

GOD'S WRATH

“I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger (אֵרָא), in fury (אֵרָא), and in great wrath (אֵרָא).”

- Jeremiah 21:5-6

1. Opening Questions.

- a. Have you ever felt righteous anger?
- b. What would you think of a husband who felt no negative emotion at learning that his wife has cheated on him or that his child was just murdered?

2. God's wrath is...

- a. The expression of his righteous and just anger upon sin and sinners.
 - (1) **Ro 2:8** 8 ...For those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.
- b. Wrath almost always refers to the administration of God's justice in time, not in eternity. There are a few exceptions, but not many.
- c. Words associated with God's wrath are anger, indignation, jealousy, vengeance, and zeal.

3. God's wrath is an expression of his perfect character.

- a. God's wrath is an expression of his:
 - (1) Majesty and glory.
 - (a) **Ex 15:7** 7 In the greatness of your majesty you [Yahweh] overthrow your adversaries. You send out your fury (אֵרָא). It consumes them like stubble.
 - (b) **Ps 59:12-13** 12 For the sin of their mouths, the words of their lips, let them be trapped in their pride. For the cursing and lies that they utter, 13 consume them in wrath (אֵרָא). Consume them till they are no more, that they may know that God rules over Jacob to the ends of the earth.
 - (c) **Ps 76:10** 10 Surely the wrath (אֵרָא) against man shall praise you. The remnant from wrath (אֵרָא) you will put on like a belt.
 - (2) Righteousness.
 - (a) **Is 59:17-18** 17 [Yahweh] put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head. He put on garments of vengeance for clothing and wrapped himself in zeal as a cloak. 18 According to their deeds, so will he repay, wrath to his adversaries, repayment to his enemies. To the coastlands he will render repayment.
 - (b) **Ro 1:17-18** 17 ...In [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith. 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.
 - (c) **Ro 2:5** 5 Because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
 - (3) Justice.
 - (a) Wrath is not an attribute of God. It is an expression of his attribute of justice.

b. Principles.

- (1) God is not ashamed of his wrath. Neither must we be.
- (2) We must not reject or modify the biblical conception of God's wrath. God's wrath is necessary to the biblical conception of God.

4. In our fallen world, God's wrath is just, necessary, reasonable, and proportionate.

a. Just.

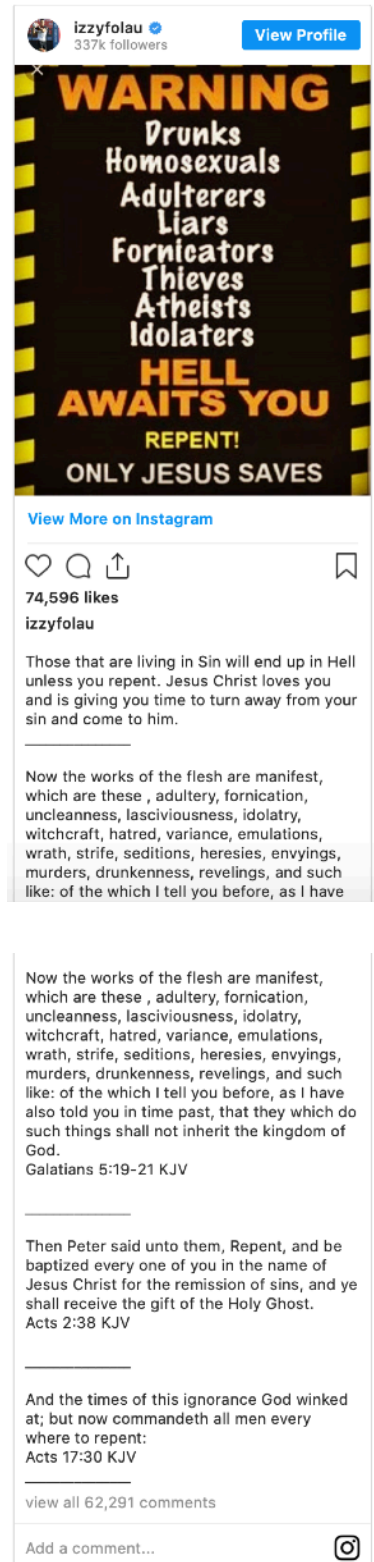
- (1) God is not unrighteous to inflict wrath on us.
 - (a) **Ro 3:5-6** 5 ...If our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous (ἄδικος) to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) 6 By no means! For then how could God judge the world?
 - (2) The Torah brings wrath.
 - (a) **Ro 4:15** 15 ...The Torah brings wrath.

b. Necessary.

