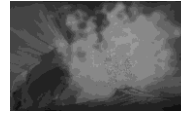


PRAY Equipped **OBJECTION:** Why does the Old Testament show a God of wrath and the New Testament a God of mercy?

IMPORTANT TO GOD TENSION



FOCUS: *To understand common objections to Christianity and be able to discuss it.*



♥🧠∞👉 **PARABLE EX:** Step into the Superbook Bible...

CONTEXT: Why does the Old Testament show a God of wrath and the New Testament a God of mercy?

CONNECTION: As an excuse others use, If God is wrathful then I don't have to serve an angry God. Not about looking to understand God but to harden the heart, mind, soul and strength even more against God.

Psalms 89:14 This is God

14 *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.*

The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament which is the Father of the Jesus Christ. SAME

A TRUTH God always deals perfectly with people in His wrath and mercy.

CLARITY It is not right to blame or credit God with the violations against His law we do.

REAL Just like in other areas of our life there are real consequences and rewards for our actions.

LOVE LIKE CHRIST, LIVE LIKE JESUS

BECOME & RESPOND

Nehemiah 9 The wrath of God against evil and the mercy of God for His faithful people
V11-21 God is Merciful

Nehemiah 9:28 God is Merciful Again

28 *But after they had rest they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. Yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you delivered them according to your mercies.*

Repentance, for the evil done by mankind, is key to moving from wrath to mercy.

Nehemiah 9:32-33 God is Merciful Again and Again

32 *"Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to you that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and*

all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until this day.

33 *Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly.*

God only ever deals righteously (just, lawful) and faithfully (trustworthily, rightly) with the wicked and faithful.

Hebrews 12:28-29

28 *Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,*

29 *for our God is a consuming fire.*

Our right response to God's actions is to remember He is a consuming fire, that we are to offer acceptable worship with reverence (bowed modesty) and awe (godly fear). Christ on the cross and God's terrible wrath on Him.

Bring God Glory and Make Disciples

This is the foundational fuel for our daily word, thoughts and deeds with our heart, mind, soul and strength.

Gospel-Centered Life

Heart: Greatest Commandment(s)

Mind: God is still on the throne.

Soul: Never get over being saved.

Strength: Great Commission

Share the Biblical truth in brotherly love.

Love like Christ, Live like Jesus

*See more clearly, love more dearly,
follow more nearly, day by day*

*We live in the flow of God's Sovereignty
and move forward at the pace of faith.*

SALVATION *John 3:18* *Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*

Why is it so easy to blame others than to try and fix the issue?

Why is it important to know that God is the same yesterday, today and forever as it relates to His wrath and mercy?

Why is God always perfectly just in how he responds to humanity?

MISSION: We exist to bring God glory and make disciples.

TITLE: GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THE SAME IN THE NEW TESTAMENT is an important aspect to why we exist.

Based on this what can we do to become more like Jesus?

Gospel-Centered

WORSHIP Repent, to move from a sinner that faces wrath to stay as a disciple disciplined by a loving Father God.

COMMUNITY Go to the core issue of God's sovereign response to man's responsibility for His action.

SERVICE Discover the type of relationship the person has with Jesus and why struggle with the wrath and mercy of God.

MULTIPLICATION Help people to see that they may want to shake their fist at Heaven but really should be shaking their fist at the mirror of humanity or self.

A TRUTH God always deals perfectly with people in His wrath and mercy.

BIBLE VERSES ON GOD'S WRATH AND MERCY

Nehemiah 9:1-38

1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads.

2 And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God.

4 On the stairs of the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

6 "You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.

7 You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham.

8 You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

9 "And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea,

10 and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day.

11 And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land,

and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters.

12 By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go.

13 You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments,

14 and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your servant.

15 You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

16 "But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments.

17 They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.

18 Even when they had made for themselves a golden calf and said, 'This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great blasphemies,

19 you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by which they should go.

20 You gave your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their thirst.

21 Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

22 "And you gave them kingdoms and peoples and allotted to them every corner. So they took possession of the land of Sihon king of Heshbon and the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess.

24 So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land, that they might do with them as they would.

25 And they captured fortified cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

26 "Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their back and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.

27 Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer. And in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hand of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. Yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you delivered them according to your mercies.

