***The Third Bowl: Freshwater Changes to Blood

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When God begins, near the end of the tribulation era, to pour out the seven bowl judgments, tribulation humanity will have passed the point of no return in its rebellion against God and the Bible. The judgment will have been set in motion. They will be locked in, and people will not be able now to abandon or to escape the consequences of their evil. These judgments are going to be so devastating that it will be total destruction to the ecology of the earth. Following these bowl judgments, it will be nearly impossible for human life to survive on earth. Again, I must tell you that what you are hearing in our studies on Revelation (because we take these things literally) is something that the religious world scoffs at and ridicules. It cannot believe that anybody would seriously think that God is going to do the things that are recorded in this book to human beings on the face of the earth. But you must each make your own decision, and the bottom line of that decision is whether you are willing to believe the truth: whether you are afraid to believe the truth; or, whether you are willing to believe it.

Following these bowl judgments, there will be no way out for the human race to survive on earth except for the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to return to this earth to take charge. When He comes, He will terminate the world government of the antichrist. He will bring to an end the economic system of socialism which will dominate all nations. Remember that socialism is government power redistributing the wealth of producers to non-producers. That's the heart of socialism, and it is done under the terms of compassion, and it is done under the terms of the rights that people have. Finally, Christ will stop all violation of God's laws, which has brought on these plagues in the first place.

In all of this, God will be true to His own character. We must understand, and God the Holy Spirit pauses in the description of these terrible plagues to make it clear to us, that God is right, and God is not unjust in what He is doing. He will remain true to His character so that He does no wrong in imposing these plagues.

**The First Bowl**

The first bold judgment causes malignant sores to break out on the bodies of those who follow the antichrist. This will be a horrible experience, and no doubt it will contribute to the death total, which has been steadily mounting during the seven years of the tribulation period. These running malignant sores on the bodies of all those who follow the antichrist will be devastating to those who are thus struck. There will be no medical system capable of handling the needs of people in such a condition.

**The Second Bowl**

The second bold judgment, we have found, causes all the saltwater bodies on earth to turn into the congealed blood of a human corpse. This will, of course, kill all the marine life in the seas, and the seashores of the earth will pile up with the dead and rotting marine animals. This, too, will be a source of great disease, adding again to the death total of human beings; not the least of which will be, of course, that the world's food chains, which begin with marine life, will be totally devastated.

**The Third Bowl**

We have come to the third bowl judgment, and when the third angel pours out his bowl, it causes all freshwater sources and bodies on earth to turn into blood. Again, this is the same thing as with the saltwater. The freshwater turns into the congealed blood of a human corpse.

These plagues dealing with blood certainly must stress in the minds of people the comparison between the eternal life to be found through the blood of Jesus Christ and the eternal death which is to be found here through the blood of the second and third bowl plagues. At this point, we read that the angel with jurisdiction over this freshwater ecological disaster will defend God's action in imposing such punishment. And I cannot stress that enough to you. Anybody who is a resister of the Word of God, and anybody who objects to believing the truth, is going to attack God for being such a mean-spirited person is to do this to people. Yet God's character governs all of His actions.

**God is Absolute Righteousness**

So, the angel points out that God is absolute righteousness. God Himself is the standard of what is right and what is wrong. God cannot do anything which His character declares to be evil. People judge God's action on the basis of their own disoriented human viewpoint, and their religious righteousness, and their relative righteousness. So, they condemn God's judgment as cruel and vindictive. We must understand that there's a big difference between the absolute righteousness of God, which determines these things, and the human viewpoint relative righteousness, which is one person matching himself against another person to see who is the lesser evil.

**God is Eternal**

Furthermore, the angel identifies God as the eternal one. That's very important. God who possesses eternal life. He had no beginning, and had no ending. God is thus the supreme authority in the universe. As such, He has the right to judge evil in His creation. God's marvelous eternal life is given to believers when they trust in Jesus Christ at the point of salvation. We have read that in 1 John 5:11-12.

So, in Revelation 16:5, we now pick up the exaltation of the character of God in order to make it clear that He is acting righteously in everything that He does. Verse 5: "I heard the angel of water saying, "You are righteous (absolute righteousness), who are, and was." He doesn't say that He is coming, because at this point, He will have come.

**God is Holy**

Then he points out that God is the holy one: "O holy one." The Greek word looks like this "hosios." This word indicates that something is unpolluted because it is compatible with the character of God. To be holy means to be compatible with the character of God. God is holy because of two factors. When we talk about God being holy, there are two factors that make Him holy.

