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## THE GOD OF THE BIBLE... THE WRATH OF GOD

BY: C. D. COLE

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

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 test, 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. *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him,"* John 3:36. *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness,"* Romans 1:18. *"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience,"* Ephesians

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 a n g e r a g a i n s t i m p u r i t y 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. *"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity,"* Psalms 5:5. *"God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day,"* 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.

***"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..."***

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;

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. *"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,"* Proverbs 29:1.

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# THEREFORE--PAUL'S CREED

BY: C. D. COLE

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service," Romans 12:1.*

**INTRODUCTION:** *The first verse of Romans 12 gives us the "therefore" of Paul's religious creed. It brings together the doctrinal and practical in religious experience. It shows the harmony between "creed" and "deed". The first eleven chapters of Romans are doctrinal and the last five are practical. The first eleven are brimful of precious doctrines to be believed; the last five are crowded with exhortations to duty. In the word "therefore" we find the pivot on which the discussion turns from the doctrinal to the practical. We have heard it said over and over again, until it is sickening, that it does not make any difference what a man believes if he is sincere. We believe it does make a difference what one believes. A man's belief is the index to the state of his soul, and the track upon which his conduct runs. One may sincerely believe that which is false. His belief determines his character and conduct.*

Every intelligent Christian has a creed. It may not be committed to writing. It need not be the creed formulated by any religious body. Whatever a man believes is his creed. The word creed comes from the Latin "credo," which means "I believe." For one to say that he has no creed is to say that he does not believe anything and to acknowledge that he is an infidel. Prejudice and ignorance of the meaning of words lead men to say foolish things about doctrine and creed. "Theology is the doctrine of God. It is the science of religion. A doctrine

is a principle of one's belief. A creed is a summary of the principles of one's belief. It is the natural product of his religious experience and thought. It is his explanation of his religion, and the interpretation of his experience of grace." The man who has no creed either has no religion or no brains with which to interpret his experience.

Paul's creed was the basis of his appeal for service. *"I beseech you therefore, etc."* Let us analyze his creed as given in this first eleven chapters of Romans.

1. Sin and human depravity. *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin,"*

R o m a n s 3:20. Paul discusses the doctrine of sin. Paul painted sin and sinners in terrible colors. One's conception of sin will determine his theology. If he is wrong on sin he will be wrong on everything else that is vital. His idea of sin will affect his view of salvation, the value of the atonement, and all related doctrines. Sin is the worst thing in the world. It is that which perverts and corrupts human nature. It is that strange and horrible something that has turned man against God. Sin is absurd; it is that foolish something that makes the creature think he can overcome the Creator. It is that which makes men believe the devil's lie rather than God's truth. Who can adequately tell of the enormity of sin? Human language is impoverished in trying to describe it. It is that something in men which would cause them, if they could, to climb

up to the throne of God and spit in His face, and disrobe and dethrone Him. It causes men to make fun of portions of His word and call it impracticable and foolish. It causes men to hypocritically praise His word with their lips and deny it with their lives. Sin is that thing that depopulates heaven and populates hell. Sin is so terrible that to save sinners from its terrible effects the Son of God came to bear their guilt in His own body on the tree. How any man can imagine he has any goodness in the sight of God when he sees what it cost Jesus Christ to keep him out of Hell. The sin of man is going to reach its climax

in the Man of Sin who will exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, etc.

2. Salvation by grace through faith. In chapters 4, 5, 6, we have salvation by grace. How could a sinner be saved any other way? How can sin merit salvation or filth create purity? The question has been propounded, "How can God be just and let a man go to hell?" Foolish question! We had better ask, "How can God be just and keep a man from going to hell who has transgressed His law and defied His commands?" This was Job's question: *"How can man be justified with God?"* Justice demands the punishment of the sinner under divine government just as it demands the punishment of the criminal under civil government. There is only one answer: *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,"* Romans 3:24.

3. The two-fold nature of the saved man. In chapter 7, Paul

***"Every intelligent Christian has a creed...whatever a man believes is his creed."***

speaks of the conflict going on in the saved man. When I would do good, evil is present with me.

4. The security of the believer in the eighth chapter. It begins with no condemnation and ends with no separation.

5. Predestination and election, in chapters 8-11.

### **The Relation Of Creed To Character And Conduct**

The relation is a vital one. A man's creed determines his conduct. Paul knew this from experience. As Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, his creed or belief made him the cruel persecutor of the believers in Jesus. He believed Jesus to be an impostor. He believed the new movement of Christianity was a wicked farce and that it ought to be put down. He believed he was serving God in his effort to destroy the movement. His conversion changed his creed. As he was on his way to Damascus to persecute Christians he met Jesus and fell under the spell of His masterful touch. A divine work was wrought within him, and his opinions were changed. He gladly became the bondsman of Jesus whom he had been persecuting. He was the greatest man Christianity has ever produced. His wonderful life was the result of his creed.

The Jews have a creed. On account of this creed they reject Christ and will have nothing to do with Christianity.

The Mohammeds have a creed. It affects their lives and conduct. They believe God to be the great Supreme Being. They know nothing of the holiness of the character of God, and therefore are without purity of life. Their idea of God leads them to propagate their religion by force and the sword.

The Hindu mother in India has a creed. She believes there is a god of the Ganges River who demands the sacrifice of her faint child. Here belief causes her to throw her child into the river. We call that murder; she calls it worship. She is sincere, but wrong.

The creed of the Germans found expression in the world war. It was her creed in action that threw the world into the horrible cataclysm of blood. Her doctrine that "Might makes right" caused her to set aside treaties and ignore international laws.

The Christian Scientist has his creed. A foolish creed, but a creed nevertheless.

The Roman Catholic has his creed. They place great emphasis on what they call the transcendence of God. God is far away. Man cannot deal directly with Him. They believe that God has invested the Church with the power to save souls. Because of this belief they have invented ecclesiastical machinery with which to save souls. This machinery consists in part of the rosary and the seven sacraments. The seven sacraments are baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, marriage and ordination. To be saved a man must be a member of the Roman Catholic Church and have at least five of these sacraments administered to him. Marriage and ordination are mutually exclusive. If a man marries he cannot be ordained. Every Catholic must have these other five sacraments. This makes salvation merely mechanical. This belief affects their character and conduct and destroys morality. That is why in purely Catholic countries the morals of the people are so low.

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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,"* Ezekiel 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.