

The Great Day of Their Wrath

by Al Martin

The sermon emphasizes the reality of God's wrath, both past and present, and the certainty of a climactic, awesome, final and utterly unique day of wrath that is yet to come.

Duration: 1:06:56

Scripture: Matthew 3:7, Matthew 3:9, John 3:36, John 14:6, Romans 5:9, Ephesians 4:11-12, Ephesians 5:9

Topics: "Divine Wrath", "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing the impending day of wrath. He explains that every person is naturally liable to this coming wrath. However, the preacher emphasizes that Jesus Christ is the only one who can deliver us from this wrath. He urges the listeners to repent and believe in order to be saved from the fury of the coming wrath. The preacher also highlights the seriousness of sin and the madness of ignoring the signposts that point towards heaven and forgiveness.

Transcript

We began what will be a relatively brief series of messages entitled, Simple Signposts to the Celestial City. It's been my very clearly stated purpose in this series of studies to direct your attention to texts of scripture in which the great and fundamental concerns of the soul are addressed in a very forthright, explicit, and powerful way. The issues of how to be right with God, how to have our sins forgiven, how to be ready to die, and to go to judgment.

And my purpose in bringing this series has been twofold. First, that God in His mercy might bless the preaching of this more concentrated gospel truth to bring some of you to repentance and faith. That whereas you may have picked up in your home, in your Sunday school class, in the ordinary ministries of the Word, various strands of gospel truth, that by these concentrated concerns with respect to those truths, God might be pleased to make the gospel the power of God unto even your salvation.

And then my second purpose has been to further equip you, the people of God, for the work of service, even that of bearing witness to your faith in Christ, seeking to point others to Christ, consistent with your particular gifts and opportunities. For according to Ephesians chapter four, this is one of the primary purposes for which Christ gives pastors and teachers to His church, namely that they might equip the saints unto service work. And surely to have a working knowledge of these basic gospel texts is to be better equipped for the wonderful service of bearing witness to the truth of the gospel.

Now, the five previous signposts that we have considered have been primarily positive statements encouraging us to look to the Lord Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life, to believe on the Lord Jesus in the confidence that so believing we shall be saved. We have looked at texts that have set forth the wonderful truths that for sinners who need Christ, Christ is a suitable and an accessible Savior and that God commands you to repent and to believe the gospel. However, tonight I want us to look at a very sobering signpost that is not positive in its overall thrust, but rather is heavy.

It is foreboding. It is sobering. And yet, nonetheless, it is one of those signposts which God has placed in His word and the scriptures and Christian experience both join in witnessing to the fact that many of God's people were initially nudged or even driven into the way of seeking salvation in earnest, not by the beauty of Christ, not by the glories of gospel privileges, but by the fear and dread of the wrath of God.

And it is right that that subject then should occupy our minds as we further develop some of these simple signposts to the celestial city. And the one that we will be considering tonight is found in the book of the Revelation, chapter 6, and it is the closing words of the paragraph which begins in verse 12. And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood.

And the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains.

And they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand? And as we consider this sixth signpost to the celestial city, I want us to envision it as a signpost with these bold letters engraven upon it. For the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand? The great day of their wrath is come.

The there refers to the living God and to the Lamb who shares His throne. The great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand? And as we think of the signpost etched with those letters, bold and clear to our eyes, as we draw closer to the signpost, I want us to see four simple statements engraved beneath the major words of the signpost. For the great day of their wrath is come, and who is able to stand? And the first of those four simple statements is this.

A unique day of God's wrath is surely coming. A unique day of God's wrath is surely coming. In our signpost itself, we read, for the great day of their wrath is come.

According to the Scriptures, God's wrath has been displayed in times past in most terrifying ways. How anyone can read his Bible and say, God is love, all love and nothing but love, and the very thought of God having a pure and a holy wrath expressed in taking vengeance upon sinners because of their sin is abhorrent and foreign to the God of the Bible. How anyone can state that and so unashamedly display his ignorance is beyond my understanding.

For according to the Scriptures, God's wrath has been displayed in times past in terrifying ways. I remind you of just a couple of them. Remember the ancient flood when God spared one man and his family and tens and hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, were blotted out in one horrible stroke of the unleashed

fury of the wrath of Almighty God.