29 And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your rules, which if a person does them, he shall live by them, and they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey.

30 Many years you bore with them and warned them by your Spirit through your prophets. Yet they would not give ear. Therefore you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.

31 Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

32 "Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to

you that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until this day.

33 Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly.

34 Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept your law or paid attention to your commandments and your warnings that you gave them.

35 Even in their own kingdom, and amid your great goodness that you gave them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you or turn from their wicked works.

36 Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves.

37 And its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress.

38 "Because of all this we make a firm covenant in writing; on the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests.

Isa 60:10 Foreigners shall build up your walls, and their kings shall minister to you; for in my wrath I struck you, but in my favor I have had mercy on you.

Jer 36:7 It may be that their plea for mercy will come before the LORD, and that every one will turn from his evil way, for great is the anger and wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people."

Lam 2:2 The Lord has swallowed up without mercy all the habitations of Jacob; in his wrath he has broken down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he has brought down to the ground in dishonor the kingdom and its rulers.

Hab 3:2 O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy.

John 3:16-21

16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*

17 *For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

18 *Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.*

19 *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.*

20 *For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.*

21 *But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."*

BIBLE VERSES ON THE WISDOM OF FEARING GOD

Job_28:28 *And he said to man, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.'*

Psa_111:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!*

Pro_1:7 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

Pro_9:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.*

Pro_15:33 *The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom, and humility comes before honor.*

Isa_11:2 *And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.*

Isa_33:6 *and he will be the stability of your times, abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is Zion's treasure.*

Mic_6:9 *The voice of the LORD cries to the city—and it is sound wisdom to fear your name: "Hear of the rod and of him who appointed it!"*

OUR Devotional Discussion Guide GOD'S CARE IS THE BEST FOR SERVANTS

FOCUS: *To understand common objections to Christianity and be able to discuss it.*

OUR SALVATION:

John 3:16-17
Ephesians 2:8-9
Romans 10:9-10



Equipped
 Resource
 Website:
 Common
 Objection 2

OUR CREATED PURPOSE:

Mark 12:30-31
Matthew 28:16-20

OUR MISSION:

We exist to bring God glory
 and make disciples

OUR VISION

Through Gospel-Centered
 Worship, Gospel-Centered
 Community, Gospel-
 Centered Community, Gospel-
 -Centered Service, Gospel-
 Centered Multiplication

Psalms 89:14, Nehemiah 9, Hebrews 12:28-29, John 3:18

What jumped off the page at you (word, phrase, concept, application, question) **as you read the verse(s)**

Why is what jumped off the page Biblically accurate?

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GOD'S WRATH AND MERCY understanding it better

Evil done results in God's wrath in His perfect timing.

Repentances results in God's mercy in His perfect timing.

God is never okay with or condoning of evil.

God has made a way to avoid His wrath in and through Jesus Christ and upholding, fulfilling and teaching all that He has commanded in the Bible.

GOD'S WRATH AND MERCY now

What are some reasons why people doing evil is not something God will just let indefinitely happen.

1.

2.

3.

John 3:19-21

19 *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.*

20 *For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.*

List some examples from the Bible where God showed mercy to someone.

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OTHER RESOURCES

facebook: Cross Examined Melissa Dougherty - How does the WRATH of God actually show his LOVE?

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=249678897136877>

YouTube: John MacArthur - Mercy in the Midst of Wrath (Revelation 7:1–8)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqFEdwzx80U>

YouTube: RC Sproul – The Wrath of God: When Worlds Collide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BKubXE4ntdg>

Jonathan Edwards “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741)

DEUT. XXXII. 35.

-Their foot shall slide in due time.-

[1] In this verse is threatned the vengeance of God on the wicked unbelieving Israelites, that were God’s visible people, and lived under means of grace; and that, notwithstanding all God’s wonderful works that he had wrought towards that people, yet remained, as is expressed, **ver. 28.** void of counsel, having no understanding in them; and that, under all the cultivations of heaven, brought forth bitter and poisonous fruit; as in the two verses next preceeding the text.

[2] The expression that I have chosen for my text, Their foot shall slide in due time; seems to imply the following things, relating to the punishment and destruction that these wicked Israelites were exposed to.

