

BEHOLD! THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD!

It will be my aim to teach this lesson as if I were preaching to lost people. It is my hope to bring home the urgency of preaching more of Jesus with an uncommon zeal.

If we could isolate the first sin that Adam did from all the rest; it would furnish an illustration of the legal consequences of the breaking of **just one** law. The law that God gave was a just and holy law. (Rom. 7:12) The breach of this one law severed the bonds of fellowship between Adam and God.

Since it was through **law** that God was offended; it would call for a legal procedure to satisfy divine justice, in order to remove the offence and restore fellowship. (We can be very glad that God had Justice as an attribute; there was no other way back to God; except through Justice.) Prior to the breaking of the law; man walked with God **without fear** of dying. Without any power being exerted over him to act against his own will; he purposely, willfully, and deliberately broke the divine law. Before the offence; the law of Moses could have come to the garden of Eden and given him a forensic examination, and he would have been declared holy. He possessed moral powers to obey any, or all laws. Now, he is left helpless, and in debt to a law he can not repay. But the law still demanded a rigid obedience that it was impossible for him to perform. **Perfect obedience is it's standard! Not only the letter, but the spirit of the law.** It demands that we obey it to it's fullest extent, **as if we could! Even though we are unable to obey to the full extent; it still demands us to do so.** Illustration: The Jews demanded Jesus to carry his cross. He would have done so, but lacked the strength. We are in the same dilemma. **The law had no power of itself to undo what had been done, but continues to demand full compliance. (GAL3:10; "... Cursed is every one that continueth not in all thing written in the book of the law to do them.") ("Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.")** Due to the offense being of a legal nature; it left the door open for justice to correct the otherwise, impossible task of freeing us from the bondage, (but not the obedience) of the law. To do the works of the law and to fulfill the law, are two different things.

If there had been any way that man could have fixed his problem; NOW was the time to do it! Before any other transgressions were multiplied under the curse of God; wouldn't a loving God have allowed some sort of personal sacrifice to have been offered at this time to atone for that **one sin, if he was ever going to?** But that rigid, inflexible law would not allow anything less than a full satisfaction, but did allow for a **SUBSTITUTE** that could meet it's requirements. It was of no value to look among the descendants of Adam, because they had lost the righteousness the law and justice required. So any action on man's part was hopeless for salvation. It was through man that sin came, and it would be through man that he must be restored. (He must be **tested by law for obedience**, to prove him qualified to pay the **penalty** of breaking it) "In the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son; made of a woman under the law, to redeem us from the **CURSE** of the law.: Gal. 4:4" . It is to him that the saved "flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both **sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;..**" Heb 6:18,19. Our souls won't sink; **unless he does.**

It is here that the core of the gospel opens up. The unsaved are under the sentence of the curse of the law, and abide under the wrath of God. He is justly condemned to death. He cannot

snap the chains of the law, or undo it's fetters. He is nothing more than dust . He came from the dust and will to dust return. We are scrapped up out of the dust and breathe a few times, and then go back and lay back down in the dust with our forefathers. It is under this sad condition that God intervened; "sparing not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all". Rom.8:32. These words cannot be fathomed.. If we view the penalty of sin with any conception of less pain to Jesus than what would have been inflicted on the sinner in Hell; we have missed the depths of sufferings that Jesus endured. Not only the physical pain, but in this court of law; when asked how he would plead; for him to have to say, "guilty!" was the height of spiritual agony. He never accepted the pain killer offered him on the cross; but endured full stroke of Divine wrath. He was treading the winepress alone, with none to help.

Inspired men from the Old Testament gave their prophetic view of his sufferings. The burden of the New Testament writers, was salvation through the suffering death and blood of Jesus. In Psalms 22; Jesus gave his own account of his unspeakable sufferings. Sins of many centuries not remembered by man; came to the cross, to be swallowed up in the firey wrath of God, when he was punishing sin in the death of Jesus.

