

“THE WRATH OF GOD IS REVEALED FROM HEAVEN”:
AN EXAMINATION OF ROMANS 1:18 IN LIGHT OF THE PAULINE CORPUS

by

Sandra K. Smith, B. Eng. M., B. Ed.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of McMaster Divinity College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Theological Studies

McMaster Divinity College
Hamilton, Ontario
2007

Master of Theological Studies
Hamilton, Ontario

McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE

TITLE: "The Wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven": An
Examination of Romans 1:18 in Light of the Pauline
Corpus

AUTHOR: Sandra K. Smith

SUPERVISOR: Michael Knowles

NUMBER OF PAGES: 81



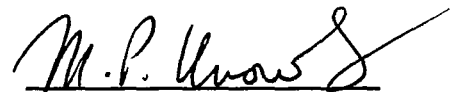
McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE


Upon the recommendation of an oral examination committee, this thesis-project by


Sandra Smith

is hereby accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Theological Studies


First Reader and Advisor


Second Reader


Dean

Date: *March 20, 2007*

ABSTRACT

“The Wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven”: An Examination of Romans 1:18 in Light of the Pauline Corpus

Sandra K. Smith
McMaster Divinity College
Hamilton, Ontario
Master of Theological Studies, 2007

This study attempts to determine Paul’s meaning when he declares in Rom 1:18, “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven” (NRSV). Two questions in particular are addressed. First, what is the wrath of God? And, second, how is it revealed? Both questions are answered in the literary and theological context of Rom 1:16-3:26, where the revelation of wrath parallels that of righteousness (1:17; 3:21-26). A review of Paul’s writings and scholarly literature shows that Paul uses both δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργή θεοῦ as code-terms with a number of distinct but related meanings, categorized according to whether θεοῦ serves as a subjective genitive or a genitive of origin, with further distinctions within each category. While divine wrath and righteousness are revealed both eschatologically and, provisionally, in the present day, their most significant revelation takes place – simultaneously – as God’s justice and mercy are vindicated in Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: THE GOSPEL AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD	3
The Power of the Gospel	4
The Righteousness of God	8
δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as Subjective Genitive	10
δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as Genitive of Origin	14
<i>Righteousness as a Status</i>	15
<i>Righteousness as Moral Regeneration</i>	17
Multifaceted Interpretations of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ	20
CHAPTER TWO: THE WRATH OF GOD	23
ὀργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ as Subjective Genitive	24
The Views of C. H. Dodd on the Wrath of God	24
Wrath as an Attribute or Emotion of God	27
Wrath as an Activity of God	33
ὀργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ as Genitive of Origin	36
The Wrath of God as a Human Condition	37
The Wrath of God as Moral Degeneration	39
Conclusion	40

CHAPTER THREE: THE REVELATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WRATH . . .	41
The Revelation of Righteousness	41
The Revelation of Wrath	46
Conclusion	54
CHAPTER 4: RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WRATH REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL . . .	55
The Solution to the Human Problem of Unrighteousness	59
The Vindication of Divine Righteousness	63
CONCLUSION	73
APPENDIX A: PAUL’S USES OF ὀργή	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	79

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this work is to ascertain Paul's meaning in Rom 1:18: "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven" (NRSV). In particular, to what does Paul refer when he uses the term ὀργὴ θεοῦ? And how exactly *is* the wrath of God revealed?

In order to answer these questions, I begin with the literary context of this verse. Rom 1:18 is the beginning of a long section (until 3:20) in which Paul describes the sinfulness of humanity. He declares that no one is righteous on their own, neither through deeds nor in accordance with the law. Everyone is under threat of condemnation, or wrath. But what is more telling is that this discourse is both preceded (1:16-17) and followed (3:21-26) by statements about the revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel. That is, the exposition on wrath appears to be a sub-point to Paul's main argument, which is that divine righteousness is manifested in the gospel for humanity's salvation.

Key to interpreting Paul's understanding of wrath is that it appears to be revealed in a way parallel to God's righteousness, based on grammatical similarities between 1:17 and 18. Therefore, I seek to construct a biblical theology of divine righteousness, based on Paul's writings (Rom 1:16-17 and 3:21-26 in particular) and examination of scholarly literature on the subject. The phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ has been the subject of considerable study in which widespread agreement has not been reached, largely because there is good evidence in support of different views. However, the varying conclusions can be broadly categorized based on the sense of the genitive θεοῦ as either a subjective genitive or a genitive of origin, with further distinctions within each category. It is within

the context of this theology of the righteousness of God that we may gain understanding of the workings of divine wrath.

Turning to literature on ὀργή θεοῦ, one also finds varying interpretations of the nature of this term, particularly on the issue of whether wrath is in any way God's attribute or emotion. Though the existing literature does not do so, I will attempt to find clarity by categorizing these interpretations in the same way as δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, based on different uses of the genitive. The expectation is that there will be a sense of wrath corresponding to each sense of righteousness which has been identified.

With the key terms, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργή θεοῦ, defined, I will turn to the revelation of divine righteousness and wrath. There is no doubt that God's righteousness is revealed in the gospel – Paul's repeated use of the δικαιο- word group assures us that this is his main point. But based on the grammatical parallels in 1:17 and 18, it is reasonable to infer that God's wrath is revealed in the gospel as well. Commentators do not hold that view unanimously, however, and so I will summarize the different viewpoints on the revelation of wrath.

Finally, given that both righteousness and wrath are revealed in the gospel, I will attempt to explain exactly *how* God has accomplished this. The key term appears to be ἰλαστήριον, a word whose meaning is widely disputed based on linguistic arguments. I will take another approach, arguing from context that it refers to the *effect* that Christ's death has had both in eliminating the threat of wrath to humanity with its offer of justification, and in vindicating God's own righteousness.

CHAPTER ONE THE GOSPEL AND RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD

In Rom 1:18, Paul states ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ, “for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven.” The key to understanding this verse is to set it in its literary context, within the structure of Paul’s entire argument from 1:16 to 3:26. That will in turn allow us to understand 1:18 in its proper theological context of God’s righteousness for the salvation of humanity.

In its literary context within 1:16-3:26, Rom 1:18 begins its own unit which continues until 3:20, describing the sinful state of all humanity and their inability to achieve righteousness on their own, that is, humanity under the wrath of God. But this discourse is preceded and followed by statements about the revelation of the righteousness of God. Rom 1:16-17 states the theme of the letter: “[the gospel] is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith . . . for in it the righteousness of God is revealed.” Later, in 3:21-26, Paul repeats and expands on the theme of God’s righteousness manifested in the gospel events. Thus, the wrath section is bracketed by expositions of the righteousness of God in relation to the salvation of humankind. This suggests that the revelation of wrath is part of the righteousness story, just one component of God’s plan to judge humanity and then justify (or condemn) on the basis of faith in the risen Christ (or its absence).

The revelation of the wrath of God is clearly connected to the revelation of the righteousness of God (1:17-18), but of the two, both Paul and biblical scholars have had much more to say about the latter. Therefore, this discussion begins not with wrath but

with the theme of God's righteousness and its relation to the gospel and its power to save. The primary Scriptural references will be Rom 1:16-17 and 3:21-26, but other passages will be drawn on to illuminate the meaning of the terms as they are used in these verses. This chapter will discuss, in turn, the power of the gospel (1:16), and the righteousness of God (1:17, 3:21-26). Following Paul, this chapter seeks to explain the story of salvation and God's righteousness, the larger story of which wrath is but a part.

The Power of the Gospel

Paul writes in Rom 1:16, "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith." He has already explained what he means by the gospel in the opening verses of the letter. The gospel is the gospel of God (1:1), concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord, who "was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead" (1:3-4). The gospel is the good news of humankind's salvation through Jesus Christ who died so that we could live, and by whose resurrection God has declared victory over the power of sin and evil. The gospel of which Paul speaks is more than the proclamation of these events. It also refers to the events themselves: Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection are the gospel proclaimed by Paul.

Paul states in 1:16 that he is not ashamed of the gospel. This is a point worth making, considering that to his Roman audience Christ's crucifixion would have been shameful and degrading. Yet Paul's assertion is that this scandalous event, on the surface the antithesis of all things divine, reveals God's righteousness. F. F. Bruce claims that

Paul is using a figure of speech called *litotes*, “an understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by negating its opposite.”¹ That is, “Paul means that he glories in the gospel and counts it a high honour to proclaim it.”² Though this may be part of the truth, we must also consider the objections Paul may have anticipated on the part of his Roman readers. According to the ancient commentator Ambrosiaster, “Paul is not ashamed of the gospel of God, but the implication is that some whom he is addressing may be ashamed of it.”³ Paul did not shy away from the paradox of a crucified Messiah, even though, in Calvin’s words, “he giveth to understand that it is contemptible in the sight of the world.”⁴ He addresses the same issue in his letter to the church at Corinth: “the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor 1:18); “We proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor 1:22-23). Paul, knowing its truth and power, is proud to proclaim the gospel, even though it is “a paradox and a contradiction

¹ litotes. Dictionary.com. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004.
<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/litotes> (accessed: November 19, 2006).

² F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary* (London: Tyndale, 1963), 79.

³ In Gerald L. Bray, ed., *Romans*. Ancient Christian Commentaries on Scripture: New Testament VI (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998), 29.

⁴ Jean Calvin, *Commentary upon the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans*, ed. Henry Beveridge, trans. Christopher Rosdell (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844), 20.

to the society of the capital of the Roman Empire.”⁵ For both the events of the gospel and the proclamation of these events reveal God’s power at work.

The power of God in the gospel is for human salvation, which it achieves in two ways. The first is in the crucifixion and resurrection themselves, although in our present study discussion of these events and the revelation in them of God’s wrath and righteousness must be deferred until a later chapter. The other is in the preaching of these events which brings people to faith so they may be saved. Karl Barth says of Paul, “Note that he does not say that the Gospel *has* such power . . . on the contrary that the Gospel *is* such power”⁶ (*italics original*). Fitzmyer concurs: “The gospel is not just a message sent from God; it is a ‘power’ unleashed into the world of humanity that actively accosts human beings, challenging them to accept it through faith in Jesus Christ.”⁷ The gospel does not merely *announce* a salvation that will come later; it is itself “a divine activity or power leading to salvation.”⁸ It does so by bringing about human faith, the obedient response to the gospel (Rom 1:5), which is not merely “belief in a proposition though doubtless intellectual beliefs are involved.”⁹ Faith is not a human accomplishment of achieving “fidelity or loyalty to God; for that might be thought of as in itself

⁵ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 255.

⁶ Karl Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (London: SCM, 1959), 20.

⁷ Fitzmyer, 254.

⁸ C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: A. & C. Black, 1991), 28.

⁹ C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932), 16.

meritorious.”¹⁰ Rather, for Paul, faith is God’s work, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22), brought about by the power of the gospel. That is to say, “faith is not the condition of salvation; rather it is the mode of salvation. So the person who hears the gospel is made a believer through the gospel and as this believer is saved.”¹¹ Thus, the proclamation of the gospel is God’s power for salvation by virtue of actively creating human faith.

Of course, this talk of salvation begs the question: from what does humanity need to be saved? In Rom 5:8-9, Paul makes it clear that through Christ’s death sinners are saved from the wrath of God. Salvation means that instead of receiving the deserved penalty for our sins, we will have “safe passage through human trials and divine judgment to eternal bliss,”¹² which Calvin describes relationally as “life with God.”¹³ “For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that . . . we might live with him” (1 Thess 5:9-10).

So salvation is “the eschatological destiny of the Christian,”¹⁴ to be experienced in the future, but there are consequences in the present age as well. The provisional reconciliation achieved now between humanity and God (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:19) is a precursor to the eternal life with God which will come following the day of judgment. “Salvation, for Paul, though oriented toward the future day of deliverance, is the total

¹⁰ Ibid., 15.

¹¹ Richard H. Bell, *No One Seeks for God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1:18 - 3:20* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 2.

¹² Barrett, 27.

¹³ Calvin, 20.

¹⁴ Fitzmyer, 256.

experience of being put into right covenantal relationship with God now, being one day raised from the dead, being acquitted on the day of judgment, and having eternal life.”¹⁵ This salvation from the wrath of God is achieved through the righteousness of God. As we shall see, these concepts are also experienced both in the eschaton and in the present age. Before addressing the central issue of wrath, however, we turn to God’s righteousness, which is revealed in the gospel as God’s power for salvation.

The Righteousness of God

Rom 1:18-3:20 describes humanity under the wrath of God, a dire situation from which no one, Jew or Gentile, can rescue themselves by means of their own righteousness, for as Paul writes, “There is no one who is righteous, not even one” (3:10). But this entire discourse on wrath appears to be a sub-point to Paul’s primary concern, for it is both preceded and followed by statements about the demonstration of God’s righteousness:

For in [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.” (1:17)

But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously

¹⁵ Michael J. Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 349.

committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. (3:21-26)

The “for” of 1:17 links this verse to Paul’s preceding statement that the gospel is God’s power for salvation; he now explains that this is so because in it the righteousness of God is revealed. It is revealed, that is, in the ongoing preaching of the gospel (1:17) as well as in the gospel events themselves (3:21, 22, 25, 26). Thus, though righteousness is crucial to the eschatological destiny of salvation, it has already been made manifest and is continually revealed in the present time. But how, exactly? The answer to that question begins with an examination of the meaning of the righteousness of God in these verses, in particular 1:17 and 3:21-22, which are the most ambiguous. Review of the literature on this subject reveals a long and varied history of interpretation, in which most commentators take the θεοῦ of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ to be either a subjective genitive or a genitive of origin, with further distinctions within those categories. Others try to create more all-encompassing definitions which do not limit the meaning of the genitive. Each of these possibilities will be considered in turn.