Think of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plains when in one day God rained hell out of heaven and consumed those cities in his wrath and anger against them for their horrible perversions, for their wretched abandonment to bestiality and to every form of sexual deviation and carnal indulgence of their flesh and the smoke of those cities God himself says is to be a constant reminder of a day of coming and future wrath. Think of the wrath of God as we have heard it described times without number in our reading through the prophets when God speaks of his fury to be let loose upon his people, a fury manifested in their going into captivity under horrible circumstances, when God speaks of mothers eating the flesh of their own children in the midst of their starvation, people drinking their own refuse and eating their own dung. Horrible manifestations of the wrath of God upon a nation that turned away from the God of the covenant.

According to the Scriptures, God's wrath has not only been displayed in times past in terrifying ways, but God's wrath is being presently displayed in undeniable ways. We heard a few weeks ago in the exposition brought to us by Pastor Pezzino in Romans chapter 1, the very clear teaching that God's wrath is being presently displayed in undeniable ways. The wrath of God, Romans 1 18, is revealed, not it shall be in the future, but is presently being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hinder, who suppress, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness.

And that wrath is manifested specifically in this context by God giving men over to the vile passions of their hearts. And when we find ourselves unable to turn on a radio and even to get the weather without hearing the most sordid details of the most sickening manifestations of moral perversion, surely we see Romans 1 being lived out undeniably before our very eyes. The wrath of God presently displayed in undeniable ways.

However, there is yet a climactic, awesome, final and utterly unique day of wrath that is yet to come. And I want you to look with me at several texts that clearly point to this climactic, awesome, final and utterly unique day of coming wrath. In Romans chapter 2 and in verse 5, the apostles speaking to those who despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance, who misread God's forbearance as His indulgence, not knowing that the goodness of God is intended to lead them to repentance.

And so by going on under the canopy of God's goodness, mistaking it for God's indifference to sin, what do they do? Verse 5, But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. He says that such people, those of you who sit among us this very night, who bask under the continual manifestations of the goodness and long suffering of God, and rather than be humbled and broken and seek God in penitence, you become harder and harder in your sins, thinking that God's forbearance is an unprincipled indulgence. And every day you thus live, God says you're putting money in the bank and you will get it with interest.

And it is in the bank of God's righteous anger and wrath. And He says you are heaping up a treasure. But it is a treasure of wrath that will be meted out in the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Here the language is clear that though God's wrath has been manifested in terrible ways in the past in biblical history, though it is being presently manifested as God gives men over to their rejection of the light of His truth and He abandons them to base and vile passions, yet there is a distinctive, unique, awesome, final day of wrath to come described in Romans 2 and verse 5 as the day of wrath and revelation of the

righteous judgment of God. In 1 Thessalonians chapter 1, here the apostle describes it using a little different terminology, describing the conversion of the Thessalonians in verse 9, 1 Thessalonians 1 in verse 9, how that they turned to God from their idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come. Jesus delivers from the wrath to come.

And that terminology, the wrath to come, is a distinct reference to that climactic, awesome, final and utterly unique day in which God will mete out wrath upon sinners in their sin. One other text, Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5, Paul is exhorting the people of God to a life of holiness, positively in the opening two verses, negatively beginning in verse 3, and then as though he anticipates someone saying, but it's not necessary to take this call seriously, is it? Can I not be a Christian and still dabble in moral filth? Notice what he says in verse 5, for this know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no man deceive you with empty words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

As surely as the people of God have a future inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God, those who live in a lifestyle characterized by fornication, uncleanness, or covetousness, or idolatry, have no inheritance in that kingdom. Let no one persuade you otherwise. Such people are slated to experience the coming wrath of God that shall break upon the head of all the sons of disobedience.

So then, as we consider this signpost to the celestial city that says, for their great day of wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand, that there is a unique day of God's wrath is so certain that by prophetic utterance John is able to write, for their great day of wrath is come. It is as certain as the dawning of this day is a certain reality, a matter that is past in our own history, yet by prophetic utterance he can write and say, their great day of wrath is coming. Say what you will.

Think what you will. It matters not. Your mind, your perceptions, your ideas of what is right or proper or what is possible or likable is not the measure of reality.

The measure of reality is the word of the God who cannot lie, and that God has declared that a unique day of His wrath is coming. Now look with me at the second statement under the large letters, and it is this. Each one of us by nature is a legitimate candidate for that coming wrath.

