

The Cup of Wrath

by Andrew Bonar

The sermon explores the concept of the cup of wrath, a symbol of God's indignation at man's sin, and how the Lord Jesus Christ drank it to its dregs as a substitute for the great multitude.

Duration: 24:49

Scripture: Job 36:18, Psalm 7:11-12, Psalm 11:6-7, Psalm 21:9, Psalm 75:1-2, Ezekiel 18:4, Ezekiel 22:13-14

Topics: "Audio Books"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the severity of God's wrath and the consequences of sin. He uses imagery of the seven seals, trumpets, and vials from the book of Revelation to illustrate that judgment and deliverance are withheld until certain conditions are met. The preacher also highlights the significance of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, where he bore the full weight of God's wrath for humanity's sins. He urges listeners to consider the impending judgment and turn to God for mercy and salvation. The sermon draws from various biblical passages, including Psalms and Ezekiel, to emphasize the certainty and seriousness of God's judgment.

Transcript

This sermon, entitled, The Cup of Wrath, was delivered by Andrew Bonner, and he takes this text from Psalm 75 and verse 8. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red, it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same, but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out and drink them. It will help greatly to the right apprehension of this solemn subject, to notice that Christ is the speaker of these awful truths. They cannot then have been spoken harshly, they must have been uttered in all tenderness.

As the head of his church, Christ says in Psalm 75 and verse 1, Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks. And then Psalm 75 and verse 2, Looking on a world lying in wickedness, he anticipates a different state of things ere long. I purpose, when I shall receive the congregation, that I shall judge uprightly.

This shall be in the day when he returns to judge the earth. It is he, meanwhile, who upholds all by the word of his power. He keeps the world from falling into ruin.

He it is that sustains that blue firmament, as well as earth's foundations. I bear up the pillars thereof, and were I to withhold my hand, all would tumble into ruin. O, that an unthinking world would consider! O, that fools would learn wisdom, and the proud fall down before their Lord.

For the judge shall surely come with a cup of red wine in his hand, a cup of wrath, of which every rebellious one must drink to the dregs. The horns of the wicked shall soon be laid low, and the righteous alone exalted, according to Psalm 75 and verses 9 and 10. It is of this cup that we this day wish to speak to you.

It gives an alarming, awakening view of our God and Savior. It is not God in Christ reconciling the world to himself, but God the Judge, Christ the Judge. It is not the King with the golden scepter inviting all to draw near.

It is the King risen up in wrath in the evening of the day of grace to judge all the wicked of the earth. O, there is a hell, an endless hell, awaiting the ungodly. The Judge warns us of it, in order that none of us may be cast into that tremendous woe.

Say not in your hearts, God is too loving and merciful ever to condemn a soul to such woe. If you continue in sin, you shall know too late that the Judge does condemn, not because he is not infinitely loving, but because your sin compels him so to do. Listen to what is written, and you will see that as sure as ever an unworthy communicant drank the wine out of the cup, so surely, if unpardoned, he shall drink of this wine of God's indignation.

First, the cup of wrath. The general idea of the verse is that there is wrath against sin to be manifested by God, terrible beyond conception. As it is written in Ezekiel 18 and verse 4, the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

And Psalm 7 and verses 11 and 12, God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will wet his sword. He hath bent his bow and made it ready.

He hath prepared for him the instruments of death. In Psalm 11 and verses 6 and 7, upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest. This is the portion of their cup, for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness.

In Psalm 21 and verse 9, thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger. In Job 36 and verse 18, because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke. Then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.

In Romans 2 and verse 5, we read, Thou treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And in Revelation 14 and verses 9 and 10, If any man worship the beast, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of his holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

Can words be found more emphatic to express God's indignation at man's sin? A cup is spoken of, a measured out portion. Psalm 11 and verse 6 and Psalm 16 and verse 5, The Lord is the portion of my cup. It is frequently used to express a full amount, as when fulfillment of curse is called the cup of trembling, according to Isaiah 51 and verse 22.

And in Ezekiel 23 verses 31 through 33, Wrath upon Samaria is the cup of Samaria. God's wrath shall be given forth in a measured portion, deliberately and fairly considered. There shall be nothing of caprice, nothing arbitrary in God's judgment on sin.

All shall be fairly adjusted. Here are the sins. There is the cup of a sized proportion to the sin and full.

God's perfections direct and dictate the filling of it. It is a cup of red wine. He elsewhere calls it the wine of my fury.

In Revelation 16 and verse 19, it is wine of the fierceness of his wrath. In the East, red wine was usually the strongest. But besides, the fiery nature of the contents is indicated by the color.

This red wine is pressed out of the grapes by the divine attributes. It must be the concentrated essence of wrath, no weak potion. But one like that in Jeremiah 25 and verse 16, where they drink and are moved and are mad.