Scholars have used several approaches to try to pinpoint the meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in Rom 1:17 and 3:21-22. They have looked at the sense in which God’s righteousness has been used elsewhere in this and other letters written by Paul. They have also tried to infer Paul’s meaning from the immediate context of these appearances and from Paul’s own Christian theology and Jewish background.

δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as Subjective Genitive

A grammatical genitive may be understood as subjective in cases where, if the head noun could be considered in a verbal sense, the genitive term would be the subject or the initiator of the action.¹⁶ In δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, the head noun δικαιοσύνη has a verbal idea of justification.¹⁷ So to regard δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as a subjective genitive is to understand God (the genitive noun) as the subject of the activity implicit in righteousness, which is justifying the faithful. That is, he reconciles them to himself now and also renders a righteous verdict on the day of judgment, for their salvation. According to Dunn, “righteousness and salvation [are] virtually synonymous: the righteousness of God [is] God’s act to restore his own and to sustain them within the covenant.”¹⁸

Of course, the divine act of justification does not occur in isolation, but is closely connected to and is in fact a result of God’s subjective *attribute* of righteousness, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as a quality of God himself.¹⁹ The righteousness that leads God to

¹⁶ Stanley E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2004), 94-95.

¹⁷ The cognate verb is δικαιοῦν, defined as Louw and Nida as “to cause someone to be in a proper or right relationship with someone else” (34.46); “the act of clearing someone of transgression” (56.34).

¹⁸ James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary (Waco: Word, 1988), 41.

¹⁹ In referring to God’s attribute of righteousness, θεοῦ may also be considered a possessive genitive (Nigel Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3 [Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1963], 211). Fitzmyer uses the terms interchangeably (p. 105). Porter states, “Many instances of the subjective genitive cannot be distinguished from the possessive genitive” (p. 95). In view of the interrelationship and overlap between the two senses of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ described here, both will be referred to as a subjective genitive throughout this work.

justify believers is described by Gorman as “God’s saving covenant faithfulness.”²⁰ It is God’s integrity in his fulfillment of his covenant obligation “to be the acquitter and savior of his people.”²¹ However, Fitzmyer cautions against limiting the interpretation of God’s attribute of righteousness to a solely salvific sense, as Dunn and Gorman do.

Righteousness should not be treated as “a mere synonym for mercy,”²² whilst ignoring the fact that God’s saving power is ultimately “exercised in a just judgment,”²³ both in the course of history and eschatologically.

For in Paul, God’s righteousness at times indeed refers to his holy justice, his role as the righteous judge of humanity. In Rom 2:5, Paul writes of “the day of wrath, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.”²⁴ That is, God’s judgment and wrath are products of his righteousness. Similarly, Paul states in 3:5-6 that God is just in judging

²⁰ Gorman, 350.

²¹ Dunn, 175.

²² Fitzmyer, 107.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ. Louw & Nida define δικαιοκρισία as “a right or just verdict or judgment” (56.27). Although Paul does not use the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in this verse, the comparison is fair. John Reumann allows that “the phrase ‘righteousness of God’ cannot be treated . . . in isolation from other *dik*-terms in Paul” (“Righteousness [NT],” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, ed. David Noel Freedman [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 758). According to Gottfried Quell and Gottlob Schrenk, “When the apostle makes his most solemn and weighty pronouncements concerning the establishment of salvation, he uses δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ instead of the simple δικαιοσύνη” (δίκη, κτλ. in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964], 203). But even without the qualifying θεοῦ, all righteousness ultimately is God’s, according to Paul’s overall argument in Romans. Paul’s assessment of humanity is “There is no one who is righteous, not even one” (3:10).

the world and inflicting wrath; δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in 3:5 is rendered “the justice of God” by the translators of the RSV and NRSV. Says Cranfield, “That God who shall judge the world is just is a fundamental certainty of all theological thinking.”²⁵

Thus the two ways in which Paul describes the divine attribute of righteousness are as God’s saving covenant faithfulness and his justice. His covenant faithfulness also comes to expression in his act of justification, or salvation. These two senses of God’s righteousness and the one activity may all be termed δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. We note, however, that there is no activity flowing from God’s justice which Paul explicitly refers to as δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. God’s condemnation of sin is certainly a product of his justice (2:5-6, 3:5-6). However, as we shall see presently, Paul more characteristically employs the phrase ὀργή θεοῦ for God’s activity of condemnation.

Having defined two possible and related interpretations of the subjective genitive in the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, we now turn to the question of whether this meaning is Paul’s intention in 1:17 and 3:21-22. Sanday and Headlam argue that the subjective sense is “quite clear,”²⁶ in Rom 3:5, 25, and 26, and that therefore it should be applied to all further verses in which it appears. Fitzmyer agrees that this is definitely the meaning in 3:5 and the best interpretation of all the uses in Romans 3, and thus only the subjective or

²⁵ C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, International Critical Commentary (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 185.

²⁶ William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1896), 25.

possessive sense of the genitive should be used in all of Romans.²⁷ Certainly he is correct regarding 3:5, where, as previously noted, θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη is translated “the justice of God.” Similarly, 3:25 explains why God put Jesus forth as a sacrifice of atonement: “He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he has passed over the sins previously committed.” Here it seems clear that Paul is referring to God’s role as judge. But contrary to Fitzmyer, the sense in 3:21 and 22 seems to have the same ambiguity as is the case in 1:17.

Cranfield follows Sanday and Headlam in arguing that because the θεοῦ in Rom 1:18 (ὁργῇ θεοῦ) is subjective, proximity demands that it be so in 1:17 also.²⁸ However, they are likely mistaken in limiting the meaning of θεοῦ in 1:18 to one sense only, a topic which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter of this work. The same scholars also note the similar subjective sense of righteousness as an attribute in LXX Ps 97[98]:2, in which there appears equivalent vocabulary of salvation, righteousness, and revelation.²⁹

Sanday and Headlam are ambivalent as to whether the subjective genitive might refer to God’s attribute of righteousness or his activity of justification. They argue for the former,³⁰ but then recognize that this sense includes the latter: “The whole scheme of

²⁷ Fitzmyer, 257.

²⁸ Sanday and Headlam, 25; Cranfield, 96.

²⁹ ἐγνώρισεν κύριος τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ, ἐναντίον τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ. Sanday and Headlam, 25; Cranfield, 96.

³⁰ Sanday and Headlam, 25.

things by which He gathers to Himself a righteous people is the direct and spontaneous expression of his own inherent righteousness.”³¹ Fitzmyer also allows for the meanings to be intimately connected: “it is an aspect of God’s power, whence proceeds his acquitting and salvific activity in a forensic mode.”³² In contrast, Cranfield dismisses the possibility that a subjective reading of the genitive in δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ designates God’s own quality: “That it refers to righteousness as an attribute of God is not likely, though this has sometimes been maintained.”³³

In conclusion, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as God’s subjective righteousness may be that attribute which makes him humanity’s saviour and/or that which makes him judge. In the former case, it also sees expression in God’s activity of justifying the faithful, which Paul likewise refers to as δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ.

δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as Genitive of Origin

In a genitive of origin, “the genitive substantive is the source from which the head noun derives or depends.”³⁴ So if θεοῦ is a genitive of origin in δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, then the righteousness in question belongs to the human recipient but only insofar as it derives from God; the phrase expresses “the uprightness communicated by God to human

³¹ Ibid.

³² Fitzmyer, 257.

³³ Cranfield, 96 n. 2.

³⁴ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 109.

beings.”³⁵ But even this can be interpreted in two different ways: either the righteousness is a status imparted by God, that is, humans are “justified,” or the righteousness implies an actual moral regeneration enabled by God. Each of these cases will be considered in turn.

Righteousness as a Status

A human status of righteousness is essential for salvation. Says Barrett, “As a Jew, instructed in the Old Testament, Paul knows that salvation presupposes righteousness.”³⁶ Bruce, quoting W. R. Smith, concurs: “The ideas of right and wrong among the Hebrews are forensic ideas; that is, the Hebrew always thinks of the right and the wrong as if they were to be settled before a judge. Righteousness is to the Hebrew not so much a moral quality as a legal status.”³⁷ But Paul’s view of the means of obtaining a righteous status changed with his conversion. Paul as Jew “believed that man’s status of righteousness before God was to be achieved by himself, in obedience to the law.”³⁸ However, as a Christian Paul had come to believe that God in his grace “justified men

³⁵ Fitzmyer, 105.

³⁶ Barrett, 29.

³⁷ Bruce, 77 (quoting W. R. Smith, *The Prophets of Israel* [1882], p. 71). However, one must not dismiss the ancient Greek view of righteousness, which undoubtedly also influenced Paul: “The view that character and justice [δικαιοσύνη] are inextricably connected has a heritage in the Greek world that can also be seen in the Christian tradition” (Ronald Weed, “Aristotle on Justice [δικαιοσύνη]: Character, Action, and Some Pauline Counterparts,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 3 [2006]: 97). The moral element of righteousness is discussed in the following section of this chapter.

³⁸ Barrett, 30.

freely on the basis not of works done in obedience to the law but of faith.”³⁹ The link in his theology between justification and salvation is clearly stated in Rom 10:10: “For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.”

In Phil 3:9, Paul expresses the idea of righteousness as a status bestowed on a human by God: “not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith.” Thus the ἐκ of Paul’s τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην in this passage “transfers the righteousness from God to man.”⁴⁰ But we must note the grammatical difference. This is the only time Paul uses ἐκ in a phrase concerning righteousness from God, although the same sense of a bestowed righteousness is elsewhere present in 2 Cor 5:21: “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ).⁴¹ This may well be the sense implied in Rom 1:17, as well as in 3:21 and 22. In 3:22 (“the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe”), according to Sanday and Headlam, “its relation to the human recipient is quite unmistakable.”⁴² The human focus is also present in 1:17 with its emphasis on faith: Paul states that “the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith” and he quotes from Hab 2:4, “The one who is righteous will live by faith.” The focus on faith seems to

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Sanday and Headlam, 25.

⁴¹ Cf. Rom 10:3.

⁴² Ibid.

shift the emphasis to the status of the human rather than God's justifying activity, and therefore suggests that it is appropriate to interpret the genitive as one of origin here, a human status originating in God. Cranfield also argues that this interpretation "agrees better with the structure of the argument of the epistle,"⁴³ in which justification by faith is a pervasive theme.

Righteousness as Moral Regeneration

Elsewhere in the New Testament, "righteousness," when referring to a human, usually indicates a moral or ethical quality: "δικαιοσύνη is almost always used in the NT for the right conduct of man which follows the will of God and is pleasing to him, for rectitude of life before God, for uprightness before his judgment."⁴⁴ Our discussion thus far has been of justification as a divine gift or human status, but is there any possibility that there is an element of moral regeneration in the righteousness that is bestowed by God, particularly in view of Paul's discussion of sanctification later in the book of Romans? Before answering this question, it is necessary to examine the vocabulary related to justification. We have already seen that the noun δικαιοσύνη can denote a human status that originates with God, but there is also a cognate verb δικαιοῦν ('to make righteous,' or 'to justify') which is used for the conferring of that status. An active participial form of the verb in Rom 3:26 describes God as δικαιοῦντα, the one who justifies, and a passive participle, δικαιοῦμενοι, denotes the justified status of humans in

⁴³ Cranfield, 98.

⁴⁴ Quell and Schrenk, 198.

3:24, similar to the status implied by δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. After a linguistic study, Cranfield concludes, “there seems to us to be no doubt that δικαιοῦν, as used by Paul [in 3:24, 26], means simply ‘acquit,’ ‘confer a righteous status on,’ and does not in itself contain any reference to moral transformation.”⁴⁵

Ziesler agrees, but only as far as the verb goes. In his study of the many problems, largely unsolved, in interpreting Paul’s use of δικαιοῦν and its cognates, he focuses on “how far the words are used purely relationally (whether the relation is understood forensically or not) and how far ethically.”⁴⁶ He concludes that

the verb ‘justify’ is used relationally, often with the forensic meaning ‘acquit’, but that the noun and the adjective δίκαιος, have behavioural meanings . . . in Paul’s thought Christians are both justified by faith (i.e. restored to fellowship, acquitted), and also righteous by faith (i.e. leading to a new life in Christ). These two are not identical, yet they are complementary and inseparable.⁴⁷

This means that when δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is interpreted anthropocentrically with θεοῦ a genitive of origin, there may indeed be a sense of moral regeneration in its meaning.⁴⁸ Ziesler admits to being surprised by the result,⁴⁹ and notes that it is contrary to

⁴⁵ Cranfield, 95. Cranfield does not deny that sanctification and moral regeneration accompany justification in the Christian life, only that they are implied by the verb δικαιοῦν.

⁴⁶ J. A. Ziesler, *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul* (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), 1.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Whether or not this is so in any particular case must be determined by context; in the verses under study this is a minor consideration compared to the other senses we have seen in the phrase.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

the common Protestant view that “righteousness as imputed by justification is . . . for forensic purposes only.”⁵⁰ Ziesler’s results make it difficult to simply dismiss the moral aspect of the human status potentially implied by δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. But so does a careful reading of Paul elsewhere in Romans. In 6:12-23, Paul makes clear his view that obedience and resistance to sin accompany divinely-imparted righteousness. He writes, “For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification” (6:19). Quell and Schrenk conclude:

Thus, without any sense of difficulty or contradiction, the thought of pardoning and forensic righteousness pass over into that of righteousness as the living power which overcomes sin . . . In Paul, therefore, δικαιοσύνη can denote both the righteousness which acquits and the living power which breaks the bondage of sin. The thought of righteousness of life cannot be separated from it.⁵¹

Therefore, we gain two more meanings of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ when we focus on the human effect by interpreting θεοῦ as a genitive of origin. We have already seen that from a theocentric perspective, a subjective divine righteousness of God may mean both God’s attribute and the justifying activity that derives from it. Now, from the anthropocentric perspective, righteousness is the justified status of the faithful human, accompanied by moral regeneration.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 8.

