

- I. Session 46: The Wrath of God and Christ's Propitiation
- a. Purpose: In this session we shall explore the attribute of the wrath of God.
  - b. The reality of God's Wrath
    - i. This is taught in the Old Testament
      1. In the Hebrew, "There are more than twenty words used to express 'wrath' as it applies to Yahweh (in addition to a number of other words which occur only with reference to human anger). These are used so frequently that there are over 580 occurrences to be taken into consideration."<sup>1</sup>
      2. "Go, inquire of the Lord for me and the people and all Judah concerning the words of this book that has been found, for great is the wrath of the Lord that burns against us, because our fathers have not listened to the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us." (2 Kings 22:13)
        - a. Context is King Josiah of Judah speaking, after the Book of the Law was found and read.
        - b. Here we see the mention of the wrath of God against Josiah's ancestors and their generation because of disobedience to His laws.
    - ii. This is taught in the New Testament <sup>2</sup>
      1. Note: I want to spend some more time in the New Testament since most people think the wrath of God is an Old Testament phenomenon but not in the New Testament. We will look at two main Greek words used to describe God's wrath.
      2. ὀργή
        - a. Meaning: It is from "ὀργάω which signifies 'to be getting ready to bear, growing ripe for something.' It comes to mean the natural disposition or character, any movement of soul, especially strong emotion, and so anger... ὀργή is adapted to a more settled emotion..."<sup>3</sup>
        - b. This term for wrath is described as coming from God in the these passages: John 3:36, Romans 1:18, Romans 9:22, Ephesians 5:6, Colossians 3:6, Revelation 19:15.
        - c. "Your wrath" is obviously that of God in Revelation 11:18 and "His wrath" in Revelation 14:10, 16:19.
      3. θυμός
        - a. Meaning: "θυμός derives from θύω which means to rush on or along and as Grimm-Thayer put it: 'to rush along or on, be in a heat, breathe violently...accordingly it signifies both the spirit panting as it is were in the body, and the rage with which the man pants and swells..."

<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Tyndale Press, 1965), 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Everything in the section on the New Testament originates from Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Tyndale Press, 1965), 180-183.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 180.

- θυμός more readily denotes passionate anger, arising and subsiding quickly...”<sup>4</sup>
- b. More direct connect of wrath to God: **Revelation 14:10, 14:19, 15:1, 15:7, 16:1, 16:19, 19:15.**
  - c. Implicit it’s wrath of God: **Romans 2:5, 3:5, 5:9, Ephesians 5:6, Colossians 3:6, 1 Thessalonians 1:10; also 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.**
4. Other ways expressed God is wrathful: God is a consuming fire according to **Hebrews 12:29.**
- c. Why is there the wrath of God?
    - i. Since God is righteous in His attributes He has to show wrath towards unrighteousness:
      1. *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness;” (Romans 1:18)*
        - a. Notice God’s wrath is *“against all ungodliness”*
        - b. Jerry Bridges: “We might say that God’s wrath is His infinite justice in action—a justice that cannot allow any sin, be it ever so small in our eyes, to go unpunished”<sup>5</sup>
      2. *“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience,” (Colossians 3:5-6)*
        - a. Notice lists of sins (v.5)
        - b. Notice these lists are identified as why God’s wrath will be upon *“the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience” (v.6)*
      3. *“But immorality [c]or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among [d]saints; 4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know with certainty, that no [e]immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” (Ephesians 5:3-6)*
        - a. Notice lists of sins (v.3-5)
        - b. Notice these lists are identified as why God’s wrath will be upon *“the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience” (v.6)*

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 180.

<sup>5</sup> Jerry Bridges, *The Transforming Power of the Gospel* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), Location 346 of 2821.

- ii. Since God is Holy in His attributes He has to show wrath towards unrighteousness because He can't look upon it with favor: "*Your eyes are too pure to [a]approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor. Why do You look with favor on those who deal treacherously? Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up those more righteous than they?*" (**Habakkuk 1:13**)
- iii. Wrath is the way God deal with those who are stubbornly unrepentant: "*But [a]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,*" (**Romans 2:5**)
- d. To escape the wrath of God we need Christ's propitiation
  - i. What does the Greek word for propitiation means?
    - 1. What does this word mean for Greek ears?
      - a. It involves paying to earn God's favor where you pay the Gods ahead of time before your endeavor, etc
      - b. The pagan Gods were so fickle so you want to make sure they are appease and not angry with you.
    - 2. What does this word mean for Jewish ears?
      - a. It involves setting aside God's wrath.
      - b. This term is used a lot in the Greek translation of the Old Testament with reference to the mercy seat of **Leviticus 16**.
    - 3. Summary: It means to satisfy the wrath of God.
  - ii. What is the means of propitiation of God's wrath?
    - 1. Through Jesus (**1 John 2:2, 1 John 4:10**)!
    - 2. Through His blood: "*whom God displayed publicly as a [d]propitiation [e]in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, [f]because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;*" (**Romans 3:25**)
- e. Implications