

Chapter 3

The Wrath of God

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 1

In understanding Romans 1:18-32, you need to understand the nature of sin and the wrath of God. I want to focus on the wrath of God. Romans 1:18, says, "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven [In other words, unveiled, displayed.] against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*" There is a general, two fold statement in this verse, one regarding sin, the other regarding God's anger, God's wrath toward sin. From verse 18 on, Paul is developing this thought of sin and the wrath of God through the first eleven chapters of the book of Romans, and you read a biblical explanation of the history of humanity. Romans 1:18-32, is also a biblical explanation of the history of humanity, as well as an explanation of why things are the way they are.

Paul's development of verse 18 also reveals the futility of man to resolve the problem of sin. Man can deal with the symptoms of a sinful nature, but man can not fix the sinful nature of man. In verse 16, Paul makes a general statement about the gospel of Christ. He says, "*.... it is the power of God unto salvation*" Then in verse 17 and 18, he reveals two matters in the gospel that relate to God. The gospel reveals the standard, which is the righteousness of God and the righteousness we need, and the wrath of God. So, you have the righteousness of God and the wrath of God, neither of which are very popular subjects, certainly not in the secular world, and not much more in the overall religious world. Those are not subjects that are well received. When you get right down to it, in general, the secular and the religious world resolutely hate and object to those two aspects of God, His righteousness and His wrath.

Why does man hate, why does man reject God's righteousness and God's wrath? The righteousness manifests that man falls short of God. Man hates that and generally hates to hear that he has fallen short of God's standards. What do they try to do? They try to remove that standard and in place of it create their own standard by which they view themselves as acceptable.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 1

The subject of the wrath of God manifests that God is displeased with man. Man does not like that either. Overall, even the religious world does not like the fact that God is displeased with man. That is how you get this, "God loves everybody. God accepts everybody." No, He doesn't.

The righteousness of God and the wrath of God, reveal that God is superior to and over man. Man is opposed to such a notion and wants a god that they can mold into their lifestyle. They do not have any problem with a god that they can mold. That is one of the reasons why you have the "megachurch" today.

The revelation of the righteousness and wrath of God, reveal the facts that God has set boundaries and there are consequences for going against God. Man does not like that God has boundaries and you are to walk within those boundaries. Man likes to set his own boundaries, but really does not want boundaries. Man does not like that fact there are consequences for going against God. People will make statements that, "My god isn't your God." That is very true, because they have created their own god in their minds. Because God has set boundaries and there are consequences for going against God. The wrath and the righteousness of God reveal that man is accountable to God. Man does not like that and does not want to be held accountable to God.

The righteousness of God and the wrath of God are both part of and involved in the gospel. God has a standard and there are consequences of going against that standard. That is a brief summary of the righteousness and the wrath of God.

The gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, is the good news of God's provision of righteousness for those who have none and have no means of achieving God's righteousness. Man does not have God's righteousness and man can not achieve it. That is where the gospel comes in.

In focusing upon the wrath of God you will learn that it is a very dominant theme throughout the word of God. The wrath of God implies that something is wrong,

something is contrary, and something is opposed to the nature of God and that God is not pleased. Man does not like that implication. You can not deal with the subject of God's wrath without dealing with the subject of God's anger. Man does not want to think of God's anger, nor wants a God who is capable of anger. You also have to consider God's hatred when dealing with His wrath. These things are brought out in the word of God. "*The wrath of God*", those four words, contain a lot.

The wrath of God shows something is wrong, something is contrary, something is opposed to the nature of God and before there can be a remedy, there has to be a diagnosis, you have to know what is wrong. What is wrong is man has sinned. The remedy is the gospel, the power of God unto salvation.

The subject of the wrath of God is really a very fitting introduction to God's grace. The reason we need God's grace is because there is sin, because there is such a thing as the wrath of God. Sin and the wrath of God is what makes God's grace so amazing. You can not preach grace without implying or preaching sin. That is why grace is needed.

If you're going to rightly consider the subject of the wrath of God, you must consider the nature of God, the attributes of God. What we mean by the attributes of God is the characteristics that belong to God, characteristics that you can attribute to God, and therefore, are attributes of God. Of the things that can be attributed to God, wrath is one of them. How do we know wrath can be attributed to God? Because of that statement, "*.... the wrath of God.*"

Attributes are very distinguishable characteristics of God's nature. They are not only characteristics of His nature, they are inseparable from Him. God can not deny Himself. You remove the attributes, you do not have a God. These attributes are inseparable from God and include His wrath. They are qualities of His being. It is who God is. They are peculiarities that constitute the very nature, the very character of God.

What are these attributes? You have His eternity. You can not put God in "time". If you do, you do not have a God. Infinity is an attribute of God. He is unsearchable. Immutability is an attribute of God and simply means God does not change. We have said many times, in all change there is either a change to the worse or a change to the better. But, if you say that God changes, and changes to the worse, that is a problem. If God changes to the better, then He is not perfect now. It is just common sense. Immutability belongs to God. Sovereignty is an attribute of God which basically sums up all of His attributes. You remove the sovereignty of God, you have no God. People hate the doctrine of the sovereignty of God, they can't hardly stand it, and hate the very mention of the word. In their ignorance they will make all kinds of false accusations concerning those who teach the sovereignty of God. They have no understanding of God's sovereignty.

Omnipresence is an attribute of God and it means more than God is everywhere; He is everywhere at the same time, without multiplication, without division. That is amazing! Omnipotence is an attribute of God, which describes His power. It means He is all powerful, almighty. You have His attribute of omniscience. He is all knowing, all wise. If something takes God by surprise, the very word *surprise*, implies He did not know. To use the word surprise in reference to God is blasphemy. It is a denial of the omniscience of God. God knows everything you and I will do and He knows what we would have done had He not restrained us from doing it. He knows all.

The Bible reveals what God wants us to know. Deuteronomy 29:29, says, "*The secret [things belong] unto the LORD*" The lesson that we must learn, that we need to realize is there are things we can not explain. God knows why those things belong to Him and He does not reveal them to us for our benefit. What is revealed is a very, very small portion of God's total knowledge.

We have to have some understanding of God's attributes if we are going to understand the wrath of God.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 2

In Romans 1:17-18, mention is made of the righteousness of God and the wrath of God. The righteousness of God shows that there is a standard and that most people do not meet God's standard, which is offensive to them. The wrath of God also shows that we are accountable to the Lord.

Wrath is one of several attributes of God. You do not hear a lot about some important truths you must remember when we consider the wrath of God. I believe that in all the attributes and characteristics of God, we have to consider these two with all the other attributes of God; God is sovereign and God is Holy. He is sovereign and He is holy in everything He does. No one attribute does away with God's sovereignty or His holiness. No matter what attribute you are considering, including God's wrath, you must consider it within the realm of that fact that God is sovereign. Being sovereign means He is above and overall, He possesses all dominion, He is superior. In all of His attributes, He is sovereign, which means that God is God and has a right to display His wrath. It is the right of God.

Sovereignty means that none can defeat His councils, thwart His purposes, or overthrow His will. Sovereignty characterizes the whole being of God. It shows us that God is sovereign in the exercise of all His attributes. Most do not have any problem with "God is love". That is an attribute of God and people do not have any problem with that. But, when you speak of God's anger, God's wrath, now, they have a problem. God is sovereign in whom He loves and He is sovereign when He displays His wrath upon whomever He displays His wrath. The truth is we all deserve the wrath of God and it is His right to pour out His wrath wherever, on whomever, and whenever He pleases. He governs all, therefore He can do just as He pleases.

You take whatever other attribute you want to consider, then consider it in the light of sovereignty and holiness. Whatever diminishes or undermines the sovereignty of God, by any degree, it can not be true and there is error. If you get to thinking about an attribute and it

begins to undermine the sovereignty of God, you are thinking erroneously. When you are studying the characteristics of God, it is a good measurement to keep in mind that God is sovereign and any attribute that undermines that, you are looking at it incorrectly. Any doctrine that undermines the sovereignty of God, you are looking at it incorrectly.

No matter what attribute is under consideration, God is holy, which means God is perfect. Wrath is not a flaw in God, because God is perfect and has no flaws. You and I can display wrath and be in sin in doing so. That is not so with God, because God is holy. Every time, God displays His wrath, He does so in holiness. I would go as far as to say He does so because He is holy. He is perfectly pure, even when He displays His wrath. People will ask, "You mean when God sent the flood and killed all those people, that He was pure in doing so?" Absolutely! You have a real problem if you think He wasn't, because then you have denied God. He was sinless, He was righteous. People will say all the time, "I don't understand how God could." You need to get that thought out of your mind completely. Whatever God does, He does so out of purity and righteousness. When God destroyed the world with the flood, He was just in doing so. When God sent fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, killing all those people, He was just in doing so.

When you think about God's attributes of anger and hatred, a lot of people would like to think that He is not capable of such. They need to read their Bibles. Anger and hatred are attributes of God. The Bible teaches that God possesses hatred. "How could a loving God be hateful?" Because He is sovereign, He is holy. Whatever He does is sovereign and holy. There is a fine line between love and hatred. I do not think you can possess love without possessing hatred. If you love God, then you hate sin. If you love a child, you hate what is going to destroy that child. Where there is love, there is also hate. It is no different with God. In the attributes of His anger and hatred there is His wrath. To me, His wrath is the outward display of His anger.

