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I would also encourage you to go to Amazon and pick up a copy of “**Liberating the Book of Revelation, Returning to the Source of the Message.**” This book is intended to help us all know what the Spirit said and how He said it. This book is focused not so much on interpreting the book of *Revelation*, that is what this podcast is for, but on accurately representing the book of *Revelation* in the manner in which the Spirit originally spoke it to John. It is available in all formats: hardback, paperback, e-book format, and as an *audible*.

EP132 Revelation 16 verses 8-11

In our last podcast, we covered the first 3 bowls of wrath poured out upon the earth. The first bowl was poured out on those **now** having the mark of the Beast and who are **now** worshipping his image. Their bodies were plagued with loathsome and malignant sores. The second bowl was poured out on the sea, and it became blood, like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died. The third bowl was poured out on the rivers and springs of water, and they too became blood.

Those who make their abode in this world have poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets, and now the earth spills forth their blood, leaving them nothing but blood to drink. They deserve it.

With that said, let’s pick up now with the fourth bowl or vial of wrath.

Bowl 4: Scorched with Fire

Revelation 16:8-9

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and it was caused to be given to him to scorch men with fire. Men were caused to be scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who is **now** having the power over these plagues, and they did **not** repent so as to give Him glory.

Vials 1-3 impacted things upon the earth, but now the hand of God reaches out into the cosmos and creates a terrible increase in sun activity and intensity. The sun was created on the fourth day. Therefore, it is not coincidental that the fourth plague is targeted at the sun.

There has been a lot of science done on what is colloquially called “global warming,” yet the only scientific study where there is a true verifiable statistical correlation between cause and effect is the study of sun flares and their impact on the earth. According to the American Institute of Physics, at Duke University, they have tracked with almost exacting accuracy the pattern between sun bursts and the rise of heat on the earth. Attempts to correlate the rise of heat with any other factor (especially man-made factors) results in a total statistical scattergram; in other words, there is no statistical verifiable correlation between those factors and the rise in the temperatures of the earth. But with the sun, there is a precise correlation. The studies have concluded that the atmosphere directly inherits its temperature fluctuations

from the variation in solar flare activity.

In that light, when the 4th Vial is poured out, global warming will become a destructive force unlike anyone has anticipated. With all the fresh water having become blood and useless to quench one's thirst, the dehydration from the heat will be unbearable, again probably resulting in many deaths. Solar flares will burst through our protective atmosphere and not just impact the temperatures of the earth, they will scorch people with fire and literally melt their flesh.

Clearly, the sun has always had the ability to scorch people with fire, but God has mercifully restrained it from destroying humanity. But now, He directs it, as He literally gives the sun (rendered in the *passive* voice) release from His cosmic constraints, and its activity is ratcheted up to unprecedented levels. Men are scorched with fierce (great) heat.

*"... and they blasphemed the name of God who is **now** having the power over these plagues, and they did **not** repent so as to give Him glory."*

This is an unfathomable statement. They don't curse the dragon who led them into this mess, they don't curse the demons, they don't curse the Beast who has lied to them claiming he could protect them from the wrath of the Lamb, they don't curse the industrialized nations, they don't curse the manufacturing practices of the third-world countries, they don't curse technology, they don't curse over-population, they don't curse the use of fossil fuels, and they don't curse any other so called "cause" for global warning. No! They vilify the name of God and speak impiously about Him.

Despite the abject horror of this "wound," they would rather be wounded than repent and give **Yahweh** glory. The implication of this statement is potentially staggering. It suggests that if they would simply repent and give God glory, there would be some special mercy and release given to those who humbled themselves before Him. In other words, none of this must be, but they are forcing it to be by choosing not to repent or to give **Yahweh** glory.

This is another reason that explains how all that God does in judgment is just. He is always ready to pour out His mercy on anyone who turns to Him. All they must do is repent, turn from their sin of unbelief, turn from their rebellion, turn from their hatred, and give Him the glory that is due His name.

On the flip side, this also gives us another indication of how desperately wicked the heart of man truly is. Everyone thinks they are so darn good; but everyone is so deceived and living in denial. Lurking within the darkness of our hearts is the unlimited capability for wickedness, rebellion, and hatred. So much so that these people go toe-to-toe with God, and in the face of all their horrific suffering they still flick him off and curse Him. How much easier it would be to just relent and cry out for His mercy. This level of darkness and hatred is astonishing and unfathomable.

