

**Doctrine of Anthropopathisms: Language of Accommodation; Classifications: Sinful: Anger and Wrath: Individual and National, Vengeance**

2. Anger and Wrath. Whereas the anthropopathism of hate indicates divine disapproval, that of anger and wrath exemplify the function of divine justice toward unbelievers.

**Ephesians 2:3** - Among them [unbelievers: vv. 1-2] we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

**Revelation 19:15** - From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

The Ephesians verse is addressed to unbelievers in general while the one in Revelation is directed toward heathen nations. An interesting comment on the latter by Dr. Merrill F. Unger deserves mention:

**Wine Press. Figurative.** The very forceful use of the wine press as a figure is found in Isaiah 63:3-6, where Jehovah is represented as taking vengeance upon the ungodly nations. The nations are the grapes, which are cut off and put into the wine press; and the red upon his garments [Revelation 19:13] is the life blood of these nations.

The New Testament counterpart of this passage is the destruction of the antichrist and his army (Revelation 19:11, sq.). He who effects this destruction is the Faithful and True, the Logos of God. The vision of John is evidently based upon that of Isaiah.<sup>1</sup>

There were three ways that Old Testament prophets received revelation from God: (1) dreams, (2) visions, or (3) direct communication from a theophany of Christ or a teaching angel.

Isaiah clearly states that he received his prophecy from a vision:

**Isaiah 1:1** - The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz (\ä'-möz) concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah [767-687 B.C.].

**v. 2a** - Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; for the Lord speaks ...

This same process was used to disclose to John the Book of Revelation:

**Revelation 1:1** - The disclosure of Jesus Christ which God has given to Him to make known to His servants, the things which must sequentially take place. Furthermore, Jesus Christ communicated this message through His angel to His bond-servant John,

<sup>1</sup> Unger, "Wine Press," in *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 1169.

**v. 2 -** who made a deposition about everything to which he was an eyewitness, namely to the doctrine given by God and the testimony given by Jesus Christ. (CTL)

Note that each passage indicates each man's prophecy was disclosed by Jesus Christ, the former by a vision, the latter by a vision, a teaching angel, and a Christophany.

The historical details of the Revelation were clearly exposed to John by means of a vision. The clause "I looked" is used five times and the clause "I saw" is found forty-one times.

In the Second-Advent portions of their visions, Isaiah and John disclose the wrath of God executed by Jesus Christ upon the heathen nations of the world. This was neither anger nor wrath, but divine justice.

1. **Vengeance.** This is an overt sin of retribution motivated by being offended: the violation of the victim's sense of what is proper or fitting or, more strongly, the impression that he has been deliberately humiliated. A common synonym of the day is to be "disrespected."

Vengeance is a believer's retribution toward one who has wronged, offended, disrespected, or insulted him. This involves revenge motivation which plots retaliation against the alleged antagonist and then carries it out with revenge tactics.

A believer is never to become involved in this. It shows a lack of spiritual self-esteem, an inability to utilize biblical problem-solving devices, and an obvious lack of confidence in divine justice.

When the believer defers the issue to the Supreme Court of Heaven, then divine jurisprudence prosecutes the case. The language of accommodation that describes this is the anthropopathism "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay."

**Romans 12:19 -** Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written [ **Deuteronomy 32:35a** ], "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

**Hebrews 10:30a -** For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay." And again [ **Deuteronomy 32:36a** ], "The Lord will judge His people."

The body of Christ is to seek all measures to maintain harmony. Differences that are interpreted as an offense are to be managed by problem-solving devices 7 and 8 and the case deferred to the Supreme Court of Heaven.