The religious world surely struggles with these things, but you should not. The anger and the hatred of God are exercised in sovereignty and in holiness. They are not blots in the character of God.

When you study this wrath of God, you learn the Bible has more to say about God's wrath than most people realize. The fact of the wrath of God is stated in Romans 1:18, "*For the wrath of God*" A very important word in that statement is "of". The wrath OF God. That little word speaks of the fact that this wrath is a characteristic of God. It is the wrath OF God. That means it is a distinctive quality of God. The little word OF means that it is something that belongs to God. The wrath OF God. Wrath belongs to God.

That little preposition "of" expresses that there is a relationship between wrath and God. The religious world would like to think that those are two completely separate things. There are a bunch of verses you can read, all of which will have the word wrath referring to God in them. What those verses do is remind you that God is a God of wrath. It can not be denied.

They also show you some truths concerning this wrath of God. First of all, take that statement, "the wrath of God." It occurs throughout the word of God. Psalms 78:31, begins, "*The wrath of God*" People say, "Well, perhaps God has wrath, but He keeps that to Himself." That is not what the Bible teaches. I believe the very word wrath shows that He does not keep it to Himself. It is a display of His anger. "*The wrath of God came upon them*" He sent it by His sovereignty. It came upon them, "*.... and slew*" It killed. The wrath of God can kill.

In John 3:36, you read, "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son [meaning the unsaved.] shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. [Him refers to the one who believes not.]*" He or she is under the wrath of God. That wrath is displayed in various ways. Ephesians 5:6, says, "*Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things [Meaning because of vain words ...] cometh the wrath of God*

upon the children of disobedience." If there is disobedience there has to be a standard. The righteousness of God is the standard. The wrath is revealed against disobedience. Colossians 3:6, declares, *"For which things' [Referring back to verse 5.] sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:"* Revelations 14:10, *"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, [Again, the wrath of God.] which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; [Or, His anger.] and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angles, and the presence of the Lamb."* You see that phrase, the wrath of God several times in the book of Revelations.

You also read of the wrath of the LORD, where "LORD" means "Jehovah". All of these verses show that sometimes this wrath is displayed against His own people and sometimes it is displayed against lost man. God, because He is God, has the right to pour His wrath on whomever He pleases and He is correct in doing so.

In Numbers 11:33, you read the phrase, "the wrath of the LORD", *"And while the flesh [was] yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people,"* Wrath is something that can be kindled. As a result, *"... the LORD smote the people with a very great plague."* God still does this same thing. Not every disease or bad thing comes as the result of the wrath of God, but many do. Job, of course, would be the example of that. But many bad things do happen because of the wrath of God, the wrath of the LORD.

In 2nd Kings 22:13, reading the phrase, "the wrath of the LORD", *"... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD [Notice again, that it is kindled] that is kindled against us, because our fathers ..."* You can experience the wrath of God because of a sin of your father's, past generations. You say, 'That's not fair.' Be careful. God is sovereign and holy. As I have said before, you had better be thankful God is not fair. Because if God was fair, none of us would have a chance. To continue, *"...because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto*

all that which is written concerning us." In other words, the wrath of God, that results from the sin of past generations, can be delayed.

2nd Chronicles 12:12 says, *"And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, [God in His sovereignty has the right to send His wrath or to pull it back.] that he would not destroy [him] altogether: and also in Judah things went well."*

In 2nd Chronicles 29:8 you will read, *"Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble,"* Trouble can be because of the wrath of the LORD. Not necessarily every time you get into trouble, is it the wrath of the LORD. It could simply be a trial to test or teach. But, it could be the wrath of the Lord.

Then in 2nd Chronicles 32:26 it says, *"... so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah."* Even when the wrath of the LORD does not come, we deserve it. How thankful we ought to be when the wrath of the LORD does not come. You think of a nation, the United States, under the wrath of God. There is no doubt in my mind, none at all, that this nation is under the wrath of God. Romans 1 will prove that. It has taken a long time to get to where we are. God could have poured His wrath down at the beginning. We were deserving of such at the very beginning. Wherever you see the wrath of God, long suffering precedes it. A lot has gone on before you get to the wrath of the LORD being poured down upon us.

2nd Chronicles 36:16 goes on to say, *"But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people"* It goes without saying that God's wrath is against whoever the object of that wrath is. Notice what it says, *"... the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till [there was] no remedy."* You get to a point where there is no remedy for God's wrath.

I believe there is a line for every individual, for every nation, at which point, when you cross that line, there is no remedy. Simply put, it means you are not coming back to

God. God has a right to do that. This is where I believe we are as a nation. It is why I think people have seriously miscalculated, when they say, "All we have to do is vote different people into office." You do not understand the wrath of the LORD. I believe we have come to the point where there is no remedy. It is not going to get better. It is only going to get worse. I know that upsets people, but you would have a hard time convincing me otherwise.

In Psalms 106:40, we find, "*Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance.*" That is quite a statement. It is talking about His own people. God abhorred his own people.

There are other verses where you read that phrase, "the wrath of the LORD". I believe they prove the point that all through the scriptures you read of the wrath of God and are reminded that God is a God of wrath. While He is a God of love, He is also a God of wrath. He is sovereign and holy in His love and likewise in His wrath.

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We see in Romans 1:17-18, two realities. One is in verse 17, the righteousness of God that is revealed. Then in verse 18, there is the wrath of God, also revealed, displayed, manifested. Those two facts; the righteousness of God, the wrath of God; are offensive to lost man. The righteousness of God declares God has a standard and lost man does not like that. The wrath of God declares that man is accountable, because he comes short of God's righteousness and man does not like to think about the wrath of God.

When you look at all the things that make up God's "person", there are two attributes, His sovereignty and holiness, that you must always remember when considering the particular attributes of His wrath, His anger and His hatred. His anger and hatred are closely related and centered upon His sovereignty and His holiness. When we think of wrath or anger, we tend to give it a bad connotation. That can not be so with God. God is holy, God is perfect. When God is angry, it is perfect anger. When God pours out His wrath, which is the display of His anger, it is a perfect anger. When God hates, it is a perfect hatred. It is sovereign. That means that God has the right to be angry, He has the right to hate, He has the right to pour out His wrath, just as much as He has the right to love and choose whom He loves.

Looking at the phrase, "*the wrath of God*", that little preposition "*of*" expresses a relationship between wrath and God. Wrath belongs to God. You can find many, many verses containing the phrase, "*the wrath of God*", "*the wrath of the LORD*", "*Thy wrath*," "*His wrath*," "*My wrath*". I want to look at some of those verses, and in doing so, establish the fact of the wrath of God. Romans 1 is the display of the wrath of the LORD.

Having already studied the phrases, "*the wrath of God*" and "*the wrath of the LORD*", you begin to learn some things about God's wrath, some characteristics of it, and that God's wrath is a fact.

A lot of God's people have the notion that if God pours out His wrath upon you, all you have to do is repent and He will then withdraw that wrath. You can not prove

that from scripture, in fact we could prove otherwise. However, people use this notion as a “fire escape”. You can read where there are times when man repents and God withholds His wrath. But there are also times when man repents and God's wrath is still there. God is sovereign, God is holy, and He can display His wrath however He pleases.

Midway through Numbers 11:33, you read that phrase, *“the wrath of the LORD”*. *“... the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people,”* His wrath was kindled, not just sudden. It was kindled over a period of time. In 2nd Kings 22:13, again, about halfway through the verse you find, *“... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book,”* Because of the sin of those who went before us, our “fathers”, God's wrath can be experienced. People will say that it is not right, but God is holy and sovereign. You can not complain about God's display of His wrath.

In 2nd Chronicles 12:12, there is an example of someone repenting and God's wrath being withdrawn. *“And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not destroy [him] altogether: [Meaning completely.] and also in Judah things went well.”* Then in chapter 29:8, *“Wherefore the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble,”* Trouble is associated with wrath, which does not mean that every time there is trouble, it is an evidence of God's wrath. Nevertheless, when God does display His wrath, there is trouble. In 2nd Chronicles 32:26, you will read again of God withdrawing His wrath, restraining His wrath in the latter part of the verse. *“... the wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.”* In chapter 34:21, midway through it says, *“... for great [is] the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, [Notice, again, why.] because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD,”* You and I can sin and perhaps God's wrath is not poured down upon us. However, because of our sin, God's wrath might be poured down upon the next generation,

which some will say is not fair. But God is holy, God is perfect.

In 2nd Chronicles 36:16, in the latter part of the verse it says, *".... until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till [there was] no remedy."* Obviously there are varying degrees of God's wrath. He does not pour it out the same way every single time, nor to the same degree every single time. However, there is a degree of God's wrath for which there is no remedy, no turning back, no way to escape it, and it is going to continue on.

In Psalms 106:40, it says, *"Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people,"* Again, the word kindled is used. The wrath of God didn't just happen at once, but over a period of time. God is long suffering.

