

The Fourth Angel Poured Out His Bowl on the Sun, Scorching People with Fire

16: 8-9

DIG: What will happen to the kingdom of the antichrist and how will it affect the people physically? More importantly, what is their reaction spiritually?

REFLECT: What has God done in your life to help you repent? How receptive are you to admitting your guilt and repenting when you sin? Are you more like wax or clay when the heat is on? As a follower of Christ, how are you to deal with your sin?

After the brief defense of the LORD's judgments by the third angel, the fourth angel looked down upon the earth, where those who had taken the mark of the beast waited expectantly for rain to quench their thirst. But, instead, the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun (16:8a). It was created to sustain life (Genesis 1:14-19), and from the fourth day of creation the sun had been a good servant to both mankind and the earth. However, during Daniel's 70th seven, it will become a source of torture. Whereas the fourth trumpet judgment affected the sun by destroying one-third of the light source, the fourth bowl judgment will also affect the sun by increasing its temperature to the point that mankind is totally scorched with fire.

When the angel pours out his bowl of wrath on the sun, a miracle will happen. God will supernaturally heat up its intensity and the solar radiation will emit great waves of scorching heat on the earth. This fiery judgment reminds us of Isaiah 24:4-6, where the prophet writes: The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the exalted of the earth will languish. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left. And Malachi 4:1 adds this comment: Surely the Great Tribulation is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire. Not a root or a branch will be left to them.

So the sun, like Yeshua whom it symbolizes as the light of the world (John 8:12), can be an enemy as well as a servant. And the sun will be given power to scorch people with fire (16:8b). Instead of catching soothing drops of rain, the people of the earth will be

burned with searing rays from **the sun**. The last forty-two months of the Great Tribulation will be a time of great judgment for those whom the seed of the Gospel had not taken **root**. **The Lord Himself** had said about those who had rejected **Him**: **But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root (Matthew 13:6)**.

As a result, the people of the earth will be **seared by the intense heat (16:9a)**. They will develop large blisters, suffer from sunstroke and endure extreme thirst. And because the judgments are accumulative, they will be tormented even further. Their painful sores caused by the first **bowl** judgment will become sunburned. There will be little relief at night because it will be difficult to rest or sleep. Some will be able to retreat to air-conditioned buildings, but it will offer only temporary relief. Water supplies will be virtually nonexistent, and will need to be used in moderation, and then only after extensive purification treatments because of the blood of the second and third bowl judgments. Life will be maddening and it will be difficult for them to think clearly at that time.³⁶⁴

Another somber consequence of the sun's intense **heat** will be the melting of the polar ice caps. The resulting rise in the seas' water level will swamp coastal regions, flooding areas miles inland with the bloody water of dead stinking, rotting fish. And "Mother Nature," like the Egyptian gods in the days of Moses, will not be able to help them at all.

One would think that the unparalleled disasters of the previous bowl judgments would cause people to repent. After all, **the Lord's** judgment is designed to soften the hearts of sinners (**Joel 2:12-14; Romans 2:4**), or like Pharaoh, to harden their hearts (**Exodus 8:32**).³⁶⁵ It is true that the same **sun** that softens wax, also hardens clay. So we see here the New Covenant's most convincing description of the normal behavior of hardened sinners. When **the heat** was on, **they** will curse **the name of God**. Although **ADONAI** had control over the plagues (**16:9b**), these unbelieving worshipers of Satan, in their madness, will curse the only One who will be able to rescue them. They recognize that **Messiah** controls **the plagues**; however, they blame **Him** (and not themselves) because they are blinded and can see no connection between their own sinful nature and **the Lord's** wrath as judgment.³⁶⁶

This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Yeshua Messiah has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world (First John 4:2-3).

Up to this point, only **the antichrist** has been portrayed as cursing **ADONAI (13:1, 5-6)**, but now the people of the earth adopt his evil character. Neither grace nor wrath will move their wicked hearts to call on the name of **the Lord** for forgiveness (**9:20-21; 16:11**). In **11:13** the worldwide earthquake it brought some repentance, but there is no evidence of anyone coming to **the Lord** during the future **bowl** judgments. They will **continue** in their **sin**.

No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who are the children of God and those of Satan: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother (First John 3:9-10).

But sinners during the second half of the *Great Tribulation* will not learn this lesson. **They will believe the lie of Satan (Second Thessalonians 2:10-11)**, and love their **sin** so much that they will stubbornly refuse to **repent and glorify God (16:9c)**. They will not fall on their sunburned faces and sore knees to ask for mercy, instead they become more wicked and curse **His** name. Being amoral and materialistic, they see no connection between their own sinful behavior and these events as judgment. They remain unrepentant throughout the chapter. This reveals that **the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it (Jeremiah 17:9)?** No amount of punishment will purify it.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (First John 1:8-9).