

# God's Wrath Against Mankind: why we deserve to be punished.

The Wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

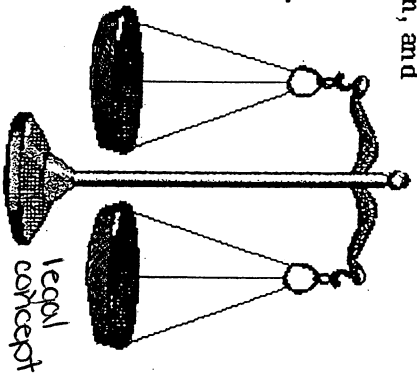
For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore God gave them over in sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator - who is forever praised. Amen.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and were received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolvent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

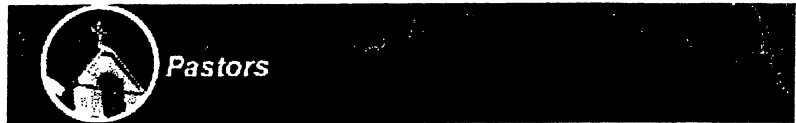
Romans 1:18-32



**PUNISHMENT DELAYED!!**: Blocking out what we deserve!

# PUNISHMENT DELAYED!!

Greek: ΑΝΟΧΗ & νόχη



Thursday, June 27, 2002

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**FORBEARANCE**: God is the one who forbears; who holds back his punishment.

for-bar'-ans (anoche):

"Forbearance" (anoche, "a holding back") is ascribed to God ([Romans 2:4](#), "the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering"; [3:25](#) the Revised Version (British and American), "the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God," the King James Version "remission" (margin "passing over") of sins, that are past, through the forbearance of God"); in [Philippians 4:5](#), to epieikes is translated by the Revised Version (British and American) "forbearance," margin "gentleness"; it is a Christian grace in likeness to God. "Forbearing" (The King James Version, margin) is substituted by the Revised Version (British and American) for "patient" (anexikakos, "holding up under evil") in [2 Timothy 2:24](#).

W. L. Walker

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Orr, James, M.A., D.D. General Editor. "Entry for 'FORBEARANCE'". "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia". <<http://www.studylight.org/enc/isb/view.cgi?number=T3507>>. 1915.

**HOW DO YOU PRONOUNCE**

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Jim Auten

fear before him: But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God."

Regarding timeliness of divine punishment toward sinful men, time itself is irrelevant to our Eternal God. "For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night" (Psalm 90:4). "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). The passage in which the latter citation appears specifically warns against spiritual apathy resulting from a delay of punishment. The following verses from this same context affirm judgment and urge prior preparation, as opposed to apathy and a lack of preparedness.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness" (2 Peter 3:9-11).



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4325 Southeast Drive  
Steubenville, Ohio 43953-3353

740.266.9322

[rushmore@gospelgazette.com](mailto:rushmore@gospelgazette.com)

Curtis P. 1 + 1/2 P. 2

# SPACE TO REPENT

© Hubert Krause July 18, 1998  
The Church of God in Williamstown  
WEB SITE: <http://www.alphalink.com.au/~sanhub/index.htm>

## INTRODUCTION

The dilemma of sin and its pervasiveness has always perplexed the men and women of God. One of the questions continually asked by many is how is it that a righteous God who does not tolerate sin in His presence does not therefore act more consistently to promptly remove sin and sinners? Why is evil allowed to exist and to prevail?

We all understand the compassion and mercy of our great God:

**Ps 145:8** The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy.

We need to be reminded, however, that God's punishment for sin has at times indeed been instantaneous and not just in the days of Israel of old:

**Acts 5:3** But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

## PUNISHMENT DELAYED

The Scriptures inform us that God's will is for all to come to repentance:

**I Tim 2:4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

To allow this to be possible God, who hates sin, at times delays applying the penalty for sin upon evildoers, a situation which all too often only further hardens the evil heart of man, as Solomon attested to:

**Ecc 8:11** Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

This has at times troubled the servants of God deeply:

**Hab 1:2** O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save. 3 Why do You show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; there is strife, and contention arises. 4 Therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

**Ps 10:1** Why do You stand afar off, O LORD? Why do You hide in times of trouble? 2 The wicked in his pride persecutes the poor; let them be caught in the plots which they have devised. 3 For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; he blesses the greedy and renounces the LORD. 4 The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts. 5 His ways are always prospering; Your judgments are far above, out of his sight; as for all his enemies, he

Cartas

sneers at them. 6 He has said in his heart, "I shall not be moved; I shall never be in adversity."

However, the delaying of the punishment of evildoers for their sins works God's purpose in the lives of His saints. Let us notice how and take the lessons to heart.

