

# The True and Just Judgements of God

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Date: 17 April 2024

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[ 0 : 00 ] But this evening we're back in the book of Revelation. We're going to turn to our Bibles now. If you don't have one, there are plenty at the front here, at the sides. Go and grab one and turn up the very last book of the Bible.

And we come to Revelation chapter 15. We looked at the first part of this chapter last week with Paul. And we're reading this evening from Revelation 15 at verse 5 and right through to the end of chapter 16.

John in his great vision is coming now towards the climax, the last round of these visions that he sees.

And we read at verse 5, After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened. And out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen with golden sashes around their chests.

And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.

[ 1 : 17 ] And the sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. And no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.

So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth. And harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshipped its image.

The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. And it became like the blood of a corpse. And every living thing died that was in the sea.

The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water. And they became blood. And I heard the angel in charge of the water say, Just are you, O holy one, who is and who was.

[ 2 : 22 ] For you brought these judgments. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets. And you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve.

And I heard the altar saying, Yes, Lord God, the Almighty. True and just are your judgments. The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun.

And it was allowed to scorch people with fire. They were scorched by the fierce heat. And they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues.

They did not repent and give him glory. The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast.

And its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish. And cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

[ 3 : 21 ] The sixth angel 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.

And I saw coming out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet three unclean spirits like frogs.

For they are demonic spirits performing signs who go abroad to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty.

Behold I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake keeping his garments on that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed.

And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Harmageddon. The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air.

[ 4 : 23 ] And a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne saying, It is done. And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth.

So great was that earthquake. The great city was split into three parts. The cities of the nations fell. And God remembered Babylon the great to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.

And every island fled away. And no mountains were to be found. And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people.

And they cursed God for the plague of hail. Because the plague was so severe. Amen.

May God bless to us. This is his solemn word. Amen. Good evening. Please have Revelation 16 open in front of you.

[ 5 : 41 ] As we spend a few moments considering this difficult chapter. And you read a chapter like this. And you may ask. Is God judgmental?

And the way in which we ask that question, and maybe others, the way in which they ask that question, it implies that yes, he is judgmental. And yes, that is a bad thing.

We associate judgmentalism with an intolerance or a harshness. But actually the Bible insists that yes, God is judgmental.

And that yes, it is actually a good thing. Because God is a far better judge than we are. We cannot transfer our understanding of what a judge is and what judgments are from our earthly experience. We can't project that onto God. You see, our judgments are often unfair. Our judgments are always shallow.

[ 6 : 51 ] We cannot see into the heart of man. And judgments in this world are often merciless. Just consider the way in which the media will hound people.

Think about how Princess Catherine has been treated in recent months. Merciless hounding as she wrestles with what has turned out to be a very difficult health condition.

See, judgments in our world are not like the judgments of God. We make a mistake if we import our understanding, our experience of judgment onto him.

As we'll see, God is fair in his judgments. He judges the heart and he offers mercy.

Mercy beyond our deserving. Mercy beyond our understanding. You see, God is a good judge. A judge who is true and just.

[ 7 : 55 ] That's what we see in this chapter. And it's a good thing. It's also a fearful thing. Now, as we come to this chapter, we find a familiar pattern in this final set of seven.

We've encountered this several times. This repeated pattern of seven things. Seven judgments. John sees heaven open and seven things follow. That's been the pattern from the very beginning of the book.

Seven churches. Seven trumpets. Seven seals. And now seven bowls. But there is a sense of finality with this particular set of seven.

Notice at the end of verse one. We didn't read this this evening. But notice chapter 15, verse one.

We read this last week. And here's what John saw.

I saw another sign in heaven. Great and amazing. Seven angels with seven plagues. Which are the last. For with them, the wrath of God is finished.

[ 9 : 00 ] With this set of seven. With the seven bowls of the wrath of God. We are being brought to the precipice of history itself. We are being shown in this vision.

The final destiny of God's people. Of history itself. The final moments of history are being unfolded. With this final set of seven. It's the final battle.

