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# April 2017 Newsletter

## The Wrath of God:

### What Is It?

It is rare that there is anything good in human anger. Almost always it springs out of unholy states of heart, and frequently it leads to cursing and violence. The man of evil temper is unpredictable and dangerous and is usually shunned by men of peace and good will.

There is a strong tendency among religious teachers these days to disassociate anger from the divine character and to defend God by explaining away the Scriptures that relate it to Him. This is understandable, but in the light of the full revelation of God it is inexcusable.

In the first place, God need no defense. Those teachers who are forever trying to make God over in their own image might better be employed in seeking to make themselves over in the image of God. In the Scriptures "God spake all these words" (Exodus 20:1), and there is no independent criterion by which we can judge

the revelation God there makes concerning Himself.

The present refusal of so many to accept the doctrine of the wrath of God is part of a larger pattern of unbelief that begins with doubt concerning the veracity of the Christian Scriptures.

Let man question the inspiration of the Scriptures and a curious, even monstrous, inversion takes place: thereafter he judges the Word instead of letting the Word judge him; he determines what the Word should teach instead of permitting it to determine what he should believe; he edits, amends, strikes out, adds at his pleasure; but always he sits above the Word and makes it amenable to him instead of kneeling before God and becoming amenable to the Word.

The tender-minded interpreter who seeks to shield God from the implications of His own Word is engaged in an officious effort that cannot but be completely wasted. Why such a man still clings to the tattered relics of religion it is hard to say. The manly thing would be

to walk out on the Christian faith and put it behind him along with other outgrown toys and discredited beliefs of childhood, but this he rarely does. He kills the tree but still hovers pensively about the orchard hoping for fruit that never comes.

Whatever is stated clearly but once in the Holy Scriptures may be accepted as sufficiently well established to invite the faith of all believers' and when we discover that the Spirit speaks of the wrath of God about three hundred times in the Bible, we may as well make up our minds either to accept the doctrine or reject the Scriptures outright. If we have valid information from some outside source proving that anger is unworthy of God, then the Bible is not to be trusted when it attributes anger to God. And if it is wrong three hundred times on one subject, who can trust it on any other? The instructed Christian knows that the wrath of God is a

### *Continuing...*

reality, that His anger is as holy as His love and that between His love and His wrath there is no incompatibility. He further knows (as far as fallen creatures can know such matters) what the wrath of God is and what it is not.

To understand God's wrath we must view it in the light of His holiness. God is holy and has made holiness to be the moral condition necessary to the health of His universe. Sin's temporary presence in the world only accents this. Whatever is holy is healthy; evil is a moral sickness that must end ultimately in death. The formation of the language itself suggests this, the English word *holy* deriving from the Anglo-Saxon *halig*, *hal* meaning *well*, *whole*. While it is not wise to press word origins unduly, there is yet a significance here that should not be overlooked.

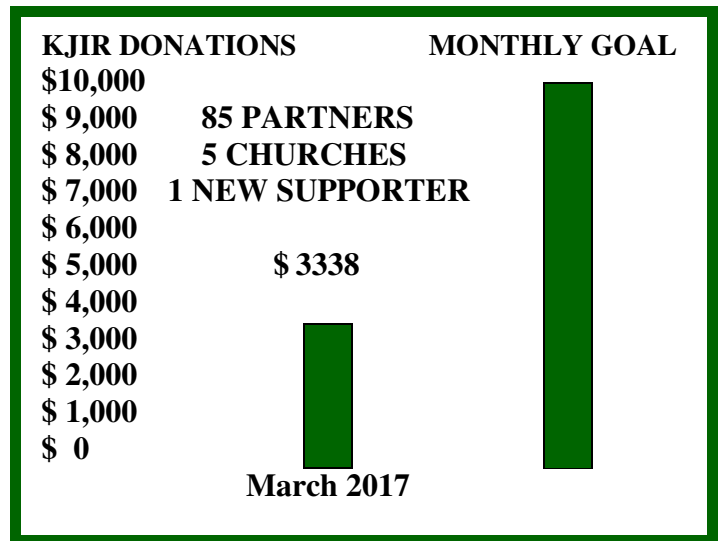
Since God's first concern for His universe is its moral health, that is, its holiness, whatever is contrary to this is necessarily under His eternal displeasure. Wherever the holiness of God confronts unholiness there is conflict. This conflict arises from the irreconcilable natures of holiness and sin. God's attitude and action in the conflict are His anger. To preserve His creation God must destroy whatever would destroy it. When He arises to put down destruction and save the world from irreparable moral collapse He is said to be angry. Every wrathful judgment of God in the history of the world has been a holy act of preservation.

The holiness of God, the wrath of God and the health of the creation are inseparably united. Not only is it right for God to display anger against sin, but I find it impossible to understand how He could do otherwise. God's wrath is His utter intolerance of whatever degrades and destroys. He hates iniquity as a mother hates the diphtheria or polio that would destroy the life of her child.

God's wrath is the antiseptic by which moral putrefaction is checked and the health of the creation maintained. When God warns of His impending wrath and exhorts men to repent and avoid it, He puts it in a language they can understand: He tells them to "flee from the wrath to come" (Luke 3:7). He says in effect, "Your life is evil, and because it is evil you are an enemy to the moral health of My creation. I must extirpate whatever would destroy the world I love. Turn from evil before I rise up in wrath against you. I love you, but I hate the sin you love. Separate yourself from your evil ways before I send judgment upon you."

"O Lord... in wrath remember mercy"  
(Habakkuk 3:2)

**A.W. Tozer**



### An Easter Prayer for Peace

Our Father, up in heaven,

Hear this Easter prayer:

May the people of ALL NATIONS BE UNITED IN THY CARE,

For earth's peace and man's salvation can come only by Thy grace

And not through bombs and missiles and our quest for outer space...

For until all men recognize that "THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S"

And peace on earth cannot be won with strategy and swords,

We will go on vainly fighting, as we have in ages past,

Finding only empty victories and a peace that cannot last...  
But we've grown so rich and mighty and so arrogantly strong,

We no longer ask in humbleness—

"God, show us where we're wrong"...

We have come to trust completely in the power of man-made things,

Unmindful of God's mighty power and that HE IS "KING OF KINGS"....

We have turned our eyes from HIM to go our selfish way,

And money, power, and pleasure are the gods we serve today...

And the good green earth God gave us to peacefully enjoy,  
Through greed and fear and hatred we are seeking to destroy...

Oh, Father, up in heaven, stir and wake our sleeping souls,

Renew our faith and lift us up and give us higher goals,

And grant us heavenly guidance as Easter comes again —

For, more than GUIDED MISSILES,

All the world needs

GUIDED MEN.

*Nahum 1:7 The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in Him.*