

RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

1. Definition: In the Old Testament the terms for anger more often indicate the wrath of God than that of man. There are words used exclusively for the anger of God, such as:
 - A. CHARAR, or CHARAR APH- burn, scorch. Ezekiel 24:10-11; Job 30:30.
 - B. ANAPH, be angry, Psalm 60:30, Isaiah 12:1, APH is nose anger, face anger, in Job 7:23 the noun is APH.
 - C. ZAAM – anger - Isaiah 30:30, Lamentations 2:6; Job 40:11; Isaiah 13:5; 26:30; Jeremiah 10:10.
 - D. Other words for anger in the Old Testament used for man and God’s anger are:
 - 1) ZAAM for man means to foam at the mouth, revenge. Proverbs 24:24 and Jeremiah 15:17.
 - 2) ZAAPH, quick breathing of someone who is angry, sad countenance, Lamentations 2:6; Isaiah 30:30; Micah 7:9.
 - 3) CHAMAM to become warm, Psalm 39:4; Exodus 16:21; Isaiah 44:15-16.
 - 4) KAAS, turbulent in the mind, commotion in the mentality, indignation, Nehemiah 4:1; Proverbs 12:6; Psalm 85:5.
 - 5) QETSEPH, Deuteronomy 29:28; 2 Kings 3:27; Numbers 17:10 “grumbings, and Ecclesiastes 5:16.
2. The idea of God’s anger in the Old Testament was the fact that Israel was to worship only Jehovah. When they did not and chased after idols or demonism, then God’s anger was stirred against them.
 - A. They rejected His righteousness and His love.
 - B. God’s anger is not emotion as we know it but rather a “process” of His justice against that which is unjust.
 - C. God’s justice does not cause Him guilt or remorse because it acts only in judgment against outside things, apart from Himself. God’s justice does not

condemn Him because of His perfect righteousness.

- D. Since God is perfect He never feels or senses guilt, misery, or imperfection; He is never the object of His own anger!
 - E. Only those beings who violate His perfect justice are the objects of His anger, or righteous indignation!
3. God's anger is directed towards Israel, Exodus 32; Numbers 11:1, 10, 22; 13:25, 14:38.
- A. His anger is expressed at their evil from the conquering of the land to the Exile (Joshua 22:20 to 1 Samuel 6:19; 28:18; 2 Samuel 6:7).
 - B. Deuteronomy speaks of God's wrath many times, Deuteronomy 1:34-37; 9:8, 19.
 - C. Chronicles also speaks of His wrath, 1 Chronicles 13:10-2 Chronicles 19:2.
 - D. God's anger from time to time was expressed against an individual such as:
 - 1) Moses, Exodus 3:14, 24; Deuteronomy 1:37.
 - 2) Aaron, Deuteronomy 9:20.
 - 3) Miriam, Numbers 12:9
 - 4) Nadab and Abihu, Leviticus 10:6.
 - 5) Kings and prophets, 1 Samuel 15, 2 Kings 23:26; Jeremiah 21:1-7.
 - 6) A whole group of people because of one man's sins.
Achan's theft in Joshua 7.
David's census in 2 Samuel 24.
 - E. The central theme of the prophet Amos was the wrath of God before the exile, Amos 3:2; 5:18.
 - F. Jeremiah and Ezekiel also told of God's wrath upon His people for their disobedience, Jeremiah 4:4, 8, 26; 7:20; Ezekiel 5:15, 6:12; 7:8; 8:18.
 - G. The prophets during and after the exile also saw the outworking of God's justice, Isaiah 42:25; 51:17; 54:8; Zechariah 1:2; Haggai 1:5-11.
 - H. There were times when God even used His wrath on Gentile nations and sent them a prophet to warn them. Jonah's ministry to Assyria. He judged Babylon, Isaiah 13:3, 5, 6, 13.

- I. The point is that there is no nation on earth who is not subject to God's wrath, Deuteronomy 32:22; Jeremiah 10:10; Isaiah 13:9.
3. There are metaphors in the Bible to describe the use of justice in the anger expressions of God.
 - A. Fire: fire burns through His nose as in Jeremiah 15:14; Psalm 18:8; fire in His tongue, Isaiah 30:27; breath of fire, Isaiah 30:33.
 - B. Storms, Jeremiah 30:23; Isaiah 30:30.
 - C. Pouring out: drinking of wrath, Hosea 5:10, Jeremiah 10:25, Nahum 1:6.
 - D. Drinking, Job 21:20; wine of wrath, Jeremiah 25:15; cup of wrath, Isaiah 51:17, 22.
 - E. Arm of God, Isaiah 30:30; 63:5; Jeremiah 21:5.
 - F. Summary: These outpourings of wrath are for judgment against violations of God's will for a nation. God always pours out His anger when His justice and love are rejected.
 4. God's wrath may be poured out for the purpose of the angelic conflict. He may allow Satan to punish a believer to prove that righteousness in the soul of a mature believer is more powerful than evil.
 - A. David, 1 Chronicles 21:1, but David failed the initial test and passed the final exam, for he chose the punishment of God's wrath over man's depraved revenge. David knew that God was perfect in His allotment of anger and discipline, and would only discipline him in a perfect way, and just enough to teach and train David.