Along with the two phrases "the wrath of God" and "the wrath of the LORD", throughout the scriptures, you also find people speaking of *"Thy wrath"*, referring to God's wrath. In Exodus 15:7, it talks about the greatness of His excellency in overthrowing the Egyptians. Then you read, *".... thou sentest forth thy wrath, [which] consumed them."* There are various degrees of God's wrath, there are various displays of God's wrath. Not all the time does God's wrath consume but sometimes it does. It is "Thy wrath".

In Job 40:11, you read of *".... the rage of thy wrath:"* God's rage, which would be His anger, is connected with His Wrath. In Psalm 38:1, David is praying, *"O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath:"* We are rebuked of the LORD many times with His wrath. It ought to be our prayer that He not rebuke us in His wrath. There is a big difference in the LORD rebuking us in His wrath and rebuking us in His love. *".... neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."* The Lord's chastening has the idea of correction. While we need rebuke and correction, we ought to pray that it not be in wrath or hot displeasure, which shows a greater degree of displeasure.

In Psalms 88:7 *"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted [me] with all thy waves. Selah."* This is again, "Thy Wrath" and also indicated is a degree of God's wrath. *"Thy wrath lieth hard upon me and thou has afflicted*

me." Affliction can be a result of God's wrath, but not all affliction, as the book of Job plainly teaches, can be attributed to the wrath of God.

Psalms 89:46, *"How long, LORD? wilt thou hide thyself for ever? shall thy wrath burn like fire?"* Here you read that His wrath is manifest in that it seems God has withdrawn. This is what we have in Romans 1, this aspect of God's wrath, where there is a withdrawing of the Lord.

In Psalm 90:7, *"For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."* Again, the use of the phrase, *"Thy wrath"*. We have *"the wrath of God"*, *"the wrath of the LORD"*, and *"thy wrath"*. What you are finding by looking at all of these verses is that wrath is a fact, it is real, and it is prevalent throughout the word of God.

You also read of *"His wrath."* In Deuteronomy 29:23, in the last part of the verse says, *"... the LORD overthrew in his anger; and in his wrath:"* There is a connection between His anger and His wrath. Wherever there is God's wrath, there is God's anger as well.

In Job 16, Job says, *"He teareth [me] in his wrath,"* His wrath is sovereign, holy, and absolutely perfect. In chapter 19:11, you read, *"He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as [one of] his enemies."* This speaks of the degree of the wrath. Job felt that he had become an enemy of the Lord, or that the Lord had become his enemy. That is part of His wrath. Then in Job 20:23, *"[When] he is about to fill his belly, [God] shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him,"* Again, it says *"His wrath"* and the fury of His wrath. In verse 28, *"The increase of his house shall depart, [and his goods] shall flow away in the day of his wrath."*

Throughout the old testament, where you read of *"the day of God's wrath."* There is a special time of the wrath of God.

In Job 32:2, again, you read, *"Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu"* Elihu is giving his opinion as to why God's wrath was upon Job. His wrath was kindled because he justified himself rather than his God. In verse 3, *"...."*

against his three friends was his wrath kindled," Verse 5, "When Elihu saw that [there was] no answer in the mouth of [these] three men, then his wrath was kindled." Not God's wrath, but Elihu's wrath.

Psalm 2:5 we read, *"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,"* God speaks in His wrath. *".... and vex them in his sore displeasure."* There is a connection between displeasure and wrath. In verse 12, we are exhorted, *"Kiss the Son, [That is Jesus Christ.] lest he be angry, and ye perish [from] the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little."* Even the words "a little", tells us that there are degrees of God's wrath. Even a little of God's wrath is a very, very serious situation.

Psalms 21:9, declares, *".... the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them."* His wrath. Psalms 78:38, says, *"But he, [being] full of compassion, forgave [their] iniquity, [People do not have any problem with that.] and destroyed [them] not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, [Many times God does turn His anger away, not only from His people, but those who are not His people.] and did not stir up all his wrath."* That is the mercy of God, which is another thing to consider when you think about His wrath. Unless God completely destroys, like the world with the flood or as He did with Sodom and Gomorrah, there is always a degree of mercy in His wrath. No matter what the degree of the wrath of God that is poured out upon an individual, it is less than they deserve. There is mercy.

The Bible also has verses where God speaks of *"My Wrath"*. In all these other cases, man is speaking about God's wrath. But, many times throughout the old testament, God says, *"My wrath"*. The LORD acknowledges that wrath is a part of His character. The world does not want a God that displays wrath, but rather a god that is all loving, all approving. If that were the case, God would not be holy. But God is holy and therefore, He hates sin and He displays His wrath. In the following verses, we will see the wrath of God is real, it is a biblical fact.

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In Exodus 22:24, *"And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; [This is God speaking.] and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."* God's wrath is very serious. In chapter 32:10, God is speaking to Moses. Moses is praying for the people that God would have mercy upon them and He gives Moses this answer, *"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."* That is God's right. He has a right to give life, take life, to create, and to consume. That is entirely God's right, because He is sovereign. When He does consume, He never does so outside of His holiness. He never does anything outside of His holiness, because if He did, that would be a blemish on the character of God. If you have a blemish, then you do not have a God. God must be holy.

In Psalms 95:11, *"Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."* God is talking about a generation of the children of Israel that He swore in His wrath He would not allow them to do something.

You see that phrase "my wrath" in Isaiah and many many times throughout the book of Ezekiel as well. All of those verses that we have looked at here, declare this fact; wrath belongs to God. Wrath is an attribute of God.

In Romans 1:18 Paul speaks of the wrath of God. Then after he mentioned it there in verse 18, he goes on to mention it ten more times in the book of Romans. In Romans 2:5, *"But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath [What a scary thing, to treasure up unto yourself, wrath.] against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;"* God's judgment, which also can be a display of His wrath, an aspect of His wrath, is always righteous. In verse 8, *"But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,"* You can go on throughout the book of Romans, and you see this wrath of God.

Wrath is an attribute of God, just as much as any

other attribute. In fact, if wrath did not belong to God, that would be a blemish upon His person. If God was void of wrath, void of anger, void of hatred, it would mean that He would be indifferent towards sin. That would be a blemish upon His holiness. God can not be indifferent toward sin, even the sin of you and I that are saved, which is sin that has been forgiven, God has not been indifferent toward that sin. He displayed His wrath upon His son for that sin. Wrath is an absolute necessity to God. If He did not possess wrath, then He would be indifferent towards sin.

There is such a thing as the severity of God. He is infinitely holy and therefore possesses severity. Romans 11:22 says, "*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: [The goodness and the severity of God are two different things entirely.] on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness,*" Here you read of severity and goodness being applied to different groups. Note also that goodness is grace, or to use a different word, mercy.

Hebrews 12:29 declares, "*For our God [is] a consuming fire.*" The Bible teaches God is love, but also teaches that God is a consuming fire, which means that God is a God of anger and displeasure, a God of wrath. We read in the latter part of Hebrews 10, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, speaking of God's wrath, of God's severity.

We have a great God and should never deny a single one of His attributes. God's wrath is real, it is a fact, and it belongs to Him. Whenever we see His wrath displayed, it is absolutely free from sin because God is holy, and He has the right to pour down His wrath wherever and upon whomever He pleases.

When studying the subject of the wrath of God mentioned in Romans 1:18, you will learn throughout the scriptures that wrath is attributed to God. You can read the phrases, *"the wrath of God"* and *"the wrath of the LORD"*. There are verses with God's people referring to *"Thy wrath"*, *"His wrath"*, and then verses where God is saying, *"My wrath"*.

Paul writes in Romans 1:16-17 of the Gospel, which is the solution or the remedy for what follows in verses 18-32. After Paul mentions the wrath of God in Romans 1:18, he goes on to mention it about ten more times throughout the book of Romans. Without a doubt, wrath is an attribute, a characteristic of God, as much as any other attribute. People have a tendency to select certain attributes and dwell on those. We ought to dwell on all the attributes of God.

When you consider His wrath, you need to realize it is not like the wrath of man. Because God is holy, everything He does in all of His attributes is holy and perfect. The truth is if wrath did not belong to God, it would be a blemish upon His person, a blemish on His holiness. God's wrath tells us that He can not be indifferent towards sin. When He forgives us of our sin, He is not indifferent towards sin. Jesus Christ had to pay the price of those sins because God is *not* indifferent towards sin.

There is the goodness and the severity of God. He is infinitely holy and therefore He possesses a severity towards sin. Romans 11:22, says, *"Behold therefore the goodness [A lot of people would like to stop right here, but it goes on ...] and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness,"* The only reason severity does not fall upon us is because God is gracious and merciful. Instead of severity falling upon us, goodness is bestowed upon us. That's grace.

It is stated in Hebrews 12:29, *"For our God is a consuming fire."* God as a consuming power speaks of His wrath, His sovereignty. He can consume whomever, whenever He wants to. Our God is a consuming fire and He

hates sin, but He is also long suffering. He does not strike with His severity the very moment a person sins. He is long suffering. That is part of His goodness.

What is the wrath of God? In studying the scriptures you can establish that wrath belongs to God. You would have to deny a lot of scripture to deny the wrath of God. Romans 1:18, says God's wrath is revealed from heaven. It is not something that God keeps within Himself, but rather He reveals, or unveils it, and it is made known.