⁵¹ Quell and Schrenk, 209.

Multifaceted Interpretations of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ

With good evidence supporting both the subjective genitive and the genitive of origin in δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, some try to take a more all-inclusive view. Reumann suggests that the genitive is one of authorship, which “probably varies in sense, at times presenting an attribute or quality of God (subjective genitive, Rom 3:5) and also ‘righteousness before God’ (objective genitive, cf. Rom 1:17; 2 Cor 5:21).”⁵² Fitzmyer, expanding on Reumann’s concept, describes it as “an uprightness that comes from God, given to human beings, which becomes the basis of their relationship with God.”⁵³ He disapproves, however, of this variable definition: “This reading seems questionable; it is better to take it everywhere in Romans as a subjective or possessive genitive.”⁵⁴ Cranfield also rejects the principle of flexibility in his interpretation of the genitive: “it is surely more likely that Paul meant to focus attention either on one or the other, though it is of course true – and this needs to be emphasized – that a direct reference to either carries with it an indirect reference to the other.”⁵⁵ Moo, however, prefers to assign definitive interpretations of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, and is comfortable with different definitive interpretations in different verses, in particular as a human status in 1:17; 3:21, and 22 but as an attribute of God in 3:25 and 26.⁵⁶

⁵² Reumann, 758.

⁵³ Fitzmyer, 105.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Cranfield, 98-99 n. 1.

⁵⁶ Douglas Moo, *Romans 1-8*, Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1991), 242.

Thus, as to the interpretation of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, there seem to be as many opinions as commentators. Cranfield concludes, “The last word on this debate has clearly not yet been spoken. It would therefore be irresponsible to claim that the question has been conclusively decided either way.”⁵⁷ In view of the different possible meanings, but their common theme of God working for human salvation, there is merit in Soards’ description of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as a “code-term for the consistent vision of the salvific triumph of God.”⁵⁸ This code-term encompasses the elements of both subjective genitive and genitive of origin, as described earlier, and in different verses may refer to one or the other of the different facets, all designated δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. The prominent meaning is then determined from context, to the extent that to do so is possible.

But in cases where the contextual clues are not determinative, more than one interpretation may be reasonable. In such a case, it is not essential, or even desirable, to remove the ambiguity from the nature of the genitive; according to Turner, “it is . . . important not to sacrifice fullness of interpretation to an over precise analysis of syntax.”⁵⁹ Rom 1:17 is one such ambiguous occurrence of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. In the fullest interpretation of Paul’s statement that the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel, we may say that he is declaring that in Jesus’ death and resurrection and in the preaching of these events are the revelation of God’s own righteousness, his activity in

⁵⁷ Cranfield, 98.

⁵⁸ Marion L. Soards, “The Righteousness of God in the Writings of the Apostle Paul,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 15 (1985): 108.

⁵⁹ Turner, 210.

justifying the faithful, their resultant righteous or justified condition, and the moral regeneration which accompanies it.

The concept of a code-term is helpful, but these scholars, in their focus on salvation, have neglected the fact that God's righteousness, in the sense of his attribute of justice, may lead to condemnation instead (2:4-5). So it seems advisable to regard δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as a code-term, but one with a meaning that sometimes goes beyond Soards' specifically salvific sense. This point will be essential as our discussion continues.

We turn in the next chapter to the wrath of God, ὀργή θεοῦ, whose revelation in Rom 1:18 appears to be linked to that of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in 1:17. In view of the many senses with which one can interpret δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, it has proven helpful to categorize them based on the type of genitive implied, as summarized in Table 1 below. A similar problem with multiple possible meanings of ὀργή θεοῦ will be addressed by attempting to classify them in a corresponding manner.

Table 1: Interpretations of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ

δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ	Attribute/Condition	Resulting Action
Subjective Genitive (theocentric focus)	God's attribute of righteousness	God's act of justification
Genitive of Origin (anthropocentric focus)	Human status: "justified"/reconciled	Human moral regeneration

CHAPTER TWO THE WRATH OF GOD

In the previous chapter I have placed Paul's assertion of the revelation of the wrath of God (Rom 1:18) in its literary and theological context within Rom 1:16-3:26. In Rom 1:16-17 Paul states that the gospel is the power of God for human salvation, in that both the gospel events themselves and their proclamation reveal the righteousness of God. God's righteousness has been interpreted in different ways, both theocentrically as an attribute or activity of God (as befits the context of the gospel which is God's power for salvation), and also anthropocentrically (as befits the emphasis on human faith for those being justified). These perspectives correspond to θεοῦ being taken as a subjective genitive or a genitive of origin, respectively. In this chapter, I will show that, like righteousness, ὁργὴ θεοῦ cannot be limited to a simple or single definition. There are both theocentric and anthropocentric perspectives to the wrath of God which largely correspond to those of the righteousness of God, with one exception: it is impossible to interpret wrath as an attribute, attitude, or emotion of God, based on the evidence of Paul's writings. The full range of meaning of ὁργὴ θεοῦ will be deduced from the immediate context of Rom 1:18, as well as from other Pauline references to wrath, which are listed in Appendix A. The discussion will present in turn the interpretations of ὁργὴ [τοῦ] θεοῦ as subjective genitive or genitive of origin.

ὁργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ as Subjective Genitive

The subjective genitive will be examined from the same two perspectives as in the previous chapter's discussion of the righteousness of God. In the first case, it would indicate an attribute of God, in the second his activity. But before the analysis begins I will, like most commentators on the topic of wrath, discuss the views of C. H. Dodd, who in effect denied any sense at all of the subjective genitive.

The Views of C. H. Dodd on the Wrath of God

As a focal point for discussion of the meaning of the genitive θεοῦ, I will address the assertions of C. H. Dodd, which have received attention from most writers on the topic of God's wrath since the publication of Dodd's Romans commentary in 1932. Dodd, followed by A. T. Hanson,⁶⁰ holds the position that idea of "the wrath of God" is archaic⁶¹ and that the phrase is an Old Testament holdover which has no bearing on Paul's actual view of the wrath of God, which Dodd describes as an impersonal "process or effect in the realm of objective facts,"⁶² rather than God's subjective attitude or attribute. According to Dodd, Paul's conception of God's wrath is made evident in the verses immediately following Rom 1:18. Rom 1:19-32 describe the moral degeneration of the godless and wicked (1:18). For Dodd, the key to the meaning of wrath is found in

⁶⁰ A. T. Hanson, *The Wrath of the Lamb* (London: SPCK, 1957), 68-111.

⁶¹ Dodd, 21.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 22.

1:24, 26, 28: “God gave them up.” Thus wrath is not predicated of God but is in fact an impersonal process; when given up by God, sinners experience “an inevitable process of cause and effect in a moral universe.”⁶³ That is, when he speaks of the wrath of God, Paul is referring to the consequences of sin; according to Hanson, Paul “transformed the wrath from an attribute of God into the name for a process which sinners bring on themselves.”⁶⁴ Thus, based on the verses following Paul’s first reference to wrath in Rom 1:18, Dodd pinpoints his definition and then insists that it be applied to all of Paul’s usages.

According to Dodd, there is yet further evidence of the impersonal nature of wrath. First of all, Paul never uses the verb ὀργίζομαι, “to be angry,” with God as subject.⁶⁵ Thus Dodd suggests that to speak of the wrath of God “suggests the simple anthropomorphic idea that God is angry with men, [while] Paul’s idea is not so simple.”⁶⁶ Also, Paul’s use of ὀργή is “curiously impersonal”⁶⁷ in that it is modified by [τοῦ] θεοῦ in only three of Paul’s eighteen usages (Rom 1:18; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6).⁶⁸ The fact that wrath can be attributed to God at all in these verses is because the process “operates

⁶³ Ibid., 23.

⁶⁴ Hanson, 69.

⁶⁵ Dodd, 21. Neither does any other New Testament writer (Hanson, 69).

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

according to the moral laws of the universe,”⁶⁹ which are ultimately God’s laws. Other than that, he insists, the process is indirect and impersonal.

The final points in the argument against a personal wrath on the part of God are theological. Dodd contends, “we cannot think with full consistency of God in terms of the highest human ideals of personality and yet attribute to Him the irrational passion of anger.”⁷⁰ And regarding the atonement, Hanson deplores the “unhappy picture of a suffering Son saving us from an angry Father.”⁷¹ Many authors have struggled to describe the relationship of wrath to a loving God, but Dodd avoids this problem. By depersonalizing the concept of wrath, he can say, “anger as an attitude of God to men disappears and His love and mercy become all-embracing. This is, as I believe, the purport of the teaching of Jesus, with its emphasis on limitless forgiveness.”⁷²

Dodd’s views have been much discussed by writers in the last few decades, with varying degrees of agreement. I will be referring to his main points in the following discussion of the possibility of the subjective sense of the genitive in ὁργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ.

⁶⁹ Hanson, 69.

⁷⁰ Dodd, 24.

⁷¹ Hanson, 89.

⁷² Dodd, 23.

Wrath as an Attribute or Emotion of God

Notwithstanding Dodd's refutation of such a view, one possible meaning of a subjective use of the genitive in ὀργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ could be that, as in δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, it describes an attribute of God himself. God's "wrath" would thus refer to a divine attitude, emotion, or disposition, an *affectus* which corresponds to human anger. In this section I will begin with evidence which seeks to refute Dodd's conclusions and then present the affirmative views of others who have written on this topic. Finally, I will attempt to draw a reasonable conclusion to this widely debated question.

One reason that Dodd rejects the interpretation of wrath as a subjective divine attribute is that the rare usage of the genitive θεοῦ indicates that Paul himself sees wrath as impersonal. Dodd suggests that the three occurrences of the modifier θεοῦ are merely the holdover of an archaic Old Testament term; wrath can be linked to God only tenuously in that it is the consequence of sin in God's universe. However, an examination of the evidence in all of Paul's uses of ὀργή reveals that Dodd has overstated his case for depersonalizing wrath. Wrath is clearly linked to God in Rom 3:5; 9:22; 12:19; and 1 Thess 5:9.⁷³ In any event, the absence of the modifier θεοῦ does not necessarily imply in any particular instance that wrath is not personal. Travis makes a comparison to Paul's use of χάρις without θεοῦ, as in Rom 5:20-21.⁷⁴ Grace is obviously personal to God whether it is stated explicitly as such or not. In a similar vein,

⁷³ Stephen H. Travis, "Wrath (NT)," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 996.

⁷⁴ Travis, "Wrath," 997.

Stählin argues that “the common absence of θεοῦ . . . simply shows us how strong was the awareness of God in all things.”⁷⁵ Morris points out that “it is quite legitimate for us to hold that the prophets who spoke of the coming day of wrath when God would punish sin had done their work so well that the fact that the wrath that was to be revealed was God’s wrath did not require emphasis.”⁷⁶ It is also illuminating to identify other terms with which Paul contrasts wrath: salvation (1 Thess 5:9), eternal life (Rom 2:7-8), justification (Rom 5:9), and membership in the kingdom of God (Eph 5:5-6). If Christians see these concepts as intensely personal, then so must be exclusion from them. Such arguments provide good grounds for rejecting Dodd’s conviction, based on Paul’s scant use of [τοῦ] θεοῦ, that wrath is an impersonal process.

Another of Dodd’s arguments against a personal divine wrath of God is that Rom 1:19-32 describes *fully* the revelation of the wrath of which Paul first speaks in 1:18. In particular, says Dodd, the παρέδωκεν of 1:24, 26, and 28 shows that God is not actively involved in the visitation of wrath but rather allows humanity to suffer the consequences of sin. As I will discuss later, this is certainly one way in which God’s wrath is revealed. However, it is at the very least unimaginative to limit the workings of the wrath of God to this one aspect. In the earlier discussion of the righteousness of God, four different definitions of righteousness were identified. As the revelation of wrath in Rom 1:18 is

⁷⁵ Gustav Stählin, “The Wrath of Man and the Wrath of God in the NT,” in Herman Kleinknecht *et al.*, ὀργή, κτλ, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 5, ed. Gerhard Friedrich and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 422.

⁷⁶ Leon M. Morris, “The Wrath of God,” *Expository Times* 63 (1952): 143.

linked so closely to the revelation of righteousness in 1:17, it is likely that wrath entails similar nuances. Therefore, Dodd's limited interpretation probably indicates that his analysis is incomplete, rather than that he has found the one correct definition of ὀργή θεοῦ.

But the question remains: can wrath properly be attributed to God? Whiteley points out that, in the Septuagint, ὀργή clearly designates divine *affectus* and *effectus* alike,⁷⁷ and those who argue for wrath as a divine attribute cite the need for consistency in the biblical portrayal of God. All would clearly make the distinction that God's wrath has none of the vagaries of human anger, addressing the irrational passion to which Dodd objected. Stählin contends that "the idea of an actual attitude of God cannot be disputed,"⁷⁸ but that in divine anger "we never find . . . enigmatic and irrational outburst."⁷⁹ Similarly, Morris calls God's wrath "a term that expresses the settled and active opposition of God's holy nature to everything that is evil."⁸⁰ Tasker agrees that "the wrath of God is an *affectus* as well as an *effectus*, a quality of the nature of God, an attitude of the mind of God toward evil."⁸¹ Perhaps Schoonhoven speaks more strongly than anyone when he says that wrath is "a subjective passion, as essential property of

⁷⁷ D. E. H. Whiteley, *The Theology of St. Paul* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), 64.

