

# The Fifth Angel Poured Out His Bowl on the Throne of the Beast, Plunging His Kingdom into Darkness

16: 10-11

**DIG:** What does this passage tell you about judgment? Where does this blackout start? Where does it end? What kind of darkness will it be? When has that happened before? Where? Why? What areas will not be judged by this plague? Why?

Spared from the worst of the suffering experienced by most people, the **antichrist** will be secure in his Babylon capitol. With the best medical attention, both human and demonic, with the best food, with his own personal water purification system, with air-conditioned living quarters, safe behind powerful armed forces and impregnable walls, **the beast** and false prophet will continue to direct their global campaign of terror.

Like the earlier trumpet judgments, the first four bowl judgments are directed against the natural realm (the earth, the sea, rivers and lakes, and the sun). You could call them "natural disasters," although they have a supernatural cause. When we get to the fifth and sixth bowl judgments, however, like their trumpet counterparts, they are more obviously supernatural, targeting the Beast's kingdom and the kingdom's of the world.

There are **five blackouts in the end times** (Joel 2:31; Revelation 6:12, 9:2, 16:10-11; Matthew 24:29-30). **Among the various results of the fifth trumpet judgment was the third blackout; however, the fifth bowl judgment will result in the fourth worldwide blackout of the end times.** Here, **John** is not giving a detailed report, but simply highlighting the important points.<sup>367</sup>

Now **the fifth angel** will pour out his bowl of wrath, this time spilling its contents on **the throne of the beast** himself, and his kingdom will be **plunged into darkness** (16:10a). The Bible is very clear that this judgment will start on **the very throne of the beast**. But Scripture is also very clear that **the hour of trial** will **come upon the whole world** (3:10). Therefore, the **darkness** will start with **the antichrist**, but the rest of **the world**, which will be **his kingdom**, will also eventually be **plunged into darkness**. The result will be a thick **darkness**, beginning in **the throne room of the beast**, then permeating the palace and other administrative buildings, and finally covering all of Babylon. Once Babylon is **plunged into darkness**, it continues to spread like a plague, from country to country, from city to city, from town to town, from house to house, and from person to person.

The prophets of the TaNaKh had much to say about this coming **darkness**. For although **darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples; on You ADONAI will rise; over You will be seen His glory (Isaiah 60:2 CJB)**.

**Blow the shofar in Zion! Sound an alarm on My holy mountain! Let all living in the Land tremble for the Day of ADONAI is coming! It's upon us! - a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick fog; a great and mighty horde is spreading like blackness over the mountains. There has never been anything like it, nor will there ever be again, not even after the years of many generations. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and terrible Day of the LORD (Joel 2:1-2, 31 CJB)**.

In addition to these two prophets, **Nathan** mentions it. **Amos** mentions it, and **Zephaniah** mentions it. Now the apostle **John** is merely saying, "This Great Tribulation period is where these prophecies fit into **God's** program." And Jesus Himself confirmed it when He said: **But in those days following the Great Tribulation, 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 (Mark 13:24-25).**<sup>368</sup>

The entire worldwide kingdom of **the beast** will be darkened, which, at this stage, will include the entire world with the exception of three Transjordan nations where the light will still exist. **The antichrist will invade Jerusalem (Ezekiel 38)**, and **many countries will fall to him in his conquest of the world, but Edom, Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand (Daniel 11:41)**. No one will be able to see the stars or moon or even the sun except for **the people** in those three countries. Why? Like Goshen, during the plagues of Egypt (**Exodus 9:26**), that's **where the Israelites were**.

The cumulative effect of the painful sores, carcass filled sea of blood, lack of drinking water, and intense heat all engulfed in the fifth blackout will bring unbearable misery. The people of the world will be plunged from the great waves of scorching heat, to the cold of total **darkness**. Until this time, incredibly, **the wicked unbelieving people** will not repent.<sup>369</sup> **They kept on chewing their own tongues in agony (16:10b)**. Those who act on the impulses of their sin nature end up stumbling in total **darkness**. The evil they turned against others ends up destroying themselves.

This reminds us that the afflictions suffered by the enemies of **Christ** are cumulative. The sores brought on by the first **bowl** will continue to fester as **the darkness** closes in around them. The water that would have soothed their sunburned faces will stand in stinking,

stagnant pool, polluted with decaying blood. The first five plagues were **God's** final opportunity for repentance. There will be no more. The bowls of wrath will reveal the sinful minds, hearts, and wills of those who took the mark of **the beast**. They will become like the generation in the days of Noah: **ADONAI saw that the people on the earth were very wicked, that all the imaginings of their hearts were only evil all the time (Genesis 6:5; also see Romans 1:18-27).**

Therefore, it is not surprising that they **cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they will refuse to repent of what they had done (16:11).** Along with **the darkness** will come a gnawing **pain** that will cause **people** to curse **the Lord** all the more. This will be a thick **darkness** that will actually be able to be felt. This is the last reference to their unwillingness to **repent**. The Bible plainly refutes the notion that wicked **people** will quickly **repent** when faced with catastrophic warnings of wrath. When confronted with the righteous judgment of **ADONAI**, their cursing is deepened and their evil purpose is highlighted. When we read this account, we can hardly believe it. We ask ourselves, "How could they not **repent**?" Friends, the answer is simply this, sin hardens our hearts. It makes us insensitive to the calling of **God** in our lives. **They will refuse to repent of what they had done** because, like Pharaoh, sin will have hardened their hearts.

The circumstances will not be unlike what befell Egypt (see my commentary on **Exodus Bs - Moses Stretched Out His Hand Toward the Sky and Total Darkness Covered All Egypt For Three Days**). **ADONAI** will humiliate **the antichrist** just as **He** humbled the gods of Egypt, by showing **Himself** to be superior in every way. All these plagues have the effect of hardening **the LORD's** enemies in their rebellion and opening a way of escape for **God's** chosen people.

We, too, have a clear choice in the face of natural disasters, unforeseen reversals of fortune, or crushing disappointments. We can blame **God**, digging ourselves deeper and deeper into resentment, anger and hatred. Or, we can seek **His** hand in the midst of these circumstances. **He** invites us to trust more fully in **His** loving care. The choice is ours.

*You are justified, **Jesus**, when you condemn. I am in no way deserving of **Your** forgiveness, and yet you offer it to me again and again. Help me trace the rainbow through the rain, cling to your promise and set out on the path that **You** have set before me.<sup>370</sup>*