

God's Anger Against the Wicked

Charles G. Finney:

"God is angry with the wicked every day." -- Psalms 7:11.

In speaking from this text I design to show briefly:

I. WHO ARE "WICKED" IN THE SCRIPTURE SENSE OF THIS TERM;

II. THAT GOD IS ANGRY WITH THEM;

III. THE NATURE OF THIS ANGER;

IV. THE REASONS FOR IT;

V. ITS DEGREE;

VI. ITS DURATION;

VII. THE TERRIBLE CONDITION OF SINNERS UNDER IT.

I. The Bible divides all the human race into two classes only, the righteous and the wicked.

Those are righteous who have true faith in Christ, whose spirit is consecrated to God, who live a heavenly life on earth, and who have been renewed by the Holy Ghost. Their original selfishness is subdued and slain and they live a new life through the ever-present grace of Christ Jesus.

Right over against them in character are the wicked, who have not been renewed in heart; who live in selfishness, under the dominion of appetite in some of its forms, and it matters not in which, out of all possible forms, it may be, but self is the great and only ultimate end of their life. These are, in the scriptural sense, the wicked.

II. God is angry with the wicked.

Our text explicitly affirms this. The same truth is affirmed and implied in numerous other passages. Let the sinner remember that this is the testimony of God himself. Who should better know the feelings of God towards sinners than God himself does? Who on this point can gainsay what God affirms?

But this truth is also taught by reason. Every man in the exercise of his reason knows it ought to be true. If God were not opposed to the wicked, he would be wicked himself for not opposing them. What would you think of a judge who did not hate and oppose lawbreakers? Would you think him an honest man if he did not take sides against transgressors? Everybody knows that this is the dictate of reason and of common sense. Sinners know this, and always assume it in their practical judgments. They know that God is angry with them, and ought to be -- though they may not realise it. Sinners know many things which they do not realise. For instance, you who are in sin know that you must die; but you have more reason to be assured that God is angry with you than you have to be sure that you must die; for it is not necessarily so certain that you will die as it is that God is angry with you for your sin. God may possibly translate you from this world to another without your death, as he has some others; but there never was, and never can be, any exception to the universal law of his anger against all the wicked. You know this, therefore, with an absolute certainty, which precludes all possibility of rational doubt.

Sinners do know this, as I have said, and always assume it in their practical judgments. Else why are they afraid to die? Why afraid to meet God face to face in the world of retribution? Would they have this fear if they did not know that God is angry with them for their sin? It would be gratuitous, therefore, to prove this truth to the sinner. He already knows it -- knows it not only as a thing that is, but as what ought to be.

III. The nature of God's anger.

The nature of this anger demands our attention. On this point it is important to notice negatively:

1. It is not a malicious anger. God is never malicious; never has a disposition to do any wrong in any way to any

being. He is infinitely far from such feelings, and from any such developments of anger.

2. His anger is not passion in the sense in which men are wont to exhibit passion in anger. You may often have seen men whose sensibility is lashed into fury under an excitement of anger; their very souls seem to be boiling with fermentation, so intense is their excitement. Reason for the time is displaced, and passion reigns. Now God is never angry in such a way. His anger against the wicked involves no such excitement of passion.

3. God's anger cannot be in any sense a selfish anger; for God is not selfish in the least degree, but infinitely the reverse of it. Of course his anger against the wicked must be entirely devoid of selfishness.

But positively his anger against the wicked implies:

1. An entire disapprobation of their conduct and character. He disapproves most intensely and utterly everything in either their heart or their life. He loathes the wicked with infinite loathing.

2. He feels the strongest opposition of will to their character. It is so utterly opposed to his own character and to his own views of right that his will arrays itself in the strongest form of opposition against it.

3. God's anger involves also strong opposition of feeling against sinners. Undoubtedly God must have feelings of anger against the wicked. We cannot suppose it possible that God should behold sin without feelings of anger.