And not only do we have a familiar pattern of seven. But the details are similar to what's come before. Compare this set of seven with the seven trumpets. Back in chapter eight. And there are striking similarities.

For example, the second trumpet turns the sea to blood. And the second bowl here does the same. Verse three. The third trumpet brings judgment on springs and rivers.

And the third bowl here does the same. And so on. It's a repeated pattern. But there are differences with this set of seven. There is a clear intensification of the judgment of God here.

[ 10 : 07 ] If you think back to the seven seals. The extent of destruction with God's judgment there is described as one quarter. And each time, so for example.

No need to turn to it. But in chapter six, verse eight. We see that the level of destruction is confined to a one quarter. And with the seven trumpets, which is the next second of seven, there's an intensification.

That time, it's one third. So we go from a quarter to a third. But here with the bowls, the destruction is total.

It is total. Notice, for example, verse three of chapter 16. The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. It became like blood of a corpse.

And every living thing died. Everything. The effect of God's judgment is no longer partial, but total. There's an intensifying effect of a building of the judgment of God.

[ 11 : 11 ] The sevens get more severe, more agonizing each time. And the effect, as you read through Revelation, as you read the set of seven after each other, as they intensify, the effect is supposed to be that we feel the ever-building, slowly-mounting judgment of God.

In other words, there is an end point. Destruction will be total at one point in history.

History does come to conclusion, and God's patience, it will end. Final judgment will, in the end, fall. And that's a very sobering, hard truth to come to terms with, isn't it? But it is an essential aspect of the gospel. Many have sought to erase it, to deny it or downplay it.

But to eliminate judgment is to eliminate the gospel itself. One scholar from a previous generation described that liberalizing of the gospel, of downplaying judgment like this.

[ 12 : 25 ] It's as if it's a God without wrath, brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment, through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross.

If you remove judgment, then there's no gospel. However palatable it might be to try and do that, to try and remove judgment from the gospel, that is very far from the Christianity of the Bible.

And we must come to terms with what Revelation teaches us here about God's judgment. Three key aspects to focus on as we consider this vision of God's judgment.

We'll notice what we're taught about the character of God's judgment. We'll notice what we're taught about the subjects of God's judgment. And finally, we'll heed the warning in light of God's judgment.

So first, the character of God's judgment. What are we taught here about the nature of God's judgment? And we'll see the justice of God's judgments.

[ 13 : 36 ] The justice of God's judgments. Now, as we read these particular chapters, there are echoes of the events recorded in Exodus.

We saw that last week, didn't we, with the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb. And back then, God delivered his people who had been in terrible slavery in Egypt for generations. They were in bondage.

They were in need of rescue. God heard their cry, and he rescued them. He delivered them. But that deliverance, that salvation, it required judgment upon their oppressors.

God had to deliver his people from their enemies. Enemies who would not relent, who would not repent, who would not obey Almighty God. And the plagues that God brought upon Egypt, they are echoed here in these accounts of the seven bowls.

Water tones of blood, painful sores, darkness. It's an echo of those plagues in Egypt. And all through the Bible, those Exodus events have been a template, a sort of model for how God works salvation for his people.

[ 14 : 50 ] And judgment upon the enemies of God's people has always been central to how God rescues. How God dealt with the unrepentant Egyptians is what he always does with those who refuse to repent.

And that's ultimately what we see here in Revelation 16. And it's clear in this chapter that his judgments are just.

Notice verse 5 and following. Let me read these verses again. And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments.

For they have shed the blood of the saints and the prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve. And I heard the author say, Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and just are your judgments.

The angel gives something of the rationale for the judgments that fall. And we then hear the response from the altar, verse 7.

[16:08] And the response from the altar to what God is doing and what the angel says, the response is that, yes, God's judgments are right and true.

They are true and just. True in that they are in line with and consistent with the sin. The judgment is not disproportionate to the sin.