⁷⁸ Stählin, 423.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 424-25.

⁸⁰ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 76.

⁸¹ R. V. G. Tasker, *The Biblical Doctrine of the Wrath of God* (London: Tyndale, 1951), 15.

God. When evil exists there is inevitably the passion of wrath, a life event in God Himself irrespective of its outward judicial expression.”⁸² Carson is one of many who find clarity by comparing God’s wrath to God’s love; he says that “wrath, like love, includes emotion as a necessary component.”⁸³ However, he makes a distinction between the essential natures of God’s wrath and God’s love:

Wrath, unlike love, is not one of the intrinsic perfections of God. Rather, it is a function of God’s holiness against sin. Where there is no sin, there is no wrath, but there will always be love in God. Where God in His holiness confronts His image-bearers in their rebellion, there must be wrath. Otherwise God is not the jealous God he claims to be, and His holiness is impugned.⁸⁴

In contrast, Bell in particular argues the opposite view: “Wrath is not an emotion of God, not even an emotion which is constant (as opposed to capricious). Rather it is an objective entity, related to God’s role as just judge and the consequence of this wrath is that sinners will be condemned on the day of judgment.”⁸⁵ In answer to the suggestion that wrath, like love, must have an emotional component, he contends that “each aspect of God . . . [must] be judged on its own terms.”⁸⁶ Responding to those who argue that it is too far removed from the Old Testament portrayal of God to deny any element of

⁸² Calvin R. Schoonhoven, *The Wrath of Heaven* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 36.

⁸³ D. A. Carson, “God’s Love and God’s Wrath,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (624) (1999): 388.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Bell, 28.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

emotion in his wrath, Bell presents a chronological development of Old Testament perspectives which removes this barrier to his view.⁸⁷ Whiteley comes to the same conclusion after reviewing all of Paul's references to wrath: "In none of them is it necessary to suppose that *orgē* refers to a 'feeling' or 'affectus' on the part of God, directed against sinners; indeed, there is no case where that explanation is even very plausible. In all cases *orgē* refers to what He will do or is already doing."⁸⁸ A review of the verses in which Paul uses ὀργή (see Appendix A) will allow the reader to decide if Whiteley is correct; he appears to be so.⁸⁹

But why these vastly different opinions? They result from the problem of humanity's lack of knowledge about God. In order to try to conceive of and understand God, we must employ human language and metaphors to describe God's characteristics. But in all cases these are merely analogies. That the conclusions reached by different scholars from the same biblical evidence are completely opposite is inexplicable unless one supposes that each begins with preconceived notions of God's nature and proceeds to analyze the evidence from a personal perspective. Presumably I do the same when I state

⁸⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁸⁸ Whiteley, 69.

⁸⁹ This despite Paul's use of θυμός in Rom 2:8: ὀργή καὶ θυμός, "wrath and fury." Louw and Nida define ὀργή as "a relative state of anger" (88.173) or "a divine punishment based on God's angry judgment against someone" (38.10), but θυμός as "a state of intense anger, with the implications of passionate outbursts" (88.178). However, Stählin is of the opinion that "the heaping up of terms . . . which serves to enhance the shattering impression of the reality of the divine wrath . . . leaves no sharp distinction between θυμός and ὀργή" (p. 422). Note that Paul may here be quoting LXX Jer 7:20, which uses the terms together to similar effect.

agreement with Maimonides that the characteristics we attribute to God are not literal but are instead attributes of action, meaning “not that He possesses moral qualities, but that He performs actions resembling the actions that in [humans] proceed from moral qualities.”⁹⁰ Thus, of the human calamities said to result from God’s wrath, Maimonides explains,

He is called jealous and avenging and keeping anger and wrathful, meaning that actions similar to those that proceed from us from a certain aptitude of the soul – namely, jealousy, holding fast to vengeance, hatred, or anger – proceed from Him . . . because of the deserts of those who are punished, and not because of any passion whatever.⁹¹

So my conclusion on this issue is that, according to Paul, wrath is not in fact an *affectus*, feeling, or emotion within God; Paul presents no evidence at all of a subjective divine attribute of wrath and it would be merely speculative to presume one. Whiteley sums up this position as follows:

We must distinguish between the referent, that is the reality referred to, and the language which is used to refer to it. It is our conclusion that the reality referred to, the wrath of God, is an impersonal *effectus* due to a personal God, but that St. Paul when he referred to this reality, used the word *orgē* which sometimes in the LXX is used for an impersonal *effectus* but more frequently for a personal *affectus* of God.⁹²

This section concludes by returning to C. H. Dodd and his controversial position that wrath is not an attribute of God but rather an impersonal process by which humans

⁹⁰ Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, tr. Schlomo Pines (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 124.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 126.

⁹² Whiteley, 71-72.

reap the consequences of their sins. He is partly right, in that there is no sense that ὀργή θεοῦ may be read as a subjective genitive in the same manner as righteousness is an attribute of God in the phrase δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. However, when he describes wrath as an impersonal process I believe Dodd falls short in his interpretation. In the remainder of this chapter I will attempt to show that God's "wrath" – while not an *affectus* – is nonetheless personal, and that there is more to its revelation than Dodd admits, particularly in its eschatological sense. The next section addresses the second sense of the subjective genitive θεοῦ, that of God's action, or *effectus*, in addressing human sinfulness.

Wrath as an Activity of God

Even those who argue that wrath is in part an *affectus* of God do not deny that its primary meaning is that of God's action in condemning human sin. For example, Stählin declares that "ὀργή is both God's displeasure at evil, His passionate resistance to every will which is set against Him, and also his judicious attack thereon."⁹³ But he also admits that "in most NT passages ὀργή is in fact the divine work, destiny, or judgment of wrath,"⁹⁴ not a subjective divine *affectus*. Ridderbos, too, states that divine wrath is both *affectus* and *effectus*, but that the wrath of God "does not so much have the significance

⁹³ Stählin, 425.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 424.

of a divine emotion or of a movement within the divine being as indeed of the active divine judgment going forth against sin in the world.”⁹⁵

This *effectus* or divine judgment has two components: the judgment on sin which takes place in the current day and the final eschatological judgment. “Of the thirteen Pauline passages where the divine wrath is mentioned eight appear quite clearly to use the word ‘wrath’ with reference to the retributive judgement of God at the last day.”⁹⁶ The revelation of eschatological divine wrath will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. For the moment I will address the wrath revealed as God’s *effectus* in the present age, which is described in Rom 1:18-32.

In his explanation of the revelation of wrath in the world, Paul says three times of the sinful, παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός, “God gave them up” (1:24, 26, 28): to impurity, to degrading passions, to a debased mind, and to things that should not be done. And those who have committed shameless acts “received in their own persons the due penalty for their error” (1:27). This “giving up” up by God to sin and its consequences is what Dodd refers to when he describes wrath as an impersonal process. Yet there are reasons *not* to exclude God’s more direct involvement from the process. Paul himself claims that God inflicts wrath on us (Rom 3:5); evidently his view is that God is actively engaged. Says Travis, “This passage [1:18-32] speaks as clearly as any in Paul of sin as a personal

⁹⁵ Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of his Theology*, trans. John R. de Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 108.

⁹⁶ G. H. C. MacGregor, “The Concept of the Wrath of God in the New Testament,” *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960, 1961): 103. See Rom 2:5; 3:5; 5:9; 12:19; 1 Thess 1:10; 5:9; Col 3:6; Eph 5:6.

affront to God which is met by his personal reaction . . . it is impossible to avoid the implication that the consequences of this ‘giving up’ are somehow ordained by God.”⁹⁷

In Romans 1, then, “the thrice-repeated παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεός is surely so emphatic as to suggest that a deliberate, positive act of God is meant.”⁹⁸ In 1:18 in particular, “Paul’s reference to revelation, his genitive *of God*, and his *from heaven* are ways of emphasizing that wrath is a divine activity. God is doing something in opposition to sin, not leaving sinners to their own devices.”⁹⁹ So all indications are that God is personally involved in the process of wrath in the world. As Travis points out,

In a divinely controlled universe, if men’s sin leads to evil consequences, that can only be because God has willed it so. Whilst Dodd was right to reject the idea of wrath as an arbitrary emotional reaction in God, he was wrong to distance the operation of wrath from God’s personal involvement in human affairs.¹⁰⁰

Bruce agrees that “to a man so convinced as Paul that the world was created and controlled by a personal God of righteousness and mercy, this retribution could not be an impersonal principle; it was God’s own wrath.”¹⁰¹ Therefore, God is personally involved in the exercise of wrath, both eschatological wrath and that which is presently enacted by the παρέδωκεν of Rom 1:24, 26, 28. Particularly convincing is the fact that to take θεοῦ

⁹⁷ Stephen H. Travis, *Christ and the Judgment of God* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1986), 37.

⁹⁸ Cranfield, 120.

⁹⁹ Morris, *Romans*, 75.

¹⁰⁰ Travis, *Christ*, 21.

¹⁰¹ Bruce, 83.

as a subjective genitive which indicates God's activity corresponds to the subjective sense of the genitive in δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (Rom 1:17; 3:21, 22, 25, 26) which is God's activity in justifying the faithful (cf. δικαιούμενοι [3:24], δικαιούντα [3:26]). In this corresponding yet opposite process, God condemns the sinful, provisionally now and permanently in the eschaton.

However, despite the fact that the activities of condemnation and justification indicated by this subjective sense of ὀργὴ θεοῦ and δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ appear to be parallel, there is a significant difference between them. The sense of the righteousness of God which is his activity of justifying faithful humans is an outflowing from his attribute of righteousness as saving covenant faithfulness. As we have seen, however, there is no attribute of wrath in God to account for his activity of condemnation. That is because this activity is, like justification, a product of God's own righteousness, that is, the aspect of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ which refers to divine justice. An unfavourable judgment results in ὀργὴ θεοῦ, the *effectus* which is God's condemnation of the unfaithful.

The discussion of the subjective genitive now complete, I turn to interpretations of ὀργὴ θεοῦ which take the genitive to be one of origin. The emphasis switches from God's activity to the human condition which is its result.

ὀργὴ [τοῦ] θεοῦ as Genitive of Origin

Reading δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ as a genitive of origin understands righteousness as a human condition which originates in God. In one sense, such "righteousness" refers to the status of justification, defined both forensically and relationally. From another –

perhaps more concrete – perspective, it refers to moral regeneration, the process of sanctification which occurs in the justified. Corresponding to these readings are two ways in which the genitive of origin may be understood in ὀργὴ θεοῦ. In one sense, it may refer to the condition or status of condemnation. In the other, it can refer to the process of moral degeneration which occurs in those living apart from God. Note that these perspectives on the human effect of wrath are less controverted than those concerning the divine aspect, and thus may be presented more succinctly.

The Wrath of God as a Human Condition

From an anthropocentric perspective, ὀργὴ θεοῦ can refer to the status or condition of sinful humans who have been given up by God in the present day to their sin and its consequences (Rom 1:24, 26, 28) and, in the eschaton, to eternal alienation and separation from him. In Rom 5:9, the wrath of God is presented as the opposite of justification, itself a relational concept implying reconciliation to God (5:10). In this view, “‘wrath’ is . . . the destiny of those who persist as God’s ‘enemies.’”¹⁰² Those under wrath will experience condemnation in the final judgment, a guilty verdict the result of which “is expressed in terms of relationship. Unbelievers will suffer ‘exclusion from the presence of the Lord’ (2 Thes. 1.9), whilst the destiny of believers is to be ‘at home with

¹⁰² Travis, *Christ*, 39.

the Lord' (2 Cor. 5.8)."¹⁰³ Thus, according to Travis, both the criteria and the result of judgment are one's relationship with Christ:

Those who are not in relation to Christ experience wrath both now and in the future: the one expression of wrath is the anticipation, the other the consummation of God's judgment on unbelievers. We find the same feature in words denoting salvation. 'Righteousness' or 'justification' can have a present (Rom. 5.1) or a future reference (Gal. 5.5). And it is a relational word, meaning the condition of being in a right relationship to God. The future aspect refers to the confirmation at the final judgment of the verdict already given proleptically. People's destinies, then, will be a confirmation and intensification of the relationship with God or alienation from him which has been their experience in this life.¹⁰⁴

Therefore, just as righteousness or justification entails adoption by and reconciliation to God now, acquittal at the final judgment, and eternal life in fellowship with God, so also wrath denotes "the lost condition of man":¹⁰⁵ a condition where humans are abandoned now by God and condemned to an eternity of exclusion from his presence. As Karl Barth said of the fate of those who wish to live as if there were no God, "the enterprise of setting up the 'No-God' is avenged by its success."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Ibid., 123.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 123-24.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 37.

¹⁰⁶ Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed., trans. Edwyn C. Hoskins (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 51.