People fail to see, or to recognize, when God pours down His wrath. There are times when you and I have seen His wrath is very obvious. There are things that happen all over the world, which to me are very obviously the wrath of God. However, news casters as well as religious people will immediately dismiss it, saying that God had nothing to do with it. God has everything to do with something like that.

The wrath of God is displayed. The fact that God possesses wrath and He manifests it, that it is exhibited, was first revealed when He cast Lucifer and a third of the angels out of heaven. That was the wrath of God. The religious world does not have too much problem with accepting God's wrath upon Lucifer and the fallen angels. The next display would be in the garden of Eden.

God displays His wrath, but what is this wrath? It has a lot to do with His holiness. It is His holiness that causes Him to hate sin, and the wrath of God is the holiness of God stirred against sin.

When you consider God's wrath, there are some other attributes that must be included in it. Though these attributes are mentioned with and are part of the wrath of God, I believe they are also separate. One such attribute that is part of God's wrath is anger. When you think of anger, you might think of someone losing their temper. That is not how you view anger when it comes to God. God is holy, God is perfect, and God never, ever loses control of Himself. Could you imagine if God were to lose control of His anger? Nothing would be left. Yet, anger is part of God's wrath.

Throughout scripture, you read of anger and wrath

being attributed to God, and sometimes they signify the same thing. However, most of the time anger and wrath are distinguished from each other. It seems to me when you study the subjects of God's anger and wrath, wrath is the display of His anger. To humans like you and I, anger is a feeling and our wrath is the display of that feeling. But, because God is holy, He hates sin, He is angry at sin, and His wrath is the display of His anger, His hatred of sin. The religious world does not want to think of anger and God, but they would have to deny a lot of scripture to deny that God possesses anger. It is a part of His character and centers around His holiness and His sovereignty.

The word of God attributes anger to God, which is anger toward the wicked, as well as His own people. You read in Job 9:13, "*[If] God will not withdraw his anger,*" This verse plainly says it is His anger, God's anger. God is in control of it and can withdraw His anger. That's His prerogative. He is sovereign.

In Psalm 7:11, "*God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry [with the wicked] every day.*" Here you read that God is angry with the wicked everyday. God is eternal, yet everyday, God is angry. You had better rejoice that He is long suffering, because everyday God is angry with the wicked. Nevertheless, that same God sends rain on the crops of the wicked and supplies the needs of the wicked. Still, God is angry with the wicked everyday. What else can "God is angry with the wicked everyday" mean? Some will say that does not mean what it says. Well, what does it mean if it does not mean that God is angry with the wicked everyday?

In Psalm 21:8-9, the psalmist, talking to God, says, "*Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them [Referring to His enemies, those that hate Him.] as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: [God is angry everyday, but now we see a time of His anger, which would be the display of His anger, His wrath.] the LORD shall swallow them up [That is the display of His anger, His wrath.] in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.*" From these verses, you

learn there is a **time** of God's anger. He is angry with the wicked everyday. There is not a time when he is not angry with the wicked. But this **time** of God's anger in Psalm 21:8-9, is the display of His anger.

Man takes advantage of the long suffering of God. Man, as well as God's people will say, "Well, if I was wrong, God would have stopped me right then." You do not understand God at all if you believe that. God does not stop us immediately every time we get out of line. That is not how God operates. People misunderstand the long suffering of God, thinking it is God's approval upon that which is wrong. God is holy, He does not approve of wrong.

Psalms 76:7, *"Thou, [even] thou, [art] to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?"* Again, God's angry everyday, and this verse is obviously talking about the display of His anger. It is equating anger with wrath, when God is angry.

Psalms 78:49-51, *"He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger; [This shows degrees of anger. The psalmist lumps several things together.] wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels [among them]. [Those are evil spirits He sends among them.] He made a way to his anger; [He displayed His anger.] he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence; And smote all the firstborn in Egypt;"* That was the anger of God, the wrath of God. People say, "Well the first born seems to be the innocent party." There is no innocent party before God. "Why would God strike the first born?" God is sovereign and can do whatever He pleases. That includes the display of His anger. It was God's anger that, *".... smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of [their] strength in the tabernacles of Ham:"*

In Psalms 90:7, the psalmist is referring to God's people, *"For we are consumed [Not outwardly, of course.] by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."* Consumed and troubled by the anger and wrath of God. Verse 11, *"Who knoweth the power of thine anger?"* You and I have no experience with perfect holiness. We can not fully

comprehend the anger of perfect holiness against sin. Who can stand, who can know the power of His anger. God does not always display the power of His anger. "... *even according to thy fear, [so is] thy wrath.*"

You read in Psalms 103:8, "*The LORD [is] merciful and gracious, [People do not have a problem with that part.] slow to anger, [He is angry with the wicked everyday, so this is a display of His anger.] and plenteous in mercy.*" Because He is merciful, because He is gracious, He is slow to anger, which means He is long suffering, also implies there is a point, which is God's prerogative, as to when He displays His anger. To put it another way, you might be able to go further in sin before God strikes. That is God's prerogative.

Look at Jeremiah 7:20. "*Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, [The fury of His anger being poured out is the display of anger, which is wrath. There is a connection between anger and wrath.] upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.*" That is the wrath of God.

When there is a tornado, a hurricane, an earthquake, or a volcano eruption, you wonder if that is a direct result of the wrath of God. I do not know. Many times, without a doubt it is. Sometimes it may not be. You can not dismiss God's wrath when He brings devastation. It can not be dismissed.

In Nahum 1:3 you find, "*The LORD [is] slow to anger, and great in power, [Power is in the context of His anger. God is almighty and anger is an attribute of God.] and will not at all acquit [the wicked]: the LORD [hath] his way in the whirlwind [Whirlwind refers to a destructive wind. God has His way and reasons for sending the whirlwind.] and in the storm, and the clouds [are] the dust of his feet.*" We see God's anger in this verse.

From these verses, it seems like wrath is the display of God's anger. So, what is anger? Anger is the stirring of resentful displeasure. Strong antagonism comes by a sense

of injury or insult. God's holiness is insulted by sin. Being insulted, there is a stirring of God's anger. Mankind gets angry if they are insulted or feel they have been slighted. You get angered. You may not always display that anger, which would be your wrath. You get the stirring of displeasure.

Deuteronomy 29:23, you can read of God's anger and His wrath in the context of the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. When God destroys a place, bringing desolation and destruction, that could very well be the wrath of God. God was angry with Sodom and Gomorrah and the overthrow was the outward display of His anger. God was long suffering toward Sodom and Gomorrah, in that He was slow to anger and slow to display His anger, even though all the while, He never approved of what was going on in those cities. Because God is long suffering, people begin to think that everything is fine, that God sees nothing wrong with what is happening. ***Do not forget, God is angry with the wicked everyday.*** That is why it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It ought to cause great fear to think that God is angry with us. That is not something we ought to dismiss lightly. People get upset if they think that a person is angry with them. It is upsetting. But, to think that God might be angry with you and I ought to cause great concern in our souls. Thankfully, God is slow, God is long suffering, in displaying His anger.

People today want a god that lets them do whatever they please, is pleased with whatever they do, and approves of everything they do and think. That is not the God of scripture of the BIBLE. He is angry with the wicked everyday, eventually displaying that anger, **always** in complete control. God can send a storm that will cause great chaos, uprooting thousands of lives. Everything seems out of control, but He is in perfect control. Whatever destructive force God sends, is just a small part of what He can do. People say, "I've never seen it this bad." It can be worse. God's wrath is just a small display of what He can do. God sends those things just to remind us just how powerful He is.

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As you work through a study of the wrath of God you learn that it is the display of some of God's attributes. Romans 1:18 shows that His wrath is something that is displayed, or unveiled. God's anger is one of His attributes which is part of His wrath. You can not separate God's wrath and God's anger.

His anger is not like man's. There is no taint, no sin in His anger. It is a holy anger, and when you think of God's anger, you must put it in the context of God's holiness. His anger is the holiness of God stirred against sin. God's anger is the stirring of resentful displeasure, or strong antagonism displayed by God towards sin.

The Bible seems to speak of various degrees of God's anger, just as there are various degrees of our anger. In Deuteronomy 29:23, in the latter part of the verse, where it is taking about the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, it says, "*... the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:*" The *overthrow* was an outward display and something everyone could see. The context of this display is in verse 24, where you read, "*Even all nations shall say, [Meaning having seen this overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, they shall say the following about it.] Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what [meaneth] the heat [Or the intensity, the fervor.] of this great anger?*" The words "heat" and "great" show a degree or intensity of His anger.

In Isaiah 30:30, take note of the phrases in this verse, "*... the lighting down of his arm,*" and "*[with] the flame of a devouring fire, [with] scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.*" All of that is the manifestation of what Isaiah says between those two phrases, "*... the indignation, [Meaning the contempt, the disgust, the abhorrence.] of [his] anger,*" With God's anger, there is contempt, there is disgust, and there is abhorrence. If a sin disgusts you and I, which it should, think of the degree of disgust of a perfect holy God. Isaiah 42:25, tells of God's anger towards Israel due to their sin, "*... the fury of his anger,*" **Fury** means

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the outrage of God's anger.

