

The Wrath of God

Definitions

- ◆ **Anger** a justifiable abhorrence; a resentful displeasure fomenting in the mind
- ◆ **Fury** a vehement & intense anger; an anger vented with violent force
- ◆ **Indignation** a hot, boiling anger; a bursting forth in moral outrage & retributive justice
- ◆ **Wrath** an ire; a deep & fierce anger; a consuming anger; a violent passion

“And in the greatness of Thine excellence Thou dost overthrow those who rise up against Thee; Thou dost send forth *Thy burning anger* (Thy wrath, *KJV*), and it consumes them as chaff.” *Ex. 15:7*

“Therefore, the *anger* of Yahweh burned against that land, to bring upon it every curse which is written in this book; and Yahweh uprooted them from their land *in anger* and *in fury* and *in great wrath*, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.” *Deut. 29:27-28*

“A jealous and avenging El is Yahweh; Yahweh is *avenging and wrathful*. Yahweh takes vengeance on His adversaries, and He reserves *wrath* for His enemies. Yahweh is slow to *anger* and great in power, and Yahweh will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. ... Who can stand before His *indignation*? Who can endure *the burning of His anger*? His *wrath* is poured out like fire, ... Yahweh is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him.” *Nah. 1:2-7*

“Worship Yahweh with reverence, and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son, lest He become *angry*, and you perish in the way, for His *wrath* may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!” *Ps. 2:11-12*

Perspective: God's Wrath and His Character

The wrath of God is:

- ◆ His judicial hostility toward any rebellion against His authority
- ◆ His expressed abhorrence of any transgression of His holiness
- ◆ His retributive justice directed toward any and all manifestations of evil

- ◆ His infinite perfection of being constrains Him to respond with eternal hostility toward all enemies who oppose His authority and transgress His commands.
- ◆ His position as absolute Sovereign constrains Him to vindicate His authority in any and every case where this authority has been opposed and assaulted.
- ◆ His resolute zeal to uphold righteousness constrains Him to respond with retributive justice toward “in-equity” and all abuse of His goodness and benevolence.
- ◆ His position as Moral Governor constrains Him to render retributive justice and vengeance on those who seek to destroy His moral order ordained as proper for men and nations.
- ◆ His unwavering passion for His infinite worthiness constrains Him to act with distinct displeasure and with resolute judicial action toward all adversaries who refuse His infinitely valuable salvific work, and toward all who refuse to honor Him as the eternal King of Gory.

God's wrath is an intrinsic attribute of His holy character; it is a perfection of His holy being that is held in perfect balance with every other perfection in all His purposes and in all His works:

- His righteousness
- His holiness
- His faithfulness to truth
- His goodness
- His love
- His mercy
- His justice
- His glory

“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” (*I John 1:5*)
God has no fellowship with the “unholy”; He loves and fellowships only with that which is holy & righteous.
God's holiness, at minimum, speaks of His moral perfection, His uncompromising intolerance of sin (*Hab. 1:13*), and that He will never allow His glory (His name) to be profaned. (*Isa. 42:8; 48:11*)

“For the *wrath* of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.” *Rom. 1:18-19*

Perspective: Evidence of the Surety of God’s Wrath as seen in the Record of Scripture

Historical evidences of the sure operation of God’s wrath can be seen in:

- ❑ His expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden after their transgression.
- ❑ His slaying of animals (shedding of innocent blood) to validate that death is the consequence of sin, and to demonstrate that atonement was necessary for sinners to continue to live.
- ❑ His judgment of Cain after he murdered Abel ... proving that sin will be judged and that the way of the transgressor will forever be hard.
- ❑ His judgment of the antediluvian world with the Noahic Flood – a global deluge(cataclysm) overwhelming the whole earth that was corrupt and filled with violence.
- ❑ His destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the expressly grievous sin and grossly depraved practices of its citizenry.
- ❑ His severe judgment of the Canaanite nations because of the depths and comprehensive extent of their gross paganism.
- ❑ His judgment on Nadab and Abihu when they did not revere and sanctify the LORD as holy, expressly transgressing His explicit commands.
- ❑ His devastating judgment on the nation Israel because of their rejection of Yahweh, their defilement of the priesthood, their empty worship, and their persistent and impenitent pursuit of idolatrous practices.
- ❑ His judgment inflicted on His own Son who entered the stream of humanity and was offered as a substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of man.
- ❑ His preparation of the lake of fire as an eternal prison for Satan and his emissaries.
- ❑ His sworn intention to condemn those of mankind who willfully reject His glorious saving work of amazing grace to eternal imprisonment and torment in the lake of fire.