We'll come back to that in a moment. But God's judgment is true. And it's just. In other words, it is totally in keeping with God's righteous character.

It's not arbitrary or random. God is true and just. That's the response that comes from the altar. But notice what it is that the angel has said in verses 5 and 6 that leads to this response.

What leads to this response of people saying it's true and just? Well, verse 5 says, Just are you, O holy one, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments.

[17:15] Why is God just for bringing these judgments? Well, look at verse 6. We're given the reason. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets and you have given them blood to drink.

It is what they deserve. Here is the terrible reality. The judgment is severe.

As you read these words, it's severe judgment, isn't it? The judgment is severe, but it's deserved. It's deserved.

You see, the judgment is aligned with the sin. You shed the blood of the saints and the prophets. Well, you shall drink blood. Blood for blood. You see, the judgment that God brings is deserved. But these judgments we read about here, they are terrible, aren't they?

[18:20] They're severe. It's hard to read. And so the conclusion we must draw, therefore, is that the sin must be equally terrible and severe.

If the judgment is this, then the sin must be as severe, mustn't it? As we consider the severity of the judgment, our understanding of the depravity and the seriousness of sin must be enhanced, mustn't it?

Sin is more sinful than we realize. It is what they deserve, end of verse 6. And isn't that just the very root of the difficulty that almost all of us have as we consider God's judgments?

With God's wrath being poured out, we don't really believe, it's what's deserved. And the thing is, we think too little of God and His holiness.

We think far too much of ourselves, which is why we need God's Word to tell us how to think. How to think about God's judgment. How to think about sin.

[19:32] We need God to tell us. And as God's Word shapes our understanding, well, our feeling, our response to it will be transformed.

Our feelings will follow as our minds are transformed by God's Word. As we see the horror of sin, we will begin to see that these judgments are just.

They are right. If we just go with how we feel about this, well, we'll think, who deserves this? Surely, not many deserve this.

But that's why we need the Bible, to tell us what God is like. And we need the Bible to tell us what sin is like. The angels cry out, just are you, O Holy One.

But if we're honest, how do many people today respond to words like this? As we read these passages, we might say, how dare you?

[20:34] How dare you, God, do this? How could a good God do this? But that's not the voice from the throne, is it? That's not the voice of the angel.

No, verse 7, the altar say, yes, Lord, the almighty, true and just. You are only giving people what they deserve. So we may protest at the judgments of God, but remember who he is.

And remember who we are. He is God. He is almighty, creator, eternal. And we, we're just creatures.

We are limited, finite. And it's hard for us to grasp the nature of our sin against an infinite God. We cannot compute it.

We will always minimize and underestimate the nature of the defense of our sin. And so we will balk against the extent of God's judgment in response to our sin.

[21:36] But we're being shown here that it is proportionate. It is right. It is just. He is the ultimate judge.

And in the end, we must, we must accept it. His judgments are final as well as being just and true and righteous.

there is no higher court to appeal to. When the Supreme Court in our land hands out the final verdict, that's it, isn't it?

The matter is settled. There is no further higher court to appeal to. We must accept the verdict. And so it is with what we read here. We can protest all we want, but God is God.

His judgment is final. And in the end, in the end, we will all see and we will all know that His judgment is nothing other than right and true and just.

[ 22 : 45 ] All of us will say on that day, it is what was deserved. That's the first thing we see in this chapter. And it's sobering and it's a challenge to us, isn't it?

As we consider the judgment of God and the nature of it, the character, it's just. His judgment is just. Well, let's notice secondly, the subjects of God's judgment.

And there are two, I guess, two key groups in view here. one is unrepentant men and women and the other is the great enemy himself, Satan.

We'll consider both of these. And the first is to focus on man's response. And we see here the hardness of men's hearts. Look with me again at verse two and we see here who upon, who, who these bowls are being poured out upon.

So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshipped its image.

[ 24 : 05 ] There are, as we've seen in Revelation, only two groups of people. there are only two marks that identify humanity.