From these verses, you can understand that God's wrath appears to be the display of His anger. The adjectives used to describe His anger are, the heat, the intensity, the fervor of His anger. You know how your anger is intensified when mankind talks about killing the unborn. Can you imagine the heat, the intensity, the fervor in the anger of God when people put their stamp of approval upon abominations like homosexuality. Oh, the intensity and the fervor of God's anger. He does not display it all the time, but His anger is there. Then you read of the indignation, the contempt and the disgust of His anger, as well as the fury, the outrage of His anger. God's wrath is the display of His anger.

You know the wrath of God is unveiled against sin. God's wrath is the outward result of His anger, resulting in His judgment upon man. That's why all through the Bible we see wrath and anger. The Bible makes it very clear that wrath is a prerogative of God and something that He displays upon His enemies, His people, and nations. He has always done this, ever since Adam and Eve and before, when He cast Lucifer and the fallen angels out of heaven. You should also know that the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah in His anger and His wrath, along with the fury or the heat of this great anger. Fury and great anger of God should be a fearful thing for all of creation. Hebrews tells us that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Our God is a consuming fire.

In 2nd Kings 22:17, it says, "*Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger ...*" They may not knowingly be provoking God to anger, but it is a very dangerous thing to provoke God to anger. "*... with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched.*" There was no longer a remedy. At the point where God displayed His wrath, there was no turning back. It was too late to say,

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“Sorry.” Even though people will say that God is long suffering, there is a point when that long suffering ceases.

Then, you read in 2nd Kings 23:26, *“Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath,”* There are times when the LORD turns from His wrath, because He is long suffering. However, this verse tell us that He turned not. Many times, those that profess salvation, have this idea that if they repent after God starts what they see as punishment, He of course, has to stop His wrath. That is utterly false. The verse goes on to say, *“... wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, [That is against His own people.] because of all the provocations”* This verse shows the long suffering of God. His anger was not the result of just one sin. There were many, many provocations. You can be assured when God does pour His wrath down, it is not because of just one sin. There have been and are many provocations leading up to the display of the wrath of God.

Many that profess Christ and as a nation, think all we have to do is start to pray and God will turn His wrath from us. You will not see evidence of that in the scriptures. People and nations reach a point when God is not going to turn back His wrath. I believe that is what you have in Romans 1. In 2nd Chronicles 34:25, you read, *“Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, [His own people] that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched.”* Man will not escape this pouring out of the wrath of God.

Psalms 21:7, says, *“Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them.”* There is the destroying wrath of God. Sodom and Gomorrah, the flood, old testament history, world history, and the happenings in our own time show many, many examples of the destroying wrath of God. In Psalm 90:7, we read, *“For we are consumed by thine anger; and by thy wrath are we*

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troubled." Wrath can cause great trouble.

There is the fury and anger of the wrath of God. In Jeremiah 21:5 you will find, *"And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath."* Here is the fury and the anger, His displeasure, seen in His wrath. God can be displeased and still bless in spite of His displeasure, because He is long suffering. When He does that, it is a magnification of His long suffering and NOT His stamp of approval on whatever it is that is causing His displeasure. Psalms 2:5 says, *"Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure."* In Psalms 38:1 you read, *"O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."* You also find in this verse there are degrees in His displeasure just as there is with you and I. We see that in the use of the word, "hot" displeasure.

The Bible attributes anger to God. When God displays that anger, it is His wrath. I do not believe God's wrath is in the category of His attributes, but rather it is the display of some of His attributes. It is a display of His holiness, His anger, and His hatred, which are attributed to Him. People will say, "How can a loving God hate?" I have some news for such people; wherever there is love, there is hate. It is comparable to the two sides of a coin. You love somebody and you hate everything that is going to harm that individual. You have love and hate together.

The very fact that God is a God of love, means that He also has hate, but it is not like man's hate. God's hatred is a perfect hatred, in which there is no taint, no misreading, no misjudgment on the part of God, no prejudice. It is a perfect hatred. In Psalms 5:5 you will read, *"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."* You know many times the foolish stand in the sight of God and He blesses them in spite of what they do, who they are. However, at the end of it all, the foolish shall

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not stand in God's sight. In verse 6, it says, *"Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man."* These verses show the hatred and the abhorrence of God.

In Zechariah 8:17, you find, *"And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these [are things] that I hate, saith the LORD."* In Malachi 1:2, he makes reference to Esau and Jacob, which takes you to Romans 9, where you learn that God hated Esau, and God loved Jacob.

Hatred is a part of God's wrath. God hates sin wherever it is and He *does* pour His wrath down upon sin. To hate is to loathe, to detest, to abhor as well as a hostility, enmity, and contempt. God has anger and He has hate. Is God only angry with those that He hates? No, because you have already read that God can be angry toward His people, but He does not hate them. It is just like you being angry towards someone that you love. But, it is also of the utmost importance that you realize God's anger, God's hatred is flawless, impeccable, pure.

It is said of Christ in Hebrews 1:9, *"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; ..."* You can not love righteousness and not hate its opposite. If you do not hate its opposite, you do not love righteousness. God loves righteousness, and you and I are to love righteousness. Because God loves righteousness, He hates unrighteousness. He hates unrighteousness wherever it is found, in whomever it is found and so should you and I. All the people today, including God's people, are trying to figure out some way to accept unrighteousness. If you love righteousness, you hate, and you are not looking for a way to accept unrighteousness and bring it into the culture.

Make no mistake, God is a God of anger and of hatred, but His is a holy anger, a holy hatred. God's unveiling, the display of His hatred and anger is His wrath. The different degrees and aspects of His wrath means you

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can not put it in a single "box". Failure to understand these differences causes people to think this nation, culture, and society are not already under the wrath of God. Just as His love, grace, and mercy are real, so is His wrath real.

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Many scriptures as well as Romans 1:18-32 establish the fact of the wrath of the LORD and that it is one of His attributes as much as any of the others. His sovereignty and His holiness completely describe God's person and His wrath is centered upon them. God's wrath includes several things that man finds inconceivable of God; anger, indignation, and hatred. Indignation is God's displeasure. God is not pleased with everything. He is displeased with anything that is contrary to Him, contrary to His person. Also, it is declared in the word of God that God hates. I have said before, people do not have a problem with God loving, but as there is love in God, there is also hate. It is just the other side of "the coin", so to speak.

Just as wrath, anger, indignation, and hatred are attributed to God, so is vengeance. Vengeance simply means revenge, retribution, retaliation. But, you must remember to consider vengeance in the context of God's holiness. God **IS** a God of vengeance, but it is a holy and perfect vengeance.

There are many verses in the BIBLE that tell of God's vengeance. In Deuteronomy 32:35 you read, "*To me [belongeth] vengeance, and recompence; [That is one truth. The following is another.] their foot shall slide in [due] time: [In due time means when God is ready and it is related to His vengeance.] for the day of their calamity [is] at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.*" Then in verse 41 it says, "*If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.*" He will reward them with retribution. In verse 43, "*Rejoice, O ye nations, [with] his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, [and] to his people.*" In the same sentence, you have God's vengeance, and God's mercy. From verse 35, you learn, when God is ready, He will exercise these things. We must never lose sight of that fact.

Psalms 94:1, "*O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; [Vengeance belongs to God. The psalmist repeats*

that statement.] *O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.*" In the context of vengeance, he is asking God to judge. That is made even more clear in the following verse, Psalms 99:8, *"Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions."* Here again, we see God's vengeance, His mercy, and grace. He shows vengeance, and on the very same ones, He also forgives.

Isaiah 35:4, *"Say to them [that are] of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come [with] vengeance, [God will come with a vengeance.] [even] God [with] a recompence; [For His people.] he will come and save you."* He does that many times by taking vengeance upon His enemies.

Isaiah 47:3 *"Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet [thee as] a man."* You could go throughout the old testament and find many more verses that show vengeance belongs to God.

In the new testament, in Romans 3:5, *"But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? [Is] God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? ..."* In other words, is God wrong in taking vengeance? No. God is holy and every thing He does is holy.

Romans 12:19, *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."* Vengeance does not belong to us, it belongs to God. It is not a blot upon His character.

Another thing that you have to include in God's wrath is His justice, which is another attribute. True justice demands wrath. There is no true justice if there is no wrath. The fact that wrath belongs to God, is because God is just. We have no right to murmur or complain when God takes vengeance and no right to judge how He does so, and upon whom He takes vengeance.

The justice of God is plainly established in the word

of God. In Genesis 18:25, we read, *"That be far from thee to do after this manner; to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* We have no grounds, no right to question the vengeance of God, the wrath of God, because God does what is right. This is what man does not understand when things happen that they can not explain. Disasters happen that they can not explain, and some preacher will get on the news and say, "Well, we know one thing, God didn't have anything to do with this." Who did, then? We know He rules everything.

In Deuteronomy 32:4, *"[He is] the Rock, his work [is] perfect: for all his ways [are] judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right [is] he."* Romans 2:2, *"But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things."* The justice of God makes it impossible for God to let sin go unpunished. It was the justice and the holiness of God that made it necessary for Christ to die in the place and instead of sinners. God does not overlook our sins. God is just, a God of justice. Sin must be punished. For you and I who are saved, it was punished in Christ in our stead. God's justice is inflexible. He never sets aside His justice. This is a part of His wrath.