Bowl 5: Darkness & Pain

Revelation 16:10-11

Then the fifth angel poured out his vial on the throne of the Beast, and this his kingdom was, by choice, caused to being darkened; and they have gnawed, by choice, their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

This is the first mention in **Revelation** of the “*throne of the Beast.*” We learned from **2 Thessalonians 2:4** that the Beast had established his *seat* of authority in the Sanctuary of God, and it is from this place, amidst God’s people, that he declares he is God. And even though, at this time in the **Revelation** narrative, the bondservants of Jesus Christ have been raptured to heaven, there are still plenty of people who, metaphorically, occupy the “temple” of Christianity. It is filled with the Called as well as the Chosen who were not found to be worshipping in the Sanctuary – those who were cut off with the measurement of the Sanctuary in **Revelation 11:1-2**.

But is his “seat” in the “Sanctuary” the “throne” that is being addressed?

The Throne

We are told in **Revelation 13:2** that the dragon gave his “*power, throne, and great authority*” to the Beast. The “*throne*” of the dragon became the “*throne*” of the Beast. Therefore, the reference to his “*seat*” in the Sanctuary of God is not a reference to his throne, but to a base from which he exercises his authority and influence over the people of God who may not see him yet who may hear him.

The Location of the Throne

The letter to the church at Pergamum, **Revelation 2:13**, states that Satan’s throne was in Pergamum, which is in modern day Turkey near the coast of the Aegean Sea.

Oddly enough, at one point in time, in the 9th-7th centuries BC, modern day Turkey, which was then known as Anatolia, was part of the **Assyrian Empire**.

Even more odd is the fact that today there is a remnant of approximately 25,000 – 30,000 Assyrian people who have survived the centuries, are ethnically Assyrians, and who live in Turkey (the majority of which live in Istanbul). Most are Eastern Aramaic-speaking Christians being members of the Assyrian Orthodox, Chaldean Catholic Church, Assyrian Pentecostal Church, Assyrian Evangelical Church, or the Ancient Church of the East.

I once went backpacking with an Assyrian. Before that trip, I did not know they still existed; I assumed they were all either slaughtered when they were conquered by Babylon or that they were assimilated into the people groups, much like the Israelites were, such that there was no distinct group of people called the “Assyrians.” But I was wrong.

Today, there are also Assyrians who live in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and parts of Europe such as Sweden and Germany, who were originally from Turkey but migrated out.

This is a detail that is oddly very important to the **Revelation** narrative. Pergamum, where the throne of Satan sits (the throne that will be given to the Beast) was part of the Assyrian Empire.

The Assyrian

Even odder, is the fact that the man we call the Antichrist is known throughout the scriptures as “**the Assyrian.**”¹ The Spirit was not just speaking in metaphors when He prophesied about “the Assyrian,”

¹ See **Micah 5:5-6; Isaiah 14:24-27, 30:31, 31:8, 33:1, 8, 52:4**. Note: there is a veiled reference to “the Assyrian” in **Daniel 9:26** which speaks of the *people* of the prince to come, the one who will make the “firm covenant” for a period of seven years and break it after 3.5 years. This is one of those instances where the Spirit uses a human imager

because the Assyrian people actually exist, and this man who will be possessed by the Beast just might arise from this very religious, very Christian community of surviving Assyrians.

We have learned a lot about “the Assyrian,” but by way of recap, in *Hosea*, the Spirit told us that one day, with regard to Israel and Ephraim, “**the Assyrian**” will be their king because they refused to return to **Yahweh**.²

Sadly, most of the Biblical Translations do not properly include the personal pronoun used in the original Hebrew text, and they just say, “But Assyria – he will be their king.” This leaves people with the impression that this text was talking about near term prophecy pointing to the time when the nation of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrian nation. But this prophecy specifically speaks of an individual, not a nation: “**the Assyrian – he will be his (Israel’s) king.**”

Jesus made a side reference to this individual when He said: “*I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.*”³ This is also a reference to that “worthless shepherd” to whom they will submit and to whom they will follow, yet who will not care for the people “*but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.*”⁴

Then in the book of *Hosea*, we are told that Ephraim will make a covenant with **the Assyrian**. This is likely a reference to the famed “*peace treaty*” or the “*alliance*” mentioned in *Daniel*. This treaty will be how those in the temple at large agree to subjugate for **42 months** (or **3.5 years**) those who are now worshipping in the Sanctuary.⁵

