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THE GOD OF THE BIBLE

THE WRATH OF GOD

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Job 36:18, "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

There is a natural tendency in man to refuse to be occupied with solemn and serious matters. He wants to drink to the full out of the wells of pleasure, and when solemn subjects like death and eternity and the judgment are urged upon him, he makes an effort to banish them as speedily as possible. Once upon a time a man wrote a very valuable treatise on the subject of death, and published it in book form. But it demanded no sale. People were not interested in death's skull and cross bones. A doctor read the story and wrote a silly ghost story as an appendix, and the first edition was soon sold.

We get from this text, first, a terrible fact; second, a solemn warning; and third, an utter impossibility.

1. A terrible fact. The wrath of God is a fact. God's wrath is as much a Divine perfection as is his love or mercy. "Because there is wrath." The fact of God's wrath is clearly revealed in the scriptures. John 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Eph. 5:6.

(1) The necessity of God's

wrath. Wrath is the expression of God's holiness. If he did not punish evildoers he would be a party to evil-doing. He would compromise with wickedness. He would condone sin. Take an argument from the less to the greater. In the human sphere he who has no wrath and anger against impurity and unchastity is a moral leper. He who has no wrath against the oppressor who crushed the weak and defenseless, is a friend. We need more righteous indignation. God hates as well as loves. Psalms 5:5 and Psalms 7:11.

(2) The greatness of God's wrath. It is infinite like all his other perfections. Human wrath is oftentimes an awful thing. Scripture likens the wrath of a king to the roaring of a lion. Scripture also speaks of the devil having great wrath because he knoweth he hath but a short time. But what shall be said of the wrath of God? To what shall we liken it? How indescribably awful must be the unrestrained and unmixed wrath of Him who hates sin with a perfect hatred. An utter impossibility.

Because there is wrath beware lest he take thee away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Every one of us richly merits God's wrath. We are all by nature the children of wrath. Our sins which have mounted up to heaven;

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our profitless lives, spent in selfish gratification with no regards for God's glory; our indifference and carelessness respecting our souls eternal welfare; our repeated refusals to respond to the invitations of God's grace, all cry aloud for judgment to descend upon us. Our only hope is for a ransom. This God has provided thru Christ. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister and give his life a ransom for many. It is a great ransom. But it avails nothing for those that ignore and reject it. If this ransom be despised then there is no possible escape for the sinner.

This text shatters the larger hope. It repudiates any possibility of a second chance in the next world. It closes the door of hope against all who die in their sins. Let the stroke of God remove the unbeliever from this world and then a great ransom cannot deliver him. Proverbs 29:1

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Why? Because it is appointed unto man once to die and after that-not another chance, not a further probation, but the judgment.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Why? Because at death the sinner goes immediately to a place of torment, out of which there is no deliverance.

Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee. Why? Because there awaits the sinner nothing but "the resurrection to damnation."

Why? Because repentance will then be too late. "Tho they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Ezek. 8:18. Why? Because whosoever's name was not written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire-and a lake has no outlet.



THE CHRISTIAN SEES FARTHEST, NOT ON TIP TOE, BUT ON BENDED KNEE.

INTRODUCTION: How many ordinances are there? Some say, three; some say two; and some say, none.

What are they for? This will help us see how many. Their purpose is to symbolize the Gospel. They are not the Gospel; they have no saving value. They do not save but point to what does save. Anything that does not symbolize some part of the Gospel is not an ordinance.

What is the Gospel? It is made up of three facts: death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and by virtue of our union with Him symbolize our death to sin and resurrection to walk in newness of life. Legally whatever has happened to Christ has happened to me. Since He died to sin, I'm to reckon myself dead to sin. He died and I died in Him. The only way we are dead to sin is in the legal sense, and this is symbolized in baptism. The only way I have been resurrected is in the legal sense and this is also symbolized in baptism. Romans 6:4, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Colossians 2:12, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Colossians 3:1, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The only way I'm seated in heaven is with Christ, my legal representative. Legally I am a citizen of heaven, but as to my experiences, I am a pilgrim and sojourner down here.