It must always be remembered that God's wrath, anger, hatred, vengeance, indignation, displeasure, and justice is always consistent with His sovereignty. He has the right to do these because He is God. It is always consistent with His holiness. You read in Deuteronomy 32:39-41, *"See now that I, [even] I, [am] he, and [there is] no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; [People do not have a problem with God making alive, but He says, 'I kill as well'.] I wound, and I heal: [We see that He is contrasting death and life, wounding and healing. His hand is in both.] neither [is there any] that can deliver out of my hand. [This is His sovereignty, His omnipotence.] For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword,*

and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me." He is God in all of that.

You never have to explain God. Do not fall into the trap where you feel you have to explain God to the ungodly, where you have to almost apologize for what God is doing. The wrath of God is just as much of divine perfection as any of His other attributes.

It should be very plain by now that the wrath of God is established by scripture. That raises the question, "What is the object of God's wrath?" What is it that God pours His wrath upon? If God so desired, He could pour His wrath on any imperfection in any of us and He would still be holy, because our imperfection is contrary to Him. Because God is gracious and merciful, He does not do that, and we are thankful that He does not. Romans 1 says, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven "against", but be sure of this; God does not reveal His wrath, show His wrath, pour down His wrath upon everything He could. None of us would be here if that were the case. That is where God's grace and mercy come in.

The wrath of God is a display of His detestation and abhorrence of everything that is contrary to Him. It is stated in Romans 1:18, *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against [Or upon] all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"* From this verse you learn God's wrath is **revealed** and it is **against** three things; ungodliness, unrighteousness (which means there is a difference between ungodliness and unrighteousness), and against men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Paul then goes on in the following verses to dwell upon these three things.

Taking the word *ungodliness*, the prefix, "un", explains, or defines the word. The prefix "un" means "not", it means the reverse of something. So, what is *ungodliness*? It is "not godliness". *Ungodliness* is the reverse of godliness. Everyone knows that. Ungodliness is to be

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deprived of godliness. Everyone knows, ungodliness is the reverse of godliness and *UNrighteousness* is the reverse of that which is right.

God's wrath is revealed against ungodliness. In order to fully understand the word, you have to understand the meaning of godliness. Ungodliness is not godliness. You have to understand also that these three objects of God's wrath; ungodliness, unrighteousness, and men who hold the truth in unrighteousness; are a summary of what the wrath of God is revealed against.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 7

Romans 1:18, says, "... *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven*" That has been so since the fall of Adam and Eve. His wrath is always being revealed somewhere. Throughout the scriptures, many, many, many times, wrath is attributed to God. It is a truth that the world does not like or wants to think about. God's wrath is something that is revealed, manifested, and displayed. It is the display of His detestation and abhorrence of that which is contrary to His person.

I started into the topic of *the objects of God's wrath* in the last lesson. Romans 1:18, says, "... *against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*" This verse shows the objects of God's wrath are threefold. There is ungodliness and there is unrighteousness. Most people make those two the same, however, they are not the same all through scriptures. Lastly, there are those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

In the last lesson, we looked at ungodliness. Ungodliness is the reverse of godliness. Godliness is reverence while ungodliness is irreverence. Godliness is devotion towards God. Ungodliness is just the opposite. Godliness is inward as is ungodliness. Godliness is an attitude that involves God, an attitude toward God. Ungodliness is an attitude toward God as well. Godliness is the occupation of the heart with God. Ungodliness is, basically, oblivion to God. All ungodliness, which includes the absence of reverence and devotion toward God, goes even further to a contempt and disregard for God. It is really an attitude of disagreement with God, a reaction against God.

It is this ungodliness that is within men, that feeds the wicked activities of men, which leads us to unrighteousness. God displays His wrath against the inward ungodliness of mankind, which always displays itself in unrighteousness. To be right with God is to be in accord with God, to be in accord with God's standard, in accord with God Himself. Unrighteousness is just the opposite of that. Unrighteousness is anti right, against, opposed to what is right.

Unrighteousness shows itself in deeds. 1st John 5:17, summarized all unrighteousness as sin. It is a part of ungodliness and the result of ungodliness.

Notice in 2nd Thessalonians 2:10, "*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness*" Unrighteousness deceives. There are those who commit unrighteous acts, are guilty of unrighteousness, that are so deceived they think it is right. They see nothing wrong and are very quick to defend, or try to defend, their unrighteousness. That is why they will say, "Well, so and so is doing it." Or, "Well, there's nothing wrong with it." They have already convinced or are trying to convince themselves of that. Unrighteousness is our deeds. It stems from ungodliness. God reveals His wrath against ungodliness and against unrighteousness. Unrighteousness is really a progression of ungodliness.

We now come to the third object of God's wrath, which is those "*who hold the truth in unrighteousness.*" Most would read that and say, "They believe unrighteousness to be truth." While that is true, that is not what is exactly being said here. "*They **hold** the truth **in** unrighteousness.*" The key to understanding that phrase is to understand *hold*. They **hold** the truth in unrighteousness. *Hold* is a verb. It is something they do. They are ungodly, therefore, they commit unrighteous acts. However, they do something else. They *hold* the truth. Since *hold* is a verb, *hold* is an action concerning the noun *truth*. *Hold* explains what they do to the *truth*.

We will show here the word *hold* can mean to suppress. Men *suppress* the truth in unrighteousness. In their unrighteous deeds, they suppress the truth. They do something to the truth and they do it in unrighteousness. The word *hold* means to hinder. For example, a child wants to cross the street, and you *hold* them, you *hinder* them from crossing the street. Mankind hinders the truth. How do they do that? In unrighteousness.

Hold also means to hold back. In Luke 4:42, it is used in that sense of "hold back", where it says, "*And when it*

*was day, he [Jesus] departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, [The very same word translated **stayed** is translated **hold** in Romans 1.] that he should not depart from them." They suppressed Him.*

In 2nd Thessalonians 2, you read some things concerning the Spirit and the Antichrist. The writer is talking about the day of the Lord, the day of Jesus Christ being at hand. I believe he is referring to the tribulation period. Verse 3 and 4 say that the man of sin will be revealed, the son of perdition, which is the Antichrist, "*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;*" Then in verse 6, referring to the Holy Spirit, "*And now ye know what withholdeth [the very same word translated **hold** in Romans 1, meaning suppresses, hinders, restrains.] that he might be revealed in his time.*" I believe the Antichrist is alive today. What keeps him from just doing what he will? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit withholds so that he can be revealed in his time. Continuing in verses 7 and 8, "*For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: [It is presently working.] only he who now letteth [This is same word again.] [will let], [Will restrain.] until he [Meaning the one who lets, who restrains.] be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume*"

This word *hold* in Romans 1, talking about those who hold, suppress, hinder, hold back the truth, these people hate truth. They seek to suppress it. They do so in their unrighteousness. When people speak of the liberals, or any group, for that matter, they will ask, "Why do they have to push their unrighteousness on an entire society? Why can't they just live their life and leave us alone?" That is not their nature. They suppress the truth. It is not just that they want to do what is unrighteous, they want to hold back that which is righteous.

That is why, for example, the homosexual crowd says, "All we want is to be free to marry our boyfriend or

whatever." But, that is not all they want. People in that crowd begin to look at a man and woman who are married as wrong, as not natural. They say, "It's wrong." What are they doing? They are suppressing truth. They are attempting to hold back truth. That is why they pass the laws that they pass. They hold the truth in unrighteousness. What is true is what they view as truth is unrighteous. However, this verse says more than that. They hold back the truth in unrighteousness. They do something to truth. They have an activity towards truth. They hold it back, they suppress it. They pass the laws they pass to suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

In the last several years, this crowd has become unglued, unhinged. They are openly displaying what has always been there, and it is very obvious they are not going to leave us alone. Their reasoning is because truth is an enemy to them. Those who believe truth is an enemy, are going to do everything in their power to suppress truth. Why is it that? Any idiot, (for lack of a better word), with the most ungodly thought process, can speak on a college campus, but someone who believes the truth can not. What are they doing? They are suppressing truth in unrighteousness. At the same time, they will speak of free speech. You say, "They don't believe in free speech." They do, but just for them. It is part of suppressing the truth. "You shut-up. We can't have you speaking." They suppress truth.

There are three objects of God's wrath. I believe they are progressive in nature. Ungodliness leads to unrighteous activity. This advances to the degree that they begin to suppress truth. It's a cycle. The ungodliness increases, the unrighteousness increases, and the desire to suppress truth increases. It is amazing when these people will say, "Why can't we just have an open discussion?" They want no such thing. They do not want to hear what you have to say. Their only desire is to suppress truth. Ungodliness, unrighteousness, suppression, is a cycle, a progression.

In viewing just the objects of God's wrath in Romans 1:18, you learn of the details of that cycle and how it works as you get further into Romans 1. Ungodliness is a wrong attitude that manifests itself in unrighteousness, or wrong actions. The unrighteous actions proceed from the ungodliness or the wrong attitudes. As they take their course, both of these end up in a suppression of truth.

The wrath of God is revealed against these three things. Since they are progressive, so is the wrath of God. That is basically what Romans 1, illustrates. Not only is sin progressive, but God's wrath is progressive, as well.

