

God's wrath looms large in all 3 incidences. Jude 6 refers to the angelic beings being held in gloomy darkness until the judgment and then in v. 13 warns of those who will spend eternity in Hell "in the gloom of utter darkness forever".

John 3:19-21 spells out the love that the wicked have for darkness to hide their evil deeds, but that is darkness they feel they can manipulate for their own purposes. They break into houses, stores and banks while their victims sleep, and they can hide in that darkness, so it is perceived as an ally – but the light exposes them. Only very desperate criminals operate in daylight, or those who believe their plan is foolproof even in daylight.

However, this darkness, sent by God is not an ally or friend, nor does it provide the wicked with comfort. Verse 10b says, "people gnawed their tongues in anguish". This reveals a time of desperate, despairing and absolute frustration. This judgment, on top of all the others is just too much to cope with and people are in dire straits, and 'anguish' is a great word to describe their condition – suffering with no apparent hope attached to it; no end in sight that offers relief.

III. Still No Repentance?! V. 11

By this time, if you have never studied through Revelation, it must come as a bit of a shock to see man's utter depravity in operation. As judgments are heaped one upon the other, we read 5 times that rather than seek God's mercy and salvation (and by now they know there is a God in heaven) the bulk of men and women cry out for the rocks to fall on them and hide them (Rev. 6:15-17 – 6th Seal); they seek death (Rev. 9:6 – 5th Trumpet); they do not repent of their idolatry and sinfulness (Rev. 9:20-21 – 6th Trumpet); here in Rev. 16:11, they did not repent of their deeds; and in Rev. 16: 21, they will curse God because of the deadly hail in the 7th Bowl Judgment! ②

Yet they worship the Antichrist and the False Prophet; they mourn over the world system's destruction and their lost way of life; but there is no mourning or brokenness over their sinfulness or recognition of how much they deserve these judgments being meted out by God. Not at this time, but in God's time, Paul tells (echoing Isa. 45:23) in Phil. 2:10-11 that "every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." By the time these hardened sinners do so, and they will, it will be too late to save them.

Notice one last thing in Rev. 16:11 – "they...cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores." These are likely the sores from the first Bowl – still there and still painful. This is a hint that these bowl judgments are not too far apart – the effects of the previous ones last until and through the proceeding ones.