[3] 1. That they were always exposed to destruction, as one that stands or walks in slippery places is always exposed to fall. This is implied in the manner of their destruction’s coming upon them, being represented by their foot’s sliding. The same is express’d, **Psal. 73. 18.** Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction.

[4] 2. It implies that they were always exposed to sudden unexpected destruction. As he that walks in slippery places is every moment liable to fall; he can’t foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall the next; and when he does fall, he falls at once, without warning. Which is also expressed in that **Psal. 73. 18, 19.** Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment?

[5] 3. Another thing implied is that they are liable to fall of themselves, without being thrown down by the hand of another. As he that stands or walks on slippery ground, needs nothing but his own weight to throw him down.

[6] 4. That the reason why they are not fallen already, and don’t fall now, is only that God’s appointed time is not come. For it is said, that when that due time, or appointed time comes, their foot shall slide. Then they shall be left to fall as they are inclined by their own weight. God won’t hold them up in these slippery places any longer, but will let them go; and then, at that very instant, they shall fall into destruction; as he that stands in such slippery declining ground on the edge of a pit that he can’t stand alone, when he is let go he immediately falls and is lost.

[7] The observation from the words that I would now insist upon is this,

[8] There is nothing that keeps wicked men, at any one moment, out of hell, but the meer pleasure of GOD.

[9] By the meer pleasure of God, I mean his sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will, restrained by no obligation, hinder’d by no manner of difficulty, any more than if nothing else but God’s mere will had in the least degree, or in any respect whatsoever, any hand in the preservation of wicked men

one moment.

[10] The truth of this observation may appear by the following considerations.

[11] 1. There is no want of power in God to cast wicked men into hell at any moment. Mens hands can't be strong when God rises up: The strongest have no power to resist him, nor can any deliver out of his hands.

[12] He is not only able to cast wicked men into hell, but he can most easily do it. Sometimes an earthly prince meets with a great deal of difficulty to subdue a rebel, that has found means to fortify himself, and has made himself strong by the numbers of his followers. But it is not so with God. There is no fortress that is any defence from the power of God. Tho' hand join in hand, and vast multitudes of God's enemies combine and associate themselves, they are easily broken in pieces: They are as great heaps of light chaff before the whirlwind; or large quantities of dry stubble before devouring flames. We find it easy to tread on and crush a worm that we see crawling on the earth; so 'tis easy for us to cut of singe a slender thread that any thing hangs by; thus easy is it for God when he pleases to cast his enemies down to hell. What are we, that we should think to stand before him, at whose rebuke the earth trembles, and before whom the rocks are thrown down?

[13] 2. They deserve to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. Yea, on the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom, Cut it down, why cumbreth it the ground, **Luk. 13. 7**. The sword of divine justice is every moment brandished over their heads, and 'tis nothing but the hand of arbitrary mercy, and God's meer will, that holds it back.

[14] 3. They are already under a sentence of condemnation to hell. They don't only justly deserve to be cast down thither; but the sentence of the law of God, that eternal and immutable rule of righteousness that God has fixed between him and mankind, is gone out against them, and stands against them; so that they are bound over already to hell.

Joh. 3. 18. He that believeth not is condemned already. So that every unconverted man properly belongs to hell; that is his place; from thence he is. **Joh 8. 23**. Ye are from beneath. And thither he is bound; 'tis the place that justice, and God's word, and the sentence of his unchangeable law assigns to him.

[15] 4. They are now the objects of that very same anger and wrath of God that is expressed in the torments of hell: and the reason why they don't go down to hell at each moment, is not because God, in whose power they are, is not then very angry with them; as angry as he is with many of those miserable creatures that he is now tormenting in hell, and do there feel and bear the fierceness of his wrath. Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth, yea doubtless with many that are now in this congregation, that it may be are at ease and quiet, than he is with many of those that are now in the flames of hell.

[16] So that it is not because God is unmindful of their wickedness, and don't resent it, that he don't let loose his hand and cut them off. God is not altogether such an one as themselves, tho' they may imagine him to be so. The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation don't slumber, the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them, the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened her mouth

under them.

