

## Wrath Has Gone Out from God's Presence

By Troy J. Edwards

Num 16:45 Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.

Num 16:46 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun.

Very often when we declare the truth that God is good and that no evil (sickness, disease, tragedy, etc.) is authored by Him we are challenged with Scripture quotes that supposedly speak to the contrary. Recently, the passage above was quoted as a refutation to one of our teachings (though no exposition of the verse was given despite my request for the person to do so).

We have already expounded upon the above passage in our book, *Does God Send Sickness* (I recommend waiting for the revised edition to be completed) and our most recent book, *The Wrath of God: What it is and How it is Executed*. However, it will not hurt to touch on it briefly in this blog, though we highly recommend our aforementioned books to get a fuller explanation of our understanding of the text.

One must keep the important truth in mind that the Bible is a *progressive revelation*. This means that since God was dealing with a nation (Israel) whose minds were still influenced by the pagan cultures surrounding them, they were not ready for a full revelation of God's character and the ongoing warfare between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. Therefore, God had to speak to them in terms by which He took responsibility for anything that happened to Israel and that came as a result of their sin.

Nevertheless, as the Israelites began to learn more truth in incremental stages and their minds adapted more towards divine thinking, then revelation progressed. With this progression of revelation God could not only reveal more truth about Himself and more thoroughly expose the true author and source of evil, which is Satan, He was also able to shed more light on some passages of Scripture in which He took responsibility for evil works such as sickness and disease.

One of the passages in which God was able to shed more light on was Numbers 16:45-46. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul's divinely inspired comments on this passage show us that it was not God but another agent that brought this plague on Israel:

*Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. (1 Cor. 10:10)*

Paul says that the “wrath” which had “gone out from the LORD” that resulted in a plague was accomplished by an entity known as “the destroyer”. The God’s Word translation renders 1 Cor. 10:10, “*Don’t complain as some of them did. The **angel of death** destroyed them.*” This belief that “the destroyer” is the “angel of death” is affirmed by numerous scholars and commentators.

There is only one “angel of death” and that is the fallen angel now known as the devil and Satan. It is he who had the power of death:

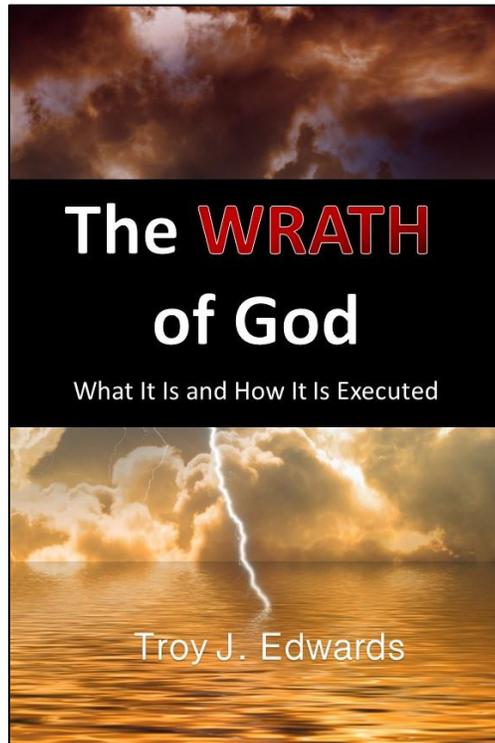
*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him **that had the power of death, that is, the devil** (Hebrew 2:14)*

It is the devil who “*cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*” (John 10:10). Therefore, Satan is the destroyer or death angel. Sickness originates with him (Job 2:7; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38). Because of Israel’s constant rebellion God was left with no choice but to “*deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh*” (1 Cor. 5:5). Thus, 1 Cor. 10:10 provides an excellent explanation for the events that took place in Numbers 16. This was not God’s doing but Satan’s. As the late Puritan minister, Cotton Mather wrote:

“It is said of the Israelites, in 1 Cor. 10.10, They were destroyed of the destroyer. That is, they had the Plague among them. ‘Tis the Destroyer, or the Devil, that scatters Plagues about the World.” (Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, p. 52)

This should be our understanding of all Old Testament Scriptures in which God is seen to be the responsible agent for sickness and disease. He is only said to be the author of such in a *permissive* rather than in a *causative* sense (see James 1:13; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1). The true agent behind sickness and disease in both the Old and New Testaments is Satan. Therefore, sickness is never to be accepted as coming from God’s hand but from Satan’s. Therefore, sickness is not to be accepted but resisted in the authority of Jesus’ Name.

For more information about how God exercises His wrath, we highly recommend our latest book,  
**“The Wrath of God: What it is and How it is Executed.”**



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