

Date : 8 Sep 2024

Theme : Making our Salvation sure

Topic : The Wrath of God

Passage : Roman 1: 16-32

Key Verse : *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness. Romans 1:18*

Introduction

The revelation of the wrath of God is essential to understanding the ways of His grace.

These days, people think that everybody is going to heaven because God is merciful and He wants everyone to be happy up there. But how do we know whether this is true? Perhaps most people hold this view because sermons preached almost always focus on the God of love; Christians also testify how they were touched by God's love.

Scripture also declares Him as the God of wrath. Nobody can head for heaven without confronting his personal sin and God's wrath against sinners.

Why is God angry with the human race?

- God's wrath is against all unrighteousness of men *Romans 1:18*

God's righteous nature undoubtedly includes love, mercy and kindness. But to be righteous and just, God must punish sin. If God fails to punish sin, He would no longer be righteous. God could not let the guilty go without judgement of man's sin against Him.

- Man's problem of rebellion and ungodliness. *Romans 1:18 - 23*

God is angry with our problem of godlessness (= living a life without acknowledgement of God), born out of a rebellious attempt to replace or ignore Him. It is to live as though He does not exist, even though we know for a fact that He does.

Because of this, we need a shield against God's wrath and His judgement. The good news is that our Lord Jesus took the hit for us while we were yet sinners. But we will not appreciate what Jesus has done if we do not know how serious our sin problem is. God's wrath and righteousness demand that we all deserve hell fire. Man does not even have the vocabulary to differentiate the subtle expressions of our sin problem. *Romans 1:26 - 32*

1. God's wrath – our greatest peril that keeps us out of heaven.

- a) What is the wrath of God?

God's wrath or anger is provoked by man's rejection of Him as Lord and Creator.

The wrath of God is completely righteous in character.

- b) Where is God's wrath directed?

God's wrath is against all ungodliness (our offenses against God) and all unrighteousness (our sins against man).

2. What have we done with God's revelation that fuelled His anger?

God's divine nature and eternal power have been revealed both in creation and within the heart and mind of man. This revelation is universal and clear for all to see, leaving man without excuse for rejecting Him. We have been created with the in-built capability to know and believe in Him.

- a) Suppressed God's truth *Romans 1:18*

We suppress the truth when we deny the plain truth of His Creator status (existence) and Lordship (His Law vs our contradiction of His Word). To support one's prior values on God's existence and Lordship, we interpret facts by selecting information to support our views, ignoring biblical information.

- b) Replaced God's Glory (= rightful place in our lives as God to be served, obeyed and worship) for corruption (= allegiance to man-made images shaped after created things). In exchanging His glory for corruption *Romans 1:23*, we become thankless, foolish, fools *Romans 1:21, 22*.

c) Exchanged God's truth (about His Glory) for the lie. *Romans 1:25 nkjv*
 (Not "a" but "the" lie. The lie is the idolatry which puts man in the place of God).

...you will be like God *Genesis 3:5*.

• Consequences *Romans 1:24 - 32*

(Dire consequences always follow rejection of Him as Lord; a mistake to think that God's mercy will override His wrath).

- Useless thoughts *verses 24 - 25* (defective reasoning)
- Shameless acts, loveless relations *verses 26 - 27*
 (lust that robs us of our dignity; vile passions = unhealthy, unholy)
- Without morals, lawless society *verses 28 - 30*
 (note the 20-odd variants of sin *verses 27 - 30*)
- Practitioners of sin, deserving death *verses 31 - 32*

3. The necessity of the gospel from God's righteous wrath.

Against such a back-drop of spiritual darkness and moral perversity, God gave mankind up to the unchecked expression of our sinful desires, to dishonouring the bodies He has made, to sexual desires in homosexual relationships, as women and men become inflamed with lust with people of their own gender.

We are all slaves to our sin and in need of deliverance from the wrath of God in judgement against us.

It is God's love that sent Christ into a world that is hurtling to hell. Christ came into our world that is under the wrath of God. We needed a shield; Jesus willingly became it. Our shield is a picture of the Lamb upon the altar of sacrifice.

So *Romans 1:16* reveals the key purpose of the book of Romans. Not to be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is God's power for salvation for everyone who believes – both Jews and non-Jews. The only way to be made righteous by God, starts and ends with faith *Romans 1:17*.

This is faith in the One who laid down His life as our Substitute.

• Why is salvation by grace through faith?

Salvation by faith means we cannot earn to merit God's forgiveness by working for it. Our Lord Jesus alone had paid the price for our redemption. Grace or favour is what God offers.

When we respond by faith to this good news, we receive eternal life. We enter into relationship with God. As long as we stay in covenant relationship with God, we have faith in Jesus as Saviour who died for us, and as our Lord whom we serve and obey.

Faith is not a one-time exercise (A one-time event in Greek grammar is called the *aorist* tense).

Biblical faith is continual tense.

Application:

Our salvation is deliverance in three phases

(Please state your salvation phase now: true / on-going / in future)

<u>FIRST PHASE</u> Salvation from PENALTY of sin	<u>Old Testament</u> Exodus (after Passover): GOING OUT FAITH	<u>New Testament</u> Romans: Justification
<u>SECOND PHASE</u> Salvation from POWER of sin	Exodus: GOING ON FAITH	Sanctification
<u>THIRD PHASE</u> Salvation from PRESENCE of sin	Joshua: GOING IN FAITH	Glorification