

REVELATION - THE FINAL VICTORY

(Lesson 8)

Intro: What do you see as the greatest dangers which affect God's church today?

- we discussed the dangers of false teaching - false religions, corrupted philosophies of the world, hedonism, humanism
- Paul told Timothy that people will gather around a great number of teachers to hear what their itching ears want to hear

- The Fifth Vision: The Seven Bowls

1. The First Five Bowls (16:1-11)

- Note the striking similarities between the seven bowls of this chapter and the vision of the seven trumpets in 8:6-9 :21; 11: 15-19. – 1st bowl poured on earth; 2nd bowl- poured on sea becomes blood; 3rd bowl- poured on rivers and fountains; 4th bowl- poured out on sun; 5th bowl - poured on throne of beast kingdom darkened, torment; 6th bowl- poured on Euphrates, great army fights against God; 7th bowl poured in air, thunder, lightning, earthquake, hail
- What is the purpose of such repetition in these visions? - warning taught by these visions (Joseph's two dreams similar; Pharaoh's two dreams; Nebuchadnezzar's dream then Daniel's)
- What is the function of these bowls? - earth, sea, rivers, sun, air turned into areas of disaster; spiritual level- symbols of God's spiritual blessings, also truth and understanding to rule God's creation, worship the Creator - entrance of false teaching is itself a punishment that are poured out on men for their unbelief
- What happens as a result of the first bowl? Who does it affect? - ugly and painful sores - spiritual disease of false beliefs that bring suffering and torment, no rest from a raging conscience; only affects those who have mark of the beast, not the true worshipers of God
- What happens when the second and third bowls are poured out? - sea turns to blood, everything died; rivers of water became blood - message of salvation is the water of life that quenches man's spiritual thirst forever, when gospel obscured in no longer refreshes, turns to blood (repulsive to O. T. Jew)
- What is the significance of drinking blood which the angel announces? - announcement of punishment, especially for those who persecuted God's people - sufferings avenged by God
- What happens when the fourth bowl is poured out? - poured on sun, sun given power to scorch people, seared with heat and they cursed God, did not repent - sun might be God's truth which false philosophies and doctrine, when truth is denied spiritual suffering results, they blaspheme God for their pain
- What is different about the fifth bowl? - poured out on throne of beast, beast from sea (government as agent of Satan), what God intended as a blessing becomes a curse in its false and devilish delusions, men writhing in pain, curse God and refuse to repent
- What are these first five bowls of judgment directed against? - false doctrine of devil, teachings of men

2. The Sixth Bowl: The Battle of Armageddon (16:12-16)

- Who is it that summons the kings from the East for battle? - summoned by demonic spirits who come out of the mouth of the dragon, beast (from sea) and false prophet (beast from earth), frogs were unclean
- What again is the significance of coming from the Euphrates? - greatest threats for God's O.T. people came from the area of the Euphrates - Assyria, Babylon, Persia
- What is the Battle of Armageddon? - this is describes as the great day of God Almighty, day which Jesus will come like a thief-Judgment Day; no Hebrew word, could be Hal' (mountain) and Megiddo (city in plain of Esdraelon), near Mt. Carmel where Elijah defeated prophets of Baal; battle when kings of earth battle God's people, heresies so prevalent, their victory seems assured, God will bring an end and win the battle; those are prepared who stay alert and are wearing righteous robes of Christ

3. The Seventh Bowl: The End of the World (16:17-21)

- What does the seventh angel announce? - *lightning, thunder, earthquake - Judgment Day, voice of God It is done, God poured out his cup filled with wine of his wrath on enemies (14: 10) - this is the end!*
- What is destroyed in the judgment? - *great city of Babylon the Great is destroyed - the seat of antichristian power, every island and mountain destroyed, hundred pound hailstones destroys everything, no survivors*

- The Sixth Vision: Christ and the Antichrist

4. The Vision of the Great Prostitute (17:1-18)

- What is significant of the fact that she sits on many waters? - *still same subject matter, angels with seven bowls - punishment of great prostitute; v.15 - rules over many peoples and nations, languages*
- What characteristics does this great prostitute have? - *kings of earth committed adultery with her, secular leaders join with her, they become drunk with the wine of her adulteries - mind muddled*
- Who is this Great Prostitute and the beast on which she rides? - *great prostitute is the apostate church, committed adultery by believing and promoting false teaching, beast is the beast of the sea – cf. 13:1b (secular government in antichristian aspects) they join forces - rulers support unfaithful church*
- How does the name she is given and her actions reveal her true nature? - *dressed in scarlet - takes same color of the beast, conforms to the world; color purple - royal color; precious stones and pearls great wealth in apostate church; golden cup - offers not the gospel but the filth of false doctrine; Mystery reveals a secret, looks glorious but embodiment of sin; Babylon the Great - great enemy of God's people, apostate church deserves this name; Mother of Prostitutes and Abominations of the Earth - mother to those who are unfaithful to God (spiritual adultery), abomination is idol worship, she fosters it, leads people away from Christ (even with outward trappings of Christianity)*
- To what extent is she willing to go to cause harm to the church? - *persecute the saints, church uses authority of the government for persecution of God's faithful people (church in Middle Ages)*
- What does the description of the beast in verse 8 reveal about its character? - *once was, now is not, and will come out of the abyss and go to destruction - seems to echo description of God (who is, who was and who is to come - eternal God), beast seeks to rival God and lay claim to divinity, beast was and is not - lasts a short time and goes to destruction; unbelievers amazed at beast's power*

(Rome was called "the city of seven hills." The seven heads of the beast are the seven hills on which the Great Prostitute sits. They are also seven kings of which five have fallen - Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece. The one is - Rome. The other is yet to come - another kingdom remaining for a short time. The beast, the secular antichrist operates through the seven kings. Ten horns are other kingdoms - 10 is the number of completeness - representing all future secular enemies of the church.)

- What do these kings in service to the beast seek to do? What will be the outcome? - *they have one purpose - to give authority to the beast (who seeks to destroy the church) but their real battle is against the Lamb; the Lamb will be victorious as Lord of lords and King of kings- his victory is for his faithful followers, chosen from eternity, called to faith through the gospel*
- In a strange turn of events what happens to the Great Prostitute? - *Great Prostitute sits on many waters - great numbers vs. little flock; beast hates the prostitute, bring her to ruin, leave her naked, eat her flesh (God used Assyria to punish his unfaithful Israel) - punish the church for her spiritual adultery God's Word is fulfilled*

Conclusion: What power does the beast from the sea use today to war against God's church? - secular government promoting antichristian teaching in our schools, promoting Roe vs. Wade, liberal churches (Great Prostitute) supports government - they join forces to destroy the church