In this passage in *Hosea*, the Spirit also says something quite odd and seemingly out of the blue. He says that a covenant is made with the Assyrians (plural) and “*oil is carried to Egypt.*” Perhaps this is a reason why *Daniel* tells us that this king of the north (**the Assyrian**) goes to war against Egypt—perhaps he wants the oil.⁶

In that light, it should not surprise us that in recent years, Israel has discovered vast resources of both oil and gas (primarily gas) off its shores and on its northern most border with Lebanon. It should be noted that Egypt already purchases natural gas from Israel to meet the demand of the local Egyptian market and Israel has committed to expand its exports to Egypt. In addition, to preserve peace with Egypt, Israel gave Egypt possession of various oil fields in the Sinai Peninsula, including ones that were discovered and developed by Israel. In fulfillment of the prophecy, in our day, oil is carried to Egypt.

to speak about the Spirit behind that imager. On the one-hand, this is a prophecy regarding the Roman general and prince, Titus, the son of Emperor Vespasian, and the conscripts he used when he attacked Jerusalem and obliterated the Second Temple, wiping the Levitical system of worship off the face of the earth. The conscripts who went to war with Titus were two legions of military men from Syria (hence, the link to the Assyrian prince who is to come). On-the-other hand with the references to the “*famed peace treaty*” and the one who comes on the “*wing of abomination*” (referring to the **Abomination of Desolation**), and who makes desolate (or who destroys, like the one whose name is Destroyer in Hebrew and Destruction in Greek), this speaks of the Beast behind this coming prince—who is known as “**the Assyrian**”.

² *Hosea 11:5*

³ *John 5:43*

⁴ *Zechariah 11:15-17*

⁵ *Hosea 12:1; Daniel 9:27, 11:23; Revelation 11:2*

⁶ See *Daniel 11*

Also in **Hosea**, the Spirit confirms that all is not lost, for some of those of Israel will return to **Yahweh** their God. Perhaps this refers to those who make up the candlestick of the Jews or perhaps the **Elect** of the Jews who survive the Great Tribulation. They will declare that despite the covenant they made with **the Assyrian**, “*Assyria will not save them.*” And no longer will they say to the **work of their hands**, this is “our God.” A remnant will come to realize that from Him (from **Yahweh**) comes their fruit.⁷

People believe that the Beast is the promised Messiah. They believe that he has the answers and is the way of salvation. They believe that he will protect them from the wrath of the Lamb. And because of the religious lies and deceptions which his image has been speaking for millennia, for centuries, for decades, for years, for months, and for days amidst the people of God, always claiming that he is God, the people swallow hook-line-and-sinker his claim of deity. Accordingly, the whole world becomes deceived, and they worshiped the Beast.⁸ In so doing, they will also worship the human avatar of the Beast, “**the Assyrian**”.

“*Then the fifth angel poured out his vial on the **throne** of the Beast.*” This vial of judgment was poured out, very specifically, on the throne, not on the kingdom, but on the throne. The results are “... *and they gnawed, by choice, their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.*”

Pergamum

Today, Pergamum is a ruin, and it does not seem likely to still be the location of the throne of Satan. Still, the target of this fifth vial is the seat of power and rule and authority of the Beast (his “throne”), which will be controlled in the physical realms by “**the Assyrian**” (the man who is possessed by the Beast) and his entourage of followers all across the world. With this fifth vial, they will all know intense pain.

The Kingdom

“... *and this his kingdom was, by choice, caused to being darkened...*” In **Revelation 13:1-2**, the Beast and the “*kingdom of the Beast*” (remember the king and the kingdom are imaged together) is pictured as “*coming out of the sea now having ten horns and seven heads and on his horns were ten diadems and on his heads were blasphemous names.*” It was also pictured as “*like unto a leopard, and his feet as of a bear, and his mouth as of the mouth of a lion.*”

In these images we are given a glimpse of how God sees the Beast and his kingdom as viewed from the heavenly realms, with the seven heads and ten horns, ten diadems, and all the blasphemous names, **and** how mankind will experience the kingdom of the Beast, with the combined natures of a leopard, a bear, and a lion.

In the physical realms, the kingdom of the Beast is a political, military, and even more importantly a religious kingdom. This kingdom starts off gaining its power through political means and then enforcing its power through military might. But the true key to its success is religion.