When you have found the depths of God's hatred of sin; you will have found the depths of Christ's suffering to satisfy the demands of Justice, so there won't be any further calls for suffering from the poor sinner. . Spurgeon said that Jesus drank Hell dry for him. "Much more then, being justified by his BLOOD; we SHALL be saved from wrath through him." Rom. 5:9 Paul said that we were redeemed by his BLOOD. Eph 1:7;" Col. 1:14. "Made nigh by the BLOOD of Christ."Eph. 2:13 "Peace through the BLOOD of his cross."Col. 1:20;" "We enter the holiest by the BLOOD of Jesus."Heb. 10:19; "Washed us in his BLOOD." Rev.1:5."Redeemed us by thy BLOOD."Rev.5:9."

Hebrews 9:14, is one of the strongest statements of the eternal merit of the Blood of Christ. He offered himself without spot to God; through the Eternal Spirit."

God demonstrated that he accepted the cleansing power of the BLOOD, by taking a repentant sinner, straight from the cross to heaven. Also, the rejecter of that Blood, went from the cross straight to Hell. In view of this; it seems no strange thing that Paul strongly affirmed that he preached the cross. Knowing the terror of the Lord; he persuaded men. Was it really true that God was so severe as to cast men into Hell?

"Heb. 10:31; "It is a FEARFUL thing to fall into the hands of THE living God."

Psa. 76:7; "Thou, even thou, art to be FEARED; and who shall stand when once thou art angry?" Phrases like, "Wrath to come," "Cast down to Hell" "Blackness of darkness forever," "Fire that is not quenched and their worm dieth not;" "tormented day and night forever;" "The great and awful day of wrath that is to come;" "Everlasting burnings"etc.

Do not these declarations of scripture, make us to tremble? We are so used to hearing the trampling of feet of those on their way to Hell, that we become insensitive. What horror, when the shadow of God; holding the sentence of death in his hand; falls over the dying sinner! (WHAT COULD BE A GREATER FEAR?)The pleadings of pastor, family and friends, and the blessing of conviction that he hated; he always tried to **FORGET, and this meeting face to face with God.** The notices that God sent that death would soon come; he tried to **FORGET.** He will beg for mercy with such piercing screams that it would rend the rocks of the mountains. They will beg for mercy, but will not repent. But it was the delight of the christian to **REMEMBER.** (Lord's Supper)the promise of Salvation through Christ. But the sting of

death(which is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. 1 Cor. 15:55,56;) will grab hold of his soul and body, and prove to only be the first installment of the eternal suffering he is to experience. In the closing moments of his life; he will meet with the **King of terrors**. (Job 18:14) There are all kinds of terror; but none like this terror. The trembling of men like Festus and Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and the jailor are nothing to compare with what will engulf men, when the King of terrors himself at last shall come. Oceans of woes will overwhelm and crush his soul!!

Picture our loved ones not just struggling with the death rattles; but **undiluted FEAR**, that will cause an earthquake in their bosoms. They hated the word of God, and rejected the blessing of the Spirit convicting them so as to be saved ; now, this unspeakable time of sorrow. **"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow., which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his anger."** Lam. 1:12. This is probably prophetic of the sufferings of Christ, but will be the sinner's portion at the final hour. No one to hear; no one to care! **How awful; how dreadful that Day!!**

Those who are living at Christ's return, will have all of these calamities to overwhelm. Whatever else the opening of the 6th seal in Revelation 6:12 may teach; it certainly teaches that the setting of the Great Day Of Wrath is about to take place. Stars falling; powers of heaven being shaken; (Heavens melting with a **fervent** heat!) men's hearts failing them; earthquakes; etc.; as described here, was also the teaching of Jesus. Matt. 24:29,30. The earth and sea will vomit up the dead! This Day is so awful, that it will drive men to complete madness. As every island and mountain are being moved out of their places the crazy prayers for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them; will go unheard. God (personified as Wisdom) has already promised to **"laugh at their calamity. And mock when distress and anguish cometh upon them as a whirlwind of destruction."** Prov 1:26,27. That laughter will roar above the sound of the heavens and earth in upheaval.