The Wrath of God as Moral Degeneration

Humanity under the wrath of God behaves sinfully, and God allows them to do so. The ungodly and wicked do not honour or thank God and their minds become darkened, says Paul (1:18, 21). They exchange the glory of the immortal God for idolatrous images (1:23). Therefore, God gives them up (1:24, 26, 28) to the various sinful behaviours described in the rest of the chapter. Immorality is given free reign to beget further immorality. Says Barth, “Our conduct becomes governed precisely by what we desire.”¹⁰⁷ But we may note, with Gorman, that “Paul is not placing the blame on God for human sin but insisting that God allows human folly to run its natural course without preventing its inevitable consequences; this is part of what Paul means when he speaks of the revelation of the wrath of God.”¹⁰⁸

This latter interpretation of the wrath of God as moral degeneration is closely associated with the previous one, but it focuses on immoral human activity as opposed to the condition or status of being “under wrath,” which is defined relationally. Both take the genitive in ὀργῇ θεοῦ as one of origin; the effect on human beings originates in their abandonment by God. These interpretations parallel those in the previous chapter which regarded the genitive in δικαιοσύνῃ θεοῦ as a genitive of origin; in that case the human results were the status of justification and an associated moral regeneration.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

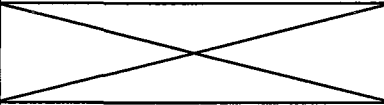
¹⁰⁸ Gorman, 353.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described various readings of ὀργή [τοῦ] θεοῦ and the ramifications of each, according to the description of the workings of divine wrath in Romans 1, as well as in Paul's other uses of the term. In particular I have attempted to align various interpretations of divine wrath with those of the somewhat parallel concept of the righteousness of God. In agreement with Dodd and against the opinions of many others, I do not believe that the biblical evidence supports the view that Paul regarded wrath as an attribute of God equivalent to divine righteousness. However, in all other aspects there are indeed parallels between the righteousness and the wrath of God. Both can be seen as divine activities and as human conditions with moral and behavioural consequences. Table 2 below summarizes the possible interpretations of ὀργή θεοῦ.

The reason for examining the similarities and differences between divine wrath and righteousness is that their revelations are apparently closely related (Rom 1:17-18). The next chapter considers the ways in which the righteousness of God and the wrath of God are effectively revealed.

Table 2: Interpretations of ὀργή θεοῦ

ὀργή θεοῦ	Attribute/Condition	Resulting Action
Subjective Genitive (theocentric focus)		God's act of condemnation
Genitive of Origin (anthropocentric focus)		Human moral degeneration

CHAPTER THREE THE REVELATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WRATH

Previous chapters have defined the terms δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργή θεοῦ, with all the nuances attributable to interpretations of θεοῦ as either a subjective genitive or a genitive of origin in each case. I now turn to the subject of the revelation of God's wrath and God's righteousness, which in Paul's theology are clearly linked to each other and to the gospel: "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation . . . For in it *the righteousness of God is revealed* . . . For *the wrath of God is revealed* from heaven" (Rom 1:16-18). In this chapter I will show that in Paul's thought righteousness and wrath, though eschatological concepts, are revealed in the present day as well. Righteousness is revealed in the gospel of Christ, both in its preaching and in the events that underlie such proclamation; wrath is revealed both in the gospel and in the sinful moral condition of humanity.

The Revelation of Righteousness

Righteousness is a concept of particular relevance to the eschaton, the basis of the final judgment (Rom 2:5; 2 Thess 1:5). The faithful will experience eschatological justification (Rom 3:30; 5:19), but are also justified in the present day (Rom 3:24-26; 5:1, 9, 17; 8:30; 9:30; 1 Cor 6:11).¹⁰⁹ According to Paul, although God's righteousness will not be revealed in its fullness until the day of judgment, it is in fact already being revealed *now* in the present-day preaching of the gospel (δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ

¹⁰⁹ Quell and Schrenk, 205.

ἀποκαλύπτεται [1:17]), and has already *been* revealed in the gospel events which preceded the proclamation. That the revelation of God's righteousness is ultimately eschatological is underscored by the word Paul chooses to announce the revelation: "Paul almost always uses the verb ἀποκαλύπτεισθαι in an eschatological context."¹¹⁰ Barrett notes that this word choice to describe a present-day revelation confirms that Paul "is thinking of a preliminary manifestation of that divine righteousness which, in orthodox Jewish thought, could be vindicated only at the last judgment."¹¹¹

Here the verb ἀποκαλύπτεισθαι is in the passive voice, but there is no uncertainty as to who is responsible for the revelation.¹¹² In the New Testament, the 26 occurrences of the verb ἀποκαλύπτειν and the 18 uses of its cognate noun ἀποκάλυψις all refer to a divine revealing.¹¹³ Paul knows that the gospel is God's power (1:16), and so its revelation of righteousness comes from God alone. As Morris states, "We proclaim the gospel, but the revelation is something God does."¹¹⁴

We have already noted that when Paul refers to the "gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον) he is thinking of both the events of the life of Jesus and their proclamation. However, the

¹¹⁰ Steve Finamore, "The Gospel and the Wrath of God in Romans 1," in *Understanding, Studying, and Reading*, ed. Christopher Rowland and Crispin Fletcher-Louis (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 138. See Rom 8:18; 1 Cor 2:10; 3:13; 2 Thess 2:3, 6, 8.

¹¹¹ Barrett, 30.

¹¹² The agent of the action of a passive verb may not be expressed if the agency is obvious and the focus is intended to be on the verb's subject (the object of the action) (Wallace, 435-36).

¹¹³ Cranfield, 92 n. 1.

¹¹⁴ Morris, *Romans*, 69.

revelations conveyed by each may be thought of differently. Moo points out that the verb ἀποκαλύπτω (meaning originally ‘to uncover’) and its cognate noun ἀποκάλυψις may indicate in some instances a revelation “to the intellect of various truths relating to God’s purposes”¹¹⁵ but in others to “the ‘uncovering’ of God’s redemptive plan, as it unfolds on the plane of human history.”¹¹⁶ Notwithstanding this distinction, however, both senses of the word apply to the revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel. The first sense, of revelation to the intellect, takes place in the preaching of the gospel; Paul in 1:17 “is speaking about the way in which the gospel makes known to us, or informs us, of the righteousness of God.”¹¹⁷ The second meaning is evident in the efficacy of the gospel events themselves; according to Moo, “the gospel in some way actually makes manifest, or brings into existence ‘the righteousness of God.’”¹¹⁸

This second sense of the divine revealing is the one upon which Paul focuses in 3:21-26 as he returns to the topic of the righteousness of God after his discourse on wrath in 1:18-3:20. He begins this section, “But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed” (3:21). The “but now” refers to a decisive series of events that have changed salvation history. According to Gorman, these words

mark a major turning point not only in Paul’s letter but in the divine story as he understands it. Paul is about to narrate the revelation of God’s righteousness that is manifested in Christ’s death and proclaimed in the

¹¹⁵ Moo, 64. See 1 Cor 2:10; 14:30; Eph 3:5; Phil 3:15.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. See Rom 2:5; 8:18, 19; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 1:16; 3:23; 2 Thess 1:7; 2:3, 6, 8.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 64-65.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 65.

apostle's gospel. This event inaugurates a new age (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 1:4; 6:15), the age of grace (5:20-21) "in which we [now] stand" (5:2). Thus 3:21-26 unpacks the thesis found in 1:16-17.¹¹⁹

In 3:21-26, Paul now begins to talk specifically about the gospel events in which the righteousness of God has been made manifest. Here in 3:21, he uses a different verb, φανεροῦν, in the perfect tense-form, to describe the revelation in these events, in contrast to ἀποκαλύπτειν in the present tense-form (1:17), for the ongoing revelation of God's righteousness in the preaching of the events.¹²⁰ According to Barrett, "There is little difference. The present tense emphasizes the continuation of the process in the proclamation of the gospel, the perfect the fact that the process has a beginning."¹²¹ But we should also consider that the effect of the perfect tense is to draw attention to an action and bring it into prominence.¹²² Hence, Paul's use of the perfect "focuses attention on the cross as the time of God's decisive intervention to establish His righteousness."¹²³ Thus it is apparent that in 3:21 Paul is not talking about the preaching the gospel; he is declaring that God's completed action on the cross has actually demonstrated his righteousness.

¹¹⁹ Gorman, 358.

¹²⁰ Cranfield (p. 202) states that the two verbs are "more or less synonymous." Louw and Nida define ἀποκαλύπτω as "to cause something to be fully known" (28.38) and φανερόω as "to cause something to be fully known by revealing clearly and in some detail" (28.36).

¹²¹ Barrett, 73.

¹²² Porter, 302.

¹²³ Moo, 65.

This is an important point to which he returns in 3:25-26, where Paul reiterates God's purpose in the gospel events: εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ . . . πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ ("to show his righteousness . . . to prove at the present time that he is righteous"). A new word declaring the revelation is introduced here: Louw and Nida define ἔνδειξις as "the means by which one knows that something is a fact" and further explain that in this term

there are two distinct sets of semantic features . . . The element of 'showing' or 'demonstrating' implies clearly 'making something known,' but that which is made known is done in a clear, convincing and confirming manner and therefore 'shown to be certain or true.' This double set of semantic features is contained in such terms as 'proof,' 'evidence,' and 'confirmation.'¹²⁴

Overall, Paul's word choice and repetition of the concept leave no doubt that the revelation of God's righteousness is the purpose for which Jesus died on the cross and the reason the gospel is preached in the world. The verb ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι indicates a divine revealing to the human mind by means of the present-day proclamation of the gospel; φανεροῦν tells us of the actual manifestation of God's righteousness on the cross, and ἔνδειξις adds an emphatic element of proof to the revelation. Paul is absolutely clear that δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is revealed in the gospel. Less evident is the exact way in which God's righteousness is revealed; that subject will be addressed in the next chapter. But first we turn to God's wrath, the revelation of which appears to be connected to that of his righteousness.

¹²⁴ Louw and Nida, 341.

The Revelation of Wrath

Paul states, directly at least, much less about the revelation of divine wrath than he does about the revelation of righteousness; only in Rom 1:18 and nowhere else does he declare that the wrath of God is revealed. Yet scholars have interpreted this statement in a variety of different ways: that wrath is revealed in the present time in the sinful actions of humanity and their consequences, that it is revealed on the cross and in the gospel proclamation, and/or that it will be revealed in the future, on the day of wrath and judgment. Each of these viewpoints will be examined in turn.

But first it is necessary to consider how one actually recognizes the revelation of wrath. Paul asserts in 1:18 that the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and wickedness, that is, against sin. He is also perfectly clear in this epistle that the deserved end result of sin is death (e.g., 1:32; 5:12, 21; 6:13, 16). This suggests that we may recognize the revelation of wrath wherever we see death as a consequence of sin. On such a view, we will recognize it not only in the eschatological death of the condemned, but also in the lives of those who are under the power of sin. Paul himself writes, “I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me” (7:9-10), implying that death is “the sin-ruled condition of his existence.”¹²⁵ Similarly, in Paul’s reference to deliverance from “this body of death” (7:24), “it is certain, as appears from the whole context (cf. vv. 5, 10, 13), that Paul is speaking here of a condition of death

¹²⁵ Ridderbos, 113.

that has already set in.”¹²⁶ Thus, death as a consequence of sin, and hence the revelation of God’s wrath, may be perceived in those who are nominally living in the present day, as well as in those who face condemnation on the day of judgment. Those “destined . . . for wrath” (cf. 1 Thess 5:9) in fact manifest God’s wrath in their present condition.

This is the case with those living under the power of sin in Romans 1, in a provisional revelation of the wrath of God. Like righteousness, divine wrath is an eschatological destiny revealed at least partly in the present. Although the Greek present tense need not be interpreted temporally,¹²⁷ and ἀποκαλύπτεται is in fact not given a temporal meaning in 1:18 by some commentators, most abide by a present meaning because of the description that follows. I have argued in the previous chapter that 1:19-32 describe the present ongoing revelation of God’s wrath, particularly in the three-fold παρέδωκεν of 1:24, 26, and 28. God’s giving up of the sinful to their desires is thus equated to his wrath in two ways: it is the means by which he actively condemns them in the present day (ὁργὴ θεοῦ as subjective genitive) and also the human status of being under wrath (ὁργὴ θεοῦ as genitive of origin). Both result in the condition of death that Paul describes. According to Stählin, there is “not the slightest doubt that a present revelation of God’s wrath is proclaimed here.”¹²⁸ Barrett says of these same verses, “Paul does not say that the wrath of God was revealed in the old time before the promulgation

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Porter, 29-33. Porter regards ἀποκαλύπτεται in 1:18 to have a timeless sense (p. 39); that is, “the question of time-reference simply does not occur” (p. 33).

¹²⁸ Stählin, 431.

of the Gospel, or that it will be revealed at the last day. He says that God's wrath is being revealed from heaven now."¹²⁹

But not everyone sees in these verses the revelation of the wrath of God in the present day. Bell, for example, argues that the situation described here "is only made possible through God's χρηστότης, ἄνοχή and μακροθυμία (2.4). That the people who according to the δικαίωμα θεοῦ are guilty of death (ἄξιοι θανάτου [1:32]) are still alive is dependent entirely on the gracious delay of God's wrath (2.4; cf. 9.22)."¹³⁰ Cranfield, too, initially denies that the "frustrations, futilities and disasters which result from human ἁσέβεια and ἁδικία [1:18]"¹³¹ are a revelation of divine wrath in the present day. However, he appears to contradict himself when he later describes God's current abandonment of the sinful as "a deliberate act of judgment and mercy."¹³² For the act of judgment inherent in the abandonment is in fact a current manifestation of eschatological divine wrath. Bell, too, might consider the more moderate position that this is indeed a revelation, albeit not a full revelation, of God's wrath, and that God's mercy and forbearance operate at the same time as his wrath in the present day. Bell's reason for not considering the present revelation of wrath is that he believes Paul is alluding in 1:18 to the future eschatological revelation;¹³³ this possibility will be considered shortly.

¹²⁹ Barrett, 33.

¹³⁰ Bell, 17.

¹³¹ Cranfield, 109, in agreement with Barth, *Shorter Commentary*, 24-25.

¹³² Ibid., 121.

¹³³ Bell, 14-16.

Cranfield, on the other hand, believes that Paul is referring only to the revelation of wrath in the gospel, both the events and the proclamation thereof.

