

Lesson 3 | The Second and Third Plagues

Objective: To reflect upon the implications that will result from the outpouring of the second and the third last plagues.

Bible Reading: Revelation 16:3-6

Memory Verse: “No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling.” **Psalm 91:10**

BIBLICAL TOPIC

The book of Exodus reveals the great power of God, not only to the Egyptian people but also to us today through the Holy Scriptures and the whole world, as witnessed in the account of the ten plagues that brought devastation upon that nation. These plagues were poured out upon Egypt for the purpose of providing convincing proof of the omnipotence of the God of Israel. Consequently, we can affirm that through these miracles, both the Egyptians and the children of Israel came to know that “Jehovah is God.”

These plagues were physical and evident to all the Egyptians. In this regard, it is important to note that some have taken as a basis the “Ipuwer Papyrus,” which describes an Egypt afflicted by natural disasters, including “the river turned into blood,” and have sought supplementary sources outside the Bible to study these manifestations of God’s power. Nevertheless, it is also important to mention that there are unbelieving individuals who neither accept nor believe that these events occurred exactly as Moses records them in the book of Exodus (**Exodus 7:25**).

Among unbelievers, alternative explanations have been sought for the events that occurred in Egypt. For example, some maintain that the plague of “the waters turned into blood” was caused by the presence of “toxic red algae” (dinoflagellates) that allegedly contaminated the waters of the Nile, turning them reddish, killing the fish, and consequently producing the remaining plagues. But what about the ponds and reservoirs of water apart from the Nile River? What about the death of the firstborn? These arguments only demonstrate how often mankind refuses to accept the work of God.

These unbelieving individuals, just as they deny what occurred in Egypt, also deny that in the future the sea and the rivers will be turned into blood. Skeptics and atheists oppose God and His great miracles; nevertheless, despite having a distorted understanding of the Supreme Being, they are convinced that there exists a power greater than man. For this reason, the psalmist declared: “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’” (**Psalm 14:1**)

The book of Revelation makes use of many symbols; furthermore, these expressions may at times be understood figuratively and at other times literally. For example, in **Revelation 8:8-9**, the sounding of the second trumpet is described, where something like a great mountain burning with fire is thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea becomes blood. In this respect, within the Church of God, we have understood that this mountain represents a government that is cast into the sea, which represents the world, and that when it was cast down, much blood was shed. As is evident, this passage is to be interpreted figuratively.

In contrast, we believe that the plagues described in **Revelation 16**, specifically the second and the third, will occur in a physical and literal manner, not figuratively. Thus, the sea and the rivers will become blood, bringing about a terrible calamity upon mankind.

At the present time, nations undertake programs to prevent the contamination of the seas; however, when the second angel and the third angel pour out their bowls upon the waters, there will be no nation able to restrain the power of God manifested in them. Scientists will be confounded, just as the servants of Pharaoh were confounded when they attempted to counteract the power of God and witnessed the disasters that came upon humanity.

It is prophesied that everything living in the waters will die; therefore, there will be serious consequences for fishing industries and for all who make their living from the sea and the rivers. Furthermore, another consequence will be the foul odors produced by the death of marine life. In summary, it will be a horrible and discouraging scenario for mankind.

Nevertheless, the angel sees in all this only the action of a righteous God who brings just retribution upon the guilty. This will be the righteous reward for having shed much blood and for having persecuted and killed the saints and prophets of God. In essence, it is the consequence of acting against the will of the Creator (**Daniel 7:25-26; Revelation 16:5-6**).

Beloved servants of the living God, we must remain faithful workers of truth, and above all, remember that we serve a God who is perfectly just. By His goodness and mercy, now is the time in which we may avoid suffering his wrath, by accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior, so that when these things take place, the time to seek God will have come to an end (**Isaiah 55:6, 8**).

QUESTIONS

1. What do the second and third plagues consist of?
2. How can we avoid being partakers of these plagues?

Luke 12:46-47; 2 Thessalonians 2:10

3. Is it possible for the sea and the rivers to be turned into blood?

Jeremiah 32:37; Luke 1:37

4. From where do the rivers come, and where do they go?

Ecclesiastes 1:7

5. If we are children of God, what is one of the promises we may expect? **Psalm 91:10**