The mark of the name of the beast or the name of the father written on the forehead of those who follow Christ. Those are the only two identities there are.

You either belong to the beast or you belong to God the father. You are either one who follows the Lord Jesus or not. You either bear the mark of Jesus or the mark of the beast.

And judgment falls on those who bear the mark of the beast. On those who do not and will not worship Jesus. And notice the chilling refrain here.

Look at the end of verse 8. Sorry, end of verse 9. They were scorched by the fierce heat. They cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues.

[ 25 : 07 ] They did not repent and give him glory. And the same again in verse 11. And they cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores.

They did not repent of their deeds. And that is ultimately the deciding factor for all of us. Will you repent?

it's not the case that Christians on their own merit are somehow worthy of salvation, worthy of avoiding God's judgment.

No, all have sinned. All fall short of the glory of God. All are deserving of God's judgment. But God's desire is to save, isn't it? Not to judge.

God is holy and right and just and so he must punish our wrongdoing. He must. But he's also a God full of love and grace and mercy.

[ 26 : 04 ] He desires that all might be saved and he has provided a way. Jesus Christ drank from the cup of God's wrath down to the dregs so that we wouldn't have to.

Jesus suffered the judgment for our sin. Is that not the most extraordinary thing? As we read here the severity of God's judgment, the seriousness of sin, Jesus did that on our behalf.

God the Father sent Jesus into this world to be judged in our place on the cross. He took our punishment so that we could be forgiven. So yes, God is judge but he's merciful, isn't he?

He provides a way. But to receive this gift of salvation from judgment we must repent. We must admit our sin and repent and turn to him.

That's the great call of the gospel. Repent and believe. Turn to God. There is a way. But even, even in the face of God's repeated warnings there are some who harden themselves.

[ 27 : 19 ] And that's the tragic thing we read about here. That's what we see. God's plagues, his warnings, they are met verse 9 and verse 11 with cursing and a refusal to repent.

And that's just what happened with Pharaoh, wasn't it? Back in Exodus, warning after warning, plague after plague. Would Pharaoh hear God's call to let his people go?

Would he obey that call? well, no. He hardened his heart. And in the end, despite his great patience, God will respect our choices.

In the end, judgments will fall. And that's what we have in this climactic set of seven. We've had the warnings with the seals and the trumpets, but the bowls, well, this is it.

Warnings have come, but there comes a time when no more warnings will be given. Judgment falls. And it falls on those who bear the mark of the beast.

[ 28 : 30 ] Our only hope, my only hope, your only hope, is God himself and turning and repenting. So don't place your trust anywhere else.

It's not only the unbelievers of this world that are subject to judgment, but the world itself. Verse 3, the bowl of wrath is poured out on the sea. Verse 4, it's the rivers and the springs of water. Verse 8, the sun itself. It's as if the whole world itself is being deconstructed. In the end, it too will pass away. Everything we might put our trust in, everything we might put our hope in, in the end, will not last.

Don't put your trust in anything else in this world is the message here. Don't think you'll find salvation outside of God because you won't. The world itself falls under God's judgment. Well, that's the first broad category. That those who bear the mark of the beast, those who refuse to repent, even after warning after warning. The second group particularly tackled here is what you might call satanic opposition, the great enemy himself.

[ 29 : 53 ] God not only places his curse of judgment on a faithless world, but also targets the leaders of spiritual opposition. So look from verse 10, we see God's judgment on the unholy trinity, which we have been becoming familiar with in recent chapters.

The dragon, the beast, Satan himself and his accomplices. Notice verse 10, the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast and its kingdom was plunged into darkness.

This is a judgment reminiscent of the fourth plague in Egypt in the Exodus when God brought darkness on the realm of Pharaoh.

It was almost a direct attack on the Egyptian sun god, Ra, who Pharaoh thought he was meant to represent. In a similar way, God will shame the satanic dominion behind the governments that oppose the gospel.

John's original readers may have connected this darkness that they read about here with the chaos that engulfed Rome in the years after the suicide of Nero that shook the whole empire's confidence.