PRINCIPLE: God's wrath is used in this way to TRAIN a believer in the ways of justice.

- B. Job also was allowed to be punished, not by God's wrath but by Satan's revenge. Job did not understand the angelic conflict and this type of testing so he thought he had broken some of God's laws. He would not curse God, Job 16:9; 19:11.

PRINCIPLE: God will not use His anger against a believer in an

unfair manner; rather, He will allow that believer to be tempted by Satan's revenge tactics. Now once in the book of Job did God's wrath hit Job; it was Satan's revenge all the way.

Job was disoriented to God's ways in testing a mature believer so he tried to figure out why God put Him through it, Job 3:11; 7:20; 10:18; 13:24, he thought God considered him an enemy. But Job had hope in God.

5. It was God's wrath that acted through justice that destroyed the tower of Babel, Genesis 11.
 - A. God claimed to be the Creator and Ruler of the world.
 - B. Arrogant man claimed to be the creator of his own environment and the ruler of his own destiny.
 - C. The two views are incompatible and therefore God judged them and tore down their "United Nations" building.
6. God does not suddenly lash out and express His anger at unrighteous men, but rather His love demand that He use grace and warn man of his false ways first.
 - A. This is called the longsuffering of God, Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Nahum 1:3; Isaiah 48:9; Psalm 103:8.
 - B. God warns a nation through individual blows, Jeremiah 4:4; Amos 4:6 are warnings from His prophets to the people... Blow one.
 - C. He gives people space for repentance and growth... Blow two.
 - D. He even restrains the enemies of His people while they are deciding what they are going to do, Jeremiah 15:15; Psalm 7:6; 77:0...Blow three.
 - E. Even when the people are in exile God's wrath is not fully unleashed so that a positive remnant will survive (Isaiah 40:2, Psalm 103:9).
Isaiah 54:8-10, "In a little wrath I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting grace I will have compassion on you, says the Lord your Redeemer."
7. Once the anger of God is unleashed upon a nation then there is nothing anyone can do to stop it until it has run its course. Only when God is ready to stop it will it stop. No sudden turning to God, no revival, no sacrifices to a deity will stop it. It is too late. If that nation does not hear the warnings before judgment starts, then

it does not have the opportunity to stop it once it begins.

- A. Numbers 16:44ff, Moses prescribed a rite of atonement to stop the disaster, but the Lord stopped when He was ready to stop, and 14,700 people died.
- B. Prayers for the removal of God's wrath are seen in the Bible in Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 10:24; Psalm 6:1; 38:1; Jeremiah 30:11, do not remove the wrath but show the people's attitude to repent.
- C. Moses prayers for apostate Israel under the wrath of God: Exodus 32:11, Numbers 11:1ff.
- D. God may limit His anger if He desires to, Numbers 14: Deuteronomy 9, or completely remove it, Numbers 11; 2 Samuel 24.
- E. But if the evil is widespread among a nation, then God's wrath will continue until the evil is destroyed completely, Amos 7:8: 8:2.
- F. There is even a time when God does not want His people to pray for the removal of His wrath, Jeremiah 7:16. When this occurs then nothing can stop the destruction God has planned, Zechariah 8:18; 14:14.
- G. Once God's anger is turned loose the believer must orient to the reasons for it in history and adjust to it without bitterness.

PRINCIPLE: God's anger is not blind rage but has a definite purpose in history and when His purpose is completed then His anger will cease. God never loses control of Himself.

PRINCIPLE: The believer can rest in God's anger for it is within the framework of His justice and will not simply boil over into something uncontrollable. He is also a God of mercy (Isaiah 54:8-10; Jeremiah 31:20, Isaiah 12).

8. The anger of God is controlled by the justice and love of God, but man has to be controlled by the Holy Spirit to express God's type of anger; the Greek word is ORGE.

- A. Righteous indignation is anger at something that God hates. Jesus expresses this in Mark 3:5, righteous indignation at religion, John 11:33, 38.

- B. Paul expresses this anger, Acts 17:16, righteous indignation at unbelief.
- C. Anger of righteousness is expressed in Romans 1:18 towards atheism and Homosexuality. Believers are to leave vengeance to God in Romans 12:19. God hates criminal activity and established law and punishment for it in Romans 13:4.
- D. Anger is right for God, for it is controlled by justice and love. But anger in man is opposite to love and they cannot exist at the same time (1 Corinthians 13:5). The Holy Spirit teaches man how to express God's anger through the Word of God.
- E. Man can express anger at unbelief, heresy, and legalism (Mark 3). Other areas include religion (Romans 1-2), crime (Romans 13:4) for these are things that God hates.