There is certainly strong support on grammatical grounds for the view that Paul's intention is to state that wrath is revealed in the gospel, even though he doesn't say so directly. When Paul writes δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] ἀποκαλύπτεται . . . ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ (1:17-18), his use of the same form of the same verb in both verses seems to indicate parallel revelations in the gospel of the righteousness and wrath of God, respectively. And just as the revelation of righteousness takes place in two ways, so does the revelation of wrath. The first is that the preaching of the gospel makes known to the intellect the wrath of God, the second that the gospel events themselves actually make manifest God's wrath.

The first type of revelation in the gospel, that of making the wrath of God known to the mind, includes but is not limited to the fact that preaching informs us of the gospel events. In addition, however, the gospel also provides a greater understanding that humanity's sinfulness and self-inflicted disasters are in fact the working of divine wrath in the world. Certainly the sinful state of humanity described in 1:18-3:20 is not a new condition. Nonetheless, the interpretation of this situation has changed decisively with the advent of the gospel. "The wrath of God may have been operative before the gospel but its operation becomes recognizable and becomes more accentuated and more thoroughgoing as a result of the gospel."¹³⁴ Stählin believes that ἀποκαλύπτεται in both

¹³⁴ Finamore, 144-45.

1:17 (righteousness) and 1:18 (wrath) “denotes . . . a revelation in concealment, i.e., one which is manifest only to the believer.”¹³⁵ So even though the working of God’s wrath in human behaviour and its consequences is nothing new in the history of the world, only those who have been brought to faith by the gospel recognize it as such. According to Stählin, “The believer looks at the same phenomena as the unbeliever, but puts a theological interpretation on them. A perception of events as being divine activity is possible only by revelation.”¹³⁶ Therefore, Paul can say that wrath is revealed in the gospel because when people come to faith through the gospel they become aware that the sinfulness of the world is a revelation of divine wrath.

Cranfield, however, disagrees. He rejects the notion that the gospel reveals divine wrath in sinful human behaviour and its consequences because Paul

must surely have known that such corruption of life and consequent disasters had marked every period of previous history, and that an observable situation which was not radically different from that obtaining five hundred or a thousand years before could not demonstrate the fact of the revelation of the righteousness of God in the recent events of Christ’s ministry and in the subsequent proclamation of them as good news from God.¹³⁷

He concurs, though, that in view of the similarities between 1:17 and 18 “the most natural way of taking v. 18 is to understand Paul to mean that ὁργὴ θεοῦ also is being revealed *in the gospel*, that is, in the on-going proclamation of the gospel.” However, it is crucial,

¹³⁵ Stählin, 432.

¹³⁶ Travis, *Christ*, 36.

¹³⁷ Cranfield, 107-108.

in his view, “to recognize that behind, and basic to, this revelation of the wrath of God in the preaching, is the prior revelation of the wrath of God in the Gospel events.”¹³⁸

He is speaking now of the other mode of revelation: beyond merely making known to the human mind that which was hitherto hidden, God has initiated an event that actually manifests his wrath. According to Cranfield, “The reality of the wrath of God is only truly known, when it is seen in its revelation in Gethsemane and on Golgotha.”¹³⁹ Morris agrees: “it is the cross that shows us the measure of God’s wrath. It is in the events of the gospel that the revelation occurs.”¹⁴⁰

And how do we know that divine wrath is revealed on the cross? By the criterion described earlier, we recognize wrath when we see death as the consequence of sin. Christ’s death was the consequence of human sin: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:21); “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us” (Gal 3:13). Tasker observes, “He did experience the misery, the affliction, the punishment and the death which are the lot of all sinners subject, as sinners must be, to the wrath of God who,

¹³⁸ Cranfield, 110. Others disagree, e.g., Moo (p. 88): “[Paul’s] generally positive use of ‘gospel’ language forbids us from considering God’s wrath and judgment to be *part* of the gospel. We must consider 1:18-3:20 as a preparation for, rather than part of, Paul’s exposition of the gospel of God’s righteousness.”

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Morris, *Romans*, 76-77.

just because he is all holy and all righteous, must punish sinners.”¹⁴¹ Calvin declares, “Christ . . . hath satisfied the judgment of the Father.”¹⁴²

In contrast to the present revelation of wrath in human history and in the gospel, other commentators take the verb ἀποκαλύπτεται to have a future sense, even though, grammatically, its form is present. “In New Testament Greek, as in classical Greek, the present tense can be used for a future event, especially when one is sure that the event will take place.”¹⁴³ Bell argues that Paul intends exactly this, referring to the future revelation of the wrath of God in the eschatological judgment, owing to the “apocalyptic nature of the words ὀργή, ἀποκαλύπτεται, and ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ of 1.18.”¹⁴⁴

Paul’s consistently eschatological use of the verb ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι has already been noted. In 1 Cor 3:13 he employs the same verb in the present tense-form with a clearly future meaning: ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται· καὶ ἐκάστου τὸ ὁποῖόν ἐστιν τὸ πῦρ [αὐτὸ] δοκιμάσει (“it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done”). The eschatological nature of ὀργή is equally evident in Rom 2:5: “the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.” In fact, most of Paul’s other uses of ὀργή are clearly eschatological (Rom 2:8; 5:9; Eph 5:6; Col 3:6; 1

¹⁴¹ Tasker, 34-35.

¹⁴² Calvin, 85.

¹⁴³ Bell, 15.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 14. One might wonder how the Dodd/Hanson position that the wrath of God is an impersonal process of cause and effect can be maintained in view of the eschatological reality of wrath. Hanson explains: “the wrath is a process in history which is openly declared and consummated, rather than executed or inflicted, in the last days” (p. 71).

Thess 1:10; 5:9) and the others may well have an eschatological sense (Rom 3:5; 4:15; 9:22; 12:19; 1 Thess 2:16). Only Rom 13:4 lacks any eschatological context.

As for ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ, this phrase serves to emphasize that the revelation of wrath is from God himself.¹⁴⁵ But it is more than “a reverent way of referring to God.”¹⁴⁶ According to Hanson, “it seems more satisfactory to take it as definitely connecting the revelation of wrath with the Incarnation.”¹⁴⁷ That same connection is certainly made, and in an eschatological context, in 2 Thess 1:7: ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ μετ' ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, “when the Lord Jesus is revealed *from heaven* with his mighty angels.” We note here also the mention of revelation and power, which are key themes in Rom 1:16-18.

There is no doubt that God's wrath will be revealed in the eschaton. I do not think, however, that this necessitates interpreting ἀποκαλύπτεται *only* as a futuristic present, as Bell does. The reasons for insisting that there is a present revelation of eschatological wrath both in the gospel and in humanity's futile sinfulness are also convincing, and there is no need to choose one sense while rejecting the others: “Properly, wrath belongs to the last day (2:5), but the idea of anticipation in divine judgments is common.”¹⁴⁸ And so “divine wrath is visited upon certain sins in various

¹⁴⁵ Barrett, 34. Moo notes: “whether *ap' ouranou* has the further purpose of distinguishing the source of God's wrath from the source of God's righteousness (‘in the gospel’) . . . is not clear” (p. 97).

¹⁴⁶ Morris, *Romans*, 77.

¹⁴⁷ Hanson, 85.

¹⁴⁸ Barrett, 34.

ways here and how, but its ultimate revelation and severest infliction await the future.

The penal consequences of sin endured in the bodies and minds of men are mere tokens of a coming 'wrath to the uttermost' (1 Thess 2:16)."¹⁴⁹

Conclusion

This chapter has described the revelation of God's wrath and God's righteousness. The two types of revelation are that of imparting knowledge or understanding to the human mind (which corresponds to the preaching of the gospel), and that of performing an act that actually manifests righteousness and wrath in the world (as in the death of the Messiah). Both events are preliminary, yet decisive, manifestations of inexorable eschatological reality. In addition, Paul indicates that God's wrath is revealed in the present day in his abandonment of humanity to sin and its consequences.

Having established that both divine wrath and divine righteousness are revealed in the gospel, we turn in the next chapter to the question of how God has accomplished both revelations simultaneously.

¹⁴⁹ W. E. McCumber, "God's Wrath in the New Testament," *Christianity Today* 3 (1959): 18.

CHAPTER FOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WRATH REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL

In the previous chapters we have defined the various meanings which can be assigned to Paul's uses of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργή θεοῦ, and discussed the ways in which God has revealed divine righteousness and wrath to humanity. But now we narrow the focus to the revelation of wrath and righteousness in the gospel events themselves, the seemingly paradoxical simultaneous revelations that have taken place with Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. The fact of this dual revelation was first stated in Rom 1:17-18, where Paul speaks of wrath being revealed in the course of his explanation of the revelation of God's righteousness, which itself explains how the gospel is God's power for salvation (1:16).

In 3:21-26, Paul restates and expands upon the revelation of God's righteousness in the gospel events. We note that, in these verses, Paul does not explicitly refer to divine wrath. However, the revelation of God's wrath is by necessity related to what Paul tells us about God's righteousness. We know this in two ways. The first is the already-noted connection of the revelations in 1:17-18. The second is laid out in the intervening section, 1:18-3:20. In these verses, Paul gives the background information which explains *why* the revelation of God's righteousness in the gospel is so desperately needed. Without it, salvation is impossible. Apart from the gospel, "There is no one righteous, not even one" (3:10). Paul's readers would naturally have accepted that this was the condition of pagan Gentiles, but he is also talking to the ostensibly faithful Jews, who were expecting salvation by adherence to the law. He writes, "For 'no human being will

be justified in his sight' by deeds prescribed by the law" (3:20). All of humanity is under the power of sin, and therefore all are subject to God's wrath (2:1-6). This context demands that Rom 3:21-26, which explicitly details the revelation of divine righteousness, also address the human predicament, the need for a solution to the problem of wrath.

But Paul's description of sinful humanity presents God, too, as being in a predicament. For does not God's own righteousness appear subject to question? We have previously described two qualities which have been associated with God's attribute of righteousness. One is his saving covenant faithfulness, God's obligation under the covenant to be his people's saviour. Yet humanity has been helplessly enslaved to sin and unable to achieve full or true righteousness on their own. Even God's attempt to help humans become righteous by adherence to the law has failed, in Paul's view (3:20).

The second aspect of God's righteousness we have noted is his justice, his role in judging and punishing sin. Paul is concerned that his readers have misunderstood God's patient delay in exercising his wrath upon those who sin. God's forbearance, meant to lead sinners to repentance, has instead been construed as a lack of justice and implicit permission to continue to sin (2:4-5). Paul's readers have concluded that God allows sin to go unpunished indefinitely. Therefore God appears to be unrighteous in that he seems not to deal seriously with sin.

So this is the scene that Paul has set in 1:18-3:20. All of humankind lacks righteousness, experiences the wrath of God provisionally now, and faces condemnation in the final judgment. God himself is perceived as unrighteous for patiently withholding

the full measure of his wrath; his forbearance has the appearance of indifference to sin. In addition, as the righteous and merciful God of the covenant, it is God's role to save humanity and to effect their reconciliation to himself. Paul recognizes that God's righteousness has not been fully evident prior to the revelation of the gospel, for this is the implication of his declaration that "in [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed" (1:17). Then in 1:18-3:20 he details the reasons why revelation of God's righteousness is essential. God must take action to at once vindicate his own justice and save humanity. Therein lies – for God – a great paradox: how does one rescue sinful humanity from the coming wrath and simultaneously punish sin to the uttermost? In accomplishing both at once on the cross, God proves his own righteousness. To this topic Paul turns in 3:21-26. Though these verses do not mention wrath directly, we know that they address the problem of wrath for both God and humanity which Paul describes in 1:18-3:20. For he opens with words that herald a new age, "But now, apart from the law." Under the old covenant, God's righteousness had been expressed in the law, the means he had provided for Jewish righteousness. With the Christ-event, God's righteousness has now been manifested in a new way.

Νυνὶ δὲ χωρὶς νόμου
 δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται
 (μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν)
 δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ
 διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
 εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας
 (οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν διαστολή)
 πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ
 δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι
 διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως
 τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ
 (ὃν πρόθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον)

διὰ τῆς πίστεως
 ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι
 εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ
 διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων
 ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ
 πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ
 ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ
 εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιоῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ¹⁵⁰

But now apart from the law
 the **righteousness** of God has been manifested
 (being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets)
 the **righteousness** of God
 through faith in Jesus Christ
 for all who believe
 (for there is no distinction)
 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
 being **justified** as a gift by His grace
 through the redemption
 which is in Christ Jesus
 (whom God set forth as a sacrifice of atonement)
 through faith
 in His blood.
*This was to demonstrate His **righteousness***
 because He had passed over the sins previously committed
 in divine forbearance
*for the demonstration of His **righteousness***
 at the present time
*that He might be **just** and the **justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus.*¹⁵¹

These verses have been arranged by phrase in order to highlight the structure and progress of Paul's logic, which in turn clarifies the cause and effect of the gospel events, revealing Paul's interpretation of what was accomplished on the cross. His seven-fold use of the δικαιο- word group indicates that Paul's overriding concern is to argue that the righteousness of God has been vindicated. As I have already discussed in Chapter 1 of

¹⁵⁰ This diagrammatic analysis was kindly supplied by Michael Knowles.

¹⁵¹ Based on the NASB, with author's emendations.

this work, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ may be regarded as a code-term, which Paul uses freely with distinct but related interpretations in different contexts. At times the genitive θεοῦ is meant as a subjective genitive, giving the righteousness a theocentric focus as God's own attribute of righteousness (justice and/or saving covenant faithfulness), as well as his resulting righteous activity in justifying the faithful. But there are also consequences to humanity which flow from God's righteousness; at other times θεοῦ may be regarded as a genitive of origin, and the sense intended is the human status of righteousness or justification conferred by God, as well as the moral regeneration that follows. And now Paul has convincingly argued in 1:18-3:20 that a revelation of the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, in all its senses, is needed. Humans lack righteousness and face wrath. God's righteousness is in question both for not exercising his wrath and for not saving humanity from sin. In 3:21-26, Paul explains how both problems were solved on the cross. We will consider the solutions in turn, first from a human and then from a divine perspective.