### SIN REVEALS THE FAITHFUL

The presence of sin around the people of God marks them as His elect:

**1 Cor 11:19** For there must also be factions [*the Greek means sects or heresies, a sin, for Paul in Gal 5:20 describes this as an evil fruit of the flesh; see also 2 Pet 2:1; Tit 3:10*] among you, that those who are approved [*by God*] may be recognized among you.

Enduring and resisting evil, even under pressure, and making godly decisions, brings God's stamp of approval:

**Jas 1:12** Blessed is the man who endures temptation [*the experience of evil or sin*]; for when he has been *approved*, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

The tares that co-exist alongside the wheat will ultimately be exposed. This happened in the apostle John's day and it will happen in ours. It fulfills one of God's purposes for allowing sin in the human realm to temporarily continue unpunished:

**1 John 2:19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that *they might be made manifest [that they were tares]*, that none of them were of us.

God allows the Devil and sin to reveal those who are approved by Him. He has always worked like this and will continue to do so even at the end of the Millennium, as we read in this most spectacular of accounts:

TONY Patterson  
**Rev 20:7** Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

Notice that the forces of evil marshalled by the Devil are allowed by God and all the resurrected saints to march over the length and breadth of the earth and to actually encircle the city of Jerusalem before God acts. Why? Obviously God is giving many people involved directly and indirectly in this rebellion space to consider their attitude and their actions and to repent before it is too late. ✱

By delaying His punishment of the world, the inheritance of the children of light is ensured. God's purpose for His elect is fulfilled as they witness the inevitable consequences of unrestrained sin around them reap their dire results and God finally does intervene and inflict the prescribed punishment. We see this in the example of the Canaanites—a type of this present evil age—who, because of their compounded sinfulness eventually, when their allotted time had expired, lost their inheritance to the children of Abraham, just as the children of this world will lose theirs to the saints:

**Gen 15:16** "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is

The Lord is Saving Souls & Gathering [a case together] for Judgement

not yet complete."

God told faithful Abram that it would be some four hundred years before his descendants gained possession of the land of Canaan. In other words, the time for God's intervention, both to bring the Israelites into the Promised Land of old and to award to His saints the rulership of the earth, is postponed a little while. People have the opportunity to repent-or to multiply their sins!

Notice how the apostle Paul affirms that God's delay in imposing punishment for evil has allowed the blindness *caused* by sin to ensure the election of the saints:

**Rom 11:7** What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day."

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

This blindness of unbelief has to do with people's hardening of their own hearts through sin, not with God arbitrarily blinding an individual's eyes. Christ confirmed this:

**John 12:40** "He has *blinded* their eyes and *hardened their hearts*, lest they should see with their eyes, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them."

So too did the author of the Book of Hebrews:

**Heb 3:13** but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

And of course the Devil is the instrument of this blindness to God's truth:

**2 Cor 4:4** whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

## TIME TO REPENT

Even the day of Christ's Second Coming is delayed, as it were, to give sinners, both in and outside of the Church, time to repent:

**2 Pet 3:3** knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness [*availing ourselves of the extra time God has given us*].

This is in accord with the purpose of God, as expressed by the apostle Paul in Romans:

**Rom 2:4** Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not

knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Those destined to fail to heed and to accept God's correction are those who do not really fear Him. They will incur His wrath:

**Ps 55:19** (NIV) God, who is enthroned forever, will hear them and afflict them—men who never change their ways and have no fear of God.

However, there are limitations to the amount of time given by God for His people to heed and accept His correction. God, through His foreknowledge, knows who will and who will not repent in the time allotted them. Punishment follows the failure to do so.

Let us see an example of this at work. Notice the words of God to the Church:

**Rev 2:21** "And I gave her [*the woman Jezebel, a type of those led astray by false doctrine*] time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.

22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works."

Again, if there is no move towards repentance, or a desire to repent, the time for delay—the space to repent—will one day be over:

**Rom 2:5** But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are *treasuring up for yourself* [by a constant refusal to heed and to repent] wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds."

**Rev 10:5** The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that *there should be delay no longer* [in holding back God's wrath on all evildoers], 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

When the time is cut short, there will be little opportunity for repentance and change. The wicked are confirmed in their wickedness, the righteous in their righteousness:

**Rev 22:10** And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. 11 He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

## OUR RESPONSIBILITY

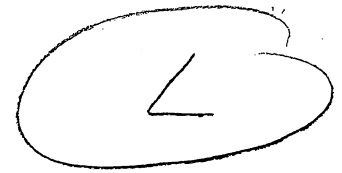
For us, as God's elect, we should always hasten to repent and obey God, as David did:

**Ps 119:60** I made haste, and did not delay to keep Your commandments.

God gives us space to repent, and He knows whether we will ultimately do so. Let us be ever mindful of the danger of sin and strive to be always repentant and ready to change, so that we will be approved by God and not miss out on our inheritance.



