

07-10-16

Series: The Book of Romans

# Sin and Condemnation: The World's need to get right with God (35)

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[Romans 1:18-3:20](#)

(Continuation from 07/03/16)

## A. God's Case Against All Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men: Why God Shows Wrath, [Romans 1:18-23](#)

[\(Romans 1:18-23\)](#) **Introduction:** the message of this passage is perfectly clear: why God reveals and executes wrath upon men.

1. **The subjects of God's wrath (v.18).**
2. **Men reject that "within" them—conscience and thoughts (v.19).**
3. **Men reject that "without" them—the signs of creation (v.20).**
4. **Men do not honor God nor give thanks (v.21).**
5. **Men become prideful and turn away from God (v.22-23).**

### 1. [\(Romans 1:18\)](#) **God's Wrath—Ungodly—Unrighteous: the subjects of God's wrath.**

[Romans 1:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

Note **three points**.

1. The wrath of God is a reality (see below [Deeper Study # 1, God's Wrath—Romans 1:18](#) for discussion).

### DEEPER STUDY # 1

[Romans 1:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.”

**(1:18) God's Wrath (*orge*):** “anger”, **not** an agitated outburst of violence. It is not the anger that quickly blazes up and just as quickly fades away, not the anger that arises solely from emotion.

Rather, **it is decisive anger**. It is an anger that has arisen from a thoughtful decision, an anger that arises from the mind much more than from the

emotions. When used of God, it is always an anger that is *righteous and just and good*. It is an anger that stands against the sin and evil, violence and slaughter, immorality and injustices of men. It is an anger that abhors and hates sin and evil and that dishes out a just revenge and equal justice.

However, it is an anger that is *deeply felt*; in fact, it must be felt, for evil and corruption must be opposed and erased from the face of the earth if there is to be a “**new heavens and a new earth.**” And God has promised a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness and perfection dwell forever.

1. There is God’s anger in judgment.

**Matthew 3:7 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup>“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

**Romans 2:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“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.”

**Romans 2:8-9 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup>“But to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation.

<sup>9</sup> *There will be* tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”

**Romans 3:5-6 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.)

<sup>6</sup> May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?”

**Romans 5:9 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup>“Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.”

**Ephesians 2:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup>“Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

**Ephesians 5:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup>“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

**Colossians 3:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup>“For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience.”

**1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup>“For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living

and true God,

<sup>10</sup> and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *that is* Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:9 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> “For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Psalms 2:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup> “Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!”

2. There is God’s anger with those who disobey the Lord Jesus.

**John 3:36 (NASB)**

<sup>36</sup> “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

3. There was God’s anger with Israel in the wilderness.

**Hebrews 3:11 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> “AS I SWORE IN MY WRATH, ‘THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.’”

4. There was the anger of the Lord Jesus at man’s hardness of heart.

**Mark 3:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> “After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He *said* to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored.”

2. God’s wrath is revealed from heaven. God reveals and shows wrath in four ways. (See below note # 1, God’s Wrath—Romans 1:24-32 for discussion.)

## Note # 1

**Romans 1:24-32 (NASB)**

<sup>24</sup> “Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.

<sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>26</sup> For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,

<sup>27</sup> and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due

penalty of their error.

<sup>28</sup> And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

<sup>29</sup> being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are gossips,*

<sup>30</sup> slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,

<sup>31</sup> without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;

<sup>32</sup> and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”

**(Romans 1:24-32) Introduction— God’s Wrath— Judgment:** Scripture says “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven” (**Romans 1:18**). This particular passage discusses the four ways that God reveals and shows His wrath.

Note **three things**.

1. All four ways concern judgments that come upon man. That is, the wrath of God is exercised and falls upon man because of his ungodliness and unrighteousness.

2. All four ways have to do with history, with human experience, with a moral universe.

That is, God’s wrath is revealed from heaven day by day...

- 1) throughout history.
- 2) in man’s experience.
- 3) within a moral universe.

3. Three of the judgments are present judgments; they take place today in the lives of men (**Romans 1:24-31**).

4. The fourth judgment is future and is to be the final judgment upon men (**Romans 1:32**).

**Romans 1:32 (NASB)**

<sup>32</sup>“And although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”

3. The subjects of God’s wrath are twofold. God shows His wrath and becomes angry with **two classes of men**:

a. Men who are ungodly and unrighteous.

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- ⇒ The “**ungodly**” (*asebeia*) fail to love and obey God. They are those who do not live as God lives. They are not like God, not holy and righteous and pure. They do not work at developing a godly nature, do not honor God by word or deed, do not worship and obey God as the only living and true God, do not reverence Him by doing what He says. On the contrary, the ungodly are those who do what they want when they want, who may give lip-service to God, but who ignore Him in their day-to-day lives.
- ⇒ The “**unrighteous**” (*adikia*) fail to love others. They are those who do not live with men as they should. They act against men: cheating, stealing, lying, abusing, enslaving, destroying and taking advantage of them.

**The point is clear:** God is angry with such men—men who are ungodly and unrighteous—men who...

- 1) do not love and obey God.
- 2) do not love and treat others as they should.

**Romans 1:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup>“**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.**”

- b. Men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. The word “**suppress**” (*katechontōn*) means “**to hold down, suppress, repress, stifle, hinder.**”

Men know the truth from **three sources**:

- 1) ⇒ from nature (cp. [Romans 1:20](#)).

**Romans 1:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup>“**For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**”

- 2) ⇒ from reason and conscience (cp. [Romans 1:18](#); [Romans 2:15](#)).

**Romans 1:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup>“**For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.**”

**Romans 2:15 (NASB)**

<sup>15</sup>“**In that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them.**”

- 3) ⇒ from Scripture ([John 5:39](#); [2 Timothy 3:16](#)).

**John 5:39 (NASB)**

<sup>39</sup>“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.”

**2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup>“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”

Yet despite having access to the truth, they ignore, neglect, and even push the truth aside, doing all they can to avoid and get rid of it. Why? Because they want to live as *they* wish and not as God says. They want to live unrighteous lives, to taste and feel and see and have all the stimulating things they want.

**But note what Scripture says:** they “**suppress the truth in unrighteousness**”; that is, they know the truth while they go about living in unrighteousness. They are without excuse.

**2 Thessalonians 2:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup>“And with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.”

**Again the point is clear:** God is angry with men...

- 1) who are ungodly, who do not love and obey God.
- 2) who are unrighteous, who do not love and treat others as they should.
- 3) who hold the truth while they live ungodly and unrighteous lives.

**Titus 2:11-14 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup>“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

<sup>12</sup>instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,

<sup>13</sup>looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

<sup>14</sup>who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”

In the brief scope of one verse ([Romans 1:18](#)), Paul presents six features that characterize God’s wrath: 1) its quality, 2) its time, 3) its source, 4) its extent 5) nature, and 6) its cause.