The heavens will depart as a scroll Rev.6:14; 20:11; and "pass away with a **great noise**." 1 Pet. 3:9. The millions of the grave will be summoned for judgement. All will be present for the verdict of the highest and last tribunal. We started out with the legal consequences of a broken law in Eden, and this is the conclusion of that offence. Judgement will only have two verdicts; "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire," and, "Come ye blessed of my Father." This will be the final session, and it's adjournment is **eternal!** No power in the universe can call it back into session, or revise the verdicts given.

They **KNEW** that this day was coming. V. 17. The fear is multiplied a thousand times over, because they realize it is now too late. They will be examined by **law**, and will be found guilty. Justice will demand that the sinner pays his dues. He will be cast into outer darkness a bankrupt; in debt as much at Judgement, as he was in life. **"Depart ye CURSED into everlasting fire;"** Jesus will say. **The curse will follow them into eternity! Also, the depths of God's hatred of sin will be inflicted on those that made it their choice to live in rebellion against him! Who will now pay his debt??** The answer is; **He will continue to pay forever with out being able to complete paying what he owes. There is a difference between suffering and being punished.**

The contrast of that Day; will be the saints of God **rejoicing!** The guilt of all their sins were left at Calvary. The remaining filth of the flesh, had been washed away in the sweet River of death. They had trusted in the **BLOOD**, and they had gone through judgement **safely; wearing the robes of Christ's righteousness.** They had begun singing this song about his **BLOOD** on earth. Rev. 1:5. They continue in heaven. Rev. 5:9 While the plagues were being

poured out on the wicked; the saints were singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb.(Deliverance) In Ex, 15; Moses sung when the host of Pharaoh were destroyed in the sea. The Israelites had escaped Egyptian bondage by going through the waters of death safely, but was the destruction of their enemies. In heaven, the song of the Lamb will be sung as the saints stand on a sea of glass; mingled with fire. Rev.15:2,3, They will be singing of his victory over our enemies of sin and death, and them being cast into the sea of forgetfulness! **(Israel being delivered from the giant by David's victory; is a picture of our deliverance from the fear of death).**

TEARS WILL BE GONE! The cause of them will have been swept into the fires of eternity. We will be deliriously happy; the Son hath made us free!! The same justice that demanded the eternal suffering of lost sinners; also demands the **LIBERTY** of those that God has justified!!“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me **FREE** from the law of sin and death.”Rom 8:2 All of the scars of sin and stench of death, will be completely gone. Also, the loss of family and friends will no more come to mind. The cross is the greatest display of the **Goodness and Severity** of God. His Goodness is displayed, by **pointing men to the spot where the fire of his wrath has burned itself out!** It is **safe** to stand on that spot. There is nothing there to burn. It was a complete work. “There is therefore now no condemnation (Judgement) to those who are in Christ Jesus.” Rom. 8:1

The **Severity** of his Holiness and Justice is demonstrated, in his being unwilling to spare his own Son, when he took the sinners place. **(Rom. 8:32)**He inflicted punishment on him in the fury of his wrath! If he did that to the substitute; **who can describe the sufferings of the one who was actually guilty? Theirs will be eternal.** PSALM 11:6 “Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of his cup.”(Psalms 11:6)

It occurred to me as I was preparing this study, that the cross and it's blood stains are appropriately placed (historically) between the sin in the garden of Eden, and the awful judgement day of God! **We must stand at the old cross, and preach toward Eden and toward Judgement=fervently! OH! Sinner; that burden that lays on your heart is enough to sink you into eternal flames of misery!! You will remember the Goodness of God and experience the Severity of his wrath!!**