Now Baptism and the Lord's Supper may be said to dramatize or symbolize these three gospel facts: death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Supper shows his death till he comes; baptism symbolizes his burial and resurrection.

BAPTISM:

I. Mode or form. It is called a burial. A man who is physically dead is buried in the ground. The man dead to sin is buried in a liquid grave. A burial presupposes death. And so baptism presupposes death to sin and portrays that

death. Baptism is a burial. Ever hear of anybody being dissatisfied with baptism by immersion?

It's also an emersion, or lifting up.

It is also called a planting and a resurrection. When you put something into the ground and cover it, you watch for it to come up.

It is a figure or likeness of something.

II. Baptism is a sacred dramatization of our faith in what Christ did for us in death and resurrection. Baptism is not faith. I had faith before I was baptized—but one way we express our faith or dramatize our faith is through baptism. In baptism I am saying that I'm one with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection.

Baptism saves figuratively. It does figuratively what the blood of Christ does actually. Acts 22:16, "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

It is for the saved, but it is the duty of every man. Christians have no duties that lost do not have. The lost man ought to be baptized but he ought to repent and believe first. The lost ought to be in the church but they ought to be saved first. Every lost man ought to come to the Lord's table but he ought to be saved and get in the church first. The supper is in the church.

THE LORD'S SUPPER:

The purpose:

I. Not to satisfy hunger. "What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in?"

II. Not to satisfy human pride. At Corinth, the rich brother loaded baskets and big jugs. He made a meal of it and got drunk and put to shame the poor with their small baskets.

III. Not to show our love for one another. If this was the purpose, we could observe it at home or anywhere. It is a communion of the body and blood of Christ.

IV. Not to satisfy thirst for strong drink. Not enough for that—only a thimbleful.

Positively:

I. It is a memorial service for Christ. This do in remembrance of me. Christ is the one honoured.

II. To show His death till he comes.

It is a memorial of his death and reminds us of the price of our redemption.

When?

On the Lord's Day. It is called supper.

Where?

Anywhere in church capacity. Under an oak tree, in a meeting house, or at my house if the church is in session. Tarry one for another. It is a church ordinance.

What is to be used?

Two elements: something to represent his body bruised and broken for me and something to represent his blood as shed for me.

Unleavened bread represents his sinless body. No yeast, nothing to puff up. Leaven is a type of sin. Also, cup or fruit of the vine.

How?

I. The action of Christ is to be repeated. We should do it like He did it. The bread and cup are to be prepared, blessed, and broken and distributed and received.

II. The communicant is to examine himself.

III. He is to discern the Lord's body.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

1. Come. Never miss church unless it is absolutely necessary. George Washington's pastor said of him: "No company ever kept him away from church."

2. Come early. Rushing into church the last minute is not conducive to true worship.

3. Come with your whole family. "The church service is not a convention, that a family should merely send a delegate."

4. Take a place toward the front of the church; leave the rear seats for those who may come late, and for the backsliders, and for mothers with children. Please!

5. Be devout. The church is not a theater or a place of amusement. You come to worship God, not to whisper, lounge, or sleep. God's house deserves our utmost reverence.

6. Be thoughtful of the comfort of others. Never make a haystack of yourself at the end of the row and

expect others to crawl over you to reach a seat.

7. Help strangers to find and follow the service. If they have no book, share yours with them. Sing! Join in the worship! Don't just sit!

8. Always remember that strangers are the guests of the church members. Treat them with the same courtesy as you would if they should visit in your own home.

9. Give a good offering to God. God loveth a cheerful giver! Freely ye have received!

10. Never rush for the door after the benediction as though the church were on fire. Speak and be spoken to. Be congenial!

11. Never stay away from church because the church is not perfect. How lonesome you would feel in a perfect church.

12. Remember at all times that you are in the house of God.

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