Doug Williams



## The Vindication of God's Righteousness

A very important question serious Bible students ask is, "How can God be just, holy and righteous in character and overlook, or allow to pass over without notice the sins of Old Testament saints? How could He intentionally overlook their sins?" The apostle Paul wrestles with this problem in Romans 3:25 when he refers to the Old Testament saints who, "in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed." Paul looks back to the old covenant and says God passed over the sins in the Old Testament times. God used self-restraint or tolerance as He looked down on sinful man. Since God is a just God, how could He "wink" at the sins committed before Christ came and still be a just and righteous God?

The apostle Paul summarizes the whole Old Testament teaching on the holy and righteous character of God when he declared, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men . . ." (Romans 1:18). In his grand indictment against all mankind in chapter one he concludes, "those who practice such things are worthy of death" (v. 32). "Therefore you are without excuse . . . And we know that the judgment of God rightfully falls upon those who practice such things" (2:1). "The wages of sin is death" (6:23). The first three chapters sum up the righteous character of God and the fact that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (3:23).

Paul reminds us of the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel who wrote, "The soul that sins will die" (Ezekiel 18:4). Again he said, "The person who sins will die" (v. 20). "The wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself" (v. 20). "For his iniquity which he has committed he will die" (v. 26). "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the LORD God. "Therefore, repent and live" (v. 32).

Obviously, sin is serious business with God. The Scriptures can be summarized as follows:

- God is holy and He hates sin. He can not look upon sin.
- Because God is righteous He must punish all guilty sinners.
- Unless God can prove that He has punished all sin, He is no longer righteous.
- God poured out His wrath on all sin at Calvary.
- God has punished all sin, and therefore He is just.

The Reason for old Testament sacrifices is because God was drawing near.

The old covenant sacrifices and offerings were never capable of producing a full forgiveness of sins. They did not expiate sin. Their sins were passed over, covered for the time being and another sacrifice would be made for sin the next day. They could not radically deal with sin. It is clear the blood of animals could not do this. All they did was to point forward to the coming perfect sacrifice that could deal with sin, cleanse the conscience of dead works, and reconcile man to God. Therefore, how could God pass over their sins? How could He remain righteous and true to Himself?

All of the Old Testament saints were in heaven on credit. Abraham, David, Isaac Jacob, etc. were forgiven because they looked to Christ and the sacrifice He would make in time. They made their offerings by faith. They took God at His word that one day He was going to provide a perfect sacrifice for sin. They believed God. The thrust of Paul's argument in Romans 3:24-25 is, "It was their faith in



Christ that saved them, exactly as it is faith in Christ that saves us now."

The apostle Paul's answer to the question of God's righteousness is clear. At the cross God was publicly declaring His own inherent and essential righteous character and justice. Here He is not referring to the imputed righteousness He gives to believers, but His own personal, glorious attributes. He is referring to His own essential moral, holy, just and righteous character. God gave a public demonstration that He is still righteous, just and holy although He has declared all believing sinners just and righteous in His sight. How did He do it? God set forth Jesus Christ as propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the passing over of sins formerly committed under the old covenant (Romans 3:24-25). Hebrews 9:15 teaches us the same thing.

God explained Himself and declared His holy character when on the cross, His Son died as a sacrifice for all sin. Although God has in patience and forbearance held His judgment back in Old Testament times, He did not hold it back at the cross. He expressed all His holy wrath against sin on Jesus. The cross was a public declaration that God's righteousness was satisfied. He vindicated His own eternal character of righteousness and holiness at the cross. At the cross God vindicated what He had been doing in the past as He overlooked sin under the old covenant. In verse 26 He answered how He could pass over those sins in the past. The answer is still in the cross of Jesus. Every sin was dealt with once and for all at the cross.

At the cross God declared His righteousness for having passed over sins in His time of self-restraint. He can declare His own righteousness then, now and forever in forgiveness of sins because God poured out His entire wrath on His Son. The wrath of God that should have come down upon all sinners in the old dispensation came down upon His Son, Jesus Christ at the cross. That same wrath that should come down upon you and me because of our sins fell upon Jesus in that same historical event at Calvary. Jesus Christ is "the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world." Because God knew He was going to execute judgment against all sin in due time He could put off that judgment until the right time. Therefore, God can remain just and deal with sin as He says He is going to do, and still justify the believing sinner.

This is "the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26). This is how He could pass over, or put off to another day, judgment against the sins in the past.

How does He deal with our sins now? How does He deal with our sins in the future?

The answer is still the same—at the cross of Jesus. Christ is the "propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." All sin was dealt with once and for all on the cross of Jesus. The blood of Jesus covers every sin of those who believe—past, present and future.

