

May 14, 2015

## The Source of God's Wrath

Romans 1:18c (NASB), **“from heaven”**

Last week I had attended the Colorado Baptist Convention prayer conference at Cornerstone Church in Lone Tree Colorado. One of the speakers that afternoon and evening was Jeff Iorg the President of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. As we study God's wrath there is one thing he said that applies to our study. He mentioned that he is disturbed when people use the term “my Jesus.” As in “My Jesus” wouldn't do this or “my Jesus” wouldn't do that. “My Jesus” is the Jesus of the Bible and in Revelation 19 Jesus rides on a white horse and it says in verse 11 that **“in righteousness He judges and wages war.”** Far too often we want a Jesus of our own making, one that is the cool hipster Jesus who is pretty much okay with anything we do. We want a Jesus that welcomes and affirms our sin! But that is not the Jesus of Scripture and to ignore that is to ignore Him and to ignore His Word.

These past few days we have been looking at Romans 1:18 and the features of God's wrath. The first feature of His wrath was the quality of His wrath which is Divine; it is **“of God.”** The second feature which we looked at yesterday was the timing of His wrath in that His wrath **“is revealed”** to us and we learned that this is rendered as “constantly revealed.” The third feature of His wrath is the source of His wrath which is **“from heaven.”** God's wrath is revealed to us **“from heaven.”**

Despite Satan's power as **“the prince of the power of the air”** and of this world, the earth is ultimately dominated by heaven and the throne of God. From heaven God's wrath is constantly and dynamically demonstrated and manifested in the world of men.

Paul frequently spoke of God's wrath and indicated it as a specific time and a specific type of wrath. For example in Romans 3:5 there is a definite article so it should read “who inflicts *the* wrath.” In Romans 5:9 Paul writes of our being **“saved from the wrath of God through”** Christ. In Romans 12:19 he writes of our leaving **“room for the wrath of God.”** In Romans 13:5 Paul says that believers are being subject to God **“not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake.”** In 1 Thessalonians 1:10 he assures believers that Jesus delivers them **“from the wrath to come.”**

Heaven reveals wrath in two ways; through His moral order and through His personal intervention. When God created the world He built into it certain moral and physical laws that govern the world. For example if you jump from a tall building you will eventually hit the ground. The moral equivalent of this is that if you deviate from God's moral law, you *will* fall into God's judgment. Now in this God is not specifically intervening but He is allowing the law of moral cause and effect to work.

The second way then is through His personal and direct intervention. God is not some impersonal cosmic force as some would have Him be who sets the universe in motion to run its course. God's wrath is executed exactly according to His divine will and purpose.

In the Old Testament there are some Hebrew words that convey the personal nature and character of God's anger. *Hara* is used 91 times and it refers to becoming heated, burning within and with fury, this word is frequently used to describe God as in Genesis 18:30. *Haron* is used 41 times and it refers to divine anger and means "a burning, fierce wrath" as in Exodus 15:7. *Qatsaph* is used 34 times and it means bitter and is used for example in Deuteronomy 1:34. *Hemeth* refers to venom or poison and is frequently associated with jealousy and is used most often of God as in 2 Kings 22:13. In Psalm 7:11 David wrote, "**God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.**" That word "**indignation**" is the Hebrew word *za'am* and it means to foam at the mouth and is used 21 times in the Old Testament and was often used to describe God's wrath.

So whether it is the cause and effect wrath or the personal fury of God that is meted out, wrath originates in heaven.