**God is Absolute Righteousness**

One is His absolute righteousness that we have already looked at in detail, and the other is His perfect justice. These are the two factors that constitute the holiness of God. We've already looked at absolute righteousness, so we'll zero in here on perfect justice.

**God is Perfect Justice**

God is totally fair in all that he does. That's what justice means: to be fair. In the Old Testament, this is stressed to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy 32:4: "The rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are just, a God of faithfulness, and without injustice. He is righteous and upright." And there you see absolute righteousness and justice brought together to constitute the holiness of God. The people of Israel were clearly taught that God is going to be square with you. He will treat you fairly. If you obey His moral laws, and if you obey his ways under the Mosaic code (that they were to live under), God is going to treat you right. But if you break those laws, if you violate His order, then He's going to bring punishment upon you. It goes both ways. Justice blesses when you obey God, and justice punishes when you disobey God? It's just that simple. And because God is perfect justice, He has to punish the disobedience of His laws.

This is pointed out to us. In the New Testament, for example, in John 3:36: "He who believes that the Son has eternal life, but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." Here's a simple statement that there's one way, and only one way, into heaven. That is through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who believe the claim of Christ – that He has covered their sin with His death on the cross, and thereby propitiated God. That's the technical word for having satisfied the justice of God. God's justice is satisfied. He is propitiated. If you trust in Christ and accept His provision, you're going to heaven. And once you accept it and become a child of God, you're born into His family, and that can never be reversed.

However, if you do not believe that, and if you do not want to accept the fact that most of the human race is going to spend eternity in the lake of fire, then the wrath of God abides upon you. Why? Because God is cruel and vindictive and mean-spirited? No, because He is justice. His perfect justice demands that if you reject Christ, you will spend eternity in the lake of fire.

In Romans 6:23, this same concept is pointed out: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The free gift of God is grace – the free gift of God. Have you experienced water baptism, perhaps as an infant or an adult, as part of your salvation? Do you believe that Christ died for your sins, but that you also require water baptism to bring you into the family of God and into heaven? If so, you're going to hell, because you have added a human work, and thus denied God the ability to give you free grace salvation. That is the only salvation there is in the Bible, and it has to be taken as a gift. You can't add anything to it (behaving; whatever you want to add; or, your good works). As you know, most of the religious systems of the world are based on exactly that. How you behave determines how you get into heaven. That is wrong. It is how Christ behaved when He faced the cross, and your sins were placed upon Him.

So, the justice of God is going to deal with you on the basis of your dealing with the Son: "The Son is the issue, stupid." Put that sign up in your house. "The Son of God is the issue, stupid." If you don't know the connection to that, come and ask Glen Wright, because he's up on all that kind of exotic stuff. This is a God of justice. Absolute righteousness and perfect justice makes Him holy.

So, when Christ paid that price on the cross as the Lamb of God for the sin of the world, He forever satisfied the justice of God against every human being. That's why Romans 8:1 could say, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Those of you who have the King James Bible are probably saying, "Why don't you read the rest of the verse?" Because the King James Bible picks up the end of verse 4, and adds it to the end of verse 1. But it is not that way in the Greek manuscript.

You can just see what happened as some middle-age Roman Catholic monk was copying the Scriptures, and he looked and read Romans 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." How do you get in Christ Jesus? By trusting in Him as your Savior. At the point of your salvation, the baptism of the Holy Spirit places you in Christ. When you're in Christ, you're forever free of any condemnation. You might say, "Yeah, but sometimes I'm a terrible sinner." That's right. But you're still free of any condemnation from God. You might say, "But sometimes I don't even like God." That's right. As Paul to Timothy, "We may not be true, but He must be true to Himself," and He will not go back upon the salvation He has given you because it's based on what Christ has done, and not on anything that you would do, or have done, or ever will do.

So, the monk reached down and added the words: "Who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit," which completely made Romans 8:1 untrue: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to spirit." Do you see what that says? "Those who do not walk according to sin nature, but according to Spirit." How many of you would like to get up and give us your testimony about how you have learned not to walk by the influence of the sin nature? There's nothing we need around here more than some paragons of sinlessness. Boy, do I get it from the paragons of seamlessness when they hear things in this service that God, at opportune times, has given them the opportunity to hear for their enlightenment, and for what He would like to do with them. And they don't have the brains to know that they have heard truth, because the sin nature always wants to edge itself in between you and God.