- (1) **Eph 2:3** 3 ...Among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of humanity.
- (2) **Eph 5:5-6** 5 ...Everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Messiah and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
- (3) **Col 3:5-6** 5 Put to death...what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming.
- (4) God must react to our evil with wrath, for indignation against wickedness is an essential element of human goodness in a world in which moral evil is always present (C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 109-111).
- (5) Unbelief and condemnation requires wrath. Otherwise God's justice system would be a total failure.

c. Reasonable.

- (1) **Ps 2:5-6** 5 ...[Yahweh] will speak to [the nations] in his wrath and terrify them in his fury saying, 6 As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.



(2) **Jer 23:20** 20 The anger of Yahweh will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly.

d. Proportionate.

(1) The wrath being revealed in Romans 1 is not nightmare of an indiscriminate, uncontrolled, irrational fury, but the wrath of the holy and merciful God directed against men's impiety and unrighteousness (C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans*, 109-111).

5. It is God's job to inflict wrath, not ours.

a. **Eze 22:30-31** 30 ...I [Yahweh] sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none. 31 Therefore I have poured out my indignation (אֵצֶם) upon them. I have consumed them with the fire of my rage (עֲבָרָה). I have returned their way upon their heads, declares Lord Yahweh.

b. **Re 19:13-15** 13 He [Jesus] is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ...15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

c. Even wrath via the criminal justice system is God's wrath.

(1) **Ro 13:4-5** 4 [A ruler] is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger (ἔκδικος) who carries out God's wrath (ὀργή) on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

d. When persecuted, it is just for us to desire God's wrath upon our persecutor. But we must never attempt to inflict wrath ourselves.

(1) **1 Sa 24:12** 12 May Yahweh judge between me [David] and you [Saul]. May Yahweh avenge (נָקַם) me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.

(2) **Ps 56:5-7** 5 All day long they injure my cause. All their thoughts are against me [David] for evil. 6 They stir up strife, they lurk. They watch my steps, as they have waited for my life. 7 For their crime will they escape? In anger (אָרַע) cast down the peoples, God!

(3) **Ps 79:6-7** 6 Pour out your wrath (נָקַם) on the nations that do not know you and on the kingdoms that do not call upon your name! 7 For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his habitation.

(4) **Ro 12:19** 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

6. God is slow to wrath.

a. **Ex 34:6** 6 Yahweh passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, Yahweh, Yahweh, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loyal love and faithfulness....

b. **Ps 78:38** 38 ...[God], being compassionate, atoned for [Israel's] iniquity and did not destroy them. He restrained his anger (אָרַע) often and did not stir up all his wrath (נָקַם).

c. **Ro 9:22** 22 What if God, desiring to show his wrath (ὀργή) and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath (ὀργή) prepared for destruction...?

- d. God always provides sufficient warning before he inflicts his wrath.
- (1) **2 Ch 36:15-16** 15 Yahweh, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to [Israel] by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. 16 But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath (הַמַּחַד) of Yahweh rose against his people, until there was no remedy.
 - (2) **Ps 2:10-12** 10 Now therefore, kings, be wise. Be warned, rulers of the earth. 11 Serve Yahweh with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry (אֵרָא), and you perish in the way, for his anger (אֵרָא) is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
 - (3) **Jer 26:2-3** 2 Thus says Yahweh: Stand in the court of Yahweh's house and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of Yahweh all the words that I command you to speak to them. Do not hold back a word. 3 It may be they will listen and every one turn from his evil way, that I may relent of the disaster that I intend to do to them because of their evil deeds.
 - (4) **Jer 36:7** 7 It may be that their plea for mercy will come before Yahweh, and that every one will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and wrath that Yahweh has pronounced against this people.
 - (5) **Lk 3:7-8** 7 [John] said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptised by him, You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Produce fruits in keeping with a change of heart.
- e. God doesn't enjoy inflicting wrath. He desires to relent from disaster.
- (1) **Jon 4:2** 2 ...[Jonah] prayed to Yahweh and said, Yahweh, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish, for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in loyal love, and relenting from disaster.