Or that in Ezekiel 23 and verses 32 and 33, a cup deep and large, it contains the much. A cup of astonishment and desolation filled with drunkenness and sorrow. It is full of mixture.

This signifies that the wine's natural quantity has been strengthened. Its force has been intensified by various ingredients cast into it. Such is the sense of mingled wine in Isaiah 5 and verse 22 and in Proverbs 9 and verse 5. Come, drink of the wine which I have mingled.

We must distinguish this from the expression without mixture in Revelation 14 and verse 10, where the speaker means to say that there is no infusion of water to weaken the strength of the wine. Here, there is everything that may enhance the bitterness of the cup. And let us ask, what may be these various ingredients? From every side of the lost sinner's nature, forms of misery shall arise.

The body as well as the soul shall be steeped in never-ending anguish, amid the unceasing wretchedness of eternal exile and lonely imprisonment. Further, each attribute of Godhead casts something into the cup. Righteousness is there, so that the rich man in hell, according to Luke 16, dare not hint that his torment is too great.

Mercy and love stand by and cast on it their ray, testifying that the sinner was dealt with in long-suffering and salvation placed within his reach. Oh, the aggravation which this thought will lend to misery! Omnipotence contributes to it. The lost man in the hands of the Almighty is utterly helpless, weak as a worm.

Eternity is an ingredient, telling that this wrath endures as long as God lives. And truth is there, declaring that all this is what God spoke. And so cannot be altered without overturning His throne.

Yet more, while shame and contempt, and the consciousness of being disowned by every holy being, fiercely sting the soul, there are ingredients cast in by the sinner himself. His conscience asserts and attests that this woe is all-deserved, and the man loathes himself. Memory recalls past opportunities and times of hope despised.

Sin goes on increasing, and passions rage. Cravings gnaw the unsatisfied soul with eternal hunger. It may be that every particular sin will contribute to the mixture, a woe for broken Sabbaths, a woe for lusts gratified, a woe for every act of drunkenness and every falsehood and dishonesty, a woe for every rejected invitation and every threatening disregarded.

Who can tell what more may be meant by the words, full of mixture? It has dregs in it. The dregs lie at the bottom, out of sight, but are the bitterest. Do these mean hidden woes, not yet conceived of by any? Such as may be hinted at in the words, better he had never been born.

Such as Christ's woes seem to speak of. These shall be the reverse of the saved man's joys, which never have entered the heart to imagine. Backsliders seem sometimes to have begun to taste these dregs.

Apostates, like Cypra, have shown a little of what they may be. But oh, the reality in the ages to come! For it shall be the wrath of him whose breath makes the mountains smoke and rocks earth to its center. Oh, the staggering madness of despair! He poureth out of the same.

The wicked shall wring them out and drink them. They are not meant to be merely shown. This is not a cup whose contents shall only be exhibited and then withdrawn.

No, the wicked must drink them and cannot refuse. When Socrates, the Athenian sage, was adjudged to drink the cup of poison, he was able to protest his innocence and thus to abate the bitterness of the draft, though he took it as awarded by the laws of his country. Here, however, there shall be nothing like protest, nothing of and such alleviation of the awful draft which the sinner must drink.

God poureth out, and the guilty soul shall wring out and drink the very dregs. Job 27 and verse 22 says, They would fain flee out of his hand. But cannot, for it is written, God shall cast upon him and not spare.

In Jeremiah 25 and verses 15 and 16, We have the Lord most peremptorily commanding, Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it, and they shall drink and be moved and be mad. And further he insists, in verse 28, If they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Ye shall certainly drink. They shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty, according to Job 21 and verse 20.

And what mean those words already quoted in Revelation 14 and verses 10 and 11? It shall not on God's part be a mere silent feeling of indignation at sin. There must be infliction of curse. There is no thunder while the electricity sleeps in the cloud.

The seven seals showed no deliverance for earth while unbroken. The seven trumpets summoned no avengers till sounded. The seven vials brought down no judgment while only held in the angels' hands.

Ah yes, the penalty must be exacted, and it will require eternity to exact it all. O fellow sinner, we have tried to say somewhat of this doom, but what are words of man? You have seen a porous vessel in which was fine-flavored liquor. Outside you tasted the moisture, and it gave a slight idea of what was within, but slight indeed.

So our words today. And remember, each new sin of yours will throw in more mixture. It is the merciful one himself who speaks in Ezekiel 22 and verses 13 and 14.

Behold, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee. Can thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee? I, the Lord, have spoken it and will do it. It is dreadful to read and hear this proclamation of wrath, but it is all given in order to compel us to flee from it.

As one of our poets, Montgomery, sings, Mercy hath writ the lines of judgment here. None who from the earth can read them need despair. Second, the story of one who drank this cup to the dregs.