The kingdom of the Beast first seduces the people of the world with its support of mystery Babylon, the mother of all spiritual harlots, representing religion, specifically the religion of Christianity.⁹ Then the kingdom suddenly turns against Babylon, turns against religion, and redirects all the spiritual authority in

⁷ See **Hosea 14:1-9**

⁸ **Revelation 13:11-15**

⁹ **Revelation 17-18**

the world towards the Beast to be worshiped as God.¹⁰

Darkness

Let's examine the phrase, "... and his kingdom was, by choice, caused to being darkened..." When read as a natural flow of the sentence, it seems that this darkness is a consequence or a result of the pouring out of the fifth vial. Yet, "darkness" does not seem to be associated much less correlated with the reaction of the people, "... and they gnawed, by choice, their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores..." Their reaction was due to their pain and sores, and not because of the darkness. Again, there seems to be no correlation between *darkness* and their reaction.

And this is why the **Code** is so important. Without examining the text according to the **Code**, we would get a wrong understanding and somehow try to man-handle a connection between the darkness and their pain and sores. But the text does not support that conclusion.

When looked at through the lens of the **Code**, we find that this statement about *darkness* is a short segue or a parenthetical that sheds light (or darkness) on the matter, but it is not intended to be understood as a consequence or as a result of the pouring out of the fifth vial.

This statement has two key verbs that we need to examine. But before we do, let's keep in mind the fact that the kingdom of the Beast was given to the Beast by the dragon. The true owner of the kingdom is the dragon; the kingdom is just on loan to the Beast. With that said, this segue provides us understanding or insight into the dragon's rule over the kingdom from times past.

There are two key verbs that point us in the right direction. What is translated as "**became by choice**" is rendered in the *aorist middle indicative*, which indicates that there was a clear choice that was made by the possessor of the kingdom; and "... what is translated as "**caused to being darkened**..." is rendered in the *perfect passive participle*, which pushes us back in time prior to when the dragon gave his kingdom to the Beast.

When the Beast inherited the kingdom in **Revelation 13**, there was nothing in the text to indicate that he did something to cause it to darken, or even that it possessed any sort of light to be darkened. The Beast was given what the dragon had prepared for him, and he took it and went with it. The only difference we were alerted to was that the Beast would have a more pronounced use of the ten horns (the force and might that interact with humanity), whereas the dragon always led with the seven heads which comprise his strategic council.

As a reminder, the *perfect* tense is used to describe a completed or past action that resonates into the future, such that it appears to the reader or observer as ongoing or even occurring simultaneous with the observation.

This means that the kingdom of the dragon (which was given to the Beast) was being darkened in the past, by choice of the dragon, and it just seems to all observers that this kingdom keeps becoming darker. The use of the *passive participle* helps us understand that this shift toward darkness did not happen instantly, but it was a process whereby the dragon, like a coiling snake, continued to wrap this kingdom in darkness.

¹⁰ **Revelation 17:15-18**

The implications that come with this segue are as follows:

1. The kingdom that was first given to the dragon by **Yahweh** was once light and not darkness.
2. Something happened wherein the dragon decided to cause his kingdom to be darkened. Therefore, for some unknown time period, his kingdom was being darkened.
3. The Beast inherited a darkened kingdom.

As we have learned, many different names have been ascribed to the angelic being known as Lucifer. For example, the image of the “dragon” is a play off the Leviathan that is imaged in the Old Testament book of **Job**.¹¹ And in association with the dragon and the Leviathan, is the serpent, the form of which Lucifer appeared to Eve in the Garden.¹² As such, Lucifer is also called the **fleeing** serpent and the **twisted** or **coiling** serpent.¹³ These images are important to this discussion on darkness.

The image of the twisted or coiling serpent suggests something like the mighty python that wraps itself around its victim and twists and coils itself until the victim is entirely within its grasp and it squeezes its victims until they die.

Now, there are two verses we will examine that seem random in terms of their immediate context, but as we have learned, the Spirit is never truly random, but He is always precise and very specific. It is possible that these two verses shed light on this issue of the kingdom that was given to the dragon and it **by choice, caused to being darkened**.

Once again, if the dragon’s kingdom was in the past caused to being darkened, then there was a time that it was light and not dark.

Satan is referred to as the ruler of this world and the god of this world (or of this age), and we are told that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one, for all authority over the earth had been given to him.¹⁴ Satan is also referred to as the prince of the power of the air (essentially, what we call the heavens).¹⁵ In effect, God gave the world and its surrounding “air” (the heaven and the earth) to Lucifer, the light bearer, to oversee, to be its landlord, so-to-speak, to manage as an agent of **Yahweh**.

Thus, when God created heaven and earth, it was not a place of darkness, it was not formless and void; it had light. Which is why the name Lucifer, the name of the angelic being we now call Satan, the devil, the dragon, and so on, literally means “light bearer” or “shining one.”¹⁶

Isaiah 45:18

For thus says **Yahweh**, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited) ...

