

The Lion, the Leopard, and the Bear

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[0:00] Let's read through chapter 13, verse 11.

Ephraim has given bitter provocation, so his Lord will leave his blood guilt on him and will repay him for his disgraceful deeds.

When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling. He was exalted in Israel, but he incurred guilt through Baal and died. And now they send more and more and make for themselves metal images, idols skillfully made of their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen.

It is said of them, those who offer human sacrifice kiss calves. Therefore, they shall be like the morning mist or like the dew that goes early away, like the shaft that swirls from the threshing floor or like smoke from a window.

But I am the Lord your God. From the land of Egypt you know no God but me, and besides me there is no Savior. It was I who knew you in the wilderness, in the land of drought.

[1:18] But when they grazed, they became full, they were filled, and their heart was lifted up. Therefore, they forgot me. So I am to them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.

I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs. I will tear open their breast, and there I will devour them like a lion, as a wild beast would rip them open.

He destroys you, O Israel, for you are against me, against your helper. Where now is your king to save you in all your cities? Where are all your rulers, those of whom you said, give me a king and princes?

I gave you a king in my anger, and I took him away in my wrath. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? I will never forget a time as a young boy, probably in second or third grade, something like that.

I went home with my friend from church, and he had a basketball hoop in his driveway, and, you know, it was playoff season.

[2:32] This was back when Michael Jordan was in his heyday, and so we were huge fans of the Chicago Bulls, huge fans of Michael Jordan. And so we were out playing basketball, and he had this annoying neighbor, this little boy that just kept coming over, and what he wanted to do was play.

He wanted to play Frisbee with us. It's like, Frisbee is boring. We don't want to play Frisbee, right? And you're too little to play with us. This is a one-on-one game. And so he wouldn't leave us alone. He kept coming back, come on, guys, let's play Frisbee. And so finally my friend said, okay, I'll play Frisbee with you. Give me your Frisbee. So the little boy goes and gives him his Frisbee and takes off running in the opposite direction, right, ready to receive it.

My friend looks up at his house, and he throws it on top of this little boy's house on his roof and turned, and we went back to playing basketball as if nothing happened.

It was my friend. It wasn't me, just to keep that in mind. Then the little boy whose mother had been gone somewhere pulled into the driveway, got out of her minivan, and the little boy who ran into his house crying ran out of his house and ran to his mommy crying.

[3:44] And we couldn't hear what he was telling her, but we could tell by the shade of red that her face was intensely becoming more and more red that he was telling her what we had done.

And then he turned and he pointed in our direction. And this mother spun on us with this death glare in her eyes, and she started storming right at our direction.

Now, guess what we did? We ran. We ran and we hid. We ran to the front of the house. We hid behind some bushes thinking that we had escaped her, but she found us.

She knew his middle name. She called him by his full name. She knew my name. She called me by my name. And I don't remember what she said. I just remember that I was so happy when it was

finally over.

So you see that there are some times where a mother's wrath is justified. We joke a lot about, in our society, about there being mother bears, but we all know that there are few things more terrifying than coming face to face with a mother's wrath, is there?

[5:06] A few years ago, if you remember, there was a woman in Baltimore who was hailed nationwide as a hero after it was videotaped of her slapping and yanking her son away during a time of rioting.

During the protest, if you remember, this mother whose son was covered in a mask and had his hoodie pulled over his head. You know how mothers have that sixth sense?

They just know things. She knew that that was her son, and she went and she pulled him out of those riots, smacking him, beating on him, yelling at him, being wrathful towards him for being involved in something that he had no place in being involved with.

And you know what happened? As a culture, and rightfully so, we praised that woman. We were thankful for her example, and I think it was because we realized how much that is lacking in our society today.

So there are a couple of instances where a person's wrath was justified. Not only was it justified, it was praised. However, when it comes to the wrath of God, fewer and fewer people feel the same way.