We would not leave you merely contemplating the terrors of that wrath. We go on, in connection with it, to speak of one whose history has a strange bearing on our case. There has been only one who has ever

drunk this cup to its dregs.

Cain has been drinking it for five thousand years and finds his punishment greater than he can bear, but he has not come to the dregs. Judas had been drinking it for nearly two thousand years, often crying out with a groan that shakes hell, O that I had never been born! O that I had never seen or heard of the Lord Jesus Christ! But he has not reached the dregs. The fallen angels have not come near the dregs, for they have not arrived at the judgment of the great day.

The only one who has taken, tasted, drunk, and grung out the bitterest of the bitter dregs has been the judge himself, the Lord Jesus. You know how often, when on earth he spoke of it, are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of, according to Matthew 20 and verse 22. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? according to John 18 and verse 11.

In Psalm 88 and verse 15, I am afflicted and ready to die, from my youth up. I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted. The universe saw him with it at his lips.

It was our cup of trembling, the cup in which the wrath, due to the multitude which no man can number, was mingled. What wrath! What woe! A few drops made him cry. Now is my soul troubled.

In the garden the sight of it wrung out the strange, mysterious words, sorrowful unto death. Though God-man, he staggered at what he saw, and went on trembling. Next day, on Calvary, he drank it all.

I suppose the three hours of darkness may have been the time when he was wringing out the dregs. For then arose from his broken heart the wail that so appealed to the heart of the Father. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? As he ended the last drop and cried out, It is finished! We may believe angels felt an inconceivable relief, and even the Father himself.

So tremendous was the wrath and curse, the wrath and curse due to our sin. In all this there was nothing too much. Love would protest against one drop too much, and never do you find God exceeding.

Did he not hasten to stay Abraham's hand when enough had been done on Moriah? And at that same spot again, David's day, when justice had sufficiently declared the sharpness of its two-edged sword, did he not again hasten to deliver, crying, It is enough! How much more, then, when it was his beloved son! He sought from him all that was needed by justice craved, and so we find in this transaction what may well be good news to us. For Jesus drank that cup as the substitute for the great multitude, his innumerable people, given him of the Father, and thereby freed them from ever tasting even one drop of that fierce wrath, that cup of red wine full of mixture with its dregs, its unknown terrors. Now this one, this only one, who so drank the whole, presents to the sinners of the world the emptied cup, his own cup emptied.

He sends it round the world, calling on mankind's sinners to take it and offer it to the Father as satisfaction for their sins. Come, O fellow sinner, grasp it and hold it up to God, plead it, and thou art acquitted. Yes, if you are anxious at all to be saved and blessed, take up this emptied cup.

However cold thy heart, however dull thy feelings, however slight thy sorrow for sin, take this emptied cup. Your appeal to this emptied cup arrests judgment at once. Do not think you need to endure some anguish of soul, some great sorrow, to take some sips of the red wine, far less to taste its dregs, ere you can be accepted.

What thoughtless presumption! Imitating Christ in his atoning work, if Uzziah the king, presenting incense when he ought to have let the priest do it for him, was smitten for his presumption, take care lest you be thrust away. If you presume to bring the fancied incense of your sorrow and bitter tears. It is the emptied cup that is offered us, not the cup wet with our tears or its purity dimmed by the breath of our prayers.

Feelings of ours, graces of ours, can do nothing but cast a veil over the perfect merits of Christ. Men of God, who has used this cup, keep pleading it always. Ever make it the ground of thine assurance of acceptance.

Examine it often, and well see how God was glorified here, and how plentifully it illustrates and honors the claims of God's righteousness. Full payment of every claim advanced by justice is here, and so you, in using it, give good measure, pressed down and running over, what then remains, but that you render thanks and take the salvation, often singing, Once it was mine, that cup of wrath, and Jesus drank it dry. What should ever hinder thy triumphant joy? Be full of gratitude, and let this gratitude appear in thy letting others know what it has done for you, and may do for them.

For again we say to you, fellow sinner, if you accept it not, soon you shall have no opportunity of choice. May I never see one of my people drinking this awful cup, may I never see it put into their hands, the groaning of a soul, dying in sin, is at times heard on this side of the veil, and it is the saddest and most haunting of all solemn and awful scenes. But what is that to the actual drinking of the cup, and wringing out the very dregs that God poureth out of the same? Never may Satan have it in his power to abrade you with having once had the offer of salvation, an offer never made to him.

It seems to me that every Sabbath, especially the Lord, takes gospel hearers aside into a quiet secluded nook, and there sets down before them the cup of red wine full of mixture, and then the emptied cup of Jesus, earnestly, most earnestly, most sincerely, most compassionately, pressing them to decide and be blessed. Men and brethren, never rest till the Holy Spirit has in your eye so glorified Christ who drank the cup, that you see in Him your salvation, and God's glory secured beyond controversy, beyond even Satan's power to question or assail.

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