In our attempts to conceive of the mental faculties of the divine mind, we are under a sort of necessity of reasoning analogically from our own minds. Revelation has told us that we are "made in the image of God." Of course the mind of God is the antitype from which ours was cast. The great constituent elements of mind, we must suppose, are therefore alike in both the infinite and the finite. As we have intellect, sensibility, and will, so has God.

From our own minds, moreover, we infer not only what the faculties of the divine mind are, but also the laws under which they act. We know that in the presence of certain objects we naturally feel strong opposition. Those objects are so related to our sensibility that anger and indignation are the natural result. We could not act according to the fixed laws of our own minds if we did not utterly disapprove wrong-doing, and if our disapproval of it, moreover, did not awaken some real sensibility in the form of displeasure and indignation against the wrong-doer.

Some suppose that these results of the excited sensibility against wrong would not develop themselves if our hearts were right. This is a great mistake. The nearer right our hearts are, the more certainly shall we disapprove wrong, the more intensely shall we feel opposed to it, and the greater will be our displeasure against the wrong-doer. Hence we must not only suppose that God is angry in the sense of a will opposed to sin, but in the further sense of a sensibility enkindled against it. This must be the case if God is truly a moral agent.

4. God is not angry merely against the sin abstracted from the sinner, but against the sinner himself. Some persons have laboured hard to set up this ridiculous and absurd abstraction, and would fain make it appear that God is angry at the sin, yet not at the sinner. He hates the theft, but loves the thief. He abhors adultery, but is pleased with the adulterer. Now this is supreme nonsense. The sin has no moral character apart from the sinner. The act is nothing apart from the actor. The very thing that God hates and disapproves is not the mere event -- the thing done in distinction from the doer; but it is the doer himself. It grieves and displeases Him that a rational moral agent, under his government, should array himself against his own God and Father, against all that is right and just in the universe. This is the thing that offends God. The sinner himself is the direct and the only object of his anger.

So the Bible shows. God is angry with the wicked, not with the abstract sin. If the wicked turn not, God will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow and made it ready, not to shoot the sin, however, but the sinner -- the wicked man who has done the abominable thing. This is the only doctrine of either the Bible or of common sense on this subject.

5. The anger of God against the wicked implies all that properly belongs to anger when it exists with good reason. We know by our own experience that when we are angry with good reason, we have strong opposition of will, and also strong feelings of displeasure and disapprobation, against wrong-doers. Hence we may infer that under the same circumstances the same is true of God.

IV. The reasons of God's anger against the wicked.

His anger is never excited without good reasons. Causeless anger is always sinful. "Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause is in danger of the judgment." God never himself violates his own laws -- founded as they are in infinite right and justice. Hence God's anger always has good reasons.

Good reasons exist for his anger, and he is angry for those reasons. It is not uncommon for persons to be angry, under circumstances, too, which are good reasons for anger, but still they are not angry for those good reasons, but for other reasons which are not good. For example, every sinner has good reasons for being angry with every other sinner for his wickedness against God. But sinners are not angry against other sinners for those reasons. Although these reasons actually exist, yet when angry at sinners, it is not for these good reasons, but for some selfish reasons, which are not good. This is a common case. You see persons angry, and if you reprove them for their anger as sinful, they seek to justify themselves by affirming that they are angry with the man for his sins -- for his wrong-doing against God. Now this is indeed a good and sufficient reason for anger, and the justification would be a good one if the anger were really excited by this cause. But often, although this reason exists, and is pleaded by the man as his excuse for anger, yet it is no excuse, for, in fact, he is not angry for this cause, but has some selfish reason for his anger. Not so with God. God is angry with the wicked, not irrespective of his sins, but for his sins.

1. Wicked men are entirely unreasonable. Their conduct is at war with all reason and with all right. God has given them intelligence and conscience; but they act in opposition to both. God has given them a pure and good law, yet this they recklessly violate. Hence their conduct is in every point of view utterly unreasonable.