The Solution to the Human Problem of Unrighteousness

Paul sums up the human predicament: "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (3:23). We are unable to attain God's intended righteousness on our own, and are therefore under the wrath of God and in need of salvation. But now, Paul says, "the righteousness of God has been disclosed . . . the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe" (3:21-22). From a human perspective, this righteousness of God is the new status that is available through faith, the new 'righteous' or 'justified' (δικαιούμενοι) condition granted by God's grace as a gift (3:24). This is the

same righteous status that humans cannot attain by their own effort or with knowledge of the law; the only solution is to have it granted freely by God. Gorman describes justification and its result this way:

To be just, righteous, or justified is not to enter into a ‘legal fiction,’ as some call it – to be ‘counted’ as righteous even though one is not. Rather to be justified is to be in right covenantal relationship with God, and this means to live in faith, to live faithfully to the covenant. The end result will be acquittal on the day of judgment. That – right covenantal relations with God now, resulting also in acquittal at the judgment – is the goal and the result of Paul’s good news.¹⁵²

Thus, in Paul’s view, justification as a result of the gospel solves humanity’s problem with regard to the wrath of God. Instead of experiencing alienation and condemnation, the justified live reconciled to God, in right covenantal relationship made possible “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith” (3:24-25).

For a moment let us consider the word which Paul uses for the sacrifice of atonement, ἱλαστήριον. The long history of interpretation connected to this term is centered around the issue of whether the efficacy of Christ’s death in reconciling humanity to God has the nature of expiation or propitiation. Linguistic arguments concerning this matter are both inconclusive and beyond the scope of this study. However, a couple of points are worth making here. The verb ἱλάσκεσθαι, cognate to ἱλαστήριον, had the meaning in classical Greek of propitiation, that is, “appeasing . . .

¹⁵² Gorman, 351.

the wrath of [a] Deity . . . when a sin or offence has been committed against him.”¹⁵³ On the other hand, in 21 out of 27 LXX uses of ἱλαστήριον and in its only other New Testament occurrence (Heb 9:5), it is a direct reference to the mercy seat.¹⁵⁴ This is the lid of the ark of the covenant on which high priest would sprinkle the blood of a young bull on the Day of Atonement. “As such it was the place at which atonement was made for the entire community of Israel . . . in accordance with God’s ordinance.”¹⁵⁵ The atonement had the nature of expiation, or “making up for an offence.”¹⁵⁶ The sacrifice would “cover” or “wash away” sins,¹⁵⁷ removing them as an obstacle to reconciliation to God. The expiatory sense of the atonment is supported by the fact that in the LXX, the verb ἱλάσκεσθαι translates the Hebrew *kipper*, “whose original meaning is ‘to cover over’ or ‘to wipe off’ . . . [When] used with sin as its object . . . its meaning then naturally becomes ‘to expiate.’”¹⁵⁸

Thus there is difficulty with the term ἱλαστήριον, in that it is a word with propitiatory origins used repeatedly in the LXX with expiatory significance and then

¹⁵³ “Propitiation,” in F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: University Press, 1997), 1337.

¹⁵⁴ Cranfield, 214.

¹⁵⁵ Jürgen Roloff, ἱλαστήριον, in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 186.

¹⁵⁶ “Expiation,” Cross and Livingstone, 589.

¹⁵⁷ Johannes Hermann and Friedrich Büchsel, ἱλεως, ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός, ἱλαστήριον, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 302.

¹⁵⁸ Barrett, 77.

reapplied by Paul in a new way to the gospel. We may infer, then, that Paul did not intend to imply either propitiation or expiation to the exclusion of the other, but rather used ἱλαστήριον as a code-term for the atoning effect of the crucifixion and resurrection. The key determinant of its meaning for Paul is neither the Hebrew nor Greek terminology necessarily, but rather the theological meaning of the significance of the Christ-event. And in that meaning we can see both propitiatory and expiatory effects of the gospel on humanity's problem of sin and wrath.

I have argued in a previous chapter that God's wrath was revealed in the gospel when Christ died for humanity's sin. The effect on humanity, then, is in part propitiatory. Christ has satisfied God's wrath as a substitute for humanity so that those who believe need not face condemnation. But Paul clearly implies expiatory effects as well. In equating Christ with the mercy seat,¹⁵⁹ Paul declares that God has replaced the old sacrificial system with a new means of expiation "in his blood" (3:25). "The crucified one has thus become the place where God himself has brought about expiation publicly and for all."¹⁶⁰ Humanity need not face divine wrath because their sins have been covered, or wiped clean, by Jesus' expiatory sacrifice. According to Barrett, however, "It would be wrong to neglect the fact that expiation has, as it were, the effect of propitiation:

¹⁵⁹ The lexical arguments for and against the "mercy seat" interpretation of Paul's ἱλαστήριον are too unwieldy to be presented here. However, in a recent work, Daniel P. Bailey argued that this is in fact Paul's intent ("Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25," *Tyndale Bulletin* 51 [2000]: 155-58).

¹⁶⁰ Roloff, 186.

the sin that might justly have excited God's wrath is expiated (at God's will) and therefore no longer does so."

Therefore, from the human perspective, 3:21-26 tells us of the means by which humanity may finally achieve true righteousness before God. The gospel has manifested for them the δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, the righteousness which is theirs through faith, granted by God. The net result is their justification, reconciliation to God, and eschatological salvation. The human problem of divine wrath has been solved.

The Vindication of Divine Righteousness

We now return to these same verses from the divine perspective: what does 3:21-26 tell us about the demonstration and vindication of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, the genitive taken subjectively to indicate God's inherent righteousness and/or his resultant activity for humanity's salvation? That "the righteousness of God has been disclosed" (3:21) has already been discussed from the human perspective as referring to our *status* of justification, but in Paul's flexible application of the term it no doubt also has the subjective sense here and in v. 22 of *God's* activity in justifying human beings for their salvation. Undeniably, this activity flows from God's saving covenant faithfulness, which is one of the aspects of his own attribute of righteousness. That saving activity is God's work in the gospel: in Christ's crucifixion he makes justification possible for those who believe and eliminates the threat of condemnation under wrath. And the faith which presupposes saving righteousness (3:22) is itself enabled by God's work through those

who preach the gospel, the gospel which is God's power for salvation (1:16) in part because it apprehends humans and brings them to faith.

It is this work of God in the gospel that leads to believers being designated δικαιοῦμενοι, those "justified by his grace as a gift" (3:24). This statement gives us something new to think about, in that it more directly introduces the topic of God's grace. Paul declares that it is divine grace that leads God to justify humanity. But we have already established that God's attribute of righteousness causes him to justify the faithful. Apparently, Paul here is using "grace" in the same sense as "righteousness," a clue to his underlying conviction that God's saving righteousness is more than a covenant obligation; it also brings into play his attitude toward humanity and the way he chooses to treat us, which is with enabling grace.

But God's righteousness has previously been in question, and it was to demonstrate his δικαιοσύνη that God put forth Christ as the ἱλαστήριον. Paul says as much three times in 3:25-26: εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, and εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον. Paul's repetition shows that "clearly the point means a good deal to him."¹⁶¹ My contention has been that God's righteousness is in need of vindication on two counts: his saving covenant faithfulness is in question because his people are doomed to face wrath and need his salvation, and his justice is in question because his forbearing nature has been misunderstood as indifference to sin. Paul has already stated that Christ as ἱλαστήριον justifies the faithful

¹⁶¹ Morris, *Romans*, 183.

“in his blood “ (3:24-25). As noted earlier, surely he refers here to the expiatory sense of Christ’s sacrificial death which has removed sin as a barrier to reconciliation with God. But there is a crucial distinction between this sacrifice and those made by Jews to God under the law, because it was God who put Christ Jesus forward (3:25). God’s initiative in effecting this expiation manifests and vindicates his righteousness; he has acted in his covenant faithfulness to save his people, now extended beyond Israel in this new age to all of humanity.

Then Paul turns to the issue of the vindication of God’s justice in 3:25-26: “He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance [ἀνοχή] he had passed over the sins previously committed.” And allowing sin to go unpunished indefinitely is not what one expects from the righteous judge of humanity who abhors sin.

It is helpful in this connection to examine Paul’s other references to God’s forbearance, or patience.¹⁶² Both references come in passages which explain the delay in exercising divine wrath against the sinful:

Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance [ἀνοχή] and patience [μακροθυμία]? Do you not realize that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. (Rom 2:4-5)

What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience [μακροθυμία] the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory? (Rom 9:22-23)

¹⁶²Paul seems to use the terms ἀνοχή and μακροθυμία as synonyms. They are both defined as “patience” by Louw and Nida (25.171 and 25.167, respectively).

From these verses it is apparent that God's patience is not evidence of indifference to sin or a lack of divine righteousness. It is part of his plan, to mercifully give sinners an opportunity to repent before the day of wrath, so that objects of wrath may become objects of mercy. God, according to Paul, is forbearing because he wants to make known his power (9:22), which I take to be his power for salvation (1:16). His patience with sinners is ultimately meant both for God's own glory and for the glory of those who repent (cf. 2 Cor 3:18).

But, as noted earlier, God's forbearance may be construed as failure to exercise judgment against sin. When God delays his wrath, sin appears to go unpunished, and this calls into question our perception of his justice. As Barrett summarizes the point, "In the past he had overlooked men's sins, and decisive action was necessary if his righteousness was to be vindicated."¹⁶³ That decisive action was his setting forth of Christ as ἰλαστήριον. As Cranfield puts it,

The idea of God's patiently holding back His wrath is familiar in Judaism. But for God to simply pass over sins would be altogether incompatible with his righteousness. He would not be the good and merciful God, had He been content to pass over sins indefinitely; for this would have been to condone evil – a denial of His own nature and a cruel betrayal of sinners. God has in fact been able to hold His hand and pass over sins, without compromising His goodness and mercy, because His intention has all along been to deal with them once and for all, decisively and finally, through the Cross.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Barrett, 79-80.

¹⁶⁴ Cranfield, 211-12.

Cranfield sees in the crucifixion a demonstration of the righteousness of God in the subjective sense as his attribute of justice. Sanday and Headlam agree: "In what sense can the death of Christ be said to demonstrate the righteousness of God? It demonstrates it by showing the impossibility of simply passing over sin."¹⁶⁵ Barrett notes, "the crucifixion shows to the full God's abhorrence of sin and his righteous judgment upon it, and at the same time indicates beyond doubt that his apparent disregard of sin in the past was due not to negligence but to mercy."¹⁶⁶ According to these commentators, then, God has vindicated his righteousness by revealing his wrath on the cross: Jesus, though sinless himself, bore the penalty for human sin as a propitiatory sacrifice to satisfy God's wrath and avert it from humanity.

But not all commentators agree that there is any propitiatory element in the effect of Christ's death. Goodridge, for one, rejects any interpretation of the atonement which includes "the spectacle of the Son enduring the Father's anger."¹⁶⁷ But to dismiss any aspect at all of propitiation in the crucifixion is difficult, given Paul's statement that God put Christ forward as ἱλαστήριον "to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed" (3:25). An alternative interpretation of the atonement requires a different translation of διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν

¹⁶⁵ Sanday and Headlam, 89.

¹⁶⁶ Barrett, 80.

¹⁶⁷ Ernest Goodridge, "The Anger – and Mercy – of God," *Epworth Review* 20 (1) (1993): 22. Cf. Hanson, 89 (quoted above, p. 26 n. 71). I have argued earlier (pp. 26-32) that there is no Pauline evidence that divine wrath includes an *affectus* corresponding to human anger.

προγεγονότων ἀμαρτημάτων, in which πάρεσις is taken to have the sense of “forgiveness” rather than “passing over,” and the meaning of διὰ is also slightly altered. Then the overall reading of the clause would be “something like ‘through His forgiving of sins committed beforehand, [which He did] in His forbearance.’”¹⁶⁸ That is, God showed his righteousness by putting forth Christ as a sacrifice so that he could forgive sins, something which he has waited patiently to do but which has been part of his divine plan since creation. Using this translation, one can deny that Paul attributes any propitiatory significance to the atonement and eliminate the distasteful thought of God angrily making his own son the object of his wrath, to which Goodridge and Hanson objected. Then, the righteousness God has shown is associated with his saving covenant faithfulness rather than his justice. However, this alternate interpretation is unlikely to be correct as it strains the meaning of πάρεσις; ἄφεσις is the obvious word choice if forgiveness is the intended meaning.¹⁶⁹ Therefore, the original translation probably better reflects Paul’s intended meaning, which appears in the context of Paul’s argument in Romans 1-3 to be that God’s wrath was indeed revealed on the cross as he vindicated his justice after a period of forbearance. Leon Morris summarizes the contextual argument for the propitiatory effect of the ἱλαστήριον as follows:

There has been, and still is, vigorous debate as to just exactly what we should understand by this Greek term; but if we begin with the context we can say that a meaning including an element of propitiation would be natural. Indeed it is demanded, for Paul has brought heavy artillery to bear

¹⁶⁸ Moo, 239.

¹⁶⁹ For complete discussion of this issue, see Moo, 238-39.

in demonstrating that God's wrath and judgment are against the sinner. And while other expressions in verses 21-26 may be held to deal with the judgment aspect, there is nothing other than this word to express the turning away of the wrath. Wrath has occupied such an important place in the argument leading up to this section that we are justified in looking for some expression indicative of its cancellation in the process which brings about salvation.¹⁷⁰

Therefore, when we regard 3:21-26 from the divine perspective, we see the vindication of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ in its subjective sense as both an attribute and an activity of God. We have observed throughout this study two different divine characteristics which are labeled "righteousness" by Paul. One is God's saving covenant faithfulness, his obligation to be a saviour to his people. God has vindicated his faithfulness by making Jesus an expiatory sacrifice, removing sin as a barrier to reconciliation and salvation. The other characteristic is God's justice. In the propitiatory view of his death, Christ, though sinless, bore the full measure of God's wrath to avert it from humanity. At the same time, God has proven his abhorrence at sin after a period of forbearance, and has thus vindicated his justice.

