

Title: When God Judges a Nation

Passage: Romans 1: 24-32

Summary:

Progression of Wrath of Abandonment

- Sexual Immorality
- Degrading passions
- Depraved mind

Key Truths:

- "We make our choices and then our choices make us."
- Abandonment of God = withdrawal of God's grace that restrains evil

Application:

- Pray (for revival, the lost, personal purity)
- Preach the Gospel
- Practice (what you preach)
- Prepare to be persecuted

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
 - "We make our choices and then our choices make us." - how has this maxim been true in your life?
 - What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?
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EXPOSITION

Context of Passage:

Romans 1:16-23

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine

nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

For the wrath of God

Romans 1:18

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

- eternal wrath to those who have rejected God.

The Wrath of God - several attributes:

- eternal wrath = eternal punishment in hell
- eschatological wrath = wrath that will be released in the End Times
- consequential wrath = wrath that God releases that is in response to the choices we make on an individual basis (aka wrath of sowing and reaping)

Galatians 6:7-8

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- Maxim: "We make our choices and then our choices make us."

Wrath of Abandonment

Judges 16:18-21

When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up again, for he has told me all his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands. She made him sleep on her knees. And she called a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him. And the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes and brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he ground at the mill in the prison.

- Because of Samson's sin, God had left him.

Judges 10:13-14

Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I will save you no more. Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress.”

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone.

- At some point, God leaves one to the just consequences of their actions in rejecting Him and His truth and suppressing those truths.

Acts 14:16

In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways.

- God’s abandonment of a nation who are choosing their own sin.

What exactly is the abandonment of God?

- Withdrawal of God’s grace that restrains evil.

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

- left to ourselves, we are inherently evil.

PROGRESSION OF THE WRATH OF ABANDONMENT

Passage:

Romans 1:24-32

Therefore God gave them up to vile impurity in the lusts of their hearts, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for falsehood, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged natural relations for that which is contrary to nature, and likewise the men, too, abandoned natural relations with women and burned in their desire toward one another, males with males committing shameful acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper, *people* having been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, *and* evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, *and* malice; *they are* gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unfeeling, *and* unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also approve of those who practice them.

- Appropriate picture of God leaving people to the consequences of their sin.
- Sin is both the cause and effect

I. SEXUAL IMMORALITY (heart)

Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!

- impurity = sexual immorality

in the lusts of their hearts to impurity

- Begins in the heart
- Impurity = decaying matter (akin to contents of a grave)

to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves

- The bodies follow in the most dishonorable ways.

II. DEGRADING PASSIONS (body)

For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged natural relations for that which is contrary to nature, and likewise the men, too, abandoned natural relations with women and burned in their desire toward one another, males with males committing shameful acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

- degrading passions = gross affections, vile desires, perversion, or even inversion
- picture of the result of those passions

III. DEPRAVED MIND (mind)

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a depraved mind, to do those things that are not proper,

- depraved = not thinking clearly = absence of morals
- Sermon reference: Cauterizing the Conscience (<https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/80-235/cauterizing-the-conscience>)

IV. RESULTING CULTURE

people having been filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, and evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding,

untrustworthy, unfeeling, and unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also approve of those who practice them.

Application

I. Pray

- pray for God's mercy and grace

Daniel 9

What to pray for?

- revival
- the lost (otherwise, they will be left to eternity in hell)
- personal purity

2 Chronicles 7:14

if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

II. Preach

- preach the Gospel to others.

1 Peter 3:15

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

III. Practice

- practice what you preach that shows Christ in all you do

Philippians 2:15

that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

Matthew 5:14-16

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

IV. Prepare

- prepare to be persecuted

2 Timothy 3:12

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

Matthew 5:11-12

"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.