Each one of us in this building from the youngest to the oldest, the youngest to the oldest, each one of us by nature is a legitimate candidate for that coming wrath. Now while the Bible teaches that there will be intensified measures of wrath for certain aggravated sins, Jesus said it will be more tolerable for certain ones in the day of judgment than for others. The Bible speaks of those who will be beaten with many stripes and those beaten with few.

stripes, and I'm fully aware of the biblical doctrine of degrees of punishment in the day of God's wrath. Yet our Bibles teach us that each and every one of us is by nature a legitimate candidate for the wrath of Almighty God. And you say, where is this taught? There is no passage which teaches it with greater clarity than Ephesians chapter 2 verses 1 through 3. The Apostle speaking to all of the believers at Ephesus, drawn from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, both ethnically, religiously, morally, he writes to all of them and says, And you, did he make a lie when you were dead through your trespasses and sins? He describes them in their former pre-converted state as those who were spiritually dead in the realm of their trespasses and their sins.

But they were the walking dead, the active dead. For in verse 2 he says, Wherein, that is, in your trespasses and sins, you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience. Now notice, he moves from speaking to them in terms of you were dead, you once walked, verse 3, among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature, we were naturally children of wrath, even as the rest.

Words could not be more all-encompassing than these words of the Apostle. He speaks of people who are children of wrath, that is, people who are the just objects of God's settled righteous indignation and the determination to execute upon them appropriate punishment. To be a child of wrath is to be such a person, one who is an object of God's settled righteous indignation and his determination to execute appropriate punishment upon the sinner.

Now he says that we were all such and we were such by nature. We were naturally, as surely as natural human beings, we were born to walk on our two feet, to accomplish our tasks with our two hands, to look at objects with our two eyes and to hear with our ears. We were by nature, creatures of two feet, two hands, two eyes, two ears.

So in the same way, simply by being born into this world, we were by nature, children of wrath. We were naturally the objects of God's settled righteous indignation and the determination to execute appropriate punishment upon us. And remember, Paul includes himself, though he was morally upright, touching the external demands of the law, he said, I was blameless, I was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, I was marked by knowledge and by zeal, and no one could point the finger at my life and accuse me of outwardly breaking the commandments of God, and yet he puts himself here saying, we, we were by nature, children of wrath.

And then he says, this is true of all others, even as the rest. So there is this universality of candidacy for the coming wrath of God. And if you ask the question, well, why should that be so? When a little one conceived in the womb and brought forth from that womb as an innocent little child, what has it done to be by nature, a child of wrath? To be one who is the object of God's settled righteous indignation and determination to execute appropriate punishment.

And the answer of the Bible is because of our sin in Adam, we are by nature, children of wrath, because by nature, each of us is conceived, sustaining a relationship to that which Adam did when he sinned in his first transgression. This is fully developed in Romans 5, verses 12 to the end of the chapter. And the truth is epitomized in these words, wherefore, as through one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all sinned.

And when did all sin? We all sinned in our first father, Adam. But to object and say, but Pastor Martin, I did not ask that Adam should represent me, that he should act on my behalf. I did not find myself consulted as to whether or not I agreed with this arrangement.

No, you didn't. Nor was I consulted. But facts are facts.

And almighty God who made Adam and almighty God who purposed that at a given point in human history, you would be conceived and developed in your mother's womb and born and be sitting here. That God decreed such an arrangement. And the word of God says, as in Adam, all die.

And whether you like it, whether you can figure out how it is fair and just and right is not an issue of concern. My friend, don't bang your head on facts. Bow your heart to reveal reality in the Scriptures.

You were by nature. I was by nature a child of wrath, a legitimate candidate for that coming wrath of God. Because I was in Adam and I sinned in Adam and Adam's sin is my sin.

But furthermore, we are by nature children of wrath because of our own individual violations of the law of God. The Scripture says that we go astray from the womb speaking lies. And when we indulge in those sins that are violations of God's law, we read in Ephesians chapter five, for which things say comes the wrath of God upon the sons of what disobedience.

We are sons of disobedience as well as sons of wrath. And we are sons of wrath because we are sons of disobedience. When God says, thou shalt, we say, I will not.

