

Psalm 76

Author: Asaph

Asaph pens some harsh words. Too harsh to read and conceive for those who like to think of God as only a God of love, grace, and mercy. My mind repeats, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16) He does love the world, but Asaph was speaking to those who had full knowledge of such a God, a concept unfamiliar to a Jesus girl like you and me.

For those of us Jesus girls who really can't put into words the meaning of God's wrath, here is a good definition: God's wrath is His righteous anger and punishment provoked by sin.

God becomes angry when His children willingly and continually rebel against His authority and disregard His sovereignty without repentance. The God of the Old Testament is the same God in the New Testament. He hates sin and will not ignore it.

Are God's children today any different than those of Asaph's day? _____

Unfortunately, we are not. We rebel against His authority and disregard His sovereignty. Though our behavior is not different, our opportunities to escape God's wrath are.

Read John 3:16

What opportunity do we have to escape God's wrath that Asaph's audience did not?

Those who accept Jesus as Savior will not perish in the final judgment and wrath of God as outlined in the book of Revelation. Can I get a collective amen and thank you Jesus? However, we live in a fallen world, surrounded by those who have not accepted and will not accept the free escape from the final wrath.

Read Romans 1:18

What is being revealed?

The wrath of God, His anger and punishment, is provoked by the sin of the godlessness and wickedness of those who suppress the truth. God is Truth and He has clearly revealed Himself, therefore humanity is without excuse. (Romans 1:19) He will not be suppressed.

Read Romans 1:26

What is God's response to those who are indignant to Him?

God will not force anyone to follow and believe Him. If humanity wants to exchange truth for lies and serve created things rather than the Creator, the Creator will not stop them. In the meantime, as believers who live among them as long as Jesus tarries, we have a responsibility to continue to present the gospel and saving grace of Jesus.

Even though God gives us over to our desires, He does not stop desiring for us to turn to Him.

Read 2 Peter 3:9

How does this verse support the previous statement?

What is our responsibility to those who have exchanged truth for lies and creation for the Creator?

Read Mark 16:15.

Were It Not For Grace

When I think of God's wrath, my mind naturally gravitates to His grace. In the 80's one of my all-time favorite contemporary Christian artists, Larnelle Harris, recorded *Were It Not for Grace*.

*Were it not for grace I can tell you where I'd be
Wandering down some pointless road to nowhere
With my salvation up to me I know how that would go
The battles I would face forever running but losing this race
Were it not for grace*

The difference between those who have accepted God's grace and those who have not is confession and forgives. We sin. We confess. He forgives. We sin again. He forgives again. We can't out-sin His grace. Amen? Amen.

What do 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 103:12 say about our sin?

Spend some time in prayer for those who are rejecting truth. Spend some time praising God for grace. *Were it not for grace, I can't tell you where I'd be*. What about you?