

Isaiah: A Prophet for Our Time  
The Relentless Wrath of a Holy God  
Isaiah 9:8-10:4

We are rebellious and disobedient by nature. Just watch any five-year-old for any extended length of time and you will discover very quickly that we learn to have a mind of our own at a very early age. Children require consistent structure and equitable discipline in order to keep them safe and develop social skills that will allow them to succeed in life. The idea is that restraint forced upon them at an early age would lead to self-restraint as adults.

1. Stubborn hearts will be devoured by their pride.
  
2. Stubborn leaders will be detached by their unrepentance.
  
3. Stubborn wickedness will be demolished by self-destruction.
  
4. Stubborn injustice will be disciplined by desolation.

While we may think that our situation is hopeless because we are powerless to turn away God's wrath, the truth is that God has already demonstrated a willingness to turn away His wrath. He maintains His holiness and justice by pouring out His wrath, but He demonstrates grace and mercy by turning it on Himself. Our situation is far from hopeless because we have a Rescuer, a Savior, who has taken on the penalty of our sin, who has endured the wrath of God, so that we don't have to be destroyed by it. Instead, by faith in the finished work of Christ and His cross, we are offered grace that leads to eternal life.

Reflection

Why is it vital for us to understand properly the biblical doctrine of the wrath of God? Why do you think that people try to undermine or change this doctrine by asserting that God has no such wrath against sin? How do the judgements of God against the nation of Israel stand as a permanent example of His intentions for every nation? What is the significance of the repeated phrase, "For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still?" Consider the judgments and, more importantly, the reasons for these judgments. Do any of these resonate with you? Are there things in your life that need to change in order to remove the threat of these judgments on you? How does this passage speak to the Christian pursuit of social justice? How is hell infinitely worse than any judgment of God that He works on the earth? What are some phrases in the section that point us to the fact that we can take refuge in God by turning back to Him? What does turning to Him look like today?