

THE SIXTH SEAL AND THE BOWL SECTION

This is what we already know:

1. That the Lord’s Sermon on the Mount of Olives recorded in Matthew 24:1-31 consists of the following units:

<p>PRELIMINARY SIGNS OF ADVENT “the beginning of the birth pangs” 24:4-8</p>	<p>THE TRIBULATION TIME 24:9-28</p>	<p>IMMINENT SIGNS OF ADVENT 24:29-30a</p>	<p>THE SECOND ADVENT 24:30b-31</p>
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2. The Seven Seals reproduce the Sermon on the Mount of Olives, using the vivid imagery associated with Apocalyptic Imagery

<p>THE FIRST FOUR SEALS The 4 horsemen Rev. 6:1-8</p>	<p>THE FIFTH SEAL Souls under the Altar Rev. 6:9-11</p>	<p>THE SIXTH SEAL Great Earthquake Rev. 6:12-17</p>	<p>THE 7TH SEAL Silence Rev.8:1</p>
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3. The Events of the Tribulation Time in Matthew 24:9-28 are reflected in the events of the Trumpet Section of Revelation. But Matthew 24:9-28 has its equivalent in the Seal Section in the Fifth Seal. Therefore we come to the conclusion that the Trumpet Section in Revelation is an expansion of the Fifth Seal.

We will now turn our attention to the Sixth Seal and its relationship to the Bowl Section in Revelation.

I. THE SIXTH SEAL REVIEWED

Revelation 6:12-17

¹² When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. ¹⁴ The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave^[d] and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”

- a. “A GREAT EARTHQUAKE” (6:12-14) which not only removes “every mountain and island . . . from its place” (v.14) but impacts on the sun, moon and the stars (vv.12-13)

In other words, that “great earthquake” utterly disrupts “the fixed order” put in place at Creation:

Jeremiah 31:35 (ESV)

Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and *the fixed order* of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar— the LORD of hosts is his name:

Under the sixth seal the earth is once again being returned to its pre-creation state of being “**without form and void**”:

Genesis 1:2 (ESV)

The earth was **without form** and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

The vivid poetic imagery applied to Judea by the Prophet Jeremiah is being alluded to in the Sixth Seal:

Jeremiah 4:23-26 (ESV)

²³ I looked on **the earth**, and behold, it was **without form and void**; and to **the heavens**, and **they had no light**.

²⁴ I looked on **the mountains**, and behold, they **were quaking**, and all **the hills moved to and fro**.

²⁵ I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the air had fled.

²⁶ I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before the LORD, **before his fierce anger**.

- b. This “great earthquake” in the sixth seal is an integral part of “The Great Day of God’s Wrath” (v.17)

Rev.6:17 (ESV)

“¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from **the wrath of the Lamb**, ¹⁷ for **the great day of their wrath has come**, and who can stand?”

Paul identifies this as the Day in which “God’s Righteous judgment” is “revealed”

Romans 2:5 (ESV)

But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on **the day of wrath** when **God’s righteous judgment will be revealed**.

Revelation 11:18 (ESV)

The nations raged, but your **wrath** came, and **the time for the dead to be judged**, and **for rewarding** your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and **for destroying** the destroyers of the earth.”

So the Sixth Seal is a day with two aspects to it – DELIVERANCE and DESTRUCTION

- c. **The Terror of the wicked on the arrival of that day**

Revelation 6:15-17 (ESV)

¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave^[d] and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the

throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

II. THE WRATH OF GOD IN REVELATION

First reference to God's wrath in Revelation 6:16-17 under the sixth seal.

Second Reference occurs in the Three Messages of Revelation 14.

The First angel has "an eternal gospel to proclaim" world-wide:

Revelation 14:6-7 (ESV)

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice,

"Fear God and give him glory,
because the hour of his judgment has come,
and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

The word translated "gospel" means "good news". Here it lacks a definite article in the Greek so is correctly translated in the ESV as "an eternal gospel". What is this GOOD NEWS? It is that "the hour of God's Judgment has come".

In its immediate context this is the time God will EXECUTE Judgment in the form of the seven bowl plagues in Revelation 16.

The Second Angel's Message identifies Babylon the Great as the primary focus of this execution of Judgment:

Revelation 14:8 (ESV)

⁸Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion^[a] of her sexual immorality."

The Third Angel's Message is a warning to the worshippers of BABYLON of whom the beast and its image are an integral part:

Revelation 14:9-11 (ESV)

⁹And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand,

¹⁰ *he also will drink the wine of God's wrath*, poured *full strength* into the cup of his anger,

and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night,

these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.”

The followers of Babylon who has made “all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality” (14:8) will now drink “the wine of God’s Wrath”.

III. THE WINE OF GOD’S WRATH IN THE BOWL SECTION OF REVELATION

Revelation 15-16 elaborate on the “wine of God’s wrath” in the message of the third angel (14:9-11).

In Revelation 15 the ‘tent of witness in heaven’ is opened [15⁵] and ‘seven angels emerge [15⁶]. Each angel receives a golden bowl ‘full of the wrath of God’ [15⁷].

Revelation 15:7 (ESV)

And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the **wrath** of God who lives forever and ever,

They are commanded to pour out the contents of their bowls (i.e. the wrath of God) upon the earth:

Revelation 16:1 (ESV)

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, “**Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.**”

As each bowl is emptied in Revelation 16, various aspects of the earth are struck by a plague.

