

## The Fifth Bowl Revelation 16:10-11 The End Times

In my last post, we considered **Revelation 16:8-9 ~ The Fourth Bowl**. In this post, we continue with **Revelation 16:10-11** to explore **The Fifth Bowl**.

***"The fifth one poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom grew dark. People gnawed on their tongues from the pain, <sup>11</sup>yet they cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and did not turn from their sinful deeds."*** ~ Revelation 16:10-11 (CJB)

The fifth bowl is poured onto the throne of **the political beast**, whose realm had suffered greatly from the first four bowls. Darkness ~ probably real darkness ~ fills his kingdom. Perhaps this is like the darkness that fell over the land of Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23). Humanity continues to blaspheme.

***The fifth one poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom grew dark. People gnawed on their tongues from the pain, <sup>11</sup>yet they cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and did not turn from their sinful deeds.*** On the surface this seems to imply a partial blackout covering only the place of the beast; however, looking back to Chapter Thirteen, where the beast rises up out of the sea, his dominion and power extend to every **tribe, people, language and nation** (Revelation 13:7). It would seem then that his kingdom covers the earth. If true, then this plague involves a total blackout of planet earth. How long it lasts is not known. However, it continues for a sufficient time to cause complete panic among the inhabitants of the earth.

The **fifth angel** poured out his bowl **on the throne of the beast**. This bowl was directed to the controller of the people of the earth ~ **the beast**, the **Antichrist**, who had been placed into power by Satan (see chapter 13). His **throne** was merely an imitation of God's great throne in heaven (Revelation 4:2-11).

When the **fifth bowl** was poured out, the Antichrist's **kingdom grew dark**. This was not like the partial darkness that had occurred during the fourth trumpet (Revelation 8:12). This was total and complete darkness ~ like the plague visited upon Egypt, which is described as so dark that **"during that time people scarcely moved, for they could not see"** (Exodus 10:23).

It's interesting to note that at the same time people are still suffering from the **sores** of the first plague. G. E. Jones says: <sup>1</sup>

*In the days of Moses and Aaron there came a plague of darkness on the land of Egypt so intense that it could be felt. See Ex.10:22-23. All who accept the Bible as being God's Word believe that those plagues which came on Egypt were literal. The plagues about which we read in Revelation will be just as literal as were those on Egypt. In fact, we can see a striking similarity in those plagues. Those that will come on the Beast and his followers will be greatly intensified. Let us not try to explain away the word of God, but let us be willing to believe it.*

### Special Comparative Note on Chapter 16:10-11 <sup>2</sup>

#### **Historicist Approach:**

**Historicists** believe the **throne of the beast** is a reference to Rome. The darkness that fills the beast's

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<sup>1</sup> A Layman's Commentary on Revelation.

<sup>2</sup> Material in this post is taken from "Revelation: Four Views, Revised & Updated" by Steve Gregg. Notations in brackets, if any, are my comments.

kingdom is symbolic of confusion, disorder, and the distress often the emblem of calamity during the French Revolution.

### **Preterist Approach:**

**Preterists** agree with the **Historicists** concerning *the throne of the beast* being a reference to Rome. The darkness is symbolic in prophetic scripture representing political turmoil and the overthrow of a ruler. This appears to have occurred in Rome after Nero committed suicide on 68 CE.

### **Futurist Approach:**

**Futurists** again divide between a symbolic and a literal interpretation. The darkness affects the political power of the beast. Lindsey takes a literal approach stating: *"I believe there's a reason God's blackout of this Revised Roman Empire: the darkness will allow the movement of 200 million Oriental soldiers into the area of the Middle East, the subject of the next judgment."* The **pains and sores** relate to ongoing effects of the *first bowl* judgment.

### **Idealist Approach:**

**Idealists** seem to take a literal approach to this passage.

In my next post, we continue to explore the plagues by examining **Revelation 16:12-16 ~ The Sixth Bowl**.