7. Things that really stir up God's wrath include:

- a. Nations that plot against Israel and her Messiah.
- (1) **Ps 2:1-6** 1 Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against Yahweh and against his Messiah saying, 3 Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us. 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs. The Lord holds them in derision. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury saying, 6 As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.
 - (2) **Ps 79:6-7** 6 Pour out your wrath (הַמַּחַד) on the nations that do not know you and on the kingdoms that do not call upon your name! 7 For they have devoured Jacob and laid waste his habitation.
 - (3) **Jer 10:25** 25 Pour out your wrath on the nations that know you not, and on the peoples that call not on your name, for they have devoured Jacob. They have devoured him and consumed him, and have laid waste his habitation.
- b. Ingratitude.
- (1) **2 Ch 32:24-25** 24 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death, and he prayed to Yahweh, and he answered him and gave him a sign. 25 But Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore anger (אֵרָא) came upon him, Judah, and Jerusalem.

- c. Failure to guard the word of Yahweh.
 - (1) **2 Ch 34:21** 21 Go, inquire of Yahweh for me [Josiah] and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath (חַמָּה) of Yahweh that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not guard (שמר) the word of Yahweh, to do according to all that is written in this book.
- d. The shedding of innocent blood.
 - (1) **Dt 32:43** 43 Rejoice with [Yahweh], heavens. Bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries.
 - (2) **2 Ki 24:3-4** 3 Surely this [the Babylonian exile] came upon Judah at the command of Yahweh, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he had done, 4 and also for the innocent blood that he had shed. For he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and Yahweh would not pardon.
- e. Injustice.
 - (1) **Jer 21:12** 12 O house of David! Thus says Yahweh: Execute justice in the morning, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed, lest my wrath go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of your evil deeds.
- f. Mocking God's messengers.
 - (1) **2 Ch 36:15-16** 15 Yahweh, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to [Israel] by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. 16 But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath (חַמָּה) of Yahweh rose against his people, until there was no remedy.
- g. Hindering the gospel.
 - (1) **1 Th 2:14-16** 14 ... You, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Messiah Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all humanity 16 by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!
- h. Worshipping the beast and its image.
 - (1) **Re 14:9-10** 9 ... If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.
- i. Unbelief.
 - (1) **Ps 2:12** 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
 - (2) **Lk 3:7-9** 7 [John] said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptised by him, You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Produce fruits in keeping with a change of heart [belief in Jesus]. ... 9 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

- (3) **Jn 3:36** 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey [the Father's command to believe in] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
 - (4) **Ro 2:5** 5 Because of your hard and impenitent heart [of unbelief] you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
 - (5) **Ro 2:8** 8 ...For those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth [by believing in Jesus], but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.
 - (6) **2 Th 1:7-9** 7 ...When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels 8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance (ἐκδίκησις) on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey [through believing] the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.
- j. Principle.
- (1) Unbelief in our most heinous crime, for it is unbelief for which one is condemned to the lake of fire for all eternity.

8. God inflicts wrath upon:

- a. Satan and the demons.
 - (1) **Is 34:4-5** 4 All the host of heaven [Satan and the demons] shall rot away, and the skies roll up like a scroll. All their host shall fall, as leaves fall from the vine, like leaves falling from the fig tree. 5 For my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens.
- b. Israel.
 - (1) **Jer 25:8-10** 8 ...Because you [Israel] have not obeyed my words, 9 behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares Yahweh, and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation.
- c. The Gentile nations.
 - (1) **Jer 10:25** 25 Pour out your wrath on the nations that know you not, and on the peoples that call not on your name, for they have devoured Jacob. They have devoured him and consumed him, and have laid waste his habitation.
 - (2) **Jer 25:15-26** 15 Thus Yahweh, the God of Israel, said to me [Jeremiah]: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. 16 They shall drink, stagger, and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them. 17 So I took the cup from Yahweh's hand, and made all the nations to whom Yahweh sent me drink it: 18 Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, a hissing and a curse, as at this day; 19 Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, all his people, 20 and all the mixed tribes among them; all the kings of the land of Uz and all the kings of the land of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod); 21 Edom, Moab, and the sons of Ammon; 22 all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea; 23 Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who cut the corners of their hair; 24 all the kings of

Arabia and all the kings of the mixed tribes who dwell in the desert; 25 all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; 26 all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth. And after them the king of Babylon shall drink.