The Angel	Bowl emptied on	Result	Ref.
1 st Angel	the earth	harmful and painful sores	v.2.
2 nd Angel	The Sea	Like blood	v.3.
3 rd angel	Rivers and springs	Became blood	vv.4-7
4 th angel	the sun	Scorch people with fire	vv.8-9
5 th angel	Throne of the beast	darkness	vv.10-11
6 th angel	The River Euphrates	Water dried up	v.12
7 th angel	The air	Great hailstones	vv.17,21

In both v.9 and v.21 these are referred to as plagues:

Revelation 16:9 (ESV) – “. . . they cursed^[b] the name of God who had power over **these plagues**. . .”

Revelation 16:21 (ESV) – “. . .they cursed God for **the plague** of the hail, because **the plague** was so severe.

These plagues are referred to as the “seven plagues which are the last” because they finish the Wrath of God.

Revelation 15:1 (ESV)

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with **seven plagues, which are the last**, for with them the **wrath** of God is finished.

IV. THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES IN THE SANCTUARY VISION OF REVELATION 15 AS THE DRINK OFFERING:

In an earlier session we saw that the Sanctuary Visions of Revelation follow the various phases of the DAILY SERVICE in Herod's Temple. In Revelation 15 we have reached the DRINK OFFERING. We note the following points:

- a. The angels are given "bowls". The Greek word thus translated is "**phialé**" which was "in the material culture of classical antiquity . . . **a shallow ceramic or metal libation bowl**. . . It typically has no handles, and no feet."¹

"a shallow Greek bowl . . . used in ancient times for drinking or pouring libations."²

In the Septuagint it translates the Hebrew word (קַרְקַר,) for a broad, shallow bowl, deep saucer³

Phialé occurs 12 times in Revelation. Eleven of these occur in the Bowl Section where it relates to the wrath of God.⁴

- b. The bowls given to the seven angels are of gold as were the bowls associated with the drink offering in the tabernacle:

Exodus 25:29 (ESV)

And you shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and **bowls with which to pour drink offerings**; you shall make them of **pure gold**.

- c. the chief component of the drink offering was WINE:

Exodus 29:40 (ESV)

And with the first lamb a tenth measure of fine flour mingled with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of **wine** for a **drink offering**. (See also Lev. 23:13; Numbers 15:7-10)

So the seven last plagues in the golden bowls are "the wine of God's Wrath" the followers of the beast and its image are to drink (rev. 14:10-11). This is explicitly stated in the Seventh Plague:

Revelation 16:19 (ESV)

The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of **the wine of the fury of his wrath**.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patera>

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phiale>

³ Dict. of Antiq. under the word Patera; B. D. American edition under the word, Vial cited in Thayer's Greek Lexicon #5357: **φιάλη** <https://biblehub.com/greek/5357.htm>

⁴ and one occurs in the sanctuary Vision of Revelation 4-5 where it is related to the offering of incense:

Revelation 5:8 (ESV)

And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden **bowls full of incense**, which are the prayers of the saints.

This connection between “wine” and “wrath” is further strengthened in Revelation where the WRATH of God is specifically connected to a winepress:

Revelation 14:19-20 (ESV)

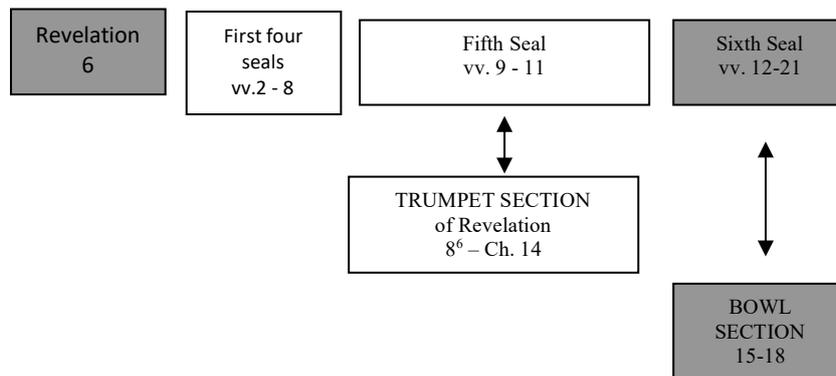
¹⁹So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into **the great winepress of the wrath of God.** ²⁰And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.^[c]

Revelation 19:15 (ESV)

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread **the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.**

V. THE DRINK OFFERING IN THE BOWL SECTION AND THE SIXTH SEAL.

So, the seven last plagues in the bowl section are descriptive of the GREAT DAY OF GOD’S WRATH introduced under the Sixth seal which is elaborated and expanded in the BOWL SECTION.



This is confirmed by the imagery associated with the Sixth Seal and the Bowl Section:

Revelation 6:12-17 (ESV)	Revelation 16:17-20 (ESV)
<p>¹²When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. ¹⁴The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place . . . ¹⁷for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"</p>	<p>¹⁷The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" ¹⁸And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings,^[c] peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. . . ²⁰And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. . . ¹⁹The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.</p>

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SIXTH SEAL AND THE BOWL SECTION

THE SIXTH SEAL

Revelation 6:12-17 (NKJV)

THE THREE MESSAGES

Revelation 14:6-11 (NKJV)

THE BOWL SECTION

Revelation 15-18 (NKJV)

12 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.

13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.

14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains.

16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

17 For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come, and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon" is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

10 the himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever, and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

15 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.

2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

"Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty!

O King of the saints!
Just and true are Your ways,

4 Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
For You alone are holy.

For all nations shall come and worship before You,
For Your judgments have been manifested."

5 After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened.

6 And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands.

7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.

8 The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth."

2 So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

3 Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man, and every living creature in the sea died.

4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be.

6 Because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due."

7 And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

8 Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.

10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.

11 They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

12 Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

18 And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.

19 Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

20 Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.