

The Second Angel Poured Out His Bowl and the Sea Turned into Blood

16: 3

DIG: How will this plague be different than the second trumpet judgment? How will it be different than the first plague in Egypt? What will be the effect of this plague upon the creatures in the sea? Upon the people of the earth? Why do they persist in their sin?

REFLECT: What does this passage tell you about God's judgment? How does the Lord deal with you and your sin? Is He fair? Is He arbitrary? Is He consistent? Is He long suffering with you?

One of the reasons that the bowl judgments will be so devastating is the their effects will be cumulative. Before the sores of the first bowl could heal, **the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man.** To the amazement, horror and despair of the world, the oceans will no longer be fluid, but will become thick, dark and coagulated, like the pool of **blood** from someone who has been stabbed to death.³⁵⁸ The second bowl judgment will be worst than the second trumpet judgment. It will pollute **the sea** by turning it into **blood** and killing everything in it. Because of the destruction of much of the earth's ecosystem, with the drought and famines, **the sea** will become an extremely important source of food. So one can see that this would be a tremendous worldwide judgment.³⁵⁹

*The ocean covers 71 percent of the Earth's surface and contains 96 percent of the planet's water. When **God** turns **the sea into blood**, one can only imagine how awful it will smell. The flies will multiply because of the increased food source. Day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year, for three and a half years the wonderful smell of the salt water will be replaced by the stench of blood.*

The TaNaKh teaches us that **blood** is the sign of life. **For the life of a creature is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11a).** **The sea** is a great reservoir of life. It is teeming with life. However, in this plague, **blood** will be a sign of death. We need to remember that chemically speaking, the composition of **sea** water is almost identical to that of **blood**, so that only a relatively small modification would be necessary to turn it into **blood**. We have no idea what chemical reactions will take place, but when the **second angel** pours his bowl, overflowing with the wrath of **God into the sea**, it will turn from womb of life into a grave of death. The cool **sea** breeze will become a stench from the carcasses floating to the surface of the

bloody water and lining the shore. Commerce will be paralyzed because transportation at **sea** will be impossible. Flies will carry disease around the world, and millions of people will die, but they will not repent.³⁶⁰

Whereas under the second trumpet judgment one-third of the salt water was turned to blood, in the second bowl judgment the remainder of the salt water will also be turned into blood. The **blood** here points us back to the first plague of Egypt (see my commentary on **Exodus Bk - Strike the Water of the Nile and It Will Be Turned into Blood**). **And every living thing in the sea died.** The entire food supply of the world will be in jeopardy. In this toxic ocean nothing will be able to survive. Soon billions of fish and marine reptiles and the innumerable verities of marine invertebrates will die, thus further poisoning the oceans and contaminating **the sea** shores of the world. As **ADONAI** had **created every living thing with which the water teems (Genesis 1:21)**, at some point in the second half of the Great Tribulation, **the sea and every living thing in the water** will die.

But the good news is that we know **the LORD** will bring **the sea** back to life again during **His** messianic reign. In his prophecy to his twelve sons on his deathbed, Jacob told **Zebulun** that he **will live by the seashore and become a haven for ships** during the thousand years of the millennial Kingdom (**Genesis 49:13**). In fact, all twelve tribes will have their borders on the Mediterranean **Sea (Ezekiel 48:1-7 and 23-28)**. Not only that, but the millennial River will flow south from the Temple to the millennial Jerusalem where it will be divided into two branches (see my commentary on **Isaiah Ge - Your Eyes Will See the King in His Beauty**). The western branch will flow down the mountain and empty into the Mediterranean **Sea**; the eastern branch will flow down into the Dead **Sea** that will be changed from death to **life (Ezekiel 47:8-10)**. Therefore, because **God** can create something out of nothing (**Genesis 1:1**), **He** will create a new living **sea** out of the old dying one that will exist during the messianic Kingdom.

In **the far eschatological future**, when **the first heaven and the first earth have passed away**, and **the New Jerusalem** comes down from **heaven**, there will be **no sea (21:1b)**. Having completed its age-old function in the earth's economy, it will cease to exist. But here, during the Great Tribulation, it will be quite a different story.

When men and women know the truth about **ADONAI** yet refuse to glorify Him, but instead exchange **the truth of God for a lie**, and worship and serve **created things rather than the Creator**, the Lord will finally give **them over to the sinful desires of their hearts (Romans 1:24-25)**, so that even the creation itself will turn against them. **The sea** and its creatures are now a spring of life; but during the second half of the Great Tribulation, it will become a cesspool of death.