And when God says, thou shalt not, we say, I will. And disobedience is the disposition of our hearts by nature. For the carnal mind is enmity against God.

It is not subject to the law of God. Neither, indeed, can it be. You see, all God needs to do to show us what we're made of is to place His law close to our conscience and exercise His authority and say, thou shalt.

And everything within us by nature rises up and says, I will not. And God says, thou shalt not. And everything within us says, I will.

And so we are, by nature, children of wrath because of our sin in Adam, because of our own individual violations of the law. And thirdly, because of the wicked sin of unbelief, John three thirty six very clearly states that the wrath of God abides upon all who do not believe the son. He that believes on the son hath eternal life, but he that obeyeth not, that is, he that goes on in a course of resolute, determined unbelief which perpetuates that lifestyle of disobedience.

This one shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him. It hangs over him awaiting the coming day of wrath. And if he still lives in unbelief, he lives under the canopy of that wrath, which in the day of wrath shall break down upon his head.

As we look at this signpost together for their great day of wrath is come and who shall be able to stand, see written beneath the bold letters. This first statement, a unique day of God's wrath is coming. Secondly, each one of us by nature is a legitimate candidate for that coming wrath.

I ask you, has that truth of the second statement ever ever become a haunting, pressing, wearisome burden? That's exactly how Bunyan describes Christian leaving the city of destruction, that burden upon his back, that burden which he knew would press him down to hell. Did he remain in the city of destruction? He could no longer work without being distracted by it. He could no longer enjoy the legitimate pleasures of his wife and his family.

And the picture Bunyan gives of Christian is this, that the issue of his being a candidate for the coming wrath was an all-absorbing, unshakably pressing concern. Isn't that the description we were given in Acts chapter two of those who came together for a festive Jewish holiday? They never expected to have their hearts stabbed as with a dagger. But under the preaching of Peter, it says, they were stabbed in their hearts.

And suddenly there was only one concern. And they cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do? Nothing else matters. Forget the next course in the feast.

Forget the friends. Forget the concerns back home. We have murdered the Son of God.

We're exposed to the wrath of God. Men and brethren, what shall we do? This is what the old writers called an anxious as opposed to a complacent soul. They spoke about sleeping sinners and they spoke about awakened sinners.

This is the terminology they were using to underscore this biblical reality. And I ask you, children, young people, teenagers, adults, older men and women, have these realities that grow out of the clear teaching of the Word of God, have they gripped you? Have they so taken hold of you? That like Bunyan's Christian, the things in which you would normally find legitimate repose or delight and diversion, suddenly they've lost all their savor to you. One thing gnaws at you day and night, night and day, in the bedroom, in the bathroom, in the workroom, in the social concourse, at the mall.

It matters not wherever you are. It's this truth. A day of wrath is coming.

And I, by nature, am a legitimate candidate for that coming wrath. But then look closely at the signpost and see a third statement etched beneath the larger words. And it is this that Jesus Christ alone can deliver us from the coming wrath that Jesus Christ alone can deliver us from the coming wrath.

Turn again, please, to the Thessalonians passage. First Thessalonians chapter one. And here is the apostle gives the account of what happened when he would go out in his missionary endeavors and begin to open his mouth to say how the gospel had triumphed at Thessalonica.

He said, we don't need to speak anything. The last phrase of verse eight, verse nine, for they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you, how you turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead. Even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come. Could language be more simple? Could language be more clear? Who delivers from that climactic, that final, that frightening revelation of the wrath of God? It is Jesus himself. It is Jesus alone.

It is the Jesus of biblical witness who died and was raised from the dead and who will come again in glory and in power for verse 10 says they are waiting for his son from heaven. It is that Jesus who himself and who alone can deliver us from the coming wrath. And how does he do this? Well, turn over to chapter five of the same epistle.

And the answer again is set before us in the plainest of language. Verse nine of chapter five. For God appointed us not unto wrath, there's our language again, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us.

There it is, all in simple, plain, clear language. How does Christ deliver us from the coming wrath? He delivers us by bringing us to partake of his salvation, the focal point of which is his death upon the cross on our behalf. Dear people, don't go into hell in the face of the clear light of such simple declarations.

God has appointed us, the apostle says, not unto wrath. That's what we deserved by nature. I told the Ephesians I, like the rest, was liable to that wrath of God and to the frightening day of wrath.