[17] 5. The devil stands ready to fall upon them and seize them as his own, at what moment God shall permit him. They belong to him; he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. The scripture represents them as his goods, **Luk. 11. 21**. The devils watch them; they are ever by them, at their right hand; they stand waiting for them, like greedy hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back; if God should withdraw his hand, by which they are restrained, they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls. The old serpent is gaping for them; hell opens its mouth wide to receive them; and if God should permit it, they would be hastily swallowed up and lost.

[18] 6. There are in the souls of wicked men those hellish principles reigning, that would presently kindle and flame out into hell fire, if it were not for God's restraints. There is laid in the very nature of carnal men a foundation for the torments of hell: There are those corrupt principles, in reigning power in them, and in full possession of them, that are seeds of hell fire. These principles are active and powerful, and exceeding violent in their nature, and if it were not for the restraining hand of God upon them, they would soon break out, they would flame out after the same manner as the same corruptions, the same enmity does in the hearts of damned souls, and would beget the same torments in 'em as they do in them. The souls of the wicked are in Scripture compared to the troubled sea, **Isai. 57. 20**. For the present God restrains their wickedness by his mighty power, as he does the raging waves of the troubled sea, saying, Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further; but if God should withdraw that restraining power, it would soon carry all afore it. Sin is the ruin and misery of the soul; it is destructive in its nature; and if God should leave it without restraint, there would need nothing else to make the soul perfectly miserable. The corruption of the heart of man is a thing that is immoderate and boundless in its fury; and while wicked men live here, it is like fire pent up by God's restraints, whenas if it were let loose it would set on fire the course of nature; and as the heart is now a sink of sin, so, if sin was not restrain'd, it would immediately turn the soul into a fiery oven, or a furnace of fire and brimstone.

[19] 7. It is no security to wicked men for one moment, that there are no visible means of death at hand. 'Tis no security to a natural man, that he is now in health, and that he don't see which way he should now immediately go out of the world by any accident, and that there is no visible danger in any respect in his circumstances. The manifold and continual experience of the world in all ages, shews that this is no evidence that a man is not on the very brink of eternity, and that the next step won't be into another world. The unseen, unthought of ways and means of persons going suddenly out of the world are innumerable and inconceivable. Unconverted men walk over the pit of hell on a rotten covering, and there are innumerable places in this covering so weak that they won't bear their weight, and these places are not seen. The arrows of death fly unseen at noon-day; the sharpest sight can't discern them. God has so many different unsearchable ways of taking wicked men out of the world and sending 'em to hell, that there is nothing to make it appear that God had need to be at the expense of a miracle, or go out of the ordinary course of his providence, to destroy any wicked man, at any moment. All the means that there are of sinners going out of the world, are so in God's hands, and so universally absolutely subject to his power and determination, that it don't depend at all less on the meer will of God, whether sinners shall at any moment go to hell, than if means were never made use of, or at all concerned in the case.

[20] 8. Natural men's prudence and care to preserve their own lives, or the care of others to preserve them, don't secure 'em a moment. This divine providence and universal experience does

also bear testimony to. There is this clear evidence that men's own wisdom is no security to them from death; that if it were otherwise we should see some difference between the wise and politic men of the world, and others, with regard to their liableness to early and unexpected death; but how is it in fact? **Eccles. 2.16.** How dieth the wise man? as the fool.

[21] 9. All wicked men's pains and contrivance they use to escape hell, while they continue to reject Christ, and so remain wicked men, don't secure 'em from hell one moment. Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; he depends upon himself for his own security; he flatters himself in what he has done, in what he is now doing, or what he intends to do; every one lays out matters in his own mind how he shall avoid damnation, and flatters himself that he contrives well for himself, and that his schemes won't fail. They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the bigger part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done: he don't intend to come to that place of torment; he says within himself, that he intends to take care that shall be effectual, and to order matters so for himself as not to fail.