Christ has dealt with all sins in His own death. It was done once and forever. God laid all sins on the back of Jesus. The sins you and I have not yet committed were laid on Him there. Christ in His death for sin has already dealt with the sins you have not yet committed. This is the only means whereby God can forgive us of our sins. This is the only justification of God for forgiving all sins whenever committed. All sins are forgiven on these grounds alone. Therefore, God can be "just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (v. 26). The cross is not just the declaration of God's love; it is also the declaration that He is a just and holy God. He is true to His holy character. At the cross God was declaring that He is "Light and in Him there is no darkness at all." His love must be kept in perfect balance with His righteousness.

The cross is the vindication of God's righteous character. God can remain holy and just because He has punished sins and sinners in His own pure and holy Son. God poured out His wrath upon Christ. The prophet Isaiah said, "He bore our chastisement." "By His stripes we are healed." God punished sin and was therefore true to Himself. He kept His integrity.

Sinners are declared righteous freely by God's grace though the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God set forth as propitiation through faith in His blood. Therefore, God can declare His righteousness for having passed over those sins in the past time of self-restraint. God is righteous in forgiving sin—past, present and future.

Is the apostle Paul teaching universalism? Does that mean everyone is automatically saved because Christ has already died for their sins? No. It means the provision has been made in God's grace by Christ's death to forgive, but only those individuals who personally believe on Christ to save them will receive forgiveness and salvation. "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36).

Have you put your trust in Jesus Christ to save you from the wrath of God? Are you enjoying His peace and assurance that all your sins have been covered by the death of Jesus Christ? As Jesus Christ to be your personal savior today. Here is [\*\*A Free Gift for You.\*\*](#)

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Title: Romans 3:24-26 The Vindication of God's Righteousness

Series: Christ in the Old Testament

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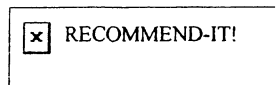
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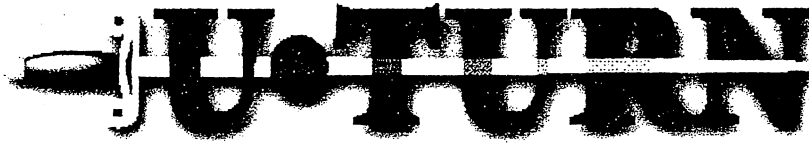
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[wil@abideinchrist.com](mailto:wil@abideinchrist.com)





*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind....Romans 12:2*

## Does God Have and Image Problem?

*Brian Watts*

*Does the Bible reveal a God of wrath in the Old Testament and a God of love in the New? If so, how do we harmonize the two revelations?*

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The God of the Old Testament is unpopular these days. Nobody wins a popularity contest with a reputation built on stories like destroying Sodom or flooding the Earth. God's image has taken a beating, being implicated in bloody massacres of Philistines and Canaanites. He appears pretty legalistic in his pronouncements from Sinai; and there is nothing worse for one's image these days than to be perceived as legalistic!

It appears that God wasn't interested in winning a popularity contest. After all, He chose to distribute the Old Testament to tell the world who He is. But modern Christians, it seems, can breathe a sigh of relief when Jesus is revealed in the New Testament, for Jesus rescues God's reputation, as a spin doctor expertly extricates His client from the ravages of earlier publicity. With a publicity genius He quickly transformed God's image, and suddenly the embarrassing God of wrath becomes the endearing God of love.

### Distorted images

In some form or another, the church has been wrestling with God's image problem for centuries. The dilemma first surfaced with a man called Marcion. He decided that the two images were so incongruous that they must actually represent two entirely different beings. The God of the Old Testament, he argued, was an evil being, the creator of matter and this sinful world. Jesus came to reveal the true God, the God of grace and love whom Marcion believed had been side-lined by the creative activity of the lesser God of the Old Testament. Marcion was condemned as a heretic in AD 144, but his ideas remain influential.

In modern times, liberalism has developed a more sophisticated variation on the theme. Marcion cut out large chunks of the Bible which did not fit his thesis; liberalism questions the authority of Scripture. The liberals begin with an evolutionary assumption about man's ascent to greater understanding with the passing of time. For liberalism the supposed differences between New Testament and Old Testament images of God are not a matter of two competing deities; rather the earlier scriptures describe God as understood by more primitive people, whereas the later ones reflect maturation in man's understanding. man's later, more sophisticated ideas about God result in an improved image, a God of love and grace.

Since liberals don't view the Scriptures as inherently authoritative, but merely a reflection of man's

evolving experience and ideas about God, they have no problem with the nature of God continuing to change. Today God has been freed from archaic notions such as patriarchy or homophobia. Now He personifies modern values like tolerance. According to this view, God's image is constantly changing to fit current sensibilities. But in reality this is ultimate idolatry, albeit making mental rather than physical idols. Man is making God in his own image. God's image changes as man's values change.