- (3) **Mic 5:15** 15 ...In anger (אָר) and wrath (הַמָּוֶה) I will execute vengeance (נִקְמָה) on the nations that did not obey.
 - (4) **Hab 3:12-13** 12 You marched through the earth in fury. You threshed the nations in anger. 13 You went out for the salvation of your people [Israel], for the salvation of your anointed [David].
 - (5) **Zep 3:8** 8 ...Wait for me, declares Yahweh, for the day when I rise up to seize the prey. For my decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger, for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.
- d. The cities of the nations, especially Babylon.
- (1) **Re 16:17-19** 17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, It is done! 18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.
- e. All people.
- (1) **Ge 7:21** 21 ...All flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind.
 - (2) **Zep 1:14-18** 17 I will bring distress on humanity, so that they shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against Yahweh. Their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. 18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of Yahweh. In the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed. For a full and sudden end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.
 - (3) **Re 6:15-17** 15 ...The kings of the earth, the great ones, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?
- f. Animals.
- (1) **Ge 7:21-23** 21 ...All flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. 22 Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23 [God] blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man, animals, creeping things, and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark.
 - (2) **Jer 21:5-6** 5 I [Yahweh] myself will fight against you [Israel] with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger (אָר), in fury (הַמָּוֶה), and in great wrath (הַמָּוֶה הַגָּדוֹל). 6 And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city [Jerusalem], both man and beast. They shall die of a great pestilence.

(3) **Jon 4:11** 11 ...Should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?

g. Plants.

(1) **Jer 7:20** 20 ...Thus says Lord Yahweh: Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground. It will burn and not be quenched.

h. The earth itself.

(1) **Zep 3:8** 8 ...My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them my indignation, all my burning anger, for in the fire of my jealousy all the earth shall be consumed.

9. Metaphors for God's wrath include:

a. Treading in a winepress.

(1) **Is 63:2-3** 2 Why is your apparel red, and your garments like his who treads in the winepress? 3 I [Yahweh] have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me. I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath. Their lifeblood spattered on my garments and stained all my apparel.

(2) **Re 14:18-20** 18 ...Another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe. 19 So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.

(3) **Re 19:15** 15 [Jesus] will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

b. Drinking a cup of wine.

(1) **Is 63:6** 6 I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.

(2) **Jer 25:15-28** 15 ...Yahweh, the God of Israel, said to me [Jeremiah]: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. 16 They shall drink, stagger, and be crazed because of the sword that I am sending among them. 17 So I took the cup from Yahweh's hand, and made all the nations to whom Yahweh sent me drink it.... 27 Then you shall say to them, Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink, be drunk and vomit, fall and rise no more, because of the sword that I am sending among you. 28 And if they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, Thus says Yahweh of hosts: You must drink!

(3) **Re 14:9-10** 9 ...If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger....

(4) **Re 16:19** 19 ...God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath.

c. A whirling storm.

- (1) **Jer 23:19** 19 Behold, the storm of Yahweh! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest. It will burst upon the head of the wicked.
- d. Trees being cut down by an axe and thrown into the fire.
- (1) **Lk 3:7-9** 7 [John] said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptised by him, You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ...9 Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.
- e. A dam reaching its bursting point.
- (1) **2 Ch 36:15-16** 15 Yahweh, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to [Israel] by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. 16 But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath (הַמָּוֶה) of Yahweh rose against his people, until there was no remedy.
- (2) **1 Th 2:14-16** 14 ... You, brothers and sisters, became imitators of the churches of God in Messiah Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all humanity 16 by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles that they might be saved—so as always to fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them at last!
- f. A boiler exploding due to too much pressure.
- g. A pot boiling over.

