



SAVED TO SERVE

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REVELATION 16:

THE 7 LAST PLAGUES, PART 3

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will study the seventh plague of Revelation 16 and understand how to practically be prepared for these last days.
2. Where will the seventh angel pour out his vial? Revelation 16:17 _____
3. Will the seventh plague be universal or local in its application? See quotation below. _____

“The Seventh Plague. Thus, has Inspiration described the last judgment which is to be inflicted in the present state of the earth upon those who are incorrigibly rebellious against God. **Some of the plagues are local in their application, but this one is poured out into the air. The atmosphere envelops the whole earth, and it follows that this plague will envelop equally the habitable globe. It will be universal. The very air will be deadly.**” {1897 UrS, DAR 698.1}

4. **Note:** Leading up to the falling of the seventh plague, the wicked will still be seeking to kill God’s people. Using the account of Esther, we will see what the experience of the saints will be during this time.
5. What did Haman sign into law against the Jews during the time of Esther? Esther 3:8-14 _____
6. Based on our previous lessons, what have the wicked enacted against the righteous sometime between the falling of the second and fourth plague? Revelation 16:4-6

“... Says the revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: “There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image.” The sea “became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” And “the rivers and fountains of waters ... became blood.” Terrible as these inflictions are, God’s justice stands fully vindicated. **The angel of God declares: “Thou art righteous, O Lord, ... because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.” Revelation 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands.** In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.” {GC 627.3}

7. What did Esther tell Mordecai to do in response to the death decree? Esther 4:16, 17; Matthew 17:21

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8. What will the righteous be doing during the death decree time period, and how will they feel? Luke 18:7; Psalm 27:14 **they will be crying day and night and feel as if the Lord has left them**

“**Yet to human sight it will appear that the people of God must soon seal their testimony with their blood as did the martyrs before them. They themselves begin to fear that the Lord has left them to fall by the hand of their enemies. It is a time of fearful agony. Day and night they cry unto God for deliverance.** The wicked exult, and the jeering cry is heard: “Where now is your faith? Why does not God deliver you out of our hands if you are indeed His people?” But the waiting ones remember Jesus dying upon Calvary’s cross and the chief priests and rulers shouting in mockery: “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.” Matthew 27:42. Like Jacob, all are wrestling with God. Their countenances express their internal struggle. Paleness sits upon every face. Yet they cease not their earnest intercession.” {GC 630.1}

“Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. **The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect’s sake the time of trouble will be shortened.** “Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? ... I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.” Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction.” {GC 630.2}

9. From one perspective, why will Jesus cut time short in these last days? Matthew 24:22; Romans 9:28 Also, see quotation below.
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“The heavenly sentinels, faithful to their trust, continue their watch. **Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavor to take their lives.** But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war.” {GC 631.1}

10. How does God respond when He sees the wicked closing in on His people? Isaiah 30:29, 30; Revelation 16:21
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“The people of God—some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains—still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. **It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen.** Saith the Lord; “Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth ... to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of His arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.” Isaiah 30:29, 30.” {GC 635.2}

11. What words are heard from heaven, signifying that the righteous have passed the final test? Whose voice is it that shakes the earth? Revelation 16:17, 18; Hebrews 12:25-29; Joel 3:16, 17
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“It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, **whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: “It is done.”** Revelation 16:17.” {GC 636.2}

12. What will take place when the Lord speaks from heaven? Revelation 16:18 **Answer:** The earth shakes and the Special Resurrection will take place: the wicked who crucified Jesus will be raised to life and the righteous saints who died under the faith of the third angel’s message will also be raised.
13. **Note:** The Special Resurrection is an event that takes place just before the Second Coming of Jesus in the clouds. This is not to be confused with, what we commonly call, the “First Resurrection” brought to view in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, when Jesus will awake all the rest of the sleeping saints and then change all of the saints’ bodies to incorruptible ones as we rise to meet Him in the air. The following scriptures prove that there will be a Special Resurrection: Daniel 12:1-2; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:64. We will break these points down in the following questions.
14. Daniel 12:1-2 brings to view the Special Resurrection. How many groups are mentioned? _____
15. Who comprises the wicked group that will rise in the Special Resurrection to “everlasting contempt?” Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:63-64
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“Graves are opened, and “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Daniel 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel’s message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God’s covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. **“They also which pierced Him”** (Revelation 1:7), **those that mocked and derided Christ’s dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory** and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient.” {GC 637.1}

“There are those who mocked Christ in His humiliation. With thrilling power come to their minds the Sufferer’s words, when, adjured by the high priest, He solemnly declared: “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Matthew 26:64. Now they behold Him in His glory, and they are yet to see Him sitting on the right hand of power.” {GC 643.1}

