

## Wrath and Grace

- The standard of acceptance by God has always been faith
  - Romans 4:1 – 12 Abraham was counted righteous because of his faith, although he lived 2000 years before Jesus and before the Law.
  - Hebrews 11 All the faithful people listed in this chapter lived before Jesus. Many did not live under the Law.
  - Micah 6:6 – 8 The objective for the Israelites was faith, not obedience to the Law.
- The nature of wrath depends on the context.
  - Sometimes, wrath refers to those who will be condemned at Judgment.
    - Romans 2:5 – 8 You are treasuring up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.
    - Romans 5:9 We shall be saved from wrath through Him.
    - Colossians 3:6 Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.
    - 1 Thessalonians 1:10 Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.
    - 1 Thessalonians 5:9 God did not appoint us to wrath.
    - Revelation 11:18 Your wrath has come and the time of the dead that they should be judged.
    - Revelation 14:10 He [worshipper of the beast] shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God...in the presence of the Lamb.
  - Sometimes, wrath refers to the defeat of evil purposes on earth.
    - 1 Thessalonians 2:16 But wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.
    - Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men...(24, 26, 28) therefore God also gave them up.
    - Revelation 6:16 – 17 The great day of His wrath has come (but this is not the end, since people are still on earth afterwards).
    - Revelation 14:19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God (but people remain on earth).
    - Revelation 15:1, 15:7, 16:1, 16:19) The bowls of wrath – but there are survivors. This wrath is the destruction of Jerusalem.
    - Romans 19:15 ...and He [Jesus] should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
  - Sometimes, the context is not specific
    - Romans 9:22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction...
    - Ephesians 5:6 Because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
  - Wrath is described about 400 times in the Old Testament
    - Many are about defeating evil designs.
      - Psalm 2:5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath and distress them in His deep displeasure.
      - Psalm 38:1 The result of God's wrath was ill health
      - Psalm 88:16 God's wrath resulted in affliction and terror.
      - Psalm 89:66 How long, Lord? Will You hide Yourself forever? Will Your wrath burn like fire? Remember how short my time is.
      - Psalm 102:10 God's wrath resulted in reproach from enemies.
      - Psalm 106:40 God's wrath resulted in subjection to the Gentiles
    - Many involve the deaths of some or all of an evil group, but eternal punishment is not mentioned. (about 400 references)
      - Exodus 22:24 Those who afflict orphans and widows would be killed by the wrath of God
      - Exodus 32:10 – 12 God intended to wipe out Israel after the golden calf incident

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- Numbers 11:33 The wrath of God struck some of the Israelites after the quail.
- Numbers 16:41 A plague struck Israel after Korah's rebellion
- Numbers 25:11 Israel's idolatry on the Plains of Moab brought a plague.
- One referenced eternal judgment
  - Psalm 95:11 I swore in My wrath, "They shall not enter My rest."
  - Hebrews 4:3 – 5 Paul's point was that the Psalm was written long after the conquest of Canaan, so the Rest and eternal wrath remained in the future.
- Contrasts:
  - Grace versus wrath
    - Romans 4:13 – 16 Abraham, 2000 years before Jesus, was not under wrath but under faith (grace, verse 14). The point of the contrast is "law brings about wrath," so wrath was never the system God chose, knowing it to be fruitless. Instead, God's standard has always been faith, "according to grace."
    - Hebrews 9:27 Eternal judgment follows death, so wrath before death has nothing to do with eternal judgment.
  - Grace versus Law
    - Romans 6:14 The point is that God has never accepted people on the basis of law, but only by grace through faith.
    - Galatians 2:21 Righteousness has never come through law; only through grace
    - Galatians 5:4 Choosing law as the standard eliminates grace.
    - Galatians 3:19 – 29 Why the Law then? To keep Israel together until the Messiah could come. Note that the faith of Jesus was promised (22) so was known before Jesus and was the objective for not just Israelites, but for all (28).
    - Only a tiny fraction of the world's population was subject to the Law of Moses. The purpose of the Law was to hold Israel together so the Messiah would have a place to come with predictions and illustrations in place.
    - Success under the Law of Moses brought big families, big crops, and victory in battle, not heaven.
  - Faith versus Law
    - Romans 9:30 – 32 Law never produces righteousness, so it has never been the standard of acceptance, Rather, faith is.
    - Galatians 2:16 Law has never resulted in justification; only faith has.
    - Galatians 3:5 – 14 Faith, not law, has been the standard at least since Abraham
  - Grace versus works
    - Romans 11:5 – 6 Even in the time of Elijah, the remnant were preserved by grace, not works. Works has never been the standard of acceptance.
- Point to ponder:
  - To prepare for Jesus, God engineered many events to build the platform.
    - Defeat of superior forces to preserve Israel
    - Exile of Israel to increase the percentage of the faithful upon return.
    - Bad times for Israel to get them back on track.
  - In the Bible, God predicted and accomplished negative events to set the stage for Jesus and get the eternal kingdom started.
    - God announced those events in advance through prophets.
    - After the destruction of Jerusalem, prophets are no more (Daniel 9:24, Zechariah 13:2).
    - God is still involved in human history, just without prior announcement.
  - If wrath were the standard before Jesus, none of the people before Jesus would end up in the Lake of Fire, because they would have suffered already. Earthly wrath from God before or after Jesus was not for eternal judgment but for achieving His objective of a big family that will last.