbelievers takes place (Rev. 20:11-15), and God creates a new heavens and new earth (Rev. 21-22).

Millennial Views

There are several views with respect to the timing of the Millennium. Most evangelicals ascribe to the premillennial view (adopted here), though there are two other viable options.

Postmillennial View

Amillennial View

Premillennial View

- Dispensational premillennialism

- Historical premillennialism

New Heaven and New Earth

¹Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.⁴ ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Rev. 21:1-4)

1. The current heavens and earth will be replaced and renewed as God frees the created order from its bondage to sin and decay (Rom. 8:19-21). God’s intention has always been to replace the heavens and earth with a new creation (Ps. 102:25-26; Isa. 65:17; Matt 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:7-13).
2. The center of the new earth is a new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9-11), which is described as being 12,000 stadia (1500 miles) in width, height, and length (Rev. 21:16-17). (Unclear if it’s a cube or a pyramid.) There will be no temple in the new Jerusalem because “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (Rev. 21:22). It will be the dwelling place of God’s people for eternity—all whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 21:27).
3. The new heavens and earth will be a complete restoration of the damage done from the curse (Rev. 22:1-3). There will no longer be night or the light of the sun; God himself will provide light (Rev. 22:5; see Isa. 60:19).

¹Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever. (Rev. 22:1-5)