[ 31 : 09 ] One scholar, Greg Beal, points out that world rulers who oppress the saints and foster idolatry may expect to suffer internal rebellion and the removal of political and religious power.

This plague of darkness in the Exodus, it showed God's sovereignty over Egypt and God likewise shows his sovereignty over Satan's rule by sowing confusion among his earthly servants.

And we saw in chapter 13 that Satan is at work in this world. He does use the powers of this world to his own ends. But sometimes God will bring about darkness where Satan's rule is growing.

That is the ultimate destiny of every earthly empire, of every evil ideology that sets itself against God and God's people. That destiny will always be darkness. Despite what many would like to think in our society, the ideologies that so capture the minds and hearts of our elites, they do not trend towards light and flourishing.

But the opposite, they trend down towards darkness and chaos. And that is what we observe in our world, isn't it? Our Western world built on the foundation of a broadly Christian worldview.

[ 32 : 40 ] well, it's quickly spoiling the good fruit that our culture has enjoyed for so long. We cannot cast off the foundations of a biblical worldview and expect everything to remain standing.

It will collapse and crumble. It's already crumbling. And that collapse, it's a warning, it's a foretaste of the coming judgment.

It's a foretaste of what will be in the end. What we read about here, this darkness, this utter darkness, that is a picture of foretaste of where things will go.

And what our culture needs is not reform, but repentance. Reform will follow. But fundamentally, we must repent. But this is the warning.

Darkness will come when the gospel's abandoned. But even then, even then, verses 10 and 11, people curse God, they do not repent.

[ 33 : 45 ] The darkness of God's judgment, when God hands us over to the desires of our hearts and the chaotic consequences that follow, that darkness, we are warned, will not lead to repentance.

Quite the opposite. You would think as our world crumbles, as things disintegrate, that might point people towards the Lord to seek answers, to find out what's going on.

But often, it leads to the opposite. And there is a perverse self-confidence, hubris even, after warning, after warning's been given.

And that's what we see with the sixth bowl. look down at verse 12, the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings of the east.

Now, the Euphrates was a key boundary separating God's people from their enemies in the east. And so, when the Euphrates dried up, that meant a key boundary providing some sort of security for God's people was gone.

[ 34 : 54 ] And so, you get the armies from the east mustering their forces, they're going to attack. That's the picture here. Presents an open door for the enemies of God's people to attack.

The east was always seen as the place from which bad things came. So, we read on here, the Euphrates dries up, and verse 13, the unholy trinity gets to work.

John saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophets, three unclean spirits like frogs. For they are demonic spirits performing signs who go abroad to the kings of the whole world to assemble them for battle on the great day of God Almighty.

It's a picture of Satan gathering up the enemies of God's people and he's preparing for what he thinks is his final victorious attack, his great moment.

But the irony is that while it looks like it's going to be the final destruction of God's people because all the kings and armies of the world have a raid against them, despite appearances, God is up to something.

[ 36 : 12 ] Just like he did at the Red Sea. The enemies of God's people may think that they are on the verge of victory, but little do they know. That is often how it goes, isn't it?

God's enemies at key points through the Bible story, they think themselves on the verge of victory, but they find themselves on the receiving end of God's judgment. That's how it was with Pharaoh and his army.

He had the people of Israel hemmed in at the Red Sea. Surely this is the end. But how wrong Pharaoh was. Or remember Haman, who thought he was about to have his arch enemy Mordecai hanged on the gallows.

Little did he know. The illusion that they're surely about to be victorious and then just at that moment God brings judgment and the entire opposition is wiped out.

That's the picture here. It's often how God works. And we must always remember God has a plan even when we do not know what it is. And that's ultimately seen on the cross, isn't it?

[ 37 : 23 ] Satan thought he'd struck the decisive blow. He thought he had God handled, defeated. And the thing is the enemies of God are almost always more confident than they should be.