But God appointed us as believers, not unto wrath, but to the obtaining of salvation, a salvation that comes exclusively through our Lord Jesus Christ and that focuses upon the work that he did when he died for us, the just for the unjust, when he underwent vicarious, that is, substitutionary wrath bearing for us. All of the wrath, the pure, holy, righteous antagonism of God's being against sin and all that it will produce in what Paul describes in Romans 2 as tribulation and anguish upon every soul of him who works evil, all that that wrath would be to us, he bore it in our room and in our stead. He bore it on our behalf.

In the words of Rabbi Duncan, it was damnation, vicariously born, and he bore it lovingly. It was damnation born on behalf of sinners and he bore it lovingly. Could language be more clear, dear boys and girls, men and women, as surely as these passages we've looked at tell us that a unique day of wrath is coming, that each and every one of us by nature is a legitimate candidate for that wrath.

They tell us with equal clarity Jesus Christ alone can deliver us from the coming wrath. You see, denying that you deserve wrath won't deliver you. It makes a mockery of the work of Christ.

You see, to sit there and say, well, I'm not so bad that I deserve the fury and the unleashed anger of God upon me that would crush me and press me into hell where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, I don't deserve that. Now, I'm not perfect and I know I've said some bad things and I've done a few bad things and to have God give me a few frowns or a few whacks on the behind, that's fair. But the notion that God would cast me into hell and make me an eternal monument of his holy wrath, I don't deserve that.

My friend, the way to be delivered from the wrath of God is not to deny that you deserve the wrath of God. It's your own sinfulness that blinds you to the horror of your sinfulness. Can you imagine a leprous man whose face is an ugly mass of open, running, putrefying sores, whose leprosy has made him blind, standing in front of a mirror saying, I don't look so bad.

Hey folks, look at me. You think I look too bad? And you turn away and disgust. That's what you are, sinner.

When you say you're not so bad as to deserve the anger and the fury and the wrath of God, you're like a leprous man without eyesight, looking in a mirror saying you don't look so bad. Your sin has blinded you to the ugly, open sores of your moral degeneracy. The marred image of God in the stench of your sin is accurate in the nostrils of God.

Oh, my friend, the way of deliverance from the coming wrath is not to try to convince yourself that you're not so bad as to deserve wrath. And surely it is not to deny that there is a coming day of wrath. Many are doing that in our day.

Reasoning around the scriptures, they will have to take their penknife and cut out our text that is the signpost for their great day of wrath is come. They'll have to rewrite it and reprogram the Word of God and say what men once thought was a day of wrath will never in reality come. No, the way of escaping the coming wrath is not to convince yourself or attempt to that you're not so bad as to deserve that wrath or deny that there is any such thing as wrath.

But to do what Psalm 2 tells you to do. What a beautiful directive coming from the very lips of the living God with respect to His Son. Chapter 2 of the book of Psalms, verse 10.

Now, therefore, be wise, O ye kings. Be instructed, you judges of the earth. God says, I'll take in the great ones, the kings who exercise authority over others and judges who make pronouncements and evaluations of others.

And by speaking to the great ones of the earth, God includes all lesser ones. Be wise, O kings. Be instructed, you judges of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish in the way.

For His wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are they that take refuge in Him. Kiss Him.

Take refuge in Him. Embrace Him for what He is. Jesus, Son of God.

Jesus, substitutionary sin bearer. Jesus, risen from the dead in power, mighty to save, mighty to deliver from the coming wrath. Kiss Him.

Fall at His feet and say, O Lord Jesus, if you delight to receive sinners, then there's hope for me. Lord Jesus, I take the posture of a penitent sinner who owns His wrath deservingness and who now embraces You as His only hope of mercy. I kiss You.

I take refuge in You. Lord Jesus, be to me my city of refuge from the avenger of blood, and I shall be safe from the wrath of God. Jesus Christ alone can deliver us from the coming wrath.

And then the fourth simple statement underneath the bold large letters is this. When the day of wrath arrives, and it will, when the day of wrath arrives, only penitent, believing, converted people will be delivered from its fury. When the day of wrath arrives, only penitent, believing, converted people will be delivered from its fury.