[22] But the foolish children of men do miserably delude themselves in their own schemes, and in their confidence in their own strength and wisdom; they trust to nothing but a shadow. The bigger part of those that heretofore have lived under the same means of grace, and are now dead, are undoubtedly gone to hell: and it was not because they were not as wise as those that are now alive: it was not because they did not lay out matters as well for themselves to secure their own escape. If it were so, that we could come to speak with them, and could inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected when alive, and when they used to hear about hell, ever to be the subjects of that misery, we doubtless should hear one and another reply, "No, I never intended to come here; I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive well for my self; I thought my scheme good; I intended to take effectual care; but it came upon me unexpected; I did not look for it at that time, and in that manner; it came as a thief; death outwitted me; God's wrath was too quick for me; O my cursed foolishness! I was flattering my self, and pleasing my self with vain dreams of what I would do hereafter, and when I was saying peace and safety, then sudden destruction came upon me."

[23] 10. God has laid himself under no obligation by any promise to keep any natural man out of hell one moment. God certainly has made no promises either of eternal life, or of any deliverance or preservation from eternal death, but what are contained in the covenant of grace, the promises that are given in Christ, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. But surely they have no interest in the promises of the covenant of grace that are not the children of the covenant, and that don't believe in any of the promises of the covenant, and have no interest in the mediator of the covenant.

[24] So that whatever some have imagined and pretended about promises made to natural men's earnest seeking and knocking, 'tis plain and manifest that whatever pains a natural man takes in religion, whatever prayers he makes, till he believes in Christ, God is under no manner of obligation to keep him a moment from eternal destruction.

[25] So that thus it is, that natural men are held in the hand of God over the pit of hell; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great towards them as to those that are actually suffering the executions of the fierceness of his wrath in hell, and they have done nothing in the least to appease or abate that anger, neither is God in the least bound by any promise to hold 'em up one moment; the devil is waiting for them, hell is

gaping for them, the flames gather and flash about them, and would fain lay hold on them, and swallow them up; the fire pent up in their own hearts is struggling to break out; and they have no interest in any mediator, there are no means within reach that can be any security to them. In short, they have no refuge, nothing to take hold of, all that preserves them every moment is the meer arbitrary will, and uncovenanted unobliged forbearance of an incensed God.

APPLICATION.

[26] The use may be of awakening to unconverted persons in this congregation. This that you have heard is the case of every one of you that are out of Christ. That world of misery, that lake of burning brimstone is extended abroad under you. There is the dreadful pit of the glowing flames of the wrath of God; there is hell's wide gaping mouth open; and you have nothing to stand upon, nor any thing to take hold of: there is nothing between you and hell but the air; 'tis only the power and meer pleasure of God that holds you up.

[27] You probably are not sensible of this; you find you are kept out of hell, but don't see the hand of God in it, but look at other things, as the good state of your bodily constitution, your care of your own life, and the means you use for your own preservation. But indeed these things are nothing; if God should withdraw his hand, they would avail no more to keep you from falling, than the thin air to hold up a person that is suspended in it.

[28] Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell, than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock. Were it not that so is the sovereign pleasure of God, the earth would not bear you one moment; for you are a burden to it; the creation groans with you; the creature is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun don't willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth don't willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air don't willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies. God's creatures are good, and were made for men to serve God with, and don't willingly subserve to any other purpose, and groan when they are abused to purposes so directly contrary to their nature and end. And the world would spue you out, were it not for the sovereign hand of him who hath subjected it in hope. There are the black clouds of God's wrath now hanging directly over your heads, full of the dreadful storm, and big with thunder; and were it not for the restraining hand of God it would immediately burst forth upon you. The sovereign pleasure of God for the present stays his rough wind; otherwise it would come with fury, and your destruction would come like a whirlwind, and you would be like the chaff of the summer threshing floor.

[29] The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given, and the longer the stream is stop'd, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. 'Tis true, that judgment against your evil works has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been with-held; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are continually rising and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the meer pleasure of God that holds the waters back that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to

go forward; if God should only withdraw his hand from the flood-gate, it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

[30] The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the meer pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.

[31] Thus are all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the SPIRIT of GOD upon your souls; all that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced light and life, (however you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets, and in the house of God, and may be strict in it,) you are thus in the hands of an angry God; 'tis nothing but his meer pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction.

[32] However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you, see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them, when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see, that those things that they depended on for peace and safety, were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

[33] The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes as the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet 'tis nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment: 'Tis to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffer'd to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep: and there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up: There is no other reason to be given why you han't gone to hell since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship: Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you don't this very moment drop down into hell.