“Those who derided His claim to be the Son of God are speechless now. There is the haughty Herod who jeered at His royal title and bade the mocking soldiers crown Him king. There are the very men who with impious hands placed upon His form the purple robe, upon His sacred brow the thorny crown, and in His unresisting hand the mimic scepter, and bowed before Him in blasphemous mockery. The men who smote and spit upon the Prince of life now turn from His

piercing gaze and seek to flee from the overpowering glory of His presence. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet, the soldier who pierced His side, behold these marks with terror and remorse.” {GC 643.2}

“With awful distinctness do priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary. With shuddering horror they remember how, wagging their heads in satanic exultation, they exclaimed: “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him.” Matthew 27:42, 43.” {GC 643.3}

16. Who comprises the righteous group that will rise in the Special Resurrection? Daniel 12:2 **Answer:** Those who have died in the faith of the third angel’s message, keeping the Sabbath. The third angel’s message began to be understood and preached in the autumn of 1846. So, all of those who died under that message from the autumn of 1846 to the present, will be raised during the falling of the seventh plague, just before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

“Graves are opened, and “many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth ... awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Daniel 12:2. **All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law.** “They also which pierced Him” (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ’s dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient.” {GC 637.1}

“It was at midnight that God chose to deliver His people. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength, and the moon stood still. The wicked looked upon the scene with amazement, while the saints beheld with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Signs and wonders followed in quick succession. Everything seemed turned out of its natural course. The streams ceased to flow. Dark, heavy clouds came up and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came the voice of God like many waters, shaking the heavens and the earth. **There was a mighty earthquake. The graves were opened, and those who had died in faith under the third angel's message, keeping the Sabbath, came forth from their dusty beds, glorified, to hear the covenant of peace that God was to make with those who had kept His law.**” {EW 285.1}

17. In what year was the third angel’s message, in connection with the Bible Sabbath, first proclaimed? Revelation 14:9-10

“**In the autumn of 1846 we began to observe the Bible Sabbath, and to teach and defend it.** My attention was first called to the Sabbath while I was on a visit to New Bedford, Massachusetts, earlier in the same year. I there became acquainted with Elder Joseph Bates, who had early embraced the advent faith, and was an active laborer in the cause. Elder B. was keeping the Sabbath, and urged its importance. I did not feel its importance, and thought that Elder B. erred in dwelling upon the fourth commandment more than upon the other nine. But the Lord gave me a view of the heavenly sanctuary. The temple of God was opened in heaven, and I was shown the ark of God covered with the mercy seat. Two angels stood, one at each end of the ark, with their wings spread over the mercy seat, and their faces turned toward it. My accompanying angel informed me that these represented all the heavenly host looking with reverential awe toward the holy law which had been written by the finger of God. Jesus raised the cover of the ark, and I beheld the tables of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written. I was amazed as I saw the fourth commandment in the very center of the ten precepts, with a soft halo of light encircling it. Said the angel: “It is the only one of the ten which defines the living God who created the heavens and the earth and all things that are therein. When the foundations of the earth were laid, then was laid the foundation of the Sabbath also.” (1T 75.4)

“I was shown that if the true Sabbath had always been kept, there would never have been an infidel or an atheist. The observance of the Sabbath would have preserved the world from idolatry. The fourth commandment has been trampled upon; therefore we are called upon to repair the breach in the law, and plead for the downtrodden Sabbath. The man of sin, who exalted himself above God, and thought to change times and laws, brought about the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. In doing this, he made a breach in the law of God. **Just prior to the great day of God, a message is sent forth to warn the people to come back to their allegiance to the law of God** which antichrist has broken down. By precept and example, attention must be called to the breach in the law. **I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world, to keep the commandments of God as the apple of the eye, and that in response to this warning many would embrace the Sabbath of the Lord.**” {1T 76.1}

18. What knowledge does God then give to the righteous (those already living and those raised during the special resurrection)? See quotation below.

“**The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus’ coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people.** Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked cannot look upon them. And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory.” {GC 640.2}

19. **Note:** For further study, read the book, *The Great Controversy*, chapter 40 - “God’s People Delivered.” Following the

announcement of the day and hour of His coming to the righteous, Jesus returns and raises the rest of the righteous in the "First Resurrection." Then, all of the saints will go to heaven.

20. **Note:** As we close, let us meditate on the encouragement God leaves us in His word.

21. What reward awaits those who remain faithful to God? Psalm 37:29

22. What must we keep in order to not backslide into sin? Psalm 37:31; Hebrews 10:16

23. Notice that Psalm 37 is an end-time scripture filled with encouragement. What does God promise the righteous when the death decree is enforced? Psalm 37:32-33

24. Based on Psalm 37:34-36, why will Jesus not allow the righteous to be slain by the wicked during the Great Time of Trouble?

25. How will Jesus identify His people in order for them to be saved and not to receive the judgment of the wicked? Psalm 37:37; Ezekiel 9:4; Revelation 7:3; 2 Timothy 2:19

26. Draw strength from Psalm 37:38-40 as we near these these end time events.