

## The Attributes of God

### Attribute #26

1. Wrath - The wrath of God is His eternal detestation of all unrighteousness. It is the displeasure and indignation of Divine equity against evil. The wrath of God is as much a divine perfection as any of the other attributes. It must be so, for there is no blemish whatever, not the slightest defect in the character of God. That Divine wrath is one of the perfections of God is declared in the following:  

A. Romans 1:18	B. Deut. 32:39-41
C. Psalm 95:11	D. Rev. 6:16
E. 1 Thess. 1:10	F. Rev. 19:1-3
G. Psalm 1:5; 7:11	H. Matt. 3:7
I. 2 Cor. 5:11	
2. There are more references in the Scripture to God's fury, anger, and wrath than there are to his love and tenderness. Because He is holy, He hates all sin; and because He hates all sin, His anger burns against the sinner (Psalm 7:11).
3. In Romans 1:18, we are told "*The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness*". Why didn't Paul say that the love of God is revealed from heaven?
  - A. So we will recognize our deep spiritual need and be prepared to receive the knowledge of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior, where alone we can receive it.
  - B. It teaches us to present the gospel as God's command to repentance (Acts 17:30).
4. The wrath of God in the Old Testament
  - A. More than twenty words are use to express wrath as it relates to God Himself; many other words relate only to human anger. The nearly six hundred important verses are not unrelated but deal with the most basic themes of the Old Testament.
    1. The giving of the Law
    2. Life in the land
    3. Disobedience on the part of God's people
    4. Eschatology – the end times
  - B. The first uniquely biblical characteristic of the divine wrath is consistency.

1. It is not arbitrary but a consistent and unyielding resistance to sin and evil.
  - a. Ex.22: 22-24 = brought on by sins against others, widows and orphans
  - b. Ex.32: 10-12 = brought on by sins against God
  - c. Job 42: 7 = provoked against his friends because of their foolish and arrogant counsel.
  - d. Deut. 29: 23-28 = against Sodom and Gomorrah because of their idolatry
  - e. Ezra 8:22 = against all that forsake Him
2. Notice, because the sin which calls forth the wrath of God is essentially a turning away from Him or rejecting Him, wrath is something people choose for themselves.
  - a. Thus, we can say that the wrath of God is that perfection of the divine nature into which we throw ourselves by our rebellion.
  - b. If we will not have God's love and grace, we will have God's wrath, for God cannot look tolerantly upon evil.
3. God's wrath has a judicial element to it. Since justice is never fully attained in this world, the OT writers tend to look forward to the future day of the perfect outpouring of His wrath against sin, when all accounts will be settled. Because of the accumulation of sin and the increasing need for a final and retributive justice, there is an increasing emphasis upon the future day of God's wrath in the latter books of the OT.
  - a. Nahum 1: 2-3, 6-8
  - b. Psalm 2: 5-9
  - c. Amos 5: 18-20
5. The wrath of God in the New Testament
  - A. There are two main words for wrath.
    1. *thumos* = to rush along fiercely, to be in a heat of violence, or to breathe violently; a panting rage
    2. *orge* = to grow ripe for something; that which has been building for a long period of time; it applies to rulers who must avenge injustice.

3. The biblical pattern denotes not so much a sudden flaring up of passion, which is soon over, as a strong and settled opposition to all that is evil arising out of God's very nature.
- B. New Testament writers speak of both a present wrath and the wrath to come.
  1. Present – Romans 1:18-32 = refers to a continuing disclosure of the wrath of God against wickedness at all periods of history and in all places.
    - a. a darkening of the understanding wherever the truth about God is rejected (v.21)
    - b. the debasing of one's spiritual awareness and a corresponding debasement of one's person (v.23)
    - c. sexual previsions. lies, envies. Hatred, murder, strife, deceit, disobedience to parents, and other consequences (v.24-31)
  2. Future – Paul speaks of a future day of wrath as the evidence of that future wrath in sin's present effects.
    - a. Romans 2: 4-5
    - b. 1 Thess. 1:10; 2: 16; 5:9
6. The wrath of God satisfied
  - A. Illustrated in the life of Moses; Exodus 19, 20 and 32.
    1. The Israelites became restless because Moses took so long on Mt. Sinai, so they built a golden calf (Exodus 32:1-4).
    2. Moses offered himself as a substitute to be the recipient of God's judgment (Ex. 32:31-32).
    3. Moses could not save his people let alone himself.
    4. God had already shown Moses that He was willing to accept an innocent substitute in place of the just death of the sinner by instructing Moses in the newly instituted sacrifice of the Passover; thus, Moses knew that His wrath could fall on a substitute.
    5. Gal. 4: 4-5
      - 1). On the basis of Christ's death, in which He himself received the full judicial outpouring of God's wrath against sin, those who believe now come to experience not wrath (though we richly deserve it) but grace abounding.
  - B. God does not eliminate wrath; wrath is still stored up against the unrepentant. But grace does eliminate the necessity for everyone to experience it.
7. Our response to the wrath of God

- A. It is a perfection of the Divine character upon which we should meditate.
  - 1. So that our heart's will understand the heinousness of all sins, not just the most visible or physical ones (Romans 1:18)
  - 2. To create within us a true fear in our souls for God (Heb.12: 28-29; Luke 12:5)
  - 3. To produce within us fervent praise for our having been delivered from the wrath to come (1 Thess. 1:10; Psalm 103:3; Rev. 19:1)
  - 4. To motivate us to be ministry-minded, to persuade men and women to come to Christ (Eph. 2:12; John 3:18; Rev. 20:11-15)
- B. Faithfulness to Christ and His glory demands that we speak as plainly about Hell as about Heaven (2 Cor. 5:11).