Evangelicals rightly denounce such idolatry. We know that there are not two competing deities as posited by Marcion. And we know that God is not a product of man's mind, as implied by the liberals. But the dichotomy between the Old and New Testaments still presents a dilemma. We are committed to a New Testament Gospel, and we continue to uphold the authenticity of the Old Testament scriptures, but we have some embarrassment in serving a God who commanded the destruction of all the women, children and animals in the city of Jericho. We know that he is the same God in both Testaments (*contra* Marcion), and that He is revealed authoritatively in all of Scripture (*contra* liberalism). But we vaguely imagine that He seems to have had a change of heart somewhere between the Old and New Testaments.

Evangelicals believe in the immutability of God. Many evangelicals have rationalized the transformation of God's image by a dispensationalism which describes an unchanging God who established a series of changing covenants with His people. In each successive dispensation He related to man differently. He didn't change, but his image did, because He is seen to act differently in different periods of history. Fortunately for us, we live in the era of the New Covenant. The God that we now preach is reassuringly the God of love whom we are happy to proclaim; the bloodthirsty episodes retreat to a former era and we suppress the less magnanimous aspects of the image of God recorded in the Old Testament.

#### Paul's defence of God's image: Romans 3:21-26

The Apostle Paul dealt with the same problem in a very different way. His defence of God in Romans 3:21-26 is shocking to a modern mind despite being frequently quoted in evangelical circles. He agrees with Marcion, liberals and dispensationalists at this starting point: Yes! the God of the Old Testament has an image problem. But that is as far as the agreement goes.

When Paul talks about God's poor reputation in Old Testament times, he is not thinking of how unloving God seems. Paul's concern in these verses is with a Gospel that is not primarily focused on man's need, but on God's glory. When Paul says we have all "fallen short" (3:23), he is not bemoaning our failure to fulfill our potential, he is describing the damage that sinful man has done to God's glory. We have fallen short in our ultimate purpose to bring glory to God. And because of the sinfulness of man, God's reputation in creation has been tarnished. It is this problem that the Gospel is primarily concerned to address: the damage done by sin to God's glory. He has a bad reputation, and his Image Is defaced. man's sin has compromised God's glory.

As Paul looks at the Old Testament era he sees a problem with God's image. But it is not that God has appeared to be overly harsh. Rather it is that up until the coming of Christ He seems to have overlooked the seriousness of sin. The marred image of God in man apparently went unchallenged. The Old Testament era is described in these verses as a time when "God passed over the sins that were previously committed" (3:25). Now, praise God, God has "demonstrated his righteousness" (3:25). He has vindicated His reputation! He has restored His image as a holy God in sending His Son to deal with the previously overlooked problem of sin.

Paul's concern about God's image is the impression that the Old Testament gives that sin does not

matter too much. God said Adam would die when he sinned, but it seemed he didn't; in fact he lived for another 930 years. God seemed able to turn a blind eye to David's adultery and murder. And far from being destroyed by their sin, the wicked seemed increasingly to prosper - and many Old Testament saints cried out "Why?" (Jer 12:1,2; Hab 1:4).

So Paul talks about the fact that God justified ungodly people like David and Abraham, which seemed to be so unjust. In Paul's argument, the wonder of the New Testament is not that it reveals a softer, kinder God, a Father-figure who is even more forbearing, overlooking the sins men commit. No! For Paul forbearance characterizes the Old Testament era in which God seems to be unjust because he justified the sinful. The wonder of the Gospel is that God's true glory is vindicated: His holiness is such that every sin really does deserve the death penalty, for every sin spoils the image of God displayed in man. The Old Testaments prophets said that the soul that sins dies, but history seemed to call that into question, for sinners continued to live and prosper! But in the death of Jesus we see that God treated sin so seriously that when our sin was placed upon his Son, even his spotless Son came under the absolute unrelenting judgment of God in death.

So Paul describes the Gospel as a demonstration of God's righteousness (Rom 3:25,26): the gospel is God's ultimate communication to a misinformed world about the reality of His identity. The God who seemed to be a soft touch in the Old Testament was not that way at all. He did not merely turn a blind eye to David's sin, but He justified David legally because David's faith was in the Jesus he had never seen, but who really died for him. God's image problem was dealt with! Now it's clear for all to see that God has always taken sin seriously - so seriously that he has eternally provided the sacrifice of his own Son. The good news is that He has found a way to be "just and the justifier" (3:26), to maintain His image as a righteous God and to legally show mercy to His chosen ones.

