

"The Wrath of God Revealed"
(Romans 1:18-19)

Introduction:

You have heard of the recent earthquakes. Maybe you thought what a tragic event, a freak occurrence. But why then and there?

You have also heard of the freezing cold which claimed more lives than the earthquake. Why did that happen?

We've looked at the decrees of God and saw that God's providence is the outworking of it. These are included. But it is in response to man's wickedness that God justly inflicts these judgments.

What I want you to see this morning is,

When men reject the God who clearly reveals Himself to them, they bring upon themselves His well-deserved wrath.

I. The Fact of Man's Rejection.

A. Context.

1. His righteousness is revealed in the gospel (1:17).
2. His wrath is revealed against sin.
3. Paul shows how both Gentiles and Jews sin against His revelation and are made liable to His wrath.
4. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23).
5. Why then are men guilty before God?

B. All Men Know God (v. 19).

1. All men possess knowledge apart from Special Revelation.
2. The Gentiles have knowledge about God.
 - a. That which can be known about God is known to them.
 - b. It penetrates their understanding (v. 20).
 - (i) This is not what is referred to in 2:14-15.
 - (ii) "In man" because apprehended by his mind and heart.
3. Because God made it known to them.
 - a. The reason all men know it is because God reveals it.
 - b. It is mediated through the creation and is available to all men <v. 20; Cf. Ps. 19:1-4b; Acts 14:16f>.
 - c. Therefore all men have this knowledge.

B. But All Men Suppress that Knowledge.

1. All men know the truth.
 - a. They know the true God and have true knowledge of Him.
 - (i) ***They suppress the truth*** (v. 18).
 - (ii) ***They knew God*** (v. 21).
 - b. They must know it in order to suppress it.
 - (i) One cannot suppress what he does not possess.
 - (ii) All suppress the revelation which God has given.

2. The means by which they suppress it is by unrighteousness.
 - a. Their corrupted intellect uses its power to suppress it.
 - (i) As created, the intellect rejoiced in that knowledge.
 - (ii) But now, it does all in its power to escape it.
 - (iii) A personally holy God is too much to bear.
 - (iv) It necessarily implies condemnation.
 - b. The result of this was greater darkness (vv. 21b-23).
 - (i) Their speculations became futile.
 - (ii) The result is that their heart was darkened.
 - (a) Their conscience becomes seared.
 - (b) They become more insensitive to the moral law.
3. Therefore, they are without excuse (v. 20c).
 - a. All men everywhere have this revelation of God.
 - (i) True, it is obscured by sin.
 - (ii) True, it is fought against by the mind of man.
 - (iii) But it is man's fault, because of his own sin.
 - b. Men also now have the supernatural revelation of God.
 - (i) Not all have it.
 - (ii) It is only where God has been pleased to send it.
 - (iii) But those who reject it commit greater sin.
 - c. The United States is saturated with this knowledge.
 - d. Therefore, they are more culpable.
 - e. We have seen **the fact of man's rejection**, now let us see

11. The Fact of God's Retribution.

A. Because of Man's Rejection, God Is **Pouring Out** His Wrath.

1. It is constantly being revealed.
 - a. God poured out His wrath at times in the past.
 - (i) He cast Adam and Eve out of paradise.
 - (ii) Death and disease followed.
 - (iii) He destroyed the antediluvian world with a flood.
 - (iv) He destroyed the cities on the plain.
 - (v) The sacrificial system proclaimed His wrath.
 - (vi) The Law pronounces a curse upon all who disobey.
 - (vii) He poured out His wrath on the inhabitants of Canaan.
 - (viii) He destroyed the Temple and dispersed the Jews.
 - (ix) Above all, it is manifested in Christ's crucifixion.
 - b. And there yet remains a final out-pouring of judgment.
 - c. But His wrath is even now breaking through constantly.
 - (i) The outpourings in this age foreshadow it.
 - (ii) This is how we ought to view the recent calamities.
 - d. It is eschatological judgment breaking through in history.
 - e. No one can plead ignorance of God's displeasure with sin.
2. Its source is from heaven.

- a. This is to say, it is from God.
 - b. He sits in judgment, and meets out just judgments.
 - c. It is the positive outgoing of the divine displeasure.
3. It is a fearsome wrath.
- a. His wrath is terrible and awesome in its intensity.
 - b. Earthquakes, tidal waves, hurricanes, freezing cold weather, disease, AIDS, famine, etc.
4. Christians sometimes experience the same things.
- a. To strengthen and perfect their faith.
 - b. To chasten for sin.
 - c. But He never removes His love from His own.
- B. His Wrath is Directed Against Wicked Men.
1. It is just retribution for their wickedness.
- a. "Ungodliness" refers to religious perversity: idolatry
 - b. "Unrighteousness" to what is moral: immorality.
 - (i) The order is significant.
 - (ii) Impiety is the precursor to immorality.
 - c. The wrath of God comes because of wickedness <Eph. 5:3-6>
 - d. It is directed against those who reject God and His Messiah (John 3:36).
 - (i) Those who trust in Christ have life and its benefits.
 - (ii) Those who reject Him will only see wrath.
2. This wickedness is of man; its source is in man, not God.
- a. God holds man responsible for sin.
 - b. Though God decrees it, He is not responsible for it.
 - c. Man commits sin because he freely chooses to do so.
3. As judgment upon sin, God gives man over to further sin.
- a. God is actively restraining sin.
 - b. But as an act of judgment, He gives man over to grosser sin <vv. 24-32>.
 - c. It is a downward spiral which only God can break.
- C. Yet, God's Wrath Is Restrained.
1. God breaks forth at some times more than others.
- a. He is not always bringing devastating earthquakes.
 - b. Unbelievers enjoy more of God's benevolence than His wrath.
2. But God's wrath will be fully revealed at Christ's return.
- a. His benevolence will be removed from them in perdition.
 - b. There, all the good they received at God's hand will testify against them <Rom. 2:1-8>.
 - c. Because of their unthankfulness, they will suffer greater judgment.

Conclusion:

- 1. The wrath of God is a terrible thing.

2. Even now there are glimpses of God's final judgment breaking through into history.
3. They are but pictures and reminders that that day is coming.
4. When that day comes only the godly will stand and be acquitted, the ungodly will be swept away.
5. Godliness only comes by trusting Christ. Are you trusting Him to save you from the coming wrath of God? If not, then turn to Him today and be saved. Amen. Let us pray!