Turn back, please, to the Revelation 6 passage and see the graphic language that is used. Let it sink deeply into your ears and into your hearts. As John is given to see these visions in which there is a cyclical unfolding of the history of the people of God from that point in which John lived to the end, and there are these repeated cycles of the unfolding of the purposes of God.

Here we have a picture of the end in this opening of the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. As John sees this in vision, what he sees happening in the cosmic realm indicates tremendous disruption of the order of things.

A great earthquake, the sun becoming as black as sackcloth, giving forth no light, the moon becoming as blood. The stars of the heavens falling to the earth as a fig tree casts her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. The heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up.

We have not seen that, many of us, but there the scroll is rolled up and removed. He said, so the heavens as we know them in vision were rolled up and taken away, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. Think of those ranges in which we find mountains like McKinley and the Matterhorn and the mighty Alps and the Pyrenees and the Cascades.

Think of them being moved out of their places. And now notice as people come into the picture, and the kings of the earth, those who have the power and the wealth and the influence and the prestige of a true kingdom and all that that involves, and the princes, the heir apparent, and the chief captains, and the rich

and the strong. You see the concentration upon the important ones, the wealthy ones, the influential ones, the people who have power and money and influence and can amass protection to themselves, and with their influence and power can usually find a way to cut a conduit to accomplish what they desire to do along with every bondman, that is, every slave and every free man.

Hide themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. What a picture. Kings who get up in the morning and their servants place their shoes upon their feet, and their servants kowtow to every need and every glance of the eye and every wave of the hand and every pointing of the finger, crawling on their hands and knees to find a little hole in the side of a rock.

Shivering, quivering, blanched white with fear, they hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains. And now kings who could command armies start praying to mountains, and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us, fall on us. Don't merely be a refuge to us.

Break up and disintegrate and bury us. And what is it that's caused such terror that will cause the kings and the great ones of the earth to be so utterly torn to pieces emotionally and psychologically? Look at the language. Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of hide us from His face.

His face we cannot bear to look upon. That face bespeaks His coming forth with the resolute determination of all of the Godhead to crush His enemies. We've seen the face of determined generals in the field of battle.

We've seen the set jaw of mighty kings in conflict, but never, never have we seen a face like that. Hide us from the face of Him that sits upon the throne, and from that which that face tells us is about to be unleashed from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath is come. And who, who, who is able to stand? Who can stand before the face of the Lamb when He comes in the holy, righteous fury of God to crush His enemies? You gonna stand? You gonna puff up your chest and say, I'll take you on Jesus.

I'll prove that I don't deserve your wrath. I'll prove to you, I'll get right in your face, and I'll prove to you that I was not by nature a child of wrath. You gonna do that? You gonna do that, kids? How about it, teenager? Defy your mom and dad? Set your jaw, go in your room, and cuss them under your breath? Is that what you're gonna do to the Son of God when He comes to tread the winepress of the wrath of God, unmixed, as it's described in the book of the Revelation, chapter 14? Is that what you're going to do? No, you won't, my friend.

Young or old, you will not get in His face and defy Him. There'll be no room into which you can retire and shut the door and mumble and cuss under your breath at Him. You'll cry out, who is able to stand? And the answer is, none shall be able to stand except those who are clothed in the virtue of the perfect life in the substitutionary death of the Lord Jesus, who have come to repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus, who have kissed the Son and taken refuge in Him, have become His willing bond slaves and follow Him where'er He goes.

They shall say with Count Zinzendorf, bold shall I stand in that great day, for who ought to my charge shall lay, fully absolved from these I am, from sin and fear and death and shame. When the day of wrath arrives, only penitent, believing, converted people will be delivered from its fury. All others, the great ones and the lesser ones, it matters not.

This is why John, in preaching to the religious leaders of his day, said these words in Matthew 3 and verse 7. Here were a people who thought they could escape the coming day of wrath by religious formalism, by religious activity, by external morality and civility. And when John saw a batch of these Pharisees coming to his baptism, Matthew 3, 7, he said to them, you offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance.

Who's warned you to think that you can escape the wrath to come by going through forms and rituals and immersing yourself in the traditions of men, but your hearts are unchanged and you know nothing of true repentance. Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance and don't think to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father. We've got godly bloodlines.

We've got a godly heritage. We have all the benefits of being reared in the covenant community. Don't say that! It will not do! Who shall be able to stand? Only the truly penitent, believing, converted men and women will stand in that day.