So God's image problem is dealt with. He cannot be impeached on charges of being unrighteous, as it seemed in Old Testament times when he overlooked men's sins for a season. The God of the Old Testament would have appeared inconsistent without the completeness of the New Testament revelation. He seemed arbitrarily to destroy some and show favoritism to others; thus King Saul lost his throne, but King David, despite being an adulterous murderer, was promised a perpetual dynasty. But now we know His anger was a true reflection of His righteousness, and His mercy was on the basis of a full atonement for sin.

His righteousness is proclaimed at Calvary. His glory is seen in absolute righteousness joined with love and mercy toward sinners who have breached that righteousness. The purpose of the cross was not *primarily* to bless man. It was to glorify God, to vindicate God as a loving merciful Father who is a justifier without being a soft touch. His reputation is now intact and His glory is magnified. And the wonder for us is that where His image problem had to do with the spoiling of His image in man, Calvary also has the power to deal with that! Men and women who fell short of their purpose to reveal His glory in reflecting His image, are being transformed again into His likeness, changed from one degree of glory to another! We cease to be His image problem, as we start to display His restored image again.

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# FORBEARANCE

## ROMANS 3

23 For all have <sup>344</sup>sinned, and come short of the glory<sup>191</sup> of God;

24 Being justified freely<sup>432</sup> by his grace<sup>545</sup> through the redemption<sup>427</sup> that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath <sup>431</sup>set forth to be a (propitiation<sup>245</sup>) through faith in his blood,<sup>129</sup> to declare his righteousness for the remission<sup>329</sup> of sins<sup>265</sup> that are <sup>43</sup>past, through the forbearance<sup>463</sup> of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time<sup>254</sup> his righteousness: that he might be just,<sup>132</sup> and the justifier<sup>134</sup> of him which believeth<sup>482</sup> in Jesus.

# FORBEARANCE

## ROMANS 2

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness<sup>544</sup> and forbearance<sup>463</sup> and long-suffering,<sup>315</sup> not knowing<sup>59</sup> that the goodness<sup>543</sup> of God leadeth<sup>71</sup> thee to repentance<sup>341</sup>?

## STRONG'S

430. ἀνεχόμεαι anéchōmai, an-ehk'-om-ah-ee; mid. from 303 and 2192; to hold oneself up against, i.e. (fig.) put up with—bear with endure, forbear, suffer.

463. ἀνοχή anochē, an-okh'-ay; from 430; self-restraint, i.e. tolerance—bearance.

COUSIN.—sister's son.

430: in the N. T. only in the mid. ἀνεχόμεαι; fut. ἀνεχόμεαι (W. 83 (79)); impf. ἠνεχόμεν 2 Co. xi. [1 Rec<sup>11</sup>].  
4 [Rec.] (G T Tr WH mrg. ἀνεχόμεν [cf. Moeris ed. Piers p. 176; (but LWH txt. in vs. 4 ἀνεχ.); cf. WH. App. p. 162; W. 72 (70); B. 35 (31)]); 2 aor. ἠνεχόμεν Acts xviii. 14 (L T Tr WH ἀνεχόμεν, refl. u. s.); to hold up, (e. g. κεφαλῆν, χεῖρας, Hom. et al.); hence in mid. to hold one's self erect and firm (against any pers. or thing), to sustain, to bear (with equanimity), to bear with, endure, with a gen. of the pers. (in Grk. writ. the accus. is more com., both of the pers. and of the thing), of his opinions, actions, etc.: Mt. xvii. 17; Mk. ix. 19; Lk. ix. 41; 2 Co. xi. 19; Eph. iv. 2; Col. iii. 13. foll. by gen. of the thing: 2 Th. i. 4 [WH mrg. ἐνεχ.] (aἰε by attraction for ἐς, unless ἐς be preferred [B. 161 (140); cf. W. 202 (190)]). foll. by μισῶν τι with gen. of both pers. and thing, 2 Co. xi. 1 (acc. to the reading μισῶν τι ἀποποιῶν [R<sup>1888</sup> L T Tr WH]; cf. Meyer ad loc.). without a case, 1 Co. iv. 12 (we endure). foll. by εἰ τις, 2 Co. xi. 20. Owing to the context, to bear with i. e. to listen: with gen. of the pers., Acts xviii. 14; of the thing, 2 Tim. iv. 3; Heb. xiii. 22. [CONC.: spoon. 463 ἄ, ἡ, ἴ, (compare ἀνεχόμεαι τὸς, s. v. ἀνεχ. p. 45), toleration, forbearance; in this sense only in Ro. ii. 4; iii. 26 (25). (In Grk. writ. a holding back, delaying, fr. ἀνεχ. to hold back, hinder.) [Cf. Trench § liii.]\*

## VINE'S

### FORBEAR, FORBEARANCE

#### A. Verbs.

1. *anechō* (ἀνέχω, 430), "to hold up" (*ana*, "up," *echō*, "to have or hold"), is used in the middle voice in the NT, signifying "to bear with, endure"; it is rendered "forbearing (one another)" in Eph. 4:2 and Col. 3:13. See BEAR. Cf. B, No. 1, below.

