Job - Commentaries by Paul Wilson

God's Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility: Arminianism, Calvinism, and a Review of A.W. Pink's "The Sovereignty of God", Does God Hate Unbelievers?

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Mr. Pink does not stop at denying God's love to the world — to mankind — but he actually goes so far as to teach that God hates those whom He does not love. Notice this: "He loves one and hates another. He exercises mercy toward some and hardens others, without reference to anything save His own sovereign will" (p. 111). In speaking about God's hating Esau, Mr. Pink goes so far as to indicate that this was so before he was born: "Go back to Romans 9:1113: Did Esau fit himself to be an object of God's hatred, or was he not such before he was born?" (p. 118). (Although this is put in the form of a question, there can be no doubt from the context that he is here teaching that Esau was hated before he was born.) Here is a more definite statement of Mr. Pink's: "If then God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and that before they were born or had done either good or evil, then the reason for His love was not in them, but in Himself " (p. 30).

Let us notice what one, from whom we have previously quoted, says on the subject: "If God 'despiseth not any' (Job 36:5), we may be perfectly sure He hates not any. Such an idea could not enter a mind which was nurtured in the Word of God, apart from the reasonings of men. I say not this because of the smallest affinity with what is commonly called Arminianism, for I have just as little affinity for Calvinism. I believe the one to be as derogatory to God's glory as the other, though in very different ways —the one by exalting man most unduly, and the other by prescribing for God, and consequently not saying the thing that is right of Him."

Mr. Pink speaks of God's wrath upon one as though it might be synonymous with God's hatred, but this "confounds hatred with judicial anger. There is no hatred in God to man assuredly. Yet God is a righteous judge, and God is angry every day, and ought to be so." But Mr. Pink asks, "Can God 'love' the one on whom His 'wrath' abides?" (p. 248). Our answer to this is "yes," for God's wrath against the sinner because of his sin is not inconsistent with infinite and sovereign love. Thus Christ in the synagogue looked upon them with anger, being grieved at the hardness of their hearts. The grief was love; the anger was His righteous estimate of their sin.

Christian Truth: Volume 16, Disasters - Italy - Haiti - Cuba - Job 33:14: The Editor's Column

"God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." Job 33:14. The solemn warnings of impending doom go unheeded as men press on down the broad road. In one week during the month of October two major disasters occurred—one in Italy and the other in the West Indies. Each was of such an unusual character that neither can be passed off as of the ordinary casual happening of the day. One thoughtful man said: "A whole generation has become so accustomed to thinking of devastation and death in the terms of man-made war that it requires a conscious effort to grasp the fact that humanity still inhabits this globe by the sufferance of other powers than its own." This from an editorial in the New York Tribune as reported by Newsweek, October 21, 1963, p. 67.

We know that Satan is called the destroyer (see Rev. 9:11—marginal reading for "Apollyon"). We read of some of his activities in the book of Job, where he brings forth the powers of the elements and of evil men against Job. God restrains providentially at the present, or the earth would be filled with destructive calamities. And when God does allow these displays of power, it is to warn men to flee from the wrath to come. But, alas! few consider these things; and they are treated as just items for a newspaper today, to be forgotten tomorrow.

Just four years ago men displayed their ingenuity by erecting the huge Vaiont Dam in Italy, which is today the second largest completed structure of its kind in the world. It stored water which backed up four miles and had a maximum depth of 873 feet. The dam was so well constructed that it did not give way even under the severe stress suddenly placed upon it when Mount Toc tumbled into the lake—130,000,000 cubic yards of rock and dirt—and splashed the water out over the dam to a height of 300 feet. This cascading water fell on the peaceful valley below with the force of a tidal wave, sweeping away villages and hamlets as though they had never existed. Much debris was carried out to sea. It is estimated that in approximately six or seven minutes all in its path was destroyed. The swiftness and totality of destruction calls to mind the verse which says: "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them... and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5:3. Certain judgment is decreed by God against this world that cast His beloved Son out of it after heaping insults upon His blessed head. The wonder is that God has lingered this long in patience and forbearance. He is not willing or desirous that any should perish; His will is that all should come to repentance while there is still mercy to be had for the taking. But God would not be righteous if He did not punish men for this awful act, as well as for their other sins. He has appointed the day for judgment, and also named the judge (Acts 17:31); and when that time comes it will be too late to flee for refuge.

Many living in the Piave River Valley were sound asleep when disaster overtook them. It mattered not that they were asleep, insensible to the danger. It is thus that men live today under the shadow of impending doom—"Careless of their souls immortal, Heeding not the call of God."

The other disaster may be related thus: At the end of September, the United States weather bureau received a photograph from an orbiting Tiros satellite which showed a hurricane in the making off the northeast coast of South America—the usual spawning ground of many hurricanes of the Western Hemisphere. From the first picture it was marked as a "bad one." The usual precautions were taken, and aircraft were sent to spot the storm and gather data concerning its center velocity and its direction and speed of movement. Man is helpless before such vicious moods of weather, except as he may be able to chart its probable path and warn those living in the danger area to take precautions. These hurricanes are named each year by the weather bureau according to the alphabet, using girl's names. This one in order of sequence was named "Flora," or the sixth of the season. Wind velocity mounted from 75 to 110 miles per hour, and in four deadly hours wreaked havoc on the tiny island of Tobago. Many were injured, 18 killed, and 17,000 left homeless; the property damage done was

extensive.

Warnings were broadcast ahead of the storm to all in its path. It came on toward the impoverished nation of Haiti with its velocity increased to 140 miles per hour in its eye.