So, the point of all this is that when God punishes tribulation humanity, who are disobedient to Him, He does so because He is holy. He is responding to that as per His absolute righteousness and His perfect justice. God, thus, will have done the right thing in bringing these plagues upon these individuals who have been violating the laws of God; the moral code; and, the whole bit.

So, we read, "Holy One, because You did judge these things." God is doing the right thing – the holy thing, in judging humanity for what it has done.

We have our teachers’ prayer meetings. I'm back, every morning hobbling my way out to our teacher prayer meetings before school begins. Recently, in one meeting, we were reading about the things for which God is going to condemn humanity at the end times – the reasons for which he's going to bring these kinds of judgments against them. I said to the teachers, after we read that passage, "Run your eye over those things, and tell me how far we have come in these evils." It was startling to all of them when they stopped to look at that, and realized how far we have gone in these evils already today. We're practically there, and God is going to respond in holiness, and He is going to judge eventually with the final judgment of the bowls.

So, in verse 6, we find that the angel is praising God for the fact that the punishment fits the crime: "For they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets." The word "for" introduces the reason why God brings this third bowl judgment down upon mankind, and why it is a fitting judgment. The word "poured out" means "to empty." Here it refers to pouring out the blood of believers from their bodies by killing them because they will not accept the mark of the beast, and they will not worship the antichrist. The antichrist and his worshipers are going to be guilty of causing widespread martyrdom among God's saints and prophets.

I want to remind you again that the Roman Empire never went out of existence. That was the fourth great empire of Daniel's dream. Babylon passed off the scene; Medo-Persia passed off the scene; and, Greece passed off the scene, but Rome never came to an end. Rome simply broke up into individual nations. Under the antichrist, the Roman Empire will be revived once more in full strength as these nations are brought together in a world government, and I need not tell you that you know very well that this is where humanity is rushing headlong into a one single world unity.

So, the antichrist is going to be guilty of causing widespread devastation in this world because he controls the whole ball of wax. All nations are under his authority, and these people are going to be guilty of killing the saints and the prophets. Who are the saints? The saints are the holy ones. This is an adjective which is used here as a noun, because it's describing a group of people. The Bible tells us that saints are believers. The Roman Catholic Church makes saints out of someone who has performed a miracle, and is considered particularly excessive in good works – more than the good works they need to go to heaven. That's not true.

The people of Corinth was a congregation which was very sinful. You'll find at the very beginning of book of 1 Corinthians that they are addressed as saints. Saints has nothing to do with your conduct. It has only to do with the fact that you are in Christ.

So, these tribulation people who have been born-again (because many will be born-again in the tribulation) have become saints by trusting in Jesus Christ, just as you and I do; just as Abraham did; and, just as all the Old Testament saints had to do to be saved. The usual use of this word in the Bible is simply for believers.

So, in the tribulation, believers are going to come on the scene, and they're going to try telling people the gospel. They're going to try analyzing for people what's going on. There will be a lot of people who have information such that now they will understand. Certainly, there's going to be a backlog of tapes such as Berean tapes that will be in different parts of the world where information will be available to those into whose hands those tapes fall. And you will probably put under the death sentence if you listen to those tapes, or any tapes that explain the Word of God.

So, these people, the saints (simple, born-again people) are going to be under the gun as well as prophets. Prophets is a little more technical term for those who are preachers, the servants of God, those who are delivering the current message of God, like the two witnesses that prophesy for that period of almost three years, and finally are able to be killed, but then are immediately raised by God. These are the preachers. You know very well that even in our day now, it is the preachers that are under the gun.

This was the point of our message from Dr. Dobson that we read in a previous session. It was a splendid presentation. And I'm getting calls about that, interestingly enough, from other parts of the country, as Christians are being alerted that here is a presentation of where we are, and it is the preachers who are being beaten over the head: "How dare you speak like that? How dare you call attention to what government and people in authority are doing to our national destruction? How dare you stand up and call an evil for what it really is?"