[6:22] They feel that it's not justified, and they feel like it isn't something that should be praised. In fact, a lot of Christians turn their eye away from it, or they make excuses for it, or they seek to make apologies for it, as if when God is displaying his wrath in Scripture that he's just having a bad day, and he woke up in a grumpy mood, or something like that.

And I'm not too prideful to confess to you this morning that I really struggled with this passage of Scripture this week, because today is Mother's Day. And it was a couple of years ago, maybe a few years ago, I heard somebody interview a pastor who I respect, Mark Dever.

He's a pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., and they asked him, Why don't you do Mother's Day sermons? Why don't you do Father's Day sermons? And his response was this.

He said, Well, I'm most concerned for the unbelievers in the pews.

And I know that on those days, a lot of times, mothers and fathers will bring their children who maybe haven't heard the gospel ever, or it's been a long time, or they're an unbeliever. And what will they benefit more from? Hearing a message about three ways that a mother can be more godly, or three marks of a godly mother, or if they hear a clear presentation of the gospel.

And so ever since I heard that, I thought, Yeah, I think that that is most important. But the way I've been trained in seminary, as you know, is to take a book of the Bible and to preach through it, chapter and verse, and it just so happens that on this Sunday, this very difficult passage of Scripture has presented itself.

[8:10] And so I had a dilemma. What do I do, Lord? I talk to my wife and my mother, because I know that, hey, I'm in jeopardy maybe of going into the den of the mother bear, and I certainly don't want to ruin anybody's Mother's Day, but this is the feedback that I got.

You know what? A godly mother would want nothing more than for her children to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

She would want nothing more than for the focus of Sunday morning worship to be not about her, but about the Lord Jesus Christ.

But again, many professing Christians consider God's wrath to be a blemish of His character.

Some, like I said, seek to apologize for it.

Others seek to conceal it altogether because they're ashamed of His wrath, because they feel as if it's inconsistent with His love.

[9:18] But what does the Scripture say? Not what our thoughts are, not what our feelings are, but what does God say about this in His Word? And if you read the Scripture, you'll know that God is not ashamed of Himself, and He is not ashamed at all of His wrath.

He doesn't try to hide it. He doesn't try to excuse it, not one bit. Deuteronomy 32, 39-41 says, See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God beside me, I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal. There is none that can deliver out of my hand. For I lift up my hand to heaven and swear, as I live forever, if I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand takes hold on judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries, and I will repay those who hate me.

As a matter of fact, if you look in the concordance of your Bible, you will find that there are more Scriptures in reference to the wrath of God than there are Scriptures in reference to the love of God. The Bible presents God as being perfectly holy. If you remember in Isaiah's vision of God in chapter 6, he sees the seraphim and they're flying around Him.

[10:43] He's too holy. They have to cover their eyes and their bodies and their feet because of how holy He is. In fact, all they can say is holy, holy, holy.

And it just goes back and forth in an endless repetition. They don't say that God is love, love, love. They don't say that God is mercy, mercy, mercy.

They don't say that God is wrath, wrath, wrath. They say that God is holy, holy, holy. The thrust of that three-fold repetition of God's holiness is to emphasize His separateness and independence from His fallen creation.

Because God is holy, He must hate sin, which is the opposite of holiness. In fact, how could He being holy ever delight in sin?

How could He who is holy ever choose to do nothing about sin at all? If God were to have a flaw, it wouldn't be that it is because He has wrath towards sin, but if He was indifferent to it, as if it was nothing to Him.

[12:02] Again, imagine those illustrations that I used earlier with a different outcome. Imagine that little boy goes home to his mother and he says to her, hey, they threw that Frisbee on my house.

And she says, well, that's too bad. Maybe you need to learn how to be tougher, right? What if that mother in Baltimore never went and grabbed her son and just let him continue to riot and be violent and potentially get arrested and have worse things happen to them?

You see, there's an epidemic, I believe, in our society right now of parents like that in our culture. They won't discipline their kids because they'd rather be their kid's friend.