Now we all know that, by a fixed law of our being, nothing can be a greater temptation to anger than to see persons act unreasonably. This is one of the greatest trials that can occur, and one of the strongest incentives to anger. So when God looks at the unreasonable conduct of sinners, he feels the strongest indignation and displeasure. If they were not rational beings endowed with reason, no anger would be awakened and called forth. But since God knows them to be endowed with reason, and to be capable of true and noble-hearted obedience, he cannot fail of being displeased with their transgression.

2. The course of the wicked is utterly ruinous. No thanks to the sinner if his influence does not ruin the whole world. By the very laws of mind, the sin of any one man tends to influence other men to sin, and they spread far and wide the dreadful contagion of his example. It may truly be said that the sinner does the worst thing possible to him to ruin the universe. He sets the example of rebellion against the supreme government of all worlds. And what influence can be more potent than that of example? What worse thing, therefore, can the sinner do to destroy all good than he is doing by his sin? No thanks to him if every man who sees his sin does not imitate it to his own ruin, and throw the power of his own example broadcast over all his associates. No thanks to any sinner if his own influence for ruin does not run like fire on the prairies, over all the world, and then over every other world of moral beings in the universe of God.

Think of the father of a family, living in his sins and exerting his great influence over his household to make them all as wicked as himself. Who can estimate the power of his influence over his wife and his children? Does he pray with them and seek to lead them to God? No; his example is prayerless. It proclaims every day to his family, "You have no occasion at all to pray. You see I can live without prayer." Does he read the Bible to them or with them? No; his constant example before them sets the Bible at naught, and continually suggests that they will be as well off without reading the Bible as with. His whole influence, therefore, is ruinous to the souls of his family. No thanks to him, if they do not all go down to hell along with himself. If they do not scream around him with yells of mingled imprecation and despair, cursing him as the guilty author of their ruin, he will have other agencies to thank besides his own. Surely he has done what he well could do to secure results so dreadful as these. Has not God good reason to be angry with him? Why not? Would not you feel that you have good reasons to be angry with a man who should come into your family to destroy its peace -- to seduce your wife and daughters, and to entice your sons into some pathway of crime and ruin? Certainly you would. Now do not all families belong to God in a far higher sense than any man's family belongs to him? Why, then, has not God as good reasons for anger against a wicked father as you could have against a villain who should plot and seek to effect the mischief and ruin of your family? Is it wonderful to you that God should be angry with every wicked father? Just consider what that father is doing by his bare example -- even supposing that his words are well-guarded and not particularly liable to objection. Who does not know that example is the very highest and strongest moral power? It does not need the help of teaching to make its power felt for terrible mischief. The prayerless husband and father! The devil could not do worse -- nay, more, not so bad; for the devil never had mercy offered him, never stood related as this wicked father does, to offered pardon and to the glorious gospel.

If, then, God would have good reason to be angry at the devil, much more has he for anger against this wicked father.

The same substantially is true of other classes of sinners. It is essential to their very course as sinners, that they are in rebellion against God, and are doing the very worst thing in the universe by drawing other moral beings into sin.

3. Again, God is so good and sinners are so wicked, he cannot help being angry at them. If he were not angry at the wicked, he would be as much worse than they as he is wiser than they. Since, in his wisdom and knowledge, he knows more fully than they do the great evil of sin, by so much the more is he under obligation to be displeased with sin and angry at the sinner. We sometimes hear men say, "God is too good to be angry at sinners." What do men mean by this language? Do they mean that God is too good to be opposed to all evil? too good to be displeased with all evil-doers? This were indeed a strange goodness! God too good to hate sin -- too good to oppose sinners! What sort of goodness can this be?

I have sometimes heard men say that if God should be angry with sinners, he would be as bad as the devil himself. Now this is not only horrible language on the score of its blasphemy, but it is monstrous absurdity on the score of its logic. The amount of its logic is that God would be himself wicked if he should be displeased at wickedness. So wrong it must be to hate the wrong-doer! Pray, who is it that holds such doctrine? Is it not possible that they feel some interest in sustaining wrong-doers even against God himself?