**Sodomy**

I have a handout for you and I'm not going to put it on the chairs. I'm not sure that all of you understand what sodomy is. It would blow the top of your head off if I were to explain it to you in detail here, or if I were to read this article. Dr. Schwartz of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade has published a letter by a military officer that was written in opposition to letting homosexuals and lesbians into the military services. When you say something like that, and the sin nature and human viewpoint take over, it can make that sound very innocuous. That's why I'm going to mail it to you. So, if you don't want your kids to read it, they won't pick it up here on the chairs, so watch for it. This puts it in very clear comparison. You will understand that what homosexuals do is sodomy. When you understand what they do; what sodomy is; and, the enormous disease consequences of that from the worst (AIDS) to lesser ones, then you will suddenly have a whole new perspective on the madness that possesses a national leader who can't wait to get into office, and to impose deadly abortion unlimited upon us so that we soak our land in blood more than ever. These people cannot wait to bring potential disease to all the men and women who are in the military service, because of the close proximity in which you are under those conditions.

So, the people who are preaching, I guarantee you, are going to get beaten over the head, and some of us are going to be done. Satan is not above being able to take his hits at us either. Be prepared for that. God allowed, for His own reasons, to let Satan take his hit against Job, but Job survived. And our business is to be faithful to the message. As Dr. Dobson says, "Get your head above the foxhole." We don't need any yellow bellies in the ministry – not now. Now is the time for sounding off and facing the evil that's there.

However, it is true that throughout history it is religious people who have been shedding the blood of God's people. When the Roman Catholic Church was a dominant religion in the Middle Ages, it was in the forefront of slaughtering those who are biblical Christians who said, "No, the church cannot take me to heaven, but only Jesus Christ can. It's a grace gift. What the church is teaching is false."

In the tribulation period, it's going to be the religious people of the tribulation under the false prophet who are going to be doing the killing of the people of God. And the false prophet will approve it, and the antichrist will authorize it. The Lord Jesus Christ taught that the Jews were personally guilty of the blood of the righteous men slain by their leaders. Matthew 23:35 tells us that.

Now, that is a sobering thought. If your leaders shed innocent blood, and soak your land with this blood that cries out to God for vengeance, then you're guilty of it too because you have not done anything to stop it. You have not raised your voice in opposition and in horror. That was a sobering instruction from the Lord. He trying to tell the Jewish people that they were under God's condemnation because their leaders historically slaughtered the prophets of God and treated them most cruelly when these men were telling them the true message of God.

Unbelievers always deeply resent those who condemn their actions by comparing it to God's standards in Scripture. They don't like those who can sound off as the voice of God because they know the Word of God. And it is the soul of liberalism to ridicule and to silence biblical fundamentalists who sound off the truth of God, because that counters their ambitions and their human viewpoint.

Numbers 35:33 is one of those passages that warns us against polluting our land with the shedding of innocent blood. I cannot stress this enough, because this is going to play a major role in the history of our country in the immediate future. God said, "So, you shall not pollute the land in which you are, for blood pollutes the land, and expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed on it except by the blood of him who shed it." There is no explanation except God's judgment upon those who are guilty for having shed that blood. He's talking about murder. He's talking about a national scale of tolerating the shedding of the innocent lives.

In Israel, this was done by the Baal worship. They had become so attracted to the Baal culture of the Canaanites that they were actually throwing their babies into the fire as an offering to the god Baal. Thus, in our day, the comparable thing is the abortion issue. We are slaughtering the lives of innocent people.

A Donahue program this past week had on it a discussion of the murder of the abortion doctor in Pensacola, Florida, as he walked from his car toward his clinic to perform abortions. An anti-abortionist came up behind him, and shot him three times, and killed the doctor. On the program was a young man, a Presbyterian minister, representing the antiabortion position, and he was faced with about five other people who were pro-abortion. It is very unusual on the Donahue program for the opposition to an evil to have someone to oppose it, and to speak the truth. The immediate attempt of Donahue was to put the minister in a bad light because the minister said that what happened to that doctor was just. It was an act of justice. And, of course, the whole audience groaned because they're all so spiritually perceptive. And the young man was very much poised. He had the police to say, "Let me explain what I mean by that." He was coming at it from a doctrinal biblical point of view.

He said, "This was an illegal act to kill that doctor that violated the laws of God. This doctor has himself been guilty of violating the laws of God with the murder of our unborn children of the abortions that he has performed. So, for him to die for murder is an act of justice." The Bible is very clear that murder one (deliberate, willful, premeditated murder) is to be paid for with one's own life. So, he said, "When I say that it is just, it is just in the sense that this doctor has been guilty of murder himself, and has suffered the penalty that God prescribes for murder: his own life." But he made it very clear that the anti-abortionist this was wrong in carrying out that execution, and that it should not have been done. He wasn't condoning it.