My sisters are teachers and I hear stories about this all the time. My sister, who's a grade school teacher, told me about a time where she was grading one of her students' papers and she used a red pen.

And the student did not do well on the test that they should have studied for. And so my sister's comment on the paper was, have you studied? And she got torn apart by the parent who got that paper.

[13:12] First of all, she said, why would you ever grade in red pen? That's mean. That sends the wrong message. And secondly, why would you ask them if they studied? That's antagonistic.

Well, that's a pretty good question if you fail a test, right? Did you study? Because I need to know because if you studied, we have a problem. But if you didn't study, I know why you didn't do so well. And so here's the main idea for this morning's message.

God's wrath is real. It's justified. And it's terrible. He will apportion his wrath with perfect fairness upon those who have chosen to face it. And only those who are in Christ will be spared.

Because this is such a heavy and controversial subject, we need to dig into this word. We need to search for its truth.

So with that in mind, let's do that very thing. Let's dig in. Though I will tell you it will be uncomfortable, but I promise you that there is good news of great joy for us to behold and experience as we go through it.

[14:26] First of all, we see that God's wrath is incurred by sin. Again, here God is speaking to the nation of Israel, the northern kingdom. He refers to them as Ephraim, has given bitter provocation, so his Lord will leave the blood guilt on him and will repay him for his disgraceful deeds.

When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling. He was exalted in Israel, but he incurred guilt through Baal and died. So here we see that the fuel that kindles the wrath of God is sin.

And in these verses, the particular sin that God is looking at is the sin of murder. There's always been a sense that things are worse today than they've ever been.

We always have this feeling that things today in our country, in our society, in our world are worse than they've ever been. But again, for the student of Scripture, you know that that is not the case.

For example, our nation, we are seeing, before our very eyes, is becoming increasingly divided. Increasingly divided. It seems like with each day, with each election, we become more divided than we've been in many years.

[15:55] It seems almost as if there's another Cold War that's taking place, but this one's not between us and the Russians. This is between the Republicans and the Democrats. And a lot of

eyes, a lot of attention right now is being given, is directed toward our next election.

And so already, people have been plotting, and they have been digging up all kinds of dirt in order to discredit their opposition in pursuit of either taking back the White House or keeping the White House.

Hosea's day was also marked by much political intrigue. However, they've taken their nastiness to a whole other level.

During this time, during this 30-year period when Hosea was ministering to these people, Israel had six kings in 30 years. To put that into perspective, Queen Elizabeth, who doesn't really have any power, but she's still Queen Elizabeth, she's been reigning for 65 years.

One person. 30 years. Six kings. Because four of those six kings were murdered by their successor. So, while our politicians may want to kill each other, they haven't, thankfully, to this point, gone to those lengths of murdering one another.

[17 : 25] But the motives for murder may vary, but ultimately, the one common denominator that they all share is sin.

whoever was murdered was murdered by the person and it was ultimately a result of their sinfulness and their sinful motivation and choice.

So, Israel was engaged in political assassination. They were also engaged in idolatrous worship, seeing them sacrifice even their own children to different gods, seeking to appease those gods, seeking to make those gods favor them or give them more convenient circumstances and I'll tell you this, that I think abortion today meets the same criteria as child sacrifice back then.

Because it's done in order to gain the same kind of convenience, isn't it? And the same kind of favorable circumstances. That's why we are so against it. God says in chapter 12, verse 14, that He will leaven His blood guilt on Israel and repay them for their disgraceful deeds.

Blood guilt there is a term denoting a level of guilt so great for an offense so severe that capital punishment is required. God then directs Israel's attention to the events that occurred long before at Baal Peor, an event that happened many generations in Israel's past.

[18 : 59] This was back before the kingdom of Israel even existed, before it was divided, before it was nonexistent, before there was judges, before there was kings. God was taking His people.

He had delivered them out of the promised land. Remember, they had wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, again, because of their sinfulness, and they were about to take possession of the promised land.