Perspective: The Operational Expression of God’s Wrath in the Present Age

God’s wrath is expressed during the present age in:

- ❑ the universal extent and the ubiquitous operation of the curse – accomplished through the operation of ordained natural laws that direct all creation toward degradation and ultimate death.
- ❑ the occasional interruption of ordained natural law through works of divine miracles of judgment and destruction, both of property and life.
- ❑ the positioning of corrupt civil authorities who undermine and frustrate accepted legal bases for the punishment of evildoers and the restraint of lawlessness (*i.e.*, through enactment of unrighteous laws; through the perversion of justice, through abuse of power, *etc.*).
- ❑ the “giving-over” of rebellious men to their choices and depraved inclinations – a judicial hardening effected by a release of restraints of conscience and enlightenment, and by a fueling of the fire of degraded passions.
- ❑ the allowance of evil philosophies to gain influence and dominance, denying absolutes of truth and destroying foundations of cultural righteousness.
- ❑ the allowance of tyrannical governments to gain power. enslave people, frustrate national and international alliances, and destroy bases for international peace and tranquility.
- ❑ the sovereign operation of the “law of the harvest” with respect to evil and corruption –the law of cause and effect in the arena of ethics, morality, law and conscience.
- ❑ the lifting of restraints holding back Satan and his emissaries from pursuing their diabolical purposes – the releasing of Satan to perform his works of confusion and deception, of contention and division, of control and dominion, and of conflict and destruction ... either on local, national or international levels.
- ❑ His allowing rogue, lawless bands to gain both means and access whereby they are able to destroy peace, oppress communities, and inflict terror and bloodshed.

Perspective: The Nature of God's Wrath

God's wrath is:

❖ Real & Personal

“Now I will shortly pour out *My wrath* on you and spend *My anger* against you; judge you according to your ways My eye will show no pity nor will I spare. ... then you will know that I, Yahweh, do the smiting.” *Ezek. 7:8-9*

❖ Active & Terrifying

“It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” *Heb. 10:31*

“and He treads the wine press of the *fierce wrath* of God, the Almighty.” *Rev. 19:15*

❖ Holy & Righteous

“But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up *wrath* for yourself in the day of *wrath* and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to each person according to his deeds. ...

For there is no partiality with God”
Rom. 2:5-6, 11

❖ Severe & Certain

“But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At *His wrath* the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure *His indignation*.” *Jer. 10:10*

“He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness.” *Acts 17:31*

❖ Final & Eternal

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [believe] the Son shall not see life, but the *wrath of God* abides on him.” *John 3:36*

“These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.” *II Thess. 1:9*

❖ Just & Proportionate

“Yet if ... you do not obey Me, but act with hostility toward Me, then I will act with wrathful hostility against you; and I, even I will punish you seven times for your sins.”

Lev. 26:27-28

“Woe to the wicked! It will go badly with him, for what he deserves will be done to him.” *Isa. 3:11*

❖ Amazing & Glorious

“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had the seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the *wrath of God* is finished. ... Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, ... For You alone are holy” *Rev. 15:1-4*

❖ Escapable

“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be *saved from the wrath of God* through [Christ who died for us]”. *Rom. 5:9*

“For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.” *I Thess. 5:9*

Concluding Remarks:

- The right emphasis on the wrath of God is essential to communicating the message of the Gospel in truth; salvation is that work of God whereby He saves sinners from His real, personal, eternal and terrifying wrath.
- The angels in heaven do not diminish or misunderstand the wrath of God; their understanding of the wrath of God is actually a motivating force for praise of Almighty God by all those who see His face.
- To diminish the just wrath of God toward sin is to think lightly of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ; to do so debases His word, disparages His love, disrespects His suffering, and detracts from the glory of His victory over sin, death, the grave, and eternal separation from the favor of God.