The subject of Romans 1 is the wrath of God and what the objects of that wrath are. Before going more into the study of Romans 1, it's important to understand the different aspects of the wrath of God. I believe there are a lot of God's people that do not understand there are different aspects of God's wrath. A tornado comes through a town and wipes it out. People will say, "That's God's wrath." It very well could be and probably is. But, that is not the only way God displays His wrath. God's wrath is displayed all around us. Everything that is happening today is the result of the wrath of God. It is a result of man's sin and God pouring His wrath down upon him because of that sin.

Throughout the word of God we read of different aspects of the wrath of God. There is the eternal wrath of God. When God takes an unsaved soul out of this world and casts it into hell, that is the eternal wrath of the LORD. It is the highest degree of God's wrath. The subject of hell is something that has been lost today, but it is just as real as heaven. Hell was created by God and God knew who would go there when He created it. I asked an arminian about that one time and he said, "God doesn't want anybody to go to hell." I asked, "Who created hell?" He had to give it some thought, because I knew he was thinking that Satan created it. Then he realized God did. I asked, "Does God know everything?" "Of course." "Did He know who He was creating hell for?" "Oh no, I'm not going there." It is just

logic. God created hell and He knew who was going there when he created it. Don't say God doesn't want anybody to go to hell. If He didn't, He wouldn't have a hell.

Matthew 3:7, says, *"But when he [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* He is talking about eternal wrath, he is talking about hell. In Luke 12:5, *"But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."* That is not the devil. The devil does not cast anyone into hell. He is talking about God, fearing God. He can cast your soul into hell. If you are unsaved, may I tell you today, He could do that at any time.

Someone just this last week made a statement that those who have not heard the word of God go to heaven. That is heresy. I said to them, "Think about that. If that is so, if they never hear the gospel, they go to heaven, then the cruelest thing you can do to an individual is tell them the gospel." That is the most cruel thing you could ever do. But, of course, that is insanity.

2nd Corinthians 5:11, we read, *"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."* Again, there is the eternal wrath of God. That is hell. That is only one aspect of God's wrath. There are other aspects of God's wrath which will be covered in the coming lessons.

It is so important to know the different aspects of the wrath of God as you study Romans 1. The last lesson was closed out with learning there is the eternal wrath of God. That is the final wrath of the Lord. There is also what I would call, the eschatological wrath of God, the wrath of God in the end times, which means the tribulation period. God manifests a different degree of His wrath during the tribulation period. Beginning with Revelation chapter 6 the record of the judgments begins. All through Revelation you read of God's wrath and you find those words, "*the wrath of God.*" That aspect of God's wrath is in the future, just as God's eternal wrath for those who are alive is yet future.

Take notice that what happens during the tribulation period has never been experienced to the degree that is revealed in Revelation 6. Revelation 6:16 says, "*And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*" Jesus Christ is called the Lamb of God throughout the book of Revelation, however it is a different picture of Him, from a different viewpoint. When you think of a lamb, you do not think of wrath, but that is how Jesus is presented in Revelation. "*The wrath of the Lamb.*" Then in verse 17, "*For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*" Who shall be able to flee, to survive this wrath of the Lamb?

Revelation 11:18, "*And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come,*" These things are in the future. They are coming, but not for you and I that are saved. We will not be in this tribulation period, this time of wrath, but many will be. Revelation 12:12, "*Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, [There is Satan's wrath as well.] because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*" The devil is aware, he does not know when Christ is coming, be he knows it isn't far off. Therefore, he becomes more enraged as well. That is why I believe demon possession is at least as high as it was when

Christ was on the earth and probably more so. Satan is so enraged and so active because his time is short. People do not identify demon possession like they should.

In Revelation 14:8, *"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."* Babylon is referring to religious institutions. In verse 10, *"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture [Meaning there is no mercy in it.] into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:"* Revelation 15:1 *"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God."* You can go through the book of Revelation and you can read that this eschatological wrath of God, this future wrath of God, that is coming.

Also revealed throughout the scriptures is the cataclysmic wrath of God. This aspect of God's wrath is revealed in storms, plagues, earthquakes, floods, famine, etc. All of those are the sign or the display of the wrath of God. Most of God's people, when they think of God's wrath, think of either His eternal wrath or this cataclysmic wrath that produces earthquakes, storms, and such. Again, all through the word of God you can read of this cataclysmic wrath. In Genesis 6:5, just prior to the flood, *"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man [was] great in the earth, and [that] every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually."* Then in verse 7, *"And the LORD said, [In the context of verse 5.] I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."* This is the cataclysmic wrath that we are discussing here. Moses is talking about the flood, of course. The flood was the result of God's wrath, the cataclysmic wrath of God.

Chapter 3 - The Wrath of God, Part 8

In Genesis 15:12-14, *"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."* Of course God is telling Abram about Israel being in Egypt. Continuing in verses 15-18, *"And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites [is] not yet full. And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, ..."* God is talking about the children of Israel going into bondage. That was God's wrath. Then He said He was going to bring them out, which was a type of salvation.

In Genesis 19:24-25, *"Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."* That was God's cataclysmic wrath. God caused fire to come down. This doesn't mean that every storm, every tornado is the wrath of God. It could be just the providential hand of God. But don't overlook that many times these things are the wrath of the Lord.

In Isaiah 1:7-10, speaking to His people, *"Your country [is] desolate, your cities [are] burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and [it is] desolate, as overthrown by strangers. [Twice "strangers" has been mentioned already.] And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage [or a hut] in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, [There is God's mercy. God was the One Who brought these things unto His*

people.] *we should have been as Sodom, [and] we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*" That was the wrath of God.

Joel 1:4-10, gives a good example of the cataclysmic wrath of God. *"That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten. Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth [are] the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast [it] away; the branches thereof are made white. Lament like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn. The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth."* It goes on and on. That is the wrath of God against God's people.

There is another aspect of God's wrath I want to focus upon. I believe, aside from the eternal wrath of God and the tribulation wrath of God, it is the most severe. This type of wrath is also revealed in the tribulation. It is the wrath of abandonment. When God leaves a people to do as they please, that is the wrath of abandonment. In other words, God says, "You're going that way. OK, go ahead." That is the wrath of the Lord. It is what we are witnessing today. People will say God's wrath is coming. Yes, it is. But, it is already here in this form of abandonment. This aspect of God's wrath is what Romans 1 is speaking of. It is declared all through Romans 1. It is so important that we understand this aspect of God's wrath and in doing so, we can almost see what is coming next. It is a cycle. It is a cycle of sin and a cycle of wrath against sin.

Throughout Romans 1, you can see the cause of God's wrath is sin. God pours His wrath upon that sin. Then

the people sin more, rebelling against God. What God did in His wrath becomes the next cause. It is an inescapable cycle outside of salvation. While God's wrath of abandonment can happen to individuals, more often in the word of God, it happens to a society, a nation, or a culture. Basically, that is what God did in the old testament, to the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel. He took His hand off and they destroyed themselves. That is God's wrath.

God's wrath of abandonment is shown in Romans 1:24, *"Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness"* They have been guilty of uncleanness, but they have hit a point where God removes His hand and says "Go ahead." God is in control the whole time and knows what is going to happen. Still, God gave them up. In verse 26, it says, *"For this cause [Which is equivalent to because.] God gave them up unto vile affections:"* Notice, there are vile affections and God pours His judgment down upon those vile affections in many different ways. Eventually those vile affections get to a point where God says, "That's it," and lets them go. The vile affections just get worse and worse and worse. They get "beyond imagination" worse. That is where we are today. Continuing in verses 26-27, *".... for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men,"* These things bring the wrath of God, but they are also the result of God's wrath of abandonment.

Notice in verse 28, *"And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,"* That is where we are today. A reprobate mind is a useless mind. *".... they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge".* I believe that knowledge is the general revelation of God that we are born with. A general revelation of God. Man did not like that and God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Now, when man is given over to a reprobate mind, he is now in a cycle that he can not escape. A nation is in a cycle they can not escape. People think, "We just need to vote new politicians into office." That will not

fix what's wrong. They're in an inescapable cycle of a reprobate mind. What does a reprobate mind produce? Reprobate things. It produces abominations. What does God do? He pours His wrath down upon abominations and those abominations are also a part of God's wrath. God gave them over.

This facet of God's wrath is when God basically turns His back upon a people, upon a nation, upon a society. He leaves them to themselves. That is worse than an earthquake, a flood, or fire coming down from heaven. For God to just let man do what he pleases, is worse than any of these other aspects of God's wrath.

This is spoken of throughout scripture. We see this very clearly in the example of Samson. Samson is an example of this wrath. God left him alone. Samson hit a point where God said, "That's it, you're on your own." When that happens, you are in a heap of trouble. More than you realize. It is bad when it happens to individuals and it is even worse when it happens to a society. In Judges 10:13, God said to His people, "*Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.*" In other words, "You have reached a point of no return. I will not deliver you. I've delivered you over and over again, but you have reached a point of no return." I believe that is where this country and the world is. Am I saying that God's not going to save anyone? No. I am not saying that at all. But, I do believe you are not going to see a major turnaround. It is not going to happen, because we are under this aspect of God's wrath.