#### B. Noun.

2. *anochē* (ἀνοχή, 463), "a holding back" (akin to A, No. 1), denotes "forbearance," a delay of punishment, Rom. 2:4; (3:25) in both places of God's "forbearance" with men; in the later passage His "forbearance" is the ground, not of His forgiveness, but of His pretermission of sins, His withholding punishment. In 2:4 it represents a suspense of wrath which must eventually be exercised unless the sinner accepts God's conditions; in (3:25) it is connected with the passing over of sins in times past, previous to the atoning work of Christ.

3. Note: Cf. the noun *epieikeia*, Acts 24:4, "clemency"; 2 Cor. 10:1, "gentleness." Synonymous with this are *makrothumia*, "longsuffering," and *hupomonē*, "patience" (see Col. 1:11). *Anochē* and *makrothumia* are used together in Rom 2:4. See also Eph. 4:2 (where A, No. 1, is used in this combination). Trench (*Syn*) and Abbott-Smith (*Lex*) state that *hupomonē* expresses patience with regard to adverse things, *makrothumia* patience with regard to antagonistic persons. It must be observed, however, that in Heb. 6:15 the verb *makrothumeō* is used of Abraham's patience under the pressure of trying circumstances (cf. also Jas. 5:7, 8). *Makrothumia* and *hupomonē* are often found together, e.g., 2 Cor. 6:4 and 6; 2 Tim. 3:10.

4. "Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish; it is the opposite of anger and is associated with mercy, and is used of God, Exod. 34:6, Sept.; Rom. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:20. Patience is the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial; it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope, in 1 Thess. 1:3; it is not used of God."

## WEBSTER'S

**TOL'ERANCE**, n. [L. *tolerantia*, from *tolero*, to bear.] The power or capacity of enduring; or the act of enduring.

Diogenes one frosty morning came to the market place shaking, to show his tolerance.

**WITHHOLDING**, ppr. **Holding back**; restraining; retaining; not granting.

**ENDURE**, v.t. [L. *durus*, duro.] 1. To last; to continue in the same state without perishing; to remain; to abide.

The Lord shall endure forever. Ps.9.

He shall hold it [his house] fast, but it shall not endure. Job.8.

2. To bear; to brook; to suffer without resistance, or without yielding.

How can I endure to see the evil that shall come to my people? Esther 8.

Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong? Ezek. 22.

**ENDURE**, v.t. To bear; to sustain; to support without breaking or yielding to force or pressure. Metals endure a certain degree of heat without melting.

Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure.

As might the strokes of two such arms endure.

1. To bear with patience; to bear without opposition or sinking under the pressure.

Therefore, I endure all things for the elect's sake. 2 Tim. 2.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. Heb.12.

2. To undergo; to sustain.

I wish to die, yet dare not death endure.

3. To continue in. [Not used.]

**ENDURANCE**, n. [See Endure.] Continuance; a state of lasting or duration; lastingness.

1. A bearing or suffering; a continuing under pain or distress without resistance, or without sinking or yielding to the pressure; sufferance; patience.

Their fortitude was most admirable in their presence and endurance of all evils, of pain, and of death.

2. Delay; a waiting for. [Not used.]

**DELAY**, v.t.

1. To prolong the time of acting, or proceeding; to put off; to defer.

My lord delayeth his coming. Matt. 14.

2. To retard; to stop, detain or hinder for a time; to restrain motion, or render it slow; as, the mail is delayed by bad roads.

Thyrsis, whose artful strains have oft delayed

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal.

3. To ally.

DELAY, v.i. To linger; to move slow; or to stop for a time.

There are certain bounds to the quickness and slowness of the succession of ideas, beyond which they can neither delay nor hasten.

DELAY, n.

1. A lingering; stay; stop. 2. A putting off or deferring; procrastination; as, the delay of trial is not to be imputed to the plaintiff. 3. Hinderance for a time.

RESTRÁ'IN, v.t. [L. restringo; re and stringo, to strain. The letter g appears from the participle to be casual; stringo, for strigo. Hence strictus, strict, stricture. If the two letters st are removed, the word rigo coincides exactly, in primary sense, with L. rego, rectus, right, and the root of reach, stretch, straight.]