[34] O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: 'Tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell: You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it, and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment.

[35] And consider here more particularly several things concerning that wrath that you are in such

danger of.

[36] 1. Whose wrath it is: It is the wrath of the infinite GOD. If it were only the wrath of man, tho' it were of the most potent prince, it would be comparatively little to be regarded. The wrath of kings is very much dreaded, especially of absolute monarchs, that have the possessions and lives of their subjects wholly in their power, to be disposed of at their meer will. **Prov. 20. 2.** The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul. The subject that very much enrages an arbitrary prince, is liable to suffer the most extreme torments, that human art can invent or human power can inflict. But the greatest earthly potentates, in their greatest majesty and strength, and when clothed in their greatest terrors, are but feeble despicable worms of the dust, in comparison of the great and almighty creator and king of heaven and earth: it is but little that they can do, when most enraged, and when they have exerted the utmost of their fury. All the kings of the earth before GOD are as grasshoppers, they are nothing and less than nothing: Both their love and their hatred is to be despised. The wrath of the great King of Kings is as much more terrible than their's, as his majesty is greater. **Luke 12. 4, 5.** And I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea I say unto you, fear him.

[37] 2. 'Tis the fierceness of his wrath that you are exposed to. We often read of the fury of God; as in **Isai. 59. 18.** According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries. So **Isai. 66. 15.** For behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. And so in many other places. So we read of God's fierceness. **Rev. 19. 15.** There we read of the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. The words are exceeding terrible: if it had only been said, the wrath of God, the words would have implied that which is infinitely dreadful: But 'tis not only said so, but the fierceness and wrath of God: the fury of God! the fierceness of Jehovah! Oh how dreadful must that be! Who can utter or conceive what such expressions carry in them! But it is not only said so, but the fierceness and wrath of ALMIGHTY GOD. As tho' there would be a very great manifestation of his almighty power, in what the fierceness of his wrath should inflict, as tho' omnipotence should be as it were enraged, and exerted, as men are wont to exert their strength in the fierceness of their wrath. Oh! then what will be the consequence! What will become of the poor worm that shall suffer it! Whose hands can be strong? and whose heart endure? To what a dreadful, inexpressible, inconceivable depth of misery must the poor creature be sunk, who shall be the subject of this!

[38] Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies that he will inflict wrath without any pity: when God beholds the ineffable extremity of your case, and sees your torment to be so vastly disproportion'd to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed and sinks down, as it were into an infinite gloom, he will have no compassion upon you, he will not forbear the executions of his wrath, or in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, nor will God then at all stay his rough wind; he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much, in any other sense than only that you shall not suffer beyond what strict justice requires: nothing shall be withheld, because it's so hard for you to bear. **Ezek. 8. 18.** Therefore will I also deal in fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and tho' they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them. Now God stands ready to pity you; this is a day of mercy; you may cry now with some encouragement of obtaining mercy: but when once the day of mercy is past, your most lamentable and dolorous cries and shrieks will be in vain; you will be wholly lost and thrown

away of God as to any regard to your welfare; God will have no other use to put you to but only to suffer misery; you shall be continued in being to no other end; for you will be a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction; and there will be no other use of this vessel but only to be filled full of wrath: God will be so far from pitying you when you cry to him, that 'tis said he will only laugh and mock, **Prov. 1. 25, 26, etc.**

[39] How awful are those words, **Isai. 63. 3.** which are the words of the great God, I will tread them in mine anger, and will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. 'Tis perhaps impossible to conceive of words that carry in them greater manifestations of these three things, viz. contempt, and hatred, and fierceness of indignation. If you cry to God to pity you, he will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favour, that instead of that he'll only tread you under foot: And tho' he will know that you can't bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, yet he won't regard that, but he will crush you under his feet without mercy; he'll crush out your blood, and make it fly, and it shall be sprinkled on his garments, so as to stain all his raiment. He will not only hate you, but he will have you in the utmost contempt; no place shall be thought fit for you, but under his feet, to be trodden down as the mire of the streets.

