

The Wrath of the Lord

Isaiah 34

Is. 34:1-2 Draw near, O nations, to hear, and give attention, O peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it. For the Lord is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their host; he has devoted them to destruction, has given them over for slaughter.

I. The Reality of God's Wrath

Is. 34:1-2 Draw near, O nations, to hear, and give attention, O peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that fills it; the world, and all that comes from it. For the Lord is enraged against all the nations, and furious against all their host; he has devoted them to destruction, has given them over for slaughter.

רָצַח "wrath" emphasizes an internal position of condemnation and displeasure with someone or something.

רָחַם "rage" emphasizes emotional expression of this displeasure.

Gen. 6:12-13 And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth.'

Gen. 19:12-13 Then the men said to Lot, 'Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city, bring them out of the place. For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it.'

Gen. 19:24-25 Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

Num. 16:44-46 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Get away from the midst of this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.' And they fell on their faces. And Moses said to Aaron, 'Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from the Lord; the plague has begun.'

Judges 2:12-14 And they abandoned the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the Lord to anger. They abandoned the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth. So the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.

Is. 34:3 Their slain shall be cast out, and the stench of their corpses shall rise; the mountains shall flow with their blood.

Is. 34:4 All the host of heaven 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.

Rev. 6:12-14 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Rev. 6:15- 17 Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 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, for the great day of their wrath has come,** and who can stand?'

Is. 13:9-11 Behold, the **day of the Lord comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,** to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. 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. I will punish the world 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.

Zeph. 1:15-17 **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, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. **I will bring distress on mankind, so that they shall walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the Lord;** their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.

Zeph. 3:8 "Therefore wait for me," declares the Lord, "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.**"

Nahum 1:2 **The Lord is a jealous and avenging God;** the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies.

Nahum 1:5-6 **The mountains quake before him; the hills melt;** the earth heaves before him, the world and all who dwell in it. Who can stand before his indignation? Who can endure the heat of his anger? His wrath is poured out like fire, and the rocks are broken into pieces by him.



Rev. 20:10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.**

Rev. 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish principles reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hellfire, if it were not for God's restraints. There is laid in the very nature of carnal men, a foundation for the torments of hell. There are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are the beginnings of hellfire. These principles are active and powerful, exceedingly violent in their nature, and if it were not for the restraining hand of God upon them, they would soon break out, they would flame out after the same manner as the same corruptions, the same enmity does in the hearts of damned souls, and would beget the same torments as they do in them.¹

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II. The Basis for God's Wrath

Is. 34:5-8 For My sword has drunk its fill in the heavens; **behold, it descends for judgment** upon Edom, upon the people I have devoted to destruction. The Lord has a sword; it is sated with blood; it is gorged with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in the land of Edom. Wild oxen shall fall with them, and young steers with the mighty bulls. Their land shall drink its fill of blood, and their soil shall be gorged with fat. **For the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.**

Is. 13:9-11 Behold, the day of the Lord comes, **cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,** to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. 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. **I will punish the world 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.

Rom. 1:18 For **the wrath of God** is revealed from heaven against **all ungodliness and unrighteousness** of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

Rom. 2:8 but for those who are **self-seeking and do not obey the truth,** but obey unrighteousness, there will be **wrath and fury.**

Eph. 5:5-6 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Heb. 12:28-29 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, **with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.**

¹ <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.sinners.html>

III. The Inevitability of God's Wrath

Is. 34:16 Seek and read from the book of the Lord: Not one of these shall be missing; none shall be without her mate. For the mouth of the Lord has commanded, and his Spirit has gathered them.

2 Pet. 3:3-4 ...knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.'

- The world was created and is sustained by the Word of God. God can destroy it at any moment. The proof of this is the Flood, by which God destroyed the first humanity.

2 Pet. 3:5-7 For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But **by the same word** the heavens and earth that now exist **are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.**

- God's time scale is different from man's. What seems too long to humans is merely a moment to God.

2 Pet. 3:8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- God's patience has a purpose—the salvation of the people He has prepared, who will make up the Church, the Bride of the Son.

2 Pet. 3:9-10 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

And it is not only a doctrine of Isaiah himself, but a biblical doctrine universally, that God will destroy the present world as soon as the measure of the sin which culminates in unbelief, and in the persecution of the congregation of the faithful, shall be really full.²

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. It is true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are constantly rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward.

If God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God, would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.³

² Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F. (1996). *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Vol. 7, p. 345). Hendrickson.

³ <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/edwards/sermons.sinners.html>

Rom. 5:9-10 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall **we be saved by him from the wrath of God**. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Is. 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

John. 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, **but the wrath of God remains on him**.

John. 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but **whoever does not believe is condemned already**, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

1 Фec. 1:9-10 For 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, and **to wait** for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, **Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come**.