And that seems from these verses how it will be as we come to the end. As final judgment is about to fall, it will seem to the watching world like God's people are on the ropes.

That God's plans are going nowhere. But it's the opposite. God's people are sometimes more fearful than we should be.

but Christ will come when things are perhaps looking to be without hope. That's why I think we get that little bit in the brackets there, verse 15.

Behold, I'm coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed. He'll come like a thief.

[ 38 : 33 ] The enemies of God may array their armies, but God will come like a thief in the night. So be prepared.

Well, we then fast forward to final judgment. We're kind of left hanging there. We're not sure how things work out. We're not given the detail. But we're fast forwarding to final judgment, the last of the seven bowls, verse 17.

Notice verse 17 there. It is done. This is the end. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on earth.

So great was that earthquake. The great city was split into three parts and the cities of the nations fell. And God remembered Babylon the Great to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of Israel.

So rather than going into the details of the final battle that we might expect after the sixth bowl, we fast forward to final judgment. The lightning and the thunder and the earthquakes, we've seen those before with the seals and the trumpets, but this time as with all the other aspects of this section, it's intensified.

[ 39 : 52 ] It's bigger. It's more significant. And so we're coming for the third time to the cataclysmic end of the earth. The city cracks up, the islands flee, the mountains crumble, hail pounds the earth. Babylon the Great, that wicked worldly system is destroyed. It drinks the cup of God's wrath down to the dregs. And the remaining chapters of Revelation from 17 to the end.

They unpack what is going on here with this final seventh bowl. What happens to those who remain unrepentant?

What happens to Babylon? What happens to the destiny of those who belong to Jesus? That's all unpacked in the last few chapters of Revelation. Revelation. But this is a glance forward to the final total judgment of God.

And we must heed the warning to our last point this evening, the warning in light of God's judgment. It's a great warning, isn't it, about presuming on God's patience.

[ 41 : 03 ] God is judge. That's clear, isn't it? But He's also merciful. He has warned us.

He desires that all would repent and seek refuge in the blood Jesus shed. Now, today, is the time of warning. Now is the time to repent.

There is judgment coming. This will happen. This is the future. This is the destiny of all. And if we don't drink from the cup of the new covenant, the cup of blessing, the cup that brings forgiveness, then there's only one other cup from which we must drink.

And it's the cup of the wrath of God. Notice the second half of verse 19. God remembered Babylon the great to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath.

See, that is the cup that you will drink from if you refuse to repent. Heed the warning. You will only drink from one of two cups in the end.

[ 42 : 18 ] Which one will you drink from? Decide today. Do not presume on God's patience because He will come and when He comes He will come like a thief in the night and He will come in judgment.

And when God comes, evil must go. not only the cruel evil that shocks us, but the convenient evil that doesn't shock us.

The everyday lies where God is sidelined. We can reject God loudly or quietly. We can reject God in outright rebellion or quiet, respectable rebellion.

But it's still in the end rebellion. Sin, however respectable we might deem it to be, it is an affront to almighty God, far beyond our comprehension.

That should be clear to us tonight as we consider the severity of God's judgment, which is just how severe must be our sin. So serious is man's sin that the judgment described here is the destiny of those who refuse to repent.

[ 43 : 38 ] And all of us, when that day comes, when judgment falls, we will echo these words. Yes, Lord God the almighty, true and just are your judgments.

All of us will say that. So which cup are you drinking from? Because God in his mercy has provided a way well, let's pray before we close our time together.

Father God, we quake before you. who are we? Small people, finite creatures, and you are the almighty, everlasting God.

Humble us before your words this evening. Humble us in sight of your true and just judgments and fill us with astonishing gratitude because of your bounding grace and mercy that you would send your own son to die the death that we deserve to die, to drink from the cup that we deserve to drink. Lord, we not refuse that great offer of salvation. Would we not refuse to repent?

[ 45 : 31 ] But Lord, help us to turn to trust, to know your great mercy. So help us, all of us, to respond tonight in faith and not rejection.

in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.