Now that is justice – to understand that the meaning of justice is doing what is fair by the laws of God. And God is going to bring justice upon our society for what we are doing. And very shortly, we will have a law that will be signed by our new president such that the day before a baby will be born, he can be torn apart in his mother's womb and killed, and it will not be considered murder.

So, God's punishment upon tribulation humanity for polluting their land with the blood of God's innocent people is to give them blood to drink since they are so bloodthirsty. The punishment fit the crime.

"For they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets. You have given them blood to drink. God has given them blood to drink, and now they can enjoy the blood that they were so willing to shed, in so many ways, of the people of God who were trying to warn them and to alert them to where they were going. God's punishment is ironic justice. So, at the end of the verse, God the Holy Spirit leads John to write: "They deserve it." That is justice. They deserve it. If they didn't deserve it, and if they were not guilty of murder, then for them to have to drink blood would be unfair. "They deserve it."

The word "deserve" looks like this in the Greek Bible: "axios," and it means "worthy." That is justice. You're worthy of it. You deserve it. You have it coming.

The Egyptians in Egypt, you remember, shed the blood of the Hebrew male infants. So, God's justice gave them blood to drink in their main water source of the Nile River. God's Holy Spirit leads John to declare that God's blood plague, therefore, is a fitting punishment for the murderous practices of the tribulation humanity. If tribulation society didn't deserve this plague of blood, the holy eternal God would not have inflicted it upon them.

So, when God brings upon us whatever He brings upon us, you must understand that He is absolute righteousness, and that He is the holy one, so He is perfect justice. Whatever He brings, He brings under that restriction and context. Israel's ancient oppressors learned this lesson about God. Isaiah 49:26 alludes to this. The prophet says, "And I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh. They will become drunk with their own blood, as with sweet wine, and all flesh will know that I the Lord am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." God told Israel, "Those who shed your blood, I will give them blood to drink." Certainly, in modern times, we have had no more classic example of that than in Nazi Germany of World War II.

**The Altar**

Verse 7 concludes the section on the third bowl and the wrath of God there. We have the testimony now that comes from what is referred to as the altar: "And I heard the altar saying." John hears something coming from an altar, and this expression is in a grammatical mood that indicates that is expressing the purpose of God. What he hears this coming from is "from the altar." The word for "altar" tells us something about the significance of this. The altars is the "thusiasterion." "Thusiasterion" is an altar of sacrifice. It used in the New Testament only for the altar to the true God. So, now we're dealing with something very holy.

The altar stood out in the court in front of the Old Testament temple where the Mosaic Law was carried out (relative sacrifices). What were those sacrifices on that altar supposed to do? They were there to satisfy the justice of God. They were there to temporarily deflect the wrath of God against sin until the Savior were to come, and die, and pay for that penalty. So, we have an altar here once more that's pointing up to us the justice of God – His fairness.

**The Plea of the Martyrs**

The altar referred to here is in the temple in heaven, and it proclaims the justice of God in fulfilling the plea of these martyrs that, we read about way back in Revelation 6. You may remember Revelation 6:9-11: "And when he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar (this same altar for sacrifice) the souls of those who had been slain because of the Word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained." These were the martyrs of the saints and prophets in the tribulation: "And they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, Holy and True, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' And there was given to each of them a white robe (signifying their personal righteousness). And they were told that they should rest for a little while longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed, even as they had been, should be completed also."

God says, "I have not forgotten you," as these voices cried out from this altar of sacrifice in heaven." God said, "I'm going to take care of it. There are other believers who are yet to join you in martyrdom, and then I will act."

This altar, of course, is personified here. It's talking as if it were a person, and it speaks again in defense of the plagues that God is bringing on tribulation humanity. But the voice that we are told that John hears may actually be that of all these martyrs that we read about as being under the altar.

We have the response to this declaration: "I heard the altar saying, 'Yes,'" relative to God's judgment of the blood plague. "Nai" is the Greek word for "yes." It expresses agreement with the words of the angel of the waters. The altar voice adds it's testimony to the fact of God's absolute righteousness and His perfect justice in imposing the bowl plagues.

**Deity**

We now come to a very significant part of this verse. We won't complete it in this session, but let's get started. I direct your attention to the fact of how God is addressed: "I heard the elder saying, 'Yes, O Lord God.'" The word Lord looks like this in the Greek Bible: "kurios." This word means "master." God the Holy Spirit took this word out of the common Greek language of New Testament times, and He gave it a specialized meaning. The specialized meaning that God the Holy Spirit gives to "kurios" ("master") is "deity." Remember that. When you read about "Lord," you're reading about somebody who is God. He is divine. So, the specialized meaning is deity. So, first of all, we're talking to someone who is doing this thing who is deity.