Up to this point in the discussion, we have seen repeatedly that Paul uses the concept of "the righteousness of God" in a range of different ways. He even uses the one phrase for two divine characteristics which appear to be in opposition to one another: God's covenant faithfulness (1:17; 3:21, 22) and his justice (3:5, 25, 26). In view of this, it is perhaps prudent to reconsider the definition of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, specifically its

¹⁷⁰ Leon Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross* (London: Tyndale, 1955), 169.

subjective sense as a divine attribute. Can we replace competing interpretations with one definition which encompasses the entirety of Paul's thought?

Any such definition must certainly take into account God's justice and covenant faithfulness alike. But Paul's mention of grace (3:24) and forbearance (3:25) suggest even more: that he has in mind God's entire character, and that God is righteous simply by being God, righteous in his "consistency in always acting in accordance with His own character."¹⁷¹ For Paul's language suggests that his view of God's character was shaped by God's words to Moses in Exod 34:6-7, in which he describes himself as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness . . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty." Yet rather than this range of qualities, "righteousness" as a complete description of God's character seems closer to Paul's thought than any one aspect of it. His flexible application of the term δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ takes into account all of these characteristics at one time or another.¹⁷²

Thus God's attribute of righteousness, in its fullest sense, is manifested in his justification of humanity, made possible by the ἱλαστήριον. God is both just (righteous) and justifying, δίκαιον καὶ δικαιοῦντα (3:26). The covenantal God achieves *both* the vindication of his own righteousness and the establishment of human righteousness with

¹⁷¹ Moo, 242.

¹⁷² Fitzmyer (p. 106) notes other divine characteristics listed in Exod 34:6-7 occasionally translated as δικαιοσύνη in the LXX: "his *ḥemet*, 'fidelity' (Gen 24:49; Josh 24:14; 38:19), [and] his *hesed*, 'steadfast mercy' (Gen 19:19; 20:13; 21:23)."

Christ's sacrificial death. And so "God's personal righteousness is vindicated in the very act of declaring sinful men and women 'righteous',"¹⁷³ as well as in the act of punishing sin on the cross. God proves himself righteous by simultaneously demonstrating his mercy and his judgment. Though this may seem paradoxical, it is in fact essential to Paul's thought:

There is no antithesis between God's justice and his mercy. Paul is saying that it is not simply the fact that God forgives that shows him to be just. Indeed, that fact by itself raises a question about God's justice . . . But if God had simply punished sinners, while that would have left no doubts about his justice, it would have raised questions about his mercy, and the God of the Bible is both just and merciful. What Paul is saying is that the cross shows us both. It is the fact that he forgives by way of the cross that is conclusive. Grace and justice come together in this resounding paradox (cf. Ps. 85:10; Isa. 45:21; Zech. 9:9). God saves in a manner that is right as well as powerful. The claims of justice as well as the claims of mercy are satisfied.¹⁷⁴

And what mercy, indeed! For it is shown in the very act of judgment as God puts a divine spin on the workings of propitiation. In the classical notion of the concept, the wrath of the gods was averted by the offering of a gift. But in Christ's death and resurrection, it was God himself who offered the gift. This inconsistency has sometimes been presented as an argument that Paul intended no propitiatory effect in his description of the Christ-event; Barrett opines that "the common Greek meaning 'to propitiate' becomes practically impossible when . . . God is subject of the verb."¹⁷⁵ On the contrary,

¹⁷³ Bruce, 78.

¹⁷⁴ Morris, *Romans*, 184.

¹⁷⁵ Barrett, 77.

however, God as subject demonstrates his great mercy toward humanity as he provides the gift that will save them from his wrath. Morris concludes that

the use of the concept of propitiation witnesses to two great realities, the one, the reality and the seriousness of the divine reaction against sin, and the other, the reality and the greatness of the divine love which provided the gift which should avert the wrath from men.¹⁷⁶

And so this is the content of the gospel which Paul preaches, “both the offer to men of a status of righteousness before God and the revelation of God’s wrath against their sin,”¹⁷⁷ a proclamation of both salvation and judgment. The gospel has revealed both δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and ὀργὴ θεοῦ. God’s own righteousness has been vindicated in two senses. First, he has provided Christ Jesus as means of salvation, proving his covenant faithfulness. Secondly, he has shown his justice in his revelation of wrath against sin on the cross. The effect of both on humanity is the new offer of justification by faith, a solution to the problem of wrath.

¹⁷⁶ Morris, *Apostolic Preaching*, 183.

¹⁷⁷ Cranfield, 110.

All aspects of wrath and righteousness are governed by God's own *attribute* of righteousness (a), which encompasses his entire character, including his justice and his saving covenant faithfulness. God's righteousness (which we may interpret as his fidelity to himself in his dealings with humanity) leads to his action of judgment (b), which has two possible outcomes. God will condemn the unfaithful (c) and justify the faithful (d). We may metaphorically say that God is expressing his wrath (e), or love (f), respectively. Both were manifested in the Christ-event, in the crucifixion (g) and resurrection (h). The effect on humanity is a new status, either condemned (i) or justified (j). The associated behavioural effects are moral degeneration (m) and moral regeneration (n). Condemnation results in abandonment by God now (k) and eschatological death (o). Conversely, justification entails fellowship with God now (l) and eschatological life (m).

This study has shown that despite the similarities between Rom 1:17 and 18, righteousness and wrath are not precisely parallel concepts. Righteousness is an attribute of God, or rather the embodiment of all his attributes; every quality of God, every part of his character, is an aspect of his righteousness. Wrath, by contrast, is not God's attribute but rather one expression of his righteousness. The wrath of God is the *effectus* which results when God's justice meets unfaithfulness. With condemnation, humanity experiences abandonment by God now and eschatological death.

According to Paul, God's wrath is revealed in varying ways. It *will* be revealed in full in the eschatological judgment. But it is also being revealed *now* on a continual basis, as sinful humanity is given up to the consequences of their unrighteousness in a provisional experience of eternal exclusion from God's presence. The wrath of God was

revealed in the gospel, in the death of the Messiah as he bore the penalty for human sinfulness. It is also revealed on an ongoing basis in the gospel proclamation. In one sense this occurs because the proclamation informs us of the revelation of wrath in the gospel events, in another because the preaching of the gospel brings us to faith, which is a prerequisite to recognizing the revelation of wrath in the world's sin.

But it is misleading to speak of the revelation of wrath in isolation. For in the gospel the *righteousness* of God is also revealed, the righteousness which is the rescue from wrath for all who believe. In the ἰλαστήριον God simultaneously expresses judgment and mercy; he is both just and justifying. In the gospel, then, God's righteousness has been completely revealed. The revelation of God's wrath is but a subset of the revelation of God's righteousness.

APPENDIX A
Paul's Uses of ὀργή¹⁷⁸

Rom 1:18

Ἀποκαλύπτεται γὰρ ὀργὴ θεοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ἀσέβειαν καὶ ἀδικίαν ἀνθρώπων τῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κατεχόντων.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth.

Rom 2:5

κατὰ δὲ τὴν σκληρότητά σου καὶ ἀμετανόντον καρδίαν θησαυρίζεις σεαυτῷ ὀργὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ θεοῦ.

But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

Rom 2:8

τοῖς δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας καὶ ἀπειθοῦσι τῇ ἀληθείᾳ πειθομένοις δὲ τῇ ἀδικίᾳ ὀργὴ καὶ θυμός.

While for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury.

Rom 3:5

εἰ δὲ ἡ ἀδικία ἡμῶν θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην συνίστησιν, τί ἐροῦμεν; μὴ ἄδικος ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἐπιφέρων τὴν ὀργήν;

But if our injustice serves to confirm the justice of God, what should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us?

Rom 4:15

ὁ γὰρ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται· οὐ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος οὐδὲ παράβασις.

For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law; neither is there violation.

Rom 5:9

πολλῷ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς.

Much more surely, then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God.

¹⁷⁸ Omitted is Eph 4:31, which refers to human anger.

Rom 9:22

εἰ δὲ θέλων ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ ἤνεγκεν ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκεύη ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν.

What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction.

Rom 12:19

μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες, ἀγαπητοί, ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, γέγραπται γάρ, Ἔμοι ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω, λέγει κύριος.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

Rom 13:4

ἐὰν δὲ τὸ κακὸν ποιῇς, φοβοῦ· οὐ γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ· θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν ἑκδικὸς εἰς ὀργὴν τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι.

But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer.

Eph 2:3

ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀνεστράφημεν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, καὶ ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί.

All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else.

Eph 5:6

Μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς ἀπατάτω κενοῖς λόγοις· διὰ ταῦτα γὰρ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient.

Col 3:6

δι' ἃ ἔρχεται ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῆς ἀπειθείας.

On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.

1 Thess 1:10

καὶ ἀναμένειν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν ρυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης.

And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead – Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath that is coming.

1 Thess 2:16

εἰς τὸ ἀναπληρῶσαι αὐτῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας πάντοτε. ἔφθασεν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος.

Thus they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God's wrath has overtaken them at last.

1 Thess 5:9

ὅτι οὐκ ἔθετο ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς εἰς ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bailey, Daniel P. "Jesus as the Mercy Seat: The Semantics and Theology of Paul's Use of *Hilasterion* in Romans 3:25," *Tyndale Bulletin* 51 (2000): 155-58.
- Barrett, C. K. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. London: A. & C. Black, 1991.
- Barth, Karl. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 6th ed., trans. Edwyn C. Hoskins. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.
- Barth, Karl. *A Shorter Commentary on Romans*. London: SCM, 1959.
- Bell, Richard H. *No One Seeks for God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 1:18 - 3:20*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998.
- Bray, Gerald L., ed. *Romans*. Ancient Christian Commentaries on Scripture: New Testament VI. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1998.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans: An Introduction and Commentary*. London: Tyndale, 1963.
- Calvin, Jean. *Commentary upon the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans*. ed. Henry Beveridge, trans. Christopher Rosdell. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1844.
- Carson, D. A. "God's Love and God's Wrath." *Bibliotheca Sacra* 156 (624) (1999): 387-98.
- Cranfield, C. E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1. International Critical Commentary. London: T. & T. Clark, 2004.
- Cross, F. L., and E. A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. Oxford: University Press, 1997.
- Dodd, C. H. *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Romans 1-8*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco: Word, 1988.
- Finamore, Steve. "The Gospel and the Wrath of God in Romans 1." In *Understanding, Studying, and Reading*, ed. Christopher Rowland and Crispin Fletcher-Louis, 137-54. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

Goodridge, Ernest. "The Anger – and Mercy – of God," *Epworth Review* 20(1) (1993): 17-24.

Gorman, Michael J. *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Hanson, Anthony T. *The Wrath of the Lamb*. London: SPCK, 1957.

Hermann, Johannes, and Friedrich Büchsel. ἵλεως, ἱλάσκομαι, ἱλασμός, ἱλαστήριον. In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 3, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 300-23. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

MacGregor, G. H. C. "The Concept of the Wrath of God in the New Testament." *New Testament Studies* 7 (1960, 1961): 101-109.

Maimonides, Moses. *The Guide of the Perplexed*, tr. Schlomo Pines. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963.

McCumber, W. E. "God's Wrath in the New Testament." *Christianity Today* 3 (1959): 16-18

Moo, Douglas. *Romans 1-8*. Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary. Chicago: Moody, 1991.

Morris, Leon. *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*. London: Tyndale, 1955.

_____. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

_____. "The Wrath of God." *Expository Times* 63 (1952): 142-45.

Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2004.

Quell, Gottfried, and Gottlob Schrenk. δίκη, κτλ. In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, 174-225. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.

Reumann, John. "Righteousness (NT)." In *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 5, ed. David Noel Freedman, 745-73. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

- Ridderbos, Herman. *Paul: An Outline of his Theology*, trans. John R. de Witt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.
- Roloff, Jürgen. ἰλαστήριον. In *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, 185-86. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.
- Sanday, William, and Arthur C. Headlam. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. International Critical Commentary. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.
- Schoonhoven, Calvin R. *The Wrath of Heaven*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966.
- Soards, Marion L. "The Righteousness of God in the Writings of the Apostle Paul." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 15 (1985): 104-109.
- Stählin, Gustav. "The Wrath of Man and the Wrath of God in the NT." In Hermann Kleinknecht, Oskar Grether, Otto Procksch, Johannes Fichtner, Erik Sjöberg, a, vol. 5, ed. Gerhard Friedrich and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gustav Stahlin. ὀργή, κτλ. In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 419-47. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967.
- Tasker, R. V. G. *The Biblical Doctrine of the Wrath of God*. London: Tyndale, 1951.
- Travis, Stephen H. *Christ and the Judgment of God*. Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1986.
- _____. "Wrath (NT)." In *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, ed. David Noel Freedman, 996-98. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- Turner, Nigel. *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963.
- Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.
- Weed, Ronald. "Aristotle on Justice (δικαιοσύνη): Character, Action, and Some Pauline Counterparts." *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 3 (2006): 72-98.
- Whiteley, D. E. H. *The Theology of St. Paul*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974.
- Ziesler, J. A. *The Meaning of Righteousness in Paul*. Cambridge: University Press, 1972.