Really there is no force, no plausibility even, in this language about the wrong of God's being angry at sinners, except what arises from misconceiving and misrepresenting the true idea of the divine anger in this case. If God's anger were in itself sinful -- as is the case often with man's anger -- then, of course, nothing more can be said in its vindication. But since his anger is never sinful, never selfish, never malicious, never unholy or wrong in any degree whatever, nothing can be more false, nothing more sophistical, nothing more ungenerous and vile and Satanic, than to imply that it is. But this is just what men do when they say that for God to be angry at sinners is to be himself wicked.

The true view of this case is not by any means abstruse or difficult of apprehension. Who does not know that good men are, by virtue of their goodness, opposed to wicked men? Surely all wicked men know this well enough. Else why the fear they have of good and law-abiding men? Why do all horse-thieves and counterfeiters keep dark from good men, dread their presence, commonly feel a strong dislike to them, and always dread their influence as hostile to their own wicked schemes?

So wicked men feel towards God. They know that his goodness places him in hostile array against themselves. This fact seems to be implied in the Psalmist's expostulation, "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? The goodness of God endureth continually." God is always good; how can you be proud of your wickedness? God is too good and too constantly good to afford you any scope for sin, any ground of hope for peace with him in your iniquity.

V. The degree of God's anger against sin.

It is plain that the degree of God's anger against the wicked ought to be equal to the degree of their wickedness, and must be if God is what he should be. The times of heathen ignorance and darkness "God winked at;" the degree of their guilt being less, by as much as their light is less, than that of such cities as Chorazin and Bethsaida. God does not hold them innocent absolutely; but relatively they might almost be called innocent, compared with the great guilt of sinners in gospel lands. Against those who sin amidst the clearest light, his anger must burn most intensely; for example, against sinners in this place and congregation. You may be outwardly a decent and moral man, respected and beloved by your friends; but if you are a selfish, impenitent sinner, the pure and holy God loathes and abhors you. He sees more real guilt in you than in ten thousand of those dark-minded heathen who are bowing down to idol gods, and whose crimes you read of with loathing and disgust. Think of it. God may be more angry against you for your great wickedness than against a nation of idolators whose ignorance he winks at, while he measures your light and consequent guilt in the balances of his own eternal justice. Oh! are you living here amid the blazing sunlight of truth; knowing your duty every day and every day refusing to do it; do you not know that in the eye of God you are one of the wickedest beings out of hell, or in hell, either, and that God's hatred against your sin is equal to your great guilt? But you say perhaps, Am I not moral and honest? Suppose you are moral. For whose sake are you moral, and for what reason? Is it not for your reputation's sake only? The devil might be as moral for such a purpose as you are. Mark, it is not for God's sake, not for Christ's sake, that you are a moral man, but because you love yourself. You might be just as moral if there were no God, or if you were an atheist. Of course if so, you are saying in

your heart, Let there be no fear of God before my eyes, no love of God in my heart. Let me live, and have my own way, as if there were no God. And all this you do, not under the darkness of heathenism, but amid the broadest sunlight of heaven's truth blazing all around you. Do you still ask, What have I done? You have arrayed yourself against God, rejected the gospel of his Son, and done despite to the Spirit of his grace. What heathen has ever done this, or anything that could compare with this in guilt? The vilest heathen people that ever wallowed in the filth of their own abominations are pure compared with you. Do you start back and rebel against this view of your case? Then let us ask again, by what rule are we to estimate guilt? You pass along the street and you see the lower animals doing what you would be horrified to see human beings do, but you never think of them as guilty. You see those dogs try to tear each other to pieces; you will perhaps try to part them; but you will not think of feeling moral indignation or moral displeasure against them; and why? Because you instinctively judge of their guilt by their light, and by their capacity for governing themselves by light and reason. On nearly the same principle you might see the heathen reeking in their abominations, quarrelling, and practising the most loathsome forms of vice and selfishness; but their guilt is only a glimmering taper compared with yours, and therefore you cannot but estimate their guilt as by so much less than your own as their light is less! Your reason demands that you should estimate guilt on this principle, and you know that you cannot rightly estimate it on any other. For the very same reason you must conclude that God estimates guilt on the same principles, and that his anger against sin is in proportion to the sinner's guilt, estimated in view of the light he enjoys and sins against. The degree of God's anger against the wicked is not measured by their outward conduct, but by their real guilt as seen by him whose eye is on the heart.

