

His Wrath

by Catherine Booth

The sermon emphasizes the importance of fearing God's wrath, which is a terrible and impartial judgment that will be revealed in the future.

Scripture: Psalm 90:11, Nahum 1:6, Matthew 10:28, Romans 2:5, Revelation 6:17

Topics: "Gods Wrath", "Divine Judgment"

Description

Catherine Booth preaches about the impending great day of God's wrath, drawing parallels to past instances of divine judgment such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the flood during Noah's time, and the siege of Jerusalem. She emphasizes that the wrath to come will be unlike anything witnessed before, as it will be the wrath of God that encompasses both body and soul, causing unimaginable suffering. Booth highlights the weight of God's wrath against sin, using the example of Jesus' agony in bearing the punishment for humanity's sins, to illustrate the severity of the impending judgment. She warns sinners to consider the gravity of treasuring up God's wrath and the inevitability of facing His righteous judgment.

Transcript

REVELATION vi. 17.-'For the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?'

THERE have been some terrible days of wrath in the past history of this world. That was a day of wrath when, wearied by the cry of their sins and iniquities, the Lord rained fire from Heaven on the guilty inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. What consternation and dismay must have seized them when they beheld the first fiery strokes of His vengeance! What a change in their feelings, they who had thought themselves and their deeds of darkness so hidden from the eye of God and from the strokes of His justice--they who had revelled in their iniquities, laughed at His threatenings, and mocked the prophecies of His vengeance, How must they have quailed and howled as each torrent of fire fell on their devoted heads! It was a day of vengeance, a day of wrath.

That was a day of wrath, also, when God resolved on punishing the earth by sweeping it at once of its crimes and its inhabitants--when He could no longer endure their evil imaginings and open rebellion, and when He burst the boundaries which He had set for the great deep, opened the sluices of the skies, and rained down death and destruction on all flesh. What wringing of hands and shrieks for mercy must have mingled with the roar of the angry floods, as thousands after thousands sank to rise no more! That was a day of wrath!

That was a day of wrath, too, when, after ages of forbearance and merciful interposition, long-threatened judgment overtook the Jewish people, and God let loose upon them their inveterate enemies, armed with all but supernatural power, to torment and destroy. Long had His mercy put off the vengeful day--for many generations had He sent them messengers and prophets, and last of all His Son, whom they rejected and slew, which filled up the measure of their iniquities and brought on them such tortures as had not been since the world began, nor shall be again till the last great day of wrath. Josephus tells us that 1,100,000 perished in the siege, that 115,880 dead bodies were carried out of one gate of Jerusalem in two and a half months. When Titus, in going his round along the valleys, saw them full of dead bodies, and the putrefaction running from them, he gave a groan, and spreading his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing. Their sufferings by famine were even worse than this death. We are told that when the Romans came within the walls and had begun their work of plunder, they found the upper rooms of the houses full of corpses. They stood in horror at the sight, and went out without touching anything. The awful prophecy that the mother should eat her own child was then fulfilled, and men gnawed their tongues for pain, and sought for death as a refuge from their misery. Truly that was a day of wrath!

These were all great and terrible visitations of the righteous vengeance of God against sinners. But they bear but a faint resemblance to the day which is coming, when there shall be a revelation of His judgment against all the unrighteousness and ungodliness of man from the beginning to the end of time. What a day that will be--who can conceive or describe?

There are two or three characteristics of the wrath then to be revealed, which we want just to glance at.

First, it will be the wrath of GOD; and this will embrace the soul as well as the body. The wrath of creatures is sometimes very terrible; it can inflict untold sufferings on its fellow-mortal, but it cannot reach beyond the body. We have all heard of instances in which the bodies of our fellow-creatures have been tormented and racked by men of hellish disposition and their engines of as hellish construction, whose souls have been not only calm and peaceful, but joyous and triumphant. Man cannot forge a dart which can penetrate the soul that is at peace with God. He can imprison and afflict the body, but the soul can mount and sing in spite of all his wrath and malice. But who shall endure God's wrath? For it not only `drieth the bones,' but it `drinketh up the spirit.' Indeed, its principal sphere of action is the soul; and it seems only just that that which has been chief in sinning should be greatest in suffering. We all know that it is the soul that sinneth; the body is only the instrument of the soul, it only does what the soul bids, and in some instances the greatest sins are committed by the soul alone, consequently the soul must be the principal sufferer. Hence, Christ, in bearing our punishment, though His body suffered in a violent and painful death, suffered chiefly in His soul. He said to His disciples, `My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death,' hours before He suffered any bodily anguish; and we are told He was in an agony, and sweat great drops of blood which ran down to the ground. Now what was it that thus wrought upon the spotless soul of Jesus?

IT WAS THE WEIGHT OF HIS FATHER'S WRATH AGAINST SIN

He was standing for us, in our stead, suffering in His soul the infliction of the justice of God against sin. It was this which drank up His Spirit, and made Him utter that exceeding loud and bitter cry. Now, if the wrath of God were so terrible to the Son of God Himself as to put Him in such an agony, what will it be to the undone sinner in the great day of wrath? Well might our Saviour say, `Fear not them which kill the body, but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell.'

Neither angel nor devil can affright or torment the soul but by God's permission. He is Lord of the soul of man; He created it, and He alone has power over it. Well might the Psalmist say, 'Who knoweth the power of Thine anger?' No creature can conjecture the weight of God's wrath on the soul. Whatever comes direct from God is most stupendous, whether in the way of mercy or judgment. His love and mercy are infinite and unsearchable, and so is His wrath. The weight of His little finger is heavier than the loins of man. God sometimes in this life lets in His wrath into the soul, filling it with terror and dismay, so that it becomes intolerable. Thus it was with Judas. The wrath of God filled his conscience with such terror that he could not bear it but hanged himself to be rid of the burden, forgetting that he was rushing into greater terror still. So it has been with many a sinner who has cried out in death, 'I feel already the torments of Hell; I will not die, I dare not die.' But whatever of the wrath of God sinners have ever felt here, it is light in comparison with what is to come hereafter--it is, as it were, only a sip from the top of that cup of fury, the dregs of which all the wicked of the earth shall wring out and drink.

Oh, sinner, consider whose wrath it is that you are treasuring up against the day of wrath. If it were the wrath of men, angels, or devils, it would be bad enough but it is the wrath of the Almighty God. God Himself will come out of His place to punish you--His own mighty hand will deal the blow--His awful voice pronounce the sentence. It must be so. It is according to His impartial justice that it should be so, for all your sins have been against HIM. Though you sinned against the creature, yet the first and greatest of every kind of rebellion is against God. 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned.' Therefore it is meet and right that He Himself should punish you.

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