

May 12, 2015

## The Timing of Divine Wrath

Romans 1:18b (NASB), “**is revealed**”

The second feature of God’s wrath that we see here in Romans 1:18 is the timing of His wrath. The timing of God’s wrath is seen in the fact that his wrath “**is revealed.**” This might better be rendered as “constantly revealed.” The Greek word that is used here is *apohalupto* and it is translated as “**revealed**” and it has the basic meaning of uncovering, bringing to light, or making something known.

God’s wrath has always been revealed to fallen and sinful mankind and is repeatedly demonstrated throughout Scripture. We see this in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve trusted the serpent’s word over the Word of God. The result was the immediate sentence of death not just for Adam and Eve but for all of their descendants as well. The earth itself was cursed as a result of sin and man’s fall. God’s wrath was also revealed in the Flood and in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. His wrath was revealed in the drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. We see His wrath in the curse of law upon every transgression and the institution of the sacrificial system to pay for those sins. We even see the wrath of God in the imperfect laws men create to deter and punish wrongdoers as these laws, as imperfect as they are, reflect the perfect and righteous wrath of God.

The culmination of God’s wrath up to this point was of course the revelation of God’s wrath which Christ bore on the cross of Calvary. You see God hates sin so intensely and requires that a penalty be paid so much that He allowed His perfect, beloved Son to be put to death as the only means by which fallen mankind might be redeemed from sin’s curse.

The British commentator Geoffrey Wilson said, “God is not an idle spectator of world events; He is dynamically active in human affairs. The conviction of sin is constantly punctuated by Divine judgment.” Historian J.A. Froude wrote, “One lesson, and only one, history may be said to repeat with distinctness; that the world is built somehow on moral foundations; that in the long run, it is ill with the wicked.”

So why do so many of the wicked prosper? Why is it that they seem to do evil with impunity and never seem to be any worse off? The answer is found in Romans 2:5, “**But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.**” Sometimes God’s wrath is delayed but while it is delayed His bowl of judgment is being filled up and is therefore increasing judgment for increased sin. They are then only storing up wrath for the Day of Judgment.

The great Donald Grey Barnhouse once recalled the story of a group of godly farmers who were irritated one Sunday morning by a neighbor's plowing his field across from their church. Noise from this man's tractor interrupted the worship service, and, as it turned out, the man had purposely chosen to plow that field on Sunday just so he could disturb the church service. Not only did he do that but he also wrote a letter to the editor of the local paper, asserting that, although he did not respect the Lord or honor the Lord's Day, he had the highest yield per acre of any farm in the county. He asked the editor how Christians could explain that. With considerable insight and wisdom, the editor printed the letter and followed it with the simple comment, "God does not settle all His accounts in the month of October."