VI. The duration of God's anger against the wicked.

It manifestly must continue as long as the wickedness itself continues. As long as wicked men continue wicked, so long must God be angry at them every day. If they turn not, there can be no abatement, no cessation, of his anger. This is so plain that everybody must know it.

VII. The terrible condition of the sinner against whom God is angry.

This dreadful truth that God is angry with the wicked every day, sinners know, but do not realize. Yet it were well for you who are sinners to apprehend and estimate this just as it is.

Look then at the attributes of God. Who and what is God? Is he not a Being whose wrath against you is to be dreaded? You often feel that it is a terrible thing to incur the displeasure of some men. Children are often exceedingly afraid of the anger of their parents. Any child has reason to feel that it is a terrible state of things, when he has done wrong and knows it must come to the knowledge of his father and his mother, and must arouse their keenest displeasure against himself -- this is terrible, and no wonder a child should dread it. How much more has the sinner reason to fear and tremble when by his sin he has made the Almighty God his enemy! Think of his state! Think of the case of the sinner's exposing himself to the indignation of the great and dreadful God! Look at God's natural attributes. Who can measure the extent of his power? Who or what can resist his will? He taketh up the isles as a very little thing, and the nations before him are only as the small dust of the balance. When his wrath is kindled, who can stand before it, or stay its dreadful fury?

Think also of his omniscience. He knows all you have done. Every act has passed underneath his eye; and not every external act, merely, but, what is far more dreadful to you, every motive lying back of every act -- all the most hidden workings of your heart. Oh, if you were only dealing with some one whom you could deceive, how would you set yourself at work to plan some deep scheme of deception! But all in vain here, for God knows it all. If it were a case between yourself and some human tribunal, you might cover up many things; you might perjure yourself; or might smuggle away the dreaded witnesses; but before God, no such measures can avail you for one moment. The whole truth will come out, dread its disclosure as much as you may. The darkness and the light are both alike to him, and nothing can be hidden from his eye.

Again, not only does God know everything you have done, and not only is he abundantly able to punish you, but he is as much disposed as he is able, or omniscient. You will find he has no disposition to overlook your guilt. He is so good that he never can let sin unrepented of pass unnoticed and unpunished. It would be an infinite wrong to the universe if he should! If he were to do it, he would at once cease to be a good and holy God!

O sinner! do you ever think of God's perfect holiness -- the infinite purity of his heart? Do you ever think how intensely strong must be his opposition to your sin? to those sins of yours, which are so bad even in your own view that you cannot bear to have many of your fellowmen know them? How do you suppose your guilty soul appears in the eye of the pure and holy God?

You often hear of God's mercy. You hope for some good to yourself, perhaps, from this attribute of his nature. Ah! if you had not spurned it, and trampled it under your feet; if you had not slighted and abused its manifestations to you, it might befriend you in your day of need. But ah, how can you meet insulted mercy! What can you say for yourself in defence for having sinned against the richest mercy the world ever saw? Can you hope that God's injured mercy will befriend you? Nay, verily; God has not one attribute which is not armed against you. Such is his nature, and such his character, that you have nothing to hope, but everything to fear. His dreadful anger against you must be expressed. He may withhold its expression for a season, to give the utmost scope for efforts to reclaim and save you. But when these efforts shall have failed, then will not justice take her course? Will not insulted Majesty utter her awful voice? Will not the infinite God arise in his awful purity, and proclaim, "I hate all wickedness, my anger burns against the sinner to the lowest hell?" Will not Jehovah take measures to make his true position towards sinners known?