And at that point, these points, these moments just previous to what happened at Baal Peor, they were unstoppable. These people were a juggernaut. They were marching in and they were taking over because God was with them.

And then they came to the land of Moab. And there, the king of Moab was Balak. And Balak saw what had all happened, that Israel had been marching through, they had been conquering, they had been victorious, and he was terrified because he knew that he now was in their sights.

And so he thought that he would devise a scheme to get God to curse His people. And so he hired a sort of prophet for hire, a diviner, a spiritist, this man named Balaam.

[20 : 18] And he hired Balaam and he said, go and pronounce curses on the people of Israel. And you remember that each time, three times he went to go do that, God changed the words of his mouth instead of cursing, it was blessing.

So God had thwarted Balak's attempts to turn him against his people. Well, Balaam didn't give up because he thought, well, if we cannot turn God against his people, what we'll do is turn God's people against him.

And so when they came to Moab, they were enticed by the women in that region and they engaged in all kinds of immoral activities with them, which resulted in them, these Israelite men, worshipping Baal instead of God.

And as a result of that, they incurred his wrath against them. Again, remember, he had delivered them from slavery. He was delivering them into the promised land and yet they turned on him in order to satisfy their own sinful lusts, passions, and desires.

The guilty Israelites were severely punished for this incident, further establishing, though, a pattern of behavior that would have negative effects on the preceding generations.

[21 : 43] generations. So you see, it is easy to blame the younger generations for the failings of a nation, but the truth may be that they are simply following a pattern of behavior that was established

generations ago.

It's like a crack. You ever had a crack in your windshield? Rock comes and hits it and puts a little star in your windshield and over time, what does that crack do? It grows, it widens, it deepens to the point where repairing it is costly or not even worth the attempt.

At Baal Peor, Israel as a nation in a sense began to die. It is not that the nation ceased to exist immediately, but the process began in that place.

They made a definitive decision to turn away from God in favor of worshiping idols and unless that decision was radically repudiated, it would fester, it would grow, it would lengthen, it would deepen, and ultimately it would destroy them.

There were times in their history after this event where the cracks were restrained attempts had been made to fill them but they continued to resurface time and time again and grow and as a result their sins multiplied and God's wrath towards them was intensified.

[23 : 16] So, having considered that, what should we do when we've realized that somewhere along the way as we've been following the Lord we've gone in a different direction, we've made the wrong choice that has now led us further away from Him than closer to Him.

Well, I love this quote by C.S. Lewis and I think he speaks perfectly to what is needed if that's the case. He says, we all want progress but progress means getting nearer to the place where you want to be and if you have taken a wrong turning then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road progress means doing an about turn and walking back to the right road and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man.

2 Chronicles 7.14 says something very similar, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Through those verses God speaks of the conditions for which He will forgive a nation for which He will forgive Israel but I think they also can be applied to ourselves as individuals when we realize that the wrath of God has been incurred by our sin and so humbly through prayer through longing for God we repent and we are restored.

[24 : 53] But if not we see in verses 2-6 that God's wrath is inflamed by adultery idolatry I should say and ungratefulness. Deuteronomy 4.23-24 There the Lord warns His people take care lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God which He made with you and make a carved image in the form of anything that the Lord your God has forbidden you for the Lord your God is a consuming fire a jealous God.

So again for review by this time in Israel's history they had completely forgotten that covenant that they had made with God that God had made with them.

Their forgetfulness led to their ungratefulness. They forgot what God had done and so then they were ungrateful for what God had done and that inflamed God's wrath towards them.

And so God makes a couple of comments here about the errors of their way. The first thing He says basically is that idolatry is stupid.

It's stupid. Verses 2-3 Again Now they send more and more and make for themselves metal images idols skillfully made of their silver all of them works of craftsmen it is said of them those who offer human sacrifices kiss calves therefore they shall be like the morning mist or like the dew that goes early away like the chaff that swirls from the fleshing floor or like smoke from a window.

