

Revelation 16

What a great day it is to be serving God, and you know, what a great day it is to know Jesus as our Savior. In just a moment we're going to be looking in Revelation Chapter 16. We're going to be looking today at the judgment of God, the repentance which glorifies God. You know, the judgments of God do not, of themselves, produce true repentance. It's seen as such in our Scripture that we're getting ready to read, and it says that these men that we're going to read about repented not to give Him glory.

In Revelation Chapter 16 and through the sections of Scripture that we're not going to read today, it speaks about judgments. It speaks about what's going to take place in the future. It's speaking about a time called Jacob's Trouble. The Bible tells us and teaches us that there's never been a time like this and there's never going to be a time like it again, and if God had not shortened those days, as we read the Scriptures, it says if He had not shortened these days that's about to come upon man, there would no flesh be saved.

In other words, everybody would be destroyed, but God through His mercy, He has mercy even when men do not repent of sin. He has mercy that comes down and is shed abroad through this human race, people who do not deserve what they receive from God. God saves people. He saves their lives and He saves those individuals today who will trust Him as Lord and Savior.

In Revelation Chapter 16, the Bible says: *¹And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. ²And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had*

the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. ³And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

Now, notice what's happening here. The wrath of God is being poured out upon man. Verse 4 says: *⁴And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. ⁵And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. ⁶For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. ⁷And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

Now, notice these verses 8 and 9: *⁸And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.*

What a sad picture that is of man, how that... Now, when I speak of man, I'm speaking of mankind here. God's speaking of mankind in these verses. What a sad commentary it is when God's judgment is poured out upon the human race and they fail to repent and turn to God, but yet, shake their fist in the face of God and say, "I have nothing to do with You."

Well, the judgments of God may produce a repentance, but as we see, there is more than one kind of repentance. There's a carnal repentance. It's caused by the fear of punishment, and we look back in the Old

Testament and we see an example of Cain after he slew his brother Abel. Now, some would teach you and try to tell you that Cain repented. Well, he did, but he did not have the repentance that turned him to God. Instead of bringing a blood sacrifice to God and saying, "God, I'm sorry for the sin in my life and for not sacrificing in the right manner, and I'm sorry for killing my brother," he said, "My punishment is more than I can bear." He did not turn to God. He did not repent of his sin and ask God's forgiveness. That's a carnal repentance.

And then there's a temporary repentance. It's a repentance which ends with the judgment, the trial that we see that Pharaoh was under, how that God's judgments came upon the land of Egypt because they would not let God's people go. Moses said, "Let my people go," and Pharaoh kept stalling, even though all of the plagues came upon Egypt, the plague of frogs, the waters turned to blood, and the lice, and all down through all the plagues that God brought upon Egypt.

Actually, when we say God brought the plagues upon Egypt, you need to understand that man brings these plagues upon himself, just as Pharaoh did. Pharaoh would not repent. He did not do what was right. He lied. He said, "Okay, you can take your people but don't go very far." But he wouldn't even let them do that. It took the plague of the death of the firstborn for Pharaoh to say, "You can go."

But then, after that took place, we see that he changed his mind and he went after Moses and the people of Israel. He chased them, and we know the story there, how that the repentance that he had was a false repentance. He chased these people, and as we read the Scriptures there about Pharaoh, we understand that he and his army, all of them died in the Red Sea because they turned their

backs upon God. They lied to God. They told Moses, "You can take the people without any kind of recompense, without any kind of thing coming upon you, we will not attack you." But God, we see, knew what was happening. And because of the temporary repentance of Pharaoh, all of these people died, all of Pharaoh's people, his army, the people who were with him chasing Israel.

And then we see that there is a judgment. There is a superficial repentance which retains the sin. And we see this daily, how that someone will say, "Yes, I'm turning to Christ," but it's superficial. They do not have a true repentance. In other words, repentance is changing one's mind and going in the right direction, but you see, when a person changes the mind, that doesn't save the person. The person needs to be willing to let Christ change their hearts. They need to be willing to let Jesus come into their hearts and live.

Well, in the case before us in Revelation Chapter 16, in this chapter the men under the plague went from bad to worse, from impenitence to blasphemy. And where there was true repentance, sin is forsaken. Now, I didn't say that there was no sin. The Bible says, if we confess our sins as a Christian, if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

That can also be for an unsaved person, a person who comes to Jesus and asks God's forgiveness and confesses that sin, saying "God, forgive me for being a sinner. Forgive me. Come into my life," and as a Christian, we often do things that we shouldn't do. In fact, the Bible says, if we say we have no sin, we make Him a liar, that's God. We make Him a liar and the truth is not in us.

So, what do we do? We confess our sin and He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That's true repentance when we've turned from that sin and we let God speak to our hearts and we have a cleansing that comes from Heaven.

Well, a greater sin is a result of not softening when God's judgment comes. First of all, man's sin becomes more a sin of knowledge. In other words, a person knows that there's a sin, but it's just a knowledge, a head knowledge instead of a heart change.

And then we see that man's sin becomes more a sin of defiance. "God, I don't care what you say, I'm going to live my life the way I want to."

And then we see that man's sin becomes a sin of lying before God. There's nothing worse than lying to God. Vows broken, resolutions forgotten, all of this is lying to the Holy Spirit. "God, I promise You that if You'll let me live another day, I'll serve you." "God, I promise, if You'll give me money, I'll serve You." "God, I promise, if You'll heal me, heal my wife, heal my children, I'll serve You." And then, when that's done, when we see something that is changed, that there's a healing or whatever takes place that we've promised God, "God, I'll serve You," and God does that thing and then we shake our fist in the face of God and say, "You know, I did this on my own. I don't need You, God."

Well, man's sin becomes a sin of hate toward God, and we see that repentance of not turning from the sin but keeping that sin. Man hates God in the sense that "God, why have You done this to me?" Man continues on in sin, often sacrificing themselves to spite God. "I'll show Him." That's the attitude that so many people have. "I'll show God. I don't need Him."

And then we see that the sin becomes more and more deliberate, costly, and stubborn. The more a person sins, the most it costs. The Bible says the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. People need to turn from that sin and quit being stubborn and trust Jesus to save them.

Well, finally, we see that the judgments of God are to be looked upon with discretion. Used by the grace of God, His judgments tend to arouse, to impress, to subdue, to humble and lead to true repentance. The judgments of God may not in themselves be regarded as beneficial. In other words, sickness may come upon us, poverty, pain, something of that sort, but remember, we're still human, and these things come upon us because we are in this human flesh, not always because of the judgments of God. When we are not under judgment and terror, we should repent. Why? Because it's sweeter and nobler to be drawn than to be like dumb, driven cattle. We need to make it our aim to give God glory, and we need to do that every day of our lives.

I ask you today, have you turned? Have you repented? Have you turned towards the cross? Have you asked Jesus to come into your heart? "Lord Jesus, I receive You right now as my Lord and my Savior. Lord, take me to Heaven. Make it possible for me to have, right now, eternal life." If you'll pray a prayer like that, God will save you today.

And let me remind you, Christian, that you need to turn from your sin. You need to repent. Turn about-face and ask God's forgiveness so you can serve Him anew.

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