It cut a swath 75 miles wide across the Tiburon Peninsula of Haiti, demolishing whole villages, or perhaps leaving only a lone building standing. Here (as in the dam disaster in Italy) the number of those killed can never be accurately known, for many were buried under debris or carried out to sea in the floods. The estimate of the dead stood at 3,000.

Next, the Island of Cuba received the brunt of the storm, and there a most unusual thing happened; the hurricane remained on Cuba for five horror-filled days. A hurricane is expected to deal out its fury and pass on, but this one got caught between north and south wind currents and remained fairly stationary. Rainfall measured up to sixty inches in some parts of Cuba. To use the words of one report: "copper and manganese mines [were] flooded, fishing fleets smashed, sugar mills destroyed, cattle herds drowned, sugar, corn, rice, cotton, banana, and tobacco crops demolished."-Time, October 18, 1963, p. 33. It seems that the officials tried to underestimate the loss of life and listed it at 700, but thousands were missing. What terrible devastation!

Certainly, man does not possess any monopoly on instruments of death and destruction, nor can he dictate where the elements will strike when once their power is unleashed. There is a time coming when, according to the sure Word of God, it will be "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth." Rev. 8:13. And the expression, "inhabiters of the earth," indicates more than where they are; it carries the force of "earth dwellers," or those who have their hopes and aspirations here. They are like the man who scoffed at a tract, saying to the Christian who offered it, "You can have all the heaven you want, just give me EARTH." The poor man who thus spoke died suddenly shortly thereafter, so he lost the earth which he loved, and lost heaven which he despised.

Men are accustomed to using superlatives to describe the works of their hands, but a time is coming when superlatives will be needed to describe God's sore judgments on those who have rejected His Son as their only Savior. They preferred pleasure, and loved their sins. This recent flood in Italy was the worst, based on the casualty count, of any previously known dam disaster. The one in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, when a dam gave way above the town, in 1889, nearly rivaled this one; but the impossibility of locating and counting all the dead washed to sea in this disaster would make the recent flood the worst. And the recent killer hurricane sets a new record for casualties in such a storm. Well did God say to Israel:

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Eze. 33:11. At this present time God commands all men everywhere to repent. Well did the poet say:

"O, turn ye! O, turn ye! for why will ye die, When God, in great mercy, is coming so nigh? Now Jesus invites you: the Spirit says 'Come.' "

The particular circumstances of these great disasters point up how serious it is to ignore warnings. In the case of the Vaiont Dam, some engineers and geologists warned of just such a possibility two years ago; but people get used to living with danger of death. The mayor of the one valley hamlet had posted signs of "continued danger." In the little village of Pineda, 35 residents who lived just below the dam moved out and left their homes. They believed the danger signs and took refuge elsewhere. Like the eight survivors of the flood in the days of Noah, they took the means of escape and perished not with them that believed not. But 34 others decided to stay and risk it, and they died in the flood. To paraphrase a sentence from Scripture, "They knew not until the flood came and took them all away."

It is not that the danger was not apparent, or that nothing was done about it. Those in charge of the dam knew that a major landslide was imminent, but they miscalculated the danger. They took the precaution of lowering the water level 21 feet to make room for an avalanche to drop into the lake, but alas! it was too little. They would have had to almost empty the lake. How like peoples' efforts to avert the judgment of God against their sins by self-improvement, by a few good deeds, or by reformation of one kind or another; but all such attempts will prove valueless. Only by repentance toward God and acceptance of the Lord Jesus as a personal Savior will they escape "the damnation of hell."

In the case of "Flora," the warnings were issued in all good faith, but in Haiti and Cuba they were despised and unheeded. The Haitian Red Cross broadcast a flat denial that any danger existed. But the storm came almost immediately with terrifying force. Perhaps some people may reply, But the officials were to blame for not telling the populace. Surely they were, but are the preachers of today who sing soothing lullabies to their congregations any less culpable? No, they are more to blame, for they claim to be ministers of God while they lie and do not tell the truth.

The Cuban authorities made light of the warnings of danger, even though by that time it was well on its way. Tobago and Haiti were already evidence of the damage it could do. These recent tragedies are warnings from God, but how many have heeded them?

Only shortly before these horrors, there were floods in Pakistan, a landslide in Nepal, and a disastrous earthquake in Yugoslavia; but men go on day after day with the same careless indifference that marks this age.

When we consider the upheavals internationally, let us note that a severe pain, a doctor's visit, and then an operation, brought the prompt and unexpected removal of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan from the British government. The same week, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (the man who helped rebuild war-stricken Germany into a powerful and prosperous nation) resigned. How suddenly great changes take place! When President Kennedy arrived in Italy late in June the government of Premier Amintore Fanfani had fallen, and the Pope was dead. Dare anyone predict who will head the major world governments a year from today? With elections due in the United States, Germany, and Britain in another year, and only a heartbeat separating any man from removal from office at any time, who can predict? In fact, every major power could have a new ruler within a short time. We "know not what shall beon the morrow," but we know Him who does, and who keeps His own counsel. He will do according to His own will, and work out all His purposes, the major part of which is that His Son will be honored here where He was cast out and is still despised. He is going to rule with a rod of iron and subject all under His feet. At the present He sits at God's right hand until that moment when God will "make His enemies His footstool" (Psalm 110).

The Christian's hope is bright beyond description; for in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, he and all the redeemed from the earth and from the tomb will instantly be changed into His glorious image and be caught away from this scene to be with Him forever. May He come

soon! But may we warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

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