10. God's wrath often involves:

- a. Blood.
- (1) **Is 63:6** 6 I [Yahweh] trampled down the peoples in my anger. I made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.
- (2) **Zep 1:17** 17 Their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.
- (3) **Re 14:20** 20 ... The winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.
- b. Darkness.
- (1) **Is 13:9-10** 9 Behold, the day of Yahweh comes, cruel (אֶכְזָרִי), with wrath (עֲבָרָה) and fierce anger (הַרְיוֹן אַף), to make the land a desolation (שָׁמָה) and to destroy (שָׁמַד) its sinners (חַטָּאִים) from it. 10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.
- (2) **Zep 1:15** 15 A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness....
- c. Fire.
- (1) **Ps 21:9-12** 9 You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear. Yahweh will swallow them up in his anger (אֵף), and fire will consume them.
- (2) **Is 30:27** 27 Behold, the name of Yahweh comes from afar, burning with his anger (אֵף) and in thick rising smoke. His lips are full of fury, and his tongue is like a devouring fire.

- (3) **Is 66:15-16** 15 ...Behold, Yahweh will come in fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render his anger in fury and his rebuke with flames of fire. 16 For by fire will Yahweh enter into judgment, and by his sword, with all flesh, and those slain by Yahweh shall be many.
 - (4) **Jer 4:4** 4 Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh. Remove the foreskin of your hearts, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.
 - (5) **Lk 12:49** 49 I [Jesus] came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!
- d. Sword.
- (1) **Is 66:16** 16 ...By fire will Yahweh enter into judgment, and by his sword, with all flesh, and those slain by Yahweh shall be many.
 - (2) **Jer 25:29** 29 ...Behold, I begin to work disaster at the city that is called by my name, and shall you go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, declares Yahweh of hosts.
 - (3) **Eze 21:14-17** 14 As for you [Ezekiel], son of man, prophesy. Clap your hands and let the sword come down twice, yes, three times, the sword for those to be slain. It is the sword for the great slaughter, which surrounds [the princes of Israel], 15 that their hearts may melt and many stumble. At all their gates I have given the glittering sword. Ah, it is made like lightning. It is taken up for slaughter. 16 Cut sharply to the right. Set yourself to the left, wherever your face is directed. 17 I also will clap my hands, and I will satisfy my wrath (הַצַּדִּיק). I Yahweh have spoken.
 - (4) **Ro 13:4** 4 [A ruler] is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger (ἔκδικος) who carries out God's wrath (ὀργή) on the wrongdoer.
 - (5) **Re 19:15** 15 From [Jesus'] mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations....
- e. Trumpet blast.
- (1) **Zep 1:15-16** 15 A day of wrath is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.

11. God's past wrath includes his wrath on:

- a. Gentiles.
 - (1) All humanity at Noah's flood (Ge 6-7).
 - (2) Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19).
 - (3) The Egyptians (Ex 7-14).
 - (4) The Canaanites (Jos 6-12).
 - (5) The succession of Gentile empires (Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome).
 - (6) WWI.
 - (7) WWII.
- b. Israel.
 - (1) Exodus generation.

- (a) **Nu 11:1** 1 ...The people [of Israel] complained in the hearing of Yahweh about their misfortunes, and when Yahweh heard it, his anger was kindled, and the fire of Yahweh burned among them and consumed some outlying parts of the camp.
- (2) Cycles in Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings.
- (3) 722 bc.
- (a) **2 Ki 17:21-23** 21 When [Yahweh] had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. And Jeroboam drove Israel from following Yahweh and made them commit great sin. 22 The people of Israel walked in all the sins that Jeroboam did. They did not depart from them, 23 until Yahweh removed Israel out of his sight, as he had spoken by all his servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day.
- (4) 586 bc.
- (a) **2 Ki 22:17-20** 17 Because they [Israel] have forsaken me [Yahweh] and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath (הַקִּי) will be kindled against this place [Jerusalem], and it will not be quenched.
- (b) **2 Ch 29:8** 8 ...The wrath (אֲרִיזָה) of Yahweh came on Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes.
- (c) **Jer 21:5-7** 5 I [Yahweh] myself will fight against you [Israel] with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger, in fury, and in great wrath. 6 And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast. They shall die of a great pestilence. 7 Afterward, declares Yahweh, I will give Zedekiah king of Judah, his servants, and the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their lives. He shall strike them down with the edge of the sword. He shall not pity them or spare them or have compassion.
- (d) Also see Jer 25:8-11; Lam 4:11.
- (5) 70 ad.
- (a) **Mt 24:1-2** 1 Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. 2 But he answered them, You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down [in 70 ad].
- (b) **Lk 19:43-44** 43 ...The days will come upon you [Jerusalem], when your enemies [the Romans] will set up a barricade around you, surround you, hem you in on every side, 44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not recognise the time of your visitation [Jesus' first coming].
- (c) **Lk 21:22-24** 22 ...These are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. 23 Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people [Israel]. 24 They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led

captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

- (6) History of the Jewish people since 70 ad.
 - (a) Anti-Semitism in Christian Europe.
 - (b) Holocaust.
- c. Jesus at the cross.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.¹