¹¹ **Job 41**

¹² **Genesis 3:1-5**

¹³ **Isaiah 27:1**

¹⁴ **John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19; Matthew 4:8-9; Luke 4:5-6**

¹⁵ **Ephesians 2:2**

¹⁶ **Isaiah 14:12**

Yet, when we are first introduced to the cosmos in **Genesis 1:2-3**, we are told that *“The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”* This is also captured in **Jeremiah 4:23**, *“I looked on the earth, and behold, it was formless and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light.”*

What Does This Mean?

- God created heaven and earth.
- He did not create it formless and void and uninhabitable.
- It was not originally covered in darkness.
- Between **Genesis 1:1** and **Genesis 1:2**, a whole lot happened. The “shining one” went apostate and led 1/3 of the angels in rebellion—some of whom once rejoiced, literally *“shouted for joy,”* over creation. These apostates rejected the light and embraced darkness, which is the absence of light.
- Then the twisted and coiling serpent, the one who was known as the “shining one” wrapped himself around the earth slowly **covering it in darkness** with each twist and turn, and in so doing making the earth, in the Hebrew, *“tohu and bohū”* – formless and void.¹⁷
- As he coiled, he squeezed and squeezed, and it’s as if he forced the waters that are inside and beneath the crust of the earth to the surface. Hence, darkness was over the surface of the deep (as we have recently learned, there are underground oceans 400 miles beneath the earth’s surface that contain 3x the amount of surface water on the earth).
- It should not surprise us that the twisted or coiling serpent is also called the *“the anointed cherub who covers”* or literally in the Hebrew *“the anointed cherub who is intertwining or fencing in”* (it is a participle).¹⁸

This anointed cherub was given great responsibility over this world, and he was to be the bearer of light (as his name “the Shining One” indicates), but fueled by his pride, ambition, bitterness, hatred, and apostasy, the world **became by choice** (Lucifer’s choice) **to be caused to being darkened**.

Therefore, God stepped in and intervened in Lucifer’s plan when He said, *“Let there be light,”* He *“separated the light from the darkness.”* He then started to bring forth all that would be needed for life. And if you can picture the scene in your mind, it is powerful. The light literally pierced the darkness.

Fueled by hatred and rebellion, the serpent is coiled around the world, having been wrapping the world tighter and tighter in darkness, then suddenly the light pierces the serpent, as if stabbing the serpent with a mighty sword, and causes the serpent (and thereby the darkness) to retreat or to flee, **“and there was light”** and God **separated the light from the darkness**. It is likely that this scene is what is behind this verse.

Isaiah 51:9

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of **Yahweh**; awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not You who caused to be cutting Rahab in pieces, **who pierced the dragon?**

¹⁷ See **Isaiah 14:12-14; Revelation 12:3-4; Job 38:4**

¹⁸ See **Ezekiel 28:14, 16**

All throughout the **Codex**, this is the only scenario to which this passage would seem to apply. There is nothing else indicating that the “*taniyn*” – the dragon or the serpent – was pierced. Perhaps this also then explains why he is called the “*fleeing serpent*.” Once God intervened and “pierced” the dragon and the darkness with light, it let loose of its grip and uncoiled itself from the world or “fled” until such time that he could plan his next attack against God’s creation, and that next attack would begin in the Garden of Eden.

Why Did the Spirit Include This Segue or Parenthetical?

It seems very odd that the Spirit would suddenly jump to something pertaining to creation when we are in the midst of understanding this terrible judgment.

Perhaps the idea is that the dark nature of this kingdom finally becomes evident to all, as the extent of its darkness is unveiled. Perhaps the followers of the Beast and all those who thought they were worshipping the true Messiah, the true Christ (while following the words of the image of the Beast), will finally realize that they have been duped, are on the wrong side of the road, and chose poorly.

Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, as do his servants, as agents of righteousness.¹⁹ As a result, so many believed that the Beast was their savior, their Christ. Even two-thirds of the Jews (the non-**Elect**) will receive this one (“the **Assyrian**”) who comes in his own name believing him to be the promised Messiah.²⁰ But now the Beast’s ability to hide and disguise the true nature of this kingdom will be removed. And instead of an illusion of light, the full darkness of his kingdom will be revealed to the shock and utter dismay of all.

