9

REVELATION 15-16

JESUS IS JUST AND WILL BRING SIN TO ITS END

REVELATION REVELATION REVELATION

15 **PREPARATION FOR THE BOWL JUDGMENTS**

Then I saw another great and awe-inspiring sign in heaven: seven angels with the seven last plagues; for with them God's wrath will be completed. [2] I also saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had won the victory over the beast, its image, and the number of its name, were standing on the sea of glass with harps from God. [3] They sang the song of God's servant Moses and the song of the Lamb:

Great and awe-inspiring are your works,
Lord God, the Almighty;
just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.
[4] Lord, who will not fear
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All the nations will come
and worship before you
because your righteous acts
have been revealed.

[5] After this I looked, and the heavenly temple—the tabernacle of testimony—was opened. [6] Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, dressed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes wrapped around their chests. [7] One of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. [8] Then the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

16 **THE FIRST BOWL**

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." [2] The first went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and severely painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image.

THE SECOND BOWL

[3] The second poured out his bowl into the sea. It turned to blood like that of a dead person, and all life in the sea died.

THE THIRD BOWL

[4] The third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. [5] I heard the angel of the waters say,

You are just,
the Holy One, who is and who was,
because you have passed judgment on these things.
[6] Because they poured out
the blood of the saints and the prophets,
you have given them blood to drink;
they deserve it!
[7] I heard the altar say,
Yes, Lord God, the Almighty,
true and just are your judgments.

THE FOURTH BOWL

[8] The fourth poured out his bowl on the sun. It was allowed to scorch people with fire, [9] and people were scorched by the intense heat. So they blasphemed the name of God, who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory.

THE FIFTH BOWL

[10] The fifth poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues because of their pain [11] and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they did not repent of their works.

THE SIXTH BOWL

[12] The sixth poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the east. [13] Then I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming from the dragon's mouth, from the beast's mouth, and from the mouth of the false prophet. [14] For they are demonic spirits performing signs, who travel to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for the battle on the great day of God, the Almighty. [15] "Look, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who is alert and remains clothed so that he may not go around naked and people see his shame." [16] So they assembled the kings at the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

THE SEVENTH BOWL

[17] Then the seventh poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done!" [18] There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder. And a severe earthquake occurred like no other since people have been on the earth, so great was the quake. [19] The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the Great was remembered in God's presence; he gave her the cup filled with the wine of his fierce anger. [20] Every island fled, and the mountains disappeared. [21] Enormous hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, fell from the sky on people, and they blasphemed God for the plague of hail because that plague was extremely severe.

• Those who rejoice in God's justice (15:1-4)

They sang the song of God's servant Moses and the song of the Lamb...
(Revelation 15:3)

THE SONG OF MOSES AND THE SONG OF THE LAMB		
	The Exodus (Exodus 15)	**The Final Exodus (Revelation 15)**
Timing	Sung after deliverance at the Red Sea	Sung before final deliverance is complete
Setting	Shore of the Red Sea	Beside the "sea of glass mixed with fire" (v. 2)
The singers	Israel, rescued from Egypt	Overcomers (v. 2)
The defeated	Pharaoh and Egypt	The beast, Babylon, and all rebellion
God's character seen	"The LORD is a warrior" (v. 3); "Majestic in holiness" (v. 11)	"Great and awe-inspiring are your works" (v. 3); "you alone are holy" (v. 4)
Outcome	Freedom from slavery	Final end of sin and evil
The new Moses	In the exodus, Moses led Israel to freedom through the judgment of the Red Sea. In the final exodus, the Lamb also saves His people through judgment.	

• Those who receive God's justice (15:5-16:21)

*After this I looked, and the heavenly temple—**the tabernacle of testimony**—was opened. Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues…* (Revelation 15:5-6)

THE TABERNACLE IN EXODUS AND REVELATION

	The Tabernacle in Exodus (Exodus 40)	The Tabernacle in the Final Exodus (Revelation 15)
God dwells Exod 40:1-2, 34; Rev 15:5	God commands a tabernacle to be built so He can dwell among His rescued people.	John sees the tabernacle appearing in Heaven as the final exodus begins.
The law Exod 25:16; Rev 15:5-7	The law is placed inside the ark in the tabernacle. God's holy standard is established among His people.	The bowls of judgment proceed from the tabernacle of testimony. Judgment flows from God's holy law.
The glory cloud Exod 40:34-35; Rev 15:8	Smoke and glory fill the tabernacle; Moses himself cannot enter. The cloud marks God's arrival among His people.	Smoke fills the temple; no one can enter until the seven plagues are finished.

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." (Revelation 16:1)

THE BOWLS AND PLAGUES

	Revelation 16 (bowl)	Exodus parallel (plague)
1	Harmful sores (v. 2)	Plague 6: Boils and sores on Egyptians (Exodus 9:8-12)
2	Sea to blood; all sea life dies (v. 3)	Plague 1: Nile turned to blood; fish die (Exodus 7:17-21)
3	Rivers and springs become blood (v. 4-7)	Plague 1: All water to blood throughout Egypt (Exodus 7:19)
4	Sun scorches people with fierce heat (v. 8-9)	Plague 7: Hail and fire from Heaven—extreme judgment (Exodus 9:22–26)
5	Darkness (v. 10-11)	Plague 9: Three days of darkness over Egypt (Exodus 10:21-23)
6	Euphrates dried up; kings of the east gather to be destroyed (v. 12)	Pharaoh's army gathers to be destroyed at the water (Exodus 14)
7	Severe thunder, earthquake, hail (v. 17-21)	Plague 7: Hail (Exodus 9:13-35)

In Exodus, the plagues judged Egypt and rescued Israel. In Revelation, the bowls judge the beast's kingdom and rescue God's people from every nation. Same God, but a greater rescue and greater judgment.

• It is done. It is finished.

Then the seventh poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done!" (Revelation 16:17)

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished." Then bowing his head, he gave up his spirit. (John 19:30)

"The most violent expression of God's wrath and justice is seen in the Cross. If ever a person had room to complain for injustice, it was Jesus. He was the only innocent man ever to be punished by God. If we stagger at the wrath of God, let us stagger at the Cross. Here is where our astonishment should be focused." — (R.C. Sproul)

THE ESCALATION OF JUDGMENT IN REVELATION

	Seals (Chapters 6-8)	Trumpets (Chapters 8-9)	Bowls (Chapters 15-16)
Scope	¼ of the Earth	⅓ of the Earth	All the Earth
Intensity	Warning: suffering enters the world	De-creation: the world comes apart	Final: judgment is done
Human response	Cry out (6:10)	Refuse to repent (9:20)	Curse God (16:11)

Life Group Discussion Guide

WEEK NINE

RHYTHM REMINDER

Sacrificial Generosity

LEAN IN

Think of a time you witnessed a clear and undeniable act of justice—a wrong that was finally made right. What was that like to witness? How did it make you feel? _____

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LOOK DOWN

Read Revelation 16 (pg. 118). In Revelation 16:5-7, an angel declares that God's judgments are "true and just." How does the distinction that God's wrath is not portrayed as arbitrary or vengeful, but as holy and righteous, shape the way we talk about God's judgment with others? _____

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LOOK OUT

Many people today are comfortable with the idea of a loving God but deeply uncomfortable with the idea of a wrathful God. How would you explain to someone why a God who does not punish sin is actually not a God worth trusting? _____

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LOOK IN

Revelation 15-16 makes clear that God's wrath will be satisfied—either in Christ for those who trust Him, or in the person who rejects Him. How does the reality of God's wrath deepen your gratitude for what Jesus did on the cross on your behalf? _____

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NOTES