Revelation 16:1-11

The First Five Plagues of God’s Wrath

1. **Plagues One through Three:**
   1. First plague: verse 2 (“God Causes Suffering for the Idolatrous Followers of the World System”)
      1. This bowl of wrath is poured out on all who worship the beast and have his mark (Rev. 13:14).
         1. The judgment comes in the form of sore/boils.
            1. This can lead to cellulitis, and possibly sepsis.
      2. Old Testament background
         1. The sixth plague in Egypt (Exodus 9:8-12)
      3. The plagues intensify as Christ’s return draws near.
         1. The same happened with the Ten Plagues in Exodus.
   2. Second plague: verse 3 (“God Punishes the World System Economically”)
      1. The seas turn to blood like from a corpse.
      2. Old Testament background
         1. The first plague in Egypt (Exodus 7:14-24).
            1. The fish died and the water stunk so bad people couldn’t drink.
      3. Is this plague blood only?
         1. What are some other ways water systems are affected?
            1. Ocean plankton supply much of the earth’s oxygen.

50-80%

* 1. Third plague: verse 4 (“God Punishes the Persecutors of His People Economically”)
     1. Rivers and springs become blood.
        1. Impossible to live?
        2. At any given time before Christ’s return, waters will be so affected that they became increasingly dangerous for people to drink.
           1. Flint River water supply
           2. In Eritrea 80% of the population lack basic water services.

1. **A response to the plagues: vv5-7**
   1. The angel of the waters
      1. In Judaism angels under God’s authority were understood to be in charge of the elements of God’s creation.
      2. This angel in verse 5 seems to have responsibility for oversight and care fo the waters.
         1. The angel cries out to God acknowledging the justness in God pouring out His wrath.
   2. The Holy One who Was and Is
      1. This is the 5th time that this form of God’ name appears in Revelation.
         1. Rev. 1:4,8; 4:8; 11:17; 16:5
      2. This phrase is an explanatory form of YHWH.
2. **Fourth and Fifth Plagues: vv8-11**
   1. Fourth plague: verses 8 and 9 (“God Punishes the Ungodly Because of Their Idolatry”)
      1. The sun is struck and people burn.
         1. The people curse God’s name instead of calling on it for salvation.
            1. Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13;
            2. The people’s hearts are hardened even more.

Refusal to repent was also seen in Revelation 13:12-15

* 1. Fifth plague: verses 10 and 11 (“God Punishes Hardened Idolaters by Causing Them to Suffer by Revealing to Them Their Irremediable Separation From Him”)
     1. The kingdom of the beast is darkened
     2. The more the worshippers of the beast suffer from the consequences of their sin the more blaspheme the God of heaven.
        1. They directly blaspheme God here in verse 11.