In Psalms 81:11-12, "*But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: [The result of that....] [and] they walked in their own counsels.*" Man's own counsels will bring further destruction. Man does not like to retain God in his knowledge and his own counsels are Godless counsels, which simply leads to further wrath of God and is the result of the wrath of God. When God takes

His hand off, man is left to his own thinking and resolve, which results in more sin. The result of more sin is more of God's wrath. We are in a cycle. What a terrible, terrible cycle it is. This is also spoken of in Proverbs 1 and Hosea 4.

In Hosea 4:17, it says, "*Ephraim [is] joined to idols: let him alone.*" Leave them alone. When God leaves someone alone, there isn't anything you can do to help them. When God says, "I'm done," just let them live their life. You can not help that person. You can not help that nation, that society. People say that God's going to judge this nation, destroy this nation, because of (pick the sin.) You could pick one of many. Do you not realize that what God is doing is worse than if He would have just destroyed this land with an earthquake? It is a more severe degree of His wrath when He says, "Just let them go their own way." They will bring more sin into our society, then more and more and more.

That is why you can not even begin to imagine. People say all the time, "I would have never thought 20 years ago that we'd be here." Wait another 20, if the Lord doesn't come, it is going to keep getting worse and worse.

It is the result of sin. It is the nature of sin. It is the nature of God's wrath. If we understand the nature of sin and the nature of God's wrath, we understand what is going on and we also understand what is coming. It is very important that we understand God's wrath and the nature of sin.

The last lesson was about the aspects of God's wrath and in particular the wrath of abandonment. I believe that is what Romans 1, is addressing. It is also what I believe we are under, not as God's people, but as a nation.

In this facet of God's wrath, God turns His back on a nation, a society, a culture leaving the people to themselves. They will then do those things that bring the further wrath of God and are caught in this cycle.

We see this aspect of God's wrath throughout the scriptures. In Proverbs 1:24-33 it says, *"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. [This destruction and distress are a result of their lifestyle.] Then shall they call upon me, [They use God as a fire escape] but I will not answer; [Then, they get mad at God] they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: [Here is why God does this.] For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, [That's a horrible thing, when God leaves a people to their own way.] and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."*

This wrath of abandonment, in the context of it being upon a nation, being left to self, is seen throughout history. It is certainly seen in the biblical record. Paul said in Acts 14:16, *"Who [Speaking of God.] in times past suffered [Permitted] all nations to walk in their own ways."* The result of that is when man walks in his own ways it leads him further from God, further down the path of sin. God's wrath is revealed against all unrighteousness, against all

ungodliness. These men will try to restrain truth in their unrighteousness, and God's wrath is revealed. It is just a vicious cycle. History proves that you get to a point of no return, as a nation, as a society. Once they are in this cycle, they just keep going further and further and further from God.

My wife and I were discussing this. She said, "I can remember you preaching that 20 years ago and people came up and gave you a hard time about it." I remember that. I said that once homosexuality is accepted, bestiality follows and then the abuse of children. There is no stopping it. It just keeps going and going. I preached that at a conference 20, 25 years ago. Someone came up to me and said, "You're making homosexuality and bestiality the same thing." I was not. I was saying that the acceptance of one leads to the acceptance of the other. You accept one, you will eventually accept the other. That is the course of sin. That is how sin works. That is also how God's wrath of abandonment works.

This lesson is about a society under the abandoning wrath of God. That is where we are as a nation. It is no accident that we have been placed in this time. We need to be a witness and tell people the truth whether they want to hear it or not. They need to be told.

It is stated in Romans 1 that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. Is God presently revealing His wrath or is wrath simply on the horizon, going to be revealed? I believe it is both. As a nation, we are presently under this wrath of abandonment and there is a wrath of destruction coming. There is a cataclysmic wrath of God on the horizon.

God is presently revealing His wrath. There are very few who even realize it. All He does is let us go our own way as a nation. You see the results. Watch the political news. Listen to the politicians. What they are saying is the result of a people that has been left and given over to a reprobate mind.

The wrath of God is not simply something in the future. We have heard it preached for decades that God will

pour His wrath down upon the United States because of homosexuality. What you have to realize is that homosexuality is the result of God's wrath. It is God leaving a people, giving them over to a reprobate mind.

Homosexuality is the result of the wrath of God, which will lead to a further cataclysmic wrath of God. Yes, there is a future wrath of God coming, but do not overlook that there is a present wrath being revealed right now. We as a nation are under that wrath. We are under that abandoning wrath of God. God's wrath is present and God's wrath is coming in the future.

The consequence of God's present wrath is future wrath. That is a terrible cycle to be in. The present and future wrath of God. God's wrath is present in the form of God's abandoning wrath. As a nation and a society, we are storing up more wrath by the result of being "given over." Man goes further from God. In doing so, he is storing up the future wrath of the Lord. God's wrath is continually proceeding from heaven. God's impending wrath is on the horizon. God is going to destroy America with His wrath, but man destroys himself. God is just taking His hands off. When that happens, man destroys himself.

We learned from Romans 1, that God's wrath is real, active today, openly displayed, and from the text in Romans 1, that the consequence of man's sin is God's wrath. The two combined, man's sin and God's wrath, result in a downward spiral that there is almost no end to. It is made clear in Romans 1, that moral collapse will not only bring God's wrath, but moral collapse is the judgment of God. It is the judgment of the Lord. Each consequence of sin is a further reason or cause of God's wrath. This is the cycle.

In 1st Chronicles 12:32, concerning the tribe of Issachar, that they "... *had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do;*" It is of extreme importance that we as the people of God have an understanding of the times in which we live so that we do not get these false hopes. "We can just get this man elected and the whole

country will turn around." No it won't. Yes, there may be a reprieve, but you have to understand the cycle you are in. There is no historical evidence or biblical evidence of a nation that has gone as far away from God as we have that ever came back. Somehow, people are so self righteous they think we are the exception. No, we're not. The United States is not going to be the exception. You look all through history. Nations get into this cycle and it is over, as far as a moral nation. It is of extreme importance that we understand these times.

Every child of God uses the phrase, "We are in the last days," We know that we live in the last days, but few understand what that means. Yes, we are in the last days and they are perilous. The Bible says that in the last days evil men shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Why is that? It is a result of the wrath of God and of sin.

Man is totally depraved. Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse. Does that mean that man will become more *totally depraved*? You can't get more than total. *Man is not more sinful in his nature than he ever was. BUT, man is more sinful in his practice than he was.* The result of that is God's abandoning wrath, and God just takes His hands off. "Go ahead. Go your way. Do it your way." It would be much better for man, if God were to destroy them after going so far. But that is not how God operates every time. Sometimes He just takes His hand off and says, "Go ahead." Therefore, seducers wax worse and worse. Their sinful *practice* becomes more and more. It is all around us.

In Genesis 6 the Bible records that man's imaginations were evil continually. They just kept getting worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Men are deceivers and they themselves are deceived. That is why you can listen to someone talk or listen to a politician and you can say, "He doesn't have a clue what he's talking about." That is true, because they are deceiving and they are deceived. Two things are going on. The reasons for this are

explained in Romans 1.

We know from observation that our country, our society, our culture is becoming more and more wicked in practice. As they do, they become more and more mired in wickedness by the day. By tomorrow it will be worse. The next day it will be worse, by the day after that, worse. That is the cycle we are in.

In spite of all that, God's people are to be a remnant, a light in this cycle, and not to get caught up in that cycle. From Romans 1, God's people are able to get a better grasp of the pattern, the cycle of what is happening and why it is happening. What is made so clear in Romans 1:18-32, is cause and effect and its progression.

Our society has a generation that has no mental concept nor any "clue" about cause and effect. They do not understand the concept of, "I do this and this is going to happen." What they do is, "I do this and something happens. Now I'm mad at everyone else because they're mistreating me." Then, mom and dad come along and say, "You're right little Johnny, you're being mistreated. People don't understand you. You're special." Yeah, they're special only because they do not understand actions have consequences. We have a whole society that way.

Throughout Romans 1, cause and effect is made very clear. You read the words that show us cause and effect in Romans 1:19, we see, "*Because.*" That is showing us cause and effect. Verse 21, "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God,*" Verse 26, "*For this cause*" By the way, that means the same thing as "because." We have "because" twice and now we have "*for this cause*". You go to verse 24 and you see "*wherefore*". All of these words show us the progression of cause and effect. It is a progression in a downward spiral.

Cause and effect is also seen in the fact that there are three exchanges made in Romans 1. In verse 23, they, "... *changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man,*" In verse 25, "*Who changed*

the truth of God into a lie," You see there is an exchange made. They do away with truth and bring in lies. That exchange is going to have an effect, a result. In verse 26, it says, "*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change [They have made an exchange, they made a trade.] the natural use into that which is against nature:"* They willfully made this exchange. The progression just continues and continues.

One of the worst mistakes God's people can make is to think, "We need to try and understand *that (whatever that is).*" I don't have a problem understanding *that*. It is sin. It is not a difficult thing. What they really mean by, "We have to understand" is, "We have to learn to adapt, we have to learn to accept what they're doing." That is bologna. You never want to get in that mindset where, "I need to try and accept what God rejects." If you do that, you have now entered that cycle. You have become part of the cycle. We as God's people are never to become a part of that cycle. We are the solution to ending that cycle.