To hold back; to check; to hold from action, proceeding or advancing, either by physical or moral force, or by an interposing obstacle. Thus we restrain a horse by a bridle; we restrain cattle from wandering by fences; we restrain water by dams and dikes; we restrain men from crimes and trespasses by laws; we restrain young people, when we can, by arguments or counsel; we restrain men and their passions; we restrain the elements; we attempt to restrain ice, but not always with success. 2. To press; to keep in awe; as, to restrain offenders. 3. To suppress; to hinder or press; as, to restrain excess. 4. To bridge; to hinder from unlimited enjoyment; as, to restrain one of his easure or of his liberty. 5. To limit; confine.

not only a metaphysical or natural, it a moral universality is also to be strained by a part of the predicate.

To withhold; to forbear.

you restrainest prayer before God. b 15.

OVERLOOK, v.t. 7. To pass by indulgently; to excuse; not to punish censure; as, to overlook faults. 8. To neglect; to slight.

They overlook truth in the judgment they pass on adversity and prosperity.

They overlook truth in the judgment they pass on adversity and prosperity.

FORBEAR, v.i. pret. forbore; pp. forborne. 1. To stop; to cease; to hold from proceeding; as, forbear to repeat these reproachful words. 2. To pause; to delay; as, forbear a while. 3. To abstain; to omit; to hold one's self from motion or entering on an affair.

Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? 1 Kings 22.

4. To refuse; to decline.

Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. Ezek. 2.

5. To be patient; to restrain from action or violence. Prov. 25:15.

FORBEAR, v.t. 1. To avoid voluntarily; to decline.

Forbear his presence. 2. To abstain from; to omit; to avoid doing. Learn from the scriptures what you ought to do and what to forbear.

Have we not power to forbear working? 1 Cor. 9.

3. To spare; to treat with indulgence and patience.

Forbearing one another in love. Eph. 4.

4. To withhold.

Forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. 2 Chron. 35.

FORBEARANCE, n. 1. The act of avoiding, shunning or omitting; either the cessation or intermission of an act commenced, or a withholding from beginning an act. Liberty is the power of doing or forbearing an action, according as the doing or forbearance has a preference in the mind. The forbearance of sin is followed with satisfaction of mind. 2. Command of temper; restraint of passions. 3. The exercise of patience; long suffering; indulgence towards those who injure us; lenity; delay of resentment or punishment.

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long suffering? Rom. 2.

ROM 3

24 Being justified freely<sup>142</sup> by his grace<sup>545</sup> through the redemption<sup>67</sup> that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth<sup>438</sup> to be a propitiation<sup>243</sup> through faith in his blood,<sup>129</sup> to declare his righteousness for the remission<sup>379</sup> of sins<sup>26</sup> that are <sup>past</sup>, through the forbearance<sup>463</sup> of God;

ROM 2

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness<sup>544</sup> and forbearance<sup>463</sup> and long-suffering;<sup>140</sup> not knowing<sup>7</sup> that the goodness<sup>540</sup> of God leadeth<sup>7</sup> thee to repentance<sup>344</sup>?

5 But, after thy hardness<sup>460</sup> and impenitent<sup>179</sup> heart,<sup>281</sup> treasurest up unto thyself wrath<sup>376</sup> against the day of wrath and revelation<sup>42</sup> of the righteous judgment<sup>134</sup> of God;

EPH 4

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk<sup>403</sup> worthy of the vocation<sup>221</sup> wherewith ye are <sup>called</sup>,<sup>254</sup>

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering,<sup>315</sup> forbearing<sup>61</sup> one another in love,<sup>26</sup>

12 Put on therefore, as the elect<sup>138</sup> of God, holy<sup>40</sup> and beloved,<sup>25</sup> bowels<sup>408</sup> of mercies,<sup>328</sup> kindness,<sup>544</sup> humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;

13 Forbearing<sup>61</sup> one another, and forgiving<sup>583</sup> one another, if any man <sup>have</sup> a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity,<sup>26</sup> which is the bond of perfectness.<sup>547</sup>

COL 3

2 My brethren,<sup>80</sup> count it all joy<sup>509</sup> when ye fall into divers<sup>414</sup> temptations;<sup>386</sup>

3 Knowing this, that the trying<sup>133</sup> of your faith<sup>412</sup> worketh patience.<sup>521</sup>

4 But let patience have her perfect<sup>546</sup> work,<sup>241</sup> that ye may be perfect and entire,<sup>368</sup> wanting nothing.

ROM 15

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,<sup>1319</sup> that we through patience and comfort<sup>374</sup> of the Scriptures<sup>1124</sup> might have hope.<sup>1659</sup>

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

ROM 7

5 Therefore being justified<sup>1344</sup> by faith,<sup>402</sup> we have peace<sup>1515</sup> with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 By whom also we have access<sup>618</sup> by faith into this grace<sup>545</sup> wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope<sup>1680</sup> of the glory<sup>1391</sup> of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4 And patience, experience,<sup>1382</sup> and experience. hope.<sup>1680</sup>