- d. Principles.
 - (1) Human history is a record of man's rebellion against God and God's subsequent wrath.
 - (a) "The history of the world is the judgment of the world" (F. Schiller).
 - (2) God's past wrath warns of his present, future, and eternal wrath.

12. God's present wrath includes:

- a. God's handing over (Ro 1:24, 26, 28) unrighteous people to the natural consequences of sin.
 - (1) **Ro 1:18** 18 ...The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.
 - (a) The wrath of God is now visible in his handing over of people to their chosen way of sin and all its consequences (D. Moo, *Romans*).
- b. The criminal justice system.
 - (1) **Ro 13:4-5** 4 [A ruler] is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger (ἔκδικος) who carries out God's wrath (ὀργή) on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.
- c. Manmade and natural disasters, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- d. Principles.
 - (1) God's present wrath warns of his future and eternal wrath.
 - (a) The present experience of God's wrath is merely a foretaste of what will come on the day of judgment (D. Moo, *Romans*).

13. God's future wrath climaxes with:

- a. The seven-year Tribulation, the day of Yahweh.

¹ Stuart Townend, "In Christ Alone."

- (1) **Is 13:9-13** 9 Behold, the day of Yahweh comes, cruel (אַכְזָרִי), with wrath (עֲבָרָה) and fierce anger (אֶרְוֹן אַרְאָה), to make the land a desolation (שְׁמָה) and to destroy (שָׂמַד) its sinners (חַטָּאִים) from it. 10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light. 11 I will punish (פָּקַד) the world (תְּבִיל) for its evil and the wicked for their iniquity. I will put an end to the pomp of the arrogant and lay low the pompous pride of the ruthless. 12 I will make people more rare than fine gold and humanity than the gold of Ophir. 13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, and the earth will be shaken out of its place, at the rage (עֲבָרָה) of Yahweh of hosts in the day of his fierce anger (אֶרְאָה).
- (2) **Zep 1:17-18** 17 I will bring distress on humanity, so that they shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against Yahweh. Their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. 18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of Yahweh. In the fire of his jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed. For a full and sudden end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.
- (3) **Lk 12:49** 49 I [Jesus] came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!
- (4) **Ro 2:5** 5 Because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
- (5) **Re 6:15-17** 15 ... The kings of the earth, the great ones, the generals, the rich, the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?
- (6) **Re 15:1** 1 ... I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished.
- (7) The Rapture delivers then-living Church age believers from the Tribulational wrath.
 - (a) **Ro 5:9** 9 Because... we have now been justified by [Messiah's] blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.
 - (b) **1 Th 1:10** 10 ... And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.
- b. Eternity in the lake of fire.
 - (1) See Hell.

14. Four things that placate God's wrath are:

- a. Intercessory prayer.
 - (1) **Ex 32:10-12** 10 ... Let me [Yahweh] alone, that my anger (אֶרְאָה) may burn hot against [Israel] and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you. 11 But Moses implored Yahweh his God and said, Yahweh, why does your anger (אֶרְאָה) burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from your burning anger (אֶרְאָה) and relent from this disaster against your people.

b. Humility.

- (1) **2 Ch 12:12** 12 When [Rehoboam] humbled himself the anger (אֵרָא) of Yahweh turned from him, so as not to make a complete destruction. Moreover, conditions were good in Judah.
- (2) **2 Ch 32:25-26** 25 ...Hezekiah did not make return according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore anger (אֵרָא) came upon him, Judah, and Jerusalem. 26 But Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the anger of Yahweh did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.
- (3) **2 Ki 22:19-20** 19 ...Because your heart was penitent and you [Josiah] humbled yourself before Yahweh, when you heard how I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares Yahweh. 20 Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.
- (4) **2 Ch 36:12** 12 [Zedekiah] did what was evil in the sight of the Lord his God. He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the Lord.
- (5) **Zep 2:1-3** 1 Gather together, yes, gather, shameless nation, 2 before the decree takes effect—before the day passes away like chaff—before there comes upon you the burning anger of Yahweh, before there comes upon you the day of the anger of Yahweh. 3 Seek Yahweh, all you humble of the land, who do his just commands. Seek righteousness. Seek humility. Perhaps you may be hidden on the day of the anger of Yahweh.

c. Faith in Jesus.