[40] 3. The misery you are exposed to is that which God will inflict to that end, that he might shew what that wrath of JEHOVAH is. God hath had it on his heart to shew to angels and men, both how excellent his love is, and also how terrible his wrath is. Sometimes earthly kings have a mind to show how terrible their wrath is, by the extreme punishments they would execute on those that provoke 'em. Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty and haughty monarch of the Chaldean empire, was willing to show his wrath, when enraged with Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego; and accordingly gave order that the burning fiery furnace should be het seven times hotter than it was before; doubtless it was raised to the utmost degree of fierceness that human art could raise it: but the great GOD is also willing to shew his wrath, and magnify his awful majesty and mighty power in the extreme sufferings of his enemies. **Rom. 9. 22.** What if God willing to shew HIS wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? And seeing this is his design, and what he has determined, to shew how terrible the unmixed, unrestrained wrath, the fury and fierceness of JEHOVAH is, he will do it to effect. There will be something accomplished and brought to pass, that will be dreadful with a witness. When the great and angry God hath risen up and executed his awful vengeance on the poor sinner; and the wretch is actually suffering the infinite weight and power of his indignation, then will God call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty, and mighty power that is to be seen in it. **Isai. 33. 12, 13, 14.** And the people shall be as the burning of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off what I have done; and ye that are near acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites etc.

[41] Thus it will be with you that are in an unconverted state, if you continue in it; the infinite might, and majesty and terribleness of the OMNIPOTENT GOD shall be magnified upon you, in the ineffable strength of your torments: You shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb; and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is, and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. **Isai. 66. 23, 24.** And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord; and they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for

their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

[42] 4. 'Tis everlasting wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity: there will be no end to this exquisite horrible misery: When you look forward, you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts, and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all; you will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it, gives but a very feeble faint representation of it; 'tis inexpressible and inconceivable: for who knows the power of God's anger?

[43] How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath, and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation, that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious they may otherwise be. Oh that you would consider it, whether you be young or old. There is reason to think, that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have: it may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell? And it would be a wonder if some that are now present, should not be in hell in a very short time, before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some person that now sits here in some seat of this meeting-house in health, and quiet and secure, should be there before to morrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! your damnation don't slumber; it will come swiftly, and in all probability very suddenly upon many of you. You have reason to wonder, that you are not already in hell. 'Tis doubtless the case of some that heretofore you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you, and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you: Their case is past all hope; they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair; but here you are in the land of the living, and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those poor damned, hopeless souls give for one day's such opportunity as you now enjoy!

[44] And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein CHRIST has flung the door of mercy wide open, and stands in the door calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God; many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very lately in the same miserable condition that you are in, are in now an happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him that has loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day! To see so many others feasting, while you are pining and perishing! To see so many rejoicing and singing for joy of heart, while you have cause to mourn

for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit! How can you rest one moment in such a condition? Are not your souls as precious as the souls of the people at * Suffield, where they are flocking from day to day to Christ?

[45] Are there not many here that have lived long in the world, that are not to this day born again, and so are aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and have done nothing ever since they have lived, but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh sirs, your case in an especial manner is extremely dangerous; your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Don't you see how generally persons of your years are pass'd over and left, in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider your selves, and wake thoroughly out of sleep; you cannot bear the fierceness and wrath of the infinite GOD.

[46] And you that are young men, and young women, will you neglect this precious season that you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities, and flocking to CHRIST? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as it is with those persons that spent away all the precious days of youth in sin, and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness.

[47] And you children that are unconverted, don't you know that you are going down to hell, to bear the dreadful wrath of that God that is now angry with you every day, and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted, and are become the holy and happy children of the King of Kings?

[48] And let every one that is yet out of Christ, and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they be old men and women, or middle aged, or young people, or little children, now hearken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the LORD, that is a day of such great favor to some, will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden, and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls: and never was there so great danger of such persons being given up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land; and probably the bigger part of adult persons that ever shall be saved, will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on that great outpouring of the SPIRIT upon the Jews in the apostles days, the election will obtain, and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this day, and will curse the day that ever you was born, to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit; and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is, as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the ax is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree that brings not forth good fruit, may be hewn down, and cast into the fire.

[49] Therefore let everyone that is out of CHRIST, now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of almighty GOD is now undoubtedly hanging over great part of this congregation: Let everyone fly out of Sodom: Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed.

FINIS