The followers of the Beast will realize that his claims were impotent and were nothing but lies. Yes, he had some tricks in his pocket, and could perform miracles and dazzling feats (with the help of some other demons, which we will get to), but he is utterly powerless against the Lamb of God. He is a liar and a poser.

THIS “WOUND” AGAINST THE THRONE OF THE BEAST EVOKES AN UNVEILING OF ITS NATURE NOT A TRANSFORMATION OF ITS NATURE.

HOPE

This unveiling of the nature of the kingdom of the Beast is also a message of great hope. The world was once cloaked in light and not darkness. And though the grip the serpent had on the earth damaged and destroyed it and cloaked it in darkness, God said, “*Let there be light*” and in so doing He started the process of creating anew.

Since that auspicious day, the serpent has spent years upon years coiling itself around the earth and covering it in darkness. We all experience this darkness closing in all around us squeezing us tighter and tighter. The speed at which this is occurring in our day-and-age is shocking.

¹⁹ **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**

²⁰ **John 5:43**

At this point in the **Revelation** narrative, the few lights, those who are reeds bearing the oil and shining the light of Jesus, are taken away at the rapture, and without the lights in the world, it has once again, by choice, caused to being darkened. As Jesus said, “*The night **now** chooses to come, when no one can **now** be caused to **now** choose to work. But while I **now** am here in the world, I **now** am the light of the world.*”²¹

The pattern, however, will remain consistent. When the world is entirely consumed in darkness, God will once again intervene and once again cause the dragon, this **twisted serpent**, to be the **fleeing serpent**.

This is the **HOPE** of all the world. At Jesus Second Coming, with a word, the One who is the light of the world will literally pierce the darkness with the sword that comes forth from His mouth, and after He causes the darkness to flee, He will again bring forth that which is new. “*And He that is choosing to **now** be sitting on the throne said, ‘Behold I **now** make all things new. You are commanded to write for these words are now faithful and true.’*”²²

Pain

“... and they have gnawed, by choice, their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.” The followers of the Beast, are covered in loathsome and malignant sores, they suffer intense burning by the sun, they are literally baked in the heat (which has to intensify the pain of the loathsome and malignant sores), there is no fresh water to cool their tongues, and now they find out that the one they followed and bet their lives upon is a complete fraud, and is entirely powerless against the Lamb.

As you can imagine, those who looked to this “throne” to be the source of their salvation will be angry, hopeless, depressed, and dismayed. We are told that they have gnawed their tongues, by choice, because of their pains. With “*gnawed*” being rendered in the rarely used *imperfect middle indicative*, we know that they did not just start to gnaw, but they have gnawed.

The “*imperfect*” is used to bring our focus to the duration of a past act. In other words, they have been in intense pain for a while; having gnawed tongues is not something new. All the prior vials of wrath cause intense pain. And perhaps, it is just a bit more intense now that they know they have been fooled and betrayed.

This imagery is becoming more and more visceral. The idea of their having gnawed their tongues is gnarly and it speaks of unrelenting agony because of their pain and their sores. Perhaps the gnawing is due to their emotional and mental pain as much as it is about their physical pain from their sores.

“*And they blasphemed (or vilified) the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.*” Once again, they harden their hearts and miss out on the opportunity for any sort of mercy. In effect, they keep challenging God to bring it on. Unbelievable!

- Why don’t they blame the Beast for lying to them and turn against him?
- Why don’t they blame Satan?
- Why don’t they repent?
- Why do they love their evil deeds and darkness so much that they would spew their hatred

²¹ **John 9:4-5**

²² **Revelation 21:5**

and bitterness toward the God of Heaven and make Him the villain in this drama?

- Why would they be gnawing their tongues?
- Why do they simply not relent and just say sorry for all they have done?

This is a mind-numbing reality associated with the pride of mankind that is beyond comprehension. Perhaps the **Codex** can shed some light on this mental and emotional disorder.

Jeremiah 17:5-6, 9, 13-14

Thus says **Yahweh**, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from **Yahweh**. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant...The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?... O **Yahweh**, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, because they have forsaken the fountain of living water, even **Yahweh**. Heal me, O **Yahweh**, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for You are my praise.

The heart of mankind is so sick, desperately so, that it would even defy the living God of heaven, all the while gnawing their tongues in horrific pain instead of simply choosing to repent and bow before His majesty and seek His mercy and healing. Sick, sick, sick, is the heart of man, cursed even.

Let's stop here and in our next podcast we will continue with **Revelation 16** and pick up with the pouring out of the 6th vile of wrath.

I am glad you "tuned in" and have been "ready to listen."