- (1) **Ps 2:12** 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry (אֵרָא), and you perish in the way, for his anger (אֵרָא) is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.
- (2) **Jon 3:5** 5 ...The people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.
- (3) **Jn 3:36** 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life. Whoever does not obey [the Father's command to believe in] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.
- (4) **Ro 5:9** 9 Because...we have now been justified by [Messiah's] blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.
- (5) **1 Th 1:9-10** 9 ...They themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

d. Turning from one's evil way.

- (1) **Jon 3:10** 10 When God saw what [the people of Nineveh] did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

15. For believers, God's wrath is a very good thing because:

- a. It is temporary.

- (1) **Ps 30:4-5** 4 Sing praises to Yahweh, you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. 5 For his anger (אֵרָא) is but for a moment, and his grace (חַסְדּוֹ) is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.
 - (2) **Is 51:22-23** 22 Thus says your Lord, Yahweh, your God who pleads the cause of his people [Israel]: Behold, I have taken from your hand the cup of staggering. The bowl of my wrath you shall drink no more, 23 and I will put it into the hand of your tormentors, who have said to you, Bow down, that we may pass over.
 - (3) **Is 57:16** 16 ...I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry, for the spirit would grow faint before me, and the breath of life that I made.
 - (4) **Re 15:1** 1 ...I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the [Tribulational] wrath of God is finished.
- b. It is necessary for our redemption and salvation.
- (1) **Is 63:3-5** 3 I [Yahweh] have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with me. I trod them in my anger and trampled them in my wrath. Their lifeblood spattered on my garments and stained all my apparel. 4 For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and my year of redemption had come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help. I was appalled, but there was no one to uphold. So my own arm brought me salvation, and my wrath upheld me.
- c. God's perfect justice will be administered.
- (1) **Jer 6:10-11** 10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot listen. Behold, the word of Yahweh is to them an object of scorn. They take no pleasure in it. 11 Therefore I am full of the wrath of Yahweh. I am weary of holding it in. Pour it out upon the children in the street and upon the gatherings of young men also. Both husband and wife shall be taken, the elderly and the very aged.
 - (2) **Jer 18:23** 23 ...You, Yahweh, know all their plotting to kill me [Jeremiah]. Forgive not their iniquity, nor blot out their sin from your sight. Let them be overthrown before you. Deal with them in the time of your anger.
 - (3) **Hab 3:12-13** 12 You marched through the earth in fury. You threshed the nations in anger. 13 You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed.
 - (4) **Re 11:16-18** 16 ...The twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God 17 saying, We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. 18 The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.
- d. It is followed by everlasting:
- (1) Grace and joy.
 - (a) **Ps 30:4-5** 4 Sing praises to Yahweh, you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. 5 For his anger (אֵרָא) is but for a moment, and his grace (חַסְדּוֹ) is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.
 - (2) Love, peace, and compassion.

- (a) **Is 54:7-10** 7 For a brief moment I [Yahweh] deserted you [Israel], but with great compassion I will gather you. 8 In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says Yahweh, your Redeemer. 9 This is like the days of Noah to me. As I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you and will not rebuke you. 10 For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my loyal love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says Yahweh, who has compassion on you.

16. In the future, we will clearly understand and agree with the justice of God's wrath.

- a. **Jer 23:20** 20 The anger of Yahweh will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intents of his heart. In the latter days you will understand it clearly.
- b. **Jer 30:24** 24 The fierce anger of Yahweh will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intentions of his mind. In the latter days you will understand this.

17. Application.

- a. Understand that God's wrath is necessary in our fallen world.
- b. Believe in Jesus to avoid God's Tribulational wrath.
- c. Warn people of God's present and future wrath.
- d. Intercede for those upon whom wrath is about to be inflicted.
- e. Forgive and let God take vengeance at the appropriate time.