REMARKS.

1. God is much more opposed to sinners than Satan is. Doubtless this must be so, for Satan has no special reason for being opposed to sinners. They are doing his work very much as he would have them. We have no evidence that Satan is displeased with their course. But God is displeased with them, and for the best of reasons.

Men sometimes say, If God is angry with the wicked, he is worse than Satan. They seem to think that Satan is a liberal, generous-hearted being. They are rather disposed to commend him as, on the whole, very charitable and noble-hearted. They may think that Satan is bad enough, but they cannot be reconciled to it that God should be so hard on sinners.

Now the facts are that God is too good to be otherwise than angry with sinners. The devil is so bad himself that he finds no difficulty in being well enough pleased with their vileness: it does not offend him. Hence, from his very nature, God must hate the sinner infinitely more than Satan does.

2. If God were not angry with sinners, he would not be worthy of confidence. What would you think of a civil governor who should manifest no indignation against transgressors of the law? You would say, of course, that he had not the good of the community at heart, and you could have no confidence in him.

3. God's anger with sinners is not inconsistent with his happiness. Why should it be, if it is not inconsistent with his holiness? If there were anything wrong about it, then it would indeed destroy all his happiness; but if it be intrinsically right, then it not only cannot destroy his happiness, but he could not be happy without anger against the wicked. His happiness must be conditioned upon his acting and feeling in accordance with the reality of things. Hence, if God did not hate sin and did not manifest his hatred in all proper ways, he could not respect himself; he could not retire within the great deep of his own nature, and enjoy eternal bliss in the consciousness of infinite rectitude.

4. God's opposition to sinners is his glory. It is all-glorious to God to manifest his anger towards wicked men and devils. Is not this the fact with all good rulers? Do they not seize every opportunity to manifest their opposition to the wicked, and is not this their real glory? Do we not account it their glory to be zealous and efficient in detecting crime? Most certainly. They can have no other real glory. But suppose a ruler should sympathise with murderers, thieves, robbers. We should execrate his very name!

5. Saints love God for his opposition to sinners, not excepting even his opposition to their own sins. They could not have confidence in him if he did not oppose their own sins, and it is not in their hearts to ask him to favour even their own iniquities. No; where they come near him and see how he is opposed to their own sins, and to them on account of them, they honour him and adore him the more. They do not want any being in the universe to connive at their own sins, or to take any other stand toward themselves as sinners, than that of opposition.

6. This text is to be understood as it reads. Its language is to be taken in its obvious sense. Some have supposed that God is not really angry with sinners, but uses this language in accommodation to our understandings.

This is an unwarrantable latitude of interpretation. Suppose we should apply the same principle to what is said of God's love. When we read, "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son," suppose we say, this cannot mean real love, such as we feel for each other -- no, nothing like this; the language is only used by way of accommodation, and really has no particular sense whatever. This sort of interpretation would destroy the

Bible, or any other book ever written. The only sound view of this matter is that God speaks as sensible men do -- to be understood by the reader and hearer, and of course uses language in its most obvious sense. If he says he is angry against the wicked, we must suppose that he really is.

It is indeed true that we are to qualify the language, as I have already shown, by what we absolutely know of his real character, and therefore hence infer that this language cannot imply malicious anger, or selfish anger, or any forms of anger inconsistent with infinite benevolence. But having made the necessary qualifications, there are no more to be made, and the cardinal idea of anger still remains -- a fixed eternal displeasure and opposition against all sinners because of their great guilt.

7. God's anger against the sinner does not exclude love -- real, compassionate love; not, however, the love of complacency, but the love of well-wishing and good-willing; not the love of him as a sinner, but the love for him as a sentient being, who might be infinitely happy in obedience to his God. This is undoubtedly the true view to be taken of God's attitude towards sinners. What parent does not know what this is? You have felt the kindlings of indignation against the wickedness of your child, but blended with this you have also felt all the compassionate tenderness of a parent's heart.