And that's why Paul could say as he did to the Thessalonians, those of whom he wrote in verse 10, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come, he said of them in verse 9, they report concerning us our manner of entering in unto you, how that you turned unto God from your idols to serve the living and the true God and to wait for his son from heaven. He describes them as a converted people and he says of such, Jesus delivers them from the coming wrath. Therefore, as we stand by this sixth simple signpost to the celestial city, look at it, look at it, look at it long and let its words sink into your heart for their great day of wrath is come.

And who shall be able to stand? Look at the four simple statements etched in smaller letters beneath that signpost. See what they tell us that there is a climactic, final, unique day of coming wrath. Secondly, each one of us by nature is liable to that coming wrath.

Thirdly, Jesus Christ alone can deliver us from that coming wrath. Fourth, when the day of wrath arrives, only penitent, believing, converted people will be delivered from its fury. Dear people, I say in all honesty, I don't know how to make it more simple.

I don't know how if God would give me the tongue of an angel to make it more simple and plain, I would do it in God's name. Why, why, why will you sit through another service and stand by a signpost that points you away from the hell and the wrath of God and to heaven and life and forgiveness and hug death to your breast? Oh, the madness of sin. And if you're tempted to take it lightly and say, well, that's just the preacher doing his thing.

He's got to earn his pay. You go home and meditate on some further passages that I've not touched upon. You meditate on Revelation 14, 10 and following a portion which speaks of the smoke of their torment ascending up forever and forever.

They have no rest day nor night. Read the word of God in Romans 2, which speaks of tribulation and anguish upon every soul of him that does evil. Read Luke 16, the rich man who died and in hell lifted up his eyes being in torment.

Dear people, we're not trafficking in myths. There is a coming day of wrath. All of us by nature is a candidate for it.

Christ alone can deliver us from it. And when that day arrives, only penitent, believing, converted people will be delivered from its fury. Are you such a person? A penitent, believing, converted man or woman, boy or girl? Then that day holds no fury, no fear, no terror for you.

But that will be the day, according to 2 Thessalonians 1, of the full manifestation of the glory of the sons of God. Romans 8 and 2 Thessalonians 1 and other passages make it plain that in that day, everyone that thought we were a little bit shy of a few bricks for a full load and a bit fanatical and all the rest. Because as penitent, believing sinners, we were attached to Christ in faith and obedience, and we lived a radical, alternate Christian lifestyle that exposed their sin and made them feel uncomfortable.

Oh, in that day will they wonder and marvel when they see what we are. We will be resplendent with the glory of our exalted Lord when every last stain of sin having been removed from our spirits at our death or at his coming and all the vestiges of sin's influence upon the body forever replaced by the dynamics of a resurrection body like unto his own. Those who sneered and mocked will stand with wide-eyed wonder, and we, by the grace of God, will be the object of the admiration of all the intelligent creatures in the universe as they see what Jesus Christ did to wrath-deserving sinners.

Thank God I'll be one of them. Will you? Will you? For the great day of their wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? Let us pray. Our Father, as we have sought to lay out simply and honestly the teaching of your word concerning that unique, that singular coming day of wrath, we pray that the Holy Spirit would own the preaching of the word and cause some sitting in this building this very hour to cry out in their hearts, Son of David, have mercy upon me.

Oh, God, bring sinners to repentance and faith this night in this place by the mighty power of your spirit working by and with the word. And, oh Lord, for those of us who once remember how we were haunted day and night with fears of death and foreboding thoughts of judgment and how we tried to scrub from our minds these realities and could not, how we thank you for the peace that you have given us through the blood of the cross of your dear Son. We thank you.

We worship you. We praise you. Lord Jesus, we thank you for bearing the wrath that was due to us.

And we pray that you will help us in loving gratitude so to live that others will see that indeed we belong to you. Seal then your word to the encouragement and to the strengthening of the faith and usefulness of your own and to the bringing in of others to the knowledge of your dear son. We pray that the seed sown will not be plucked away by that wicked one, for we know that he is present wherever the gospel seed is sown, like birds who follow the one who sows seed, just waiting to snatch away the seed.

Oh God, bind that foul fiend of hell and cause your word to sink deeply into the subsoil of every heart and there to germinate and bring forth fruit to your glory and to our good. Hear our prayer we plead in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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