

Table 13: The Bowl-Plagues

Bowl-plague	Reference to empire's "sin" requiring judgment	Link between the punishment and the sin
1: "foul and painful sore came on those who had the mark of the Beast and who worshiped its image." (16:2)	"no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the Beast or the number of its name." (13:17)	Participation in empire's economics is revealed as self-destructive
2: "sea ... became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing in the sea died." (16:3)	Beast from the sea makes war on the holy ones and sheds their blood (13:1, 7, 10)	The Empire's murderous ways pollutes its own source: the sea/chaos
3: "rivers and the springs of water ... became blood." (16:4)	Beast from the sea makes war on the holy ones and sheds their blood (13:1,7,10)	Those who collude with imperial murder drink human blood (16:6)
4: "sun ... was allowed to scorch them with fire" (16:8)	"performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth" (13:13; cf. 7:16)	This fire "stolen" from heaven (i.e., the claim to divinity) is revealed as self-destructive
5: "throne of the Beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness" (16:10)	"dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority." (13:2)	The worship of emperors is revealed as the cause of darkness, not light
6: "great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings from the east." (16:12)	"I rule as a queen; I am no widow, and I will never see grief" (18:7)	An "invasion" by the neighboring kingdom of Parthia reveals the <i>Pax Romana</i> to be temporary, not eternal
7. "The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." (16:19)	Great city murdered the witnesses and crucified Jesus (11:8)	The attempt by the "great city" to crush Jesus and his followers causes its own collapse.

Table adapted from Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now* (Orbis 1999)