The sinner sometimes says, It cannot be that God is angry with me, for he watches over me day by day; he feeds me from his table, and regales me with his bounties. Ah, sinner! you may be greatly mistaken in this matter. Don't deceive yourself! God is slow to anger indeed; that is, he is slow to give expression to his anger, and himself assigns the reason, because he is long suffering towards sinners, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." But take care that you do not misconceive his real feeling towards you. Beware, lest you misinterpret his great forbearance. He waits, I know; but the storm of vengeance is gathering. How soon he may come forth out of his place and unlock suddenly all the whirlwinds of his vengeance! Ah, sinner! this once done, they will sleep no more.

8. It is plain that sinners do not realise God's anger, though they know it. If they do both know and realise it, they manifest a degree of hardihood in iniquity which is dreadful. But the fact is, they keep the thought of God's anger from their minds. They are reckless about it, and treat it as they do death. Sinners know they must die, but they do not realise this fact. They do not love to sit down and commune with death -- thinking how soon it may come, how certainly it will come; how the grave-worms will gnaw the flesh from their cheek-bones, and consume those eyes now bright and sparkling. These young ladies don't love to commune with such thoughts as these, and realise how soon these scenes will be realities.

So you don't love to think of God's anger against sin, of his reasons for his anger, and of his great provocations. You probably don't like to hear me preach about it, and yet I preach as mildly as I can. You can't bear to hear the subject brought forward and pressed upon your attention. Tell me, are you in the habit of sitting down and considering this subject attentively? If you were to do so, you could not condemn God and treat him as if you had no care for him.

9. Are you aware, sinner, that you have made God your enemy, and have you thought how terrible a thing this is? Do you consider how impotent you are to withstand God? If you were in any measure dependent on any one of your fellowmen, you would not like to make him your enemy. The student in this college is careful not to make the faculty, or any one of them, his enemy. The child has the same solicitude in regard to his parent. Now consider what you are doing towards God -- that God who holds your breath in his hands, your very life, in his power. Let him only withdraw his hand, and you sink to hell by your own gravity. On a slippery steep you stand, and the billows of damnation roll below! O sinner! are you aware that when you lie down at night with your weapons of rebellion against God in your very hands, his blazing eye is on you? Are you well aware of this?

You may recollect the case of a Mr. H., once a student here. For a considerable time he had been rebellious against the truth of God as presented here to his mind, and this spirit of rebellion rose gradually to a higher and yet higher pitch. It seemed to have made about as much head as he could well bear, and in this state he retired to bed, and extinguished his light. All at once his room seemed full of dazzling splendour; he gazed around; there stood before him a glorious form -- with eyes of unearthly and most searching power; gradually all else disappeared save one eye, which shone with indescribable brilliancy and seemed to search him through and through. The impression made on his mind was awful. Oh! said he, I could not have lived under it many minutes if I had not yielded and bowed in submission to the will of God.

Sinner, have you ever considered that God's searching eye is on you? Do you think of it whenever you lie down at night? If you should live so long and should lie down again on your bed, think of it then. Write it down on a little card, and hang it where it will most often catch your eye, "Thou God seest me." Do this; and then realise

God's Anger Against the Wicked

that God's eye is penetrating your very heart. Oh that searching, awful eye! You close your eyes to sleep -- still God's eye is on you. It closes not for the darkness of night. Do you say, "I shall sleep as usual -- I am not the sinner who will be kept awake through fear of God's wrath. Why should I be afraid of God? What have I to fear? I know indeed that God says 'Give me thy heart,' but I have no thought of doing it. I have disobeyed him many years and see no flaming wrath yet. I expect he will feed me still and fill my cup with every form of blessing." O sinner! for these very reasons have you the more cause to dread his burning wrath. You have abused his mercy well-nigh to the last moment of endurance. Oh how soon will his wrath break forth against thee! and no arm in all the universe can stay its whelming floods of ruin. And if you don't believe it, its coming will be all the more sure, speedy, and awful!