**The Supreme Being**

Secondly, he uses the word "God," which is the word "theos," and "theos" means Supreme Being. What this is referring to is the only God that there is in the universe. That's the first thing that needs to be established. This term, "Lord God," has considerable significance to it. Deuteronomy 4:35: "To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord: He is God. There is no other beside Him." How many gods are out there? One, and only one God.

Jude verse 25 stresses the same thing: "To the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority before all time, and now, and forever. Amen:" "To the only God." The word "only" here refers to God in the sense that He is a unique being. God is a unique being.

**God is Unique**

Remember that you cannot add another word with the word "unique" in the English language. Just have a little grammar session here. You cannot add an adjective to the word "unique." You can add another word. You can't say, "He is very unique," or "this is a most unique situation," because the word "unique" means "one only:" "You're my unique love. You my one and only. You're not my *most* unique because, I have some others that are kind of like this too. But you're the most unique." No, unique means the one and only, and no others. So, you'll find people who very often say, "That's very unique. That's most unique. That's extremely unique." And in your mind, you want to correct that and just say, "Unique." This is the only God. He is unique in the sense there's none other like Him. He alone is the Supreme Being because He is the eternal one.

What God the Holy Spirit is getting to here is that you better have a sober evaluation for who it is that you're dealing with here. Who is it that is speaking to us? Who is it that is taking action in the tribulation? And who is it that acts with His holiness – perfect righteousness and justice?

In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6, we have this pointed out. The context of the background of this passage is, in the New Testament world, here in the city of Corinth, whether Christians should go down to the local temple, where people have brought meat as an offering to the idol gods, and when they're through with the offering ceremony, they hang the meat up on a hook for people to come by and purchase. And those who are very devoted to their gods bring good slices of meat. So, the question was that it bothered some Christians that other Christians, when they went out to buy meat, they considered the temple the best butcher shop in town, which it was. And they would go and buy the meat hanging on these hooks, which had been previously taken off of the altar, which it had been a sacrifice to some idol God, behind which indeed is always a demon. It bothered some of those people.

Paul says, "In 1 Corinthians 8:4-6: "Therefore, concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one." These idols are dumb, lifeless objects. They are no power. The power that they have comes from demons, and demons are no power for God. There's only one Supreme Being, and that is the Creator God:

"For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on the earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is but one God – the Father from whom are all things, and we exist for Him, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him." There's only one God. There is God the Father that he refers to here, and there is God the Son. God the Son did the creating work, and God the Son, through whom we exist, meaning that He holds creation together."

So, here we have the one Supreme Being in the universe, and Paul says, "It's OK to eat that meat because that act was insignificant. If there is no God out there besides the true God, they have wasted a good slab of steak. Go ahead and buy it, and enjoy it."

However, he says, as the passage goes on, "If some weak Christian is going to get all upset about it, and it's going to hurt his spiritual life, don't buy it. At least don't buy it when he's watching you. And don't serve it when he comes to visit at your house." This is the same problem for you people who are not pig eaters. You go to somebody's house, and the dinner is ham. Or even worse, if you've been in the hospital, they keep slapping pork at you, until you start raising a fuss that you are not a pig eater, because of the contamination, and the parasites, and the worms that are in pig meat at best, and the hazard of eating it.

So, what are you going to do if somebody invites you over, and this is what they put in front of you? This has happened to me. Paul says, "Don't make an issue." And I don't. I just eat the pig meat. Then I hit the vitamin bottle and a little water with a teaspoon of cider vinegar. I put two teaspoons in and really knock it dead, and you'll be basically back on your way.

This is what Paul is talking about. But you must be a strong, mature Christian to take that in stride. Some of you are, and some of you aren't. And you must act accordingly with one another.

The altar calls out for justice from a holy God who is going to do that. And the response is, "Yes, indeed. You are doing the right thing in these plagues, Lord God, the only God in the universe, the unique god, the Supreme Being. He alone is the eternal one."

**Lord God**

Now that brings us to some significant information as to the combination of these two words: "Lord God." This is what our society refuses to recognize – that we are dealing with the Lord God. Just who in the world is the Lord God? Please join us next time, and we will find out about one of the most dramatically important passages of Scripture in the Bible.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1992

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