[26 : 32] So you see that idolatry that began at Baal Peor got worse and worse over time. What had begun with people merely seeking to satisfy their own desires doing what made them feel happy escalated into their taking the lives as I said earlier of the innocent.

In this case they were sacrificing their own children. And this is ironic. This is how idolatry is so stupid. This is why sin is so stupid because they were worshipping Baal Baal.

He was the God of fertility. He was the God who was supposed to give life but in order to get life from him they had to kill their children. What sense does that make?

It doesn't make any sense. To me this is similar to what Satan did to Adam and Eve in the garden. He convinced them, remember?

He convinced them that if they disobeyed God that their life would be better. That their situation in life would improve. But the truth was what? It only brought death.

[27 : 45] What makes idolatry so dumb is as God points out people are creating things. They are making these images with their own hands according to their own imaginations.

And then they're bowing down to them and worshipping them as if they are superior to them. though they are the ones who have made them. And they say that they are gods and then they're willing to even sacrifice their own children to these objects that they have made.

How ridiculous is that? Idolatry is stupid because it is self destructive. And so Hosea uses four word pictures here.

He says it's like chaff that blows away in the wind. It's like the morning cloud that dissipates in the afternoon. It's like dew that dries up and is gone by the afternoon. It's like smoke that vanishes into the atmosphere.

These similes are used to emphasize how Israel's idolatry has led to nothing but their demise.

Idolatry is stupid and we see that idolatry makes people act stupidly.

[28 : 53] Verse four and six. God says, but I am the Lord your God from the land of Egypt. You know no God but me and besides me there is no Savior. It was I who knew you in the wilderness in the land of drought.

But when they had grazed they became full, they were filled and their heart was lifted up therefore they forgot me. Israel was blessed more so than any other nation for the simple fact that God had chosen them.

He had chosen them to be his covenant people. He had powerfully delivered them out of slavery.

He led them to the conquest of the promised land. But by this time all these amazing things, all these amazing miracles that God had done for them, they had completely forgotten about.

And instead of worshipping the one true and living God they turned to idols that are deaf, dumb, and mute. Now you might be thinking, well Pastor Mike, that was like thousands of years ago and we are so much more sophisticated in our day and age, we do not do the same thing.

We do not worship idols. I think John Calvin said it best when he said that the human mind and the human heart is an idol factory. Oh yeah, we have idols today.

[30 : 22] You know what they are? They're status symbols, houses and cars, clothes, different brands, and you have these things and you need these things because you feel like these things give you an identity.

They let people know that you're an important person. And so we crave these things. We strive to acquire these things and once we have them we feel like we've made it in life.

We do that with money. We do that with our work. There might be a position at your job or a certain title or a certain promotion that you want and you want it just because it will make you feel more important.

That people will view you better than they did before and so you treat it as an idol. Listen, we do this with sports teams. Saturday afternoon in Oklahoma is a time of worship.

And now you say, well you're from Kansas and they're terrible at football so you're looking down on us. Well guess what? I'm from Kansas City and when the Chiefs are good nobody hardly goes to church because they don't want to worship at church.

[31 : 39] They're too busy worshipping Patrick Mahomes out at Arrowhead Stadium. But you see we do this. I caught this in myself years ago watching my Chiefs lose a game that they shouldn't have in the playoffs to the Colts.

This was about four years ago. My brother-in-law was watching it with me. He's a Colts fan. They lost and I wanted to strangle him. And I thought this is wrong. This is terrible.

But you know what else we do it with? This is Mother's Day. We do it with our children. And this is another tragedy of our day. Mothers and fathers who make idols out of their kids.

Reliving their lives or the lives that they wish that they would have had through their children.

Forcing them, pressuring them to go to different schools. Pressuring them to get those titles so that they can brag about them so that they can lift up their child and have everybody look at them and say, look at what I've done.

Look at what I've created in this child of mine. First time I came across this was as a youth pastor some time ago. And I had a parent who would call me every year around the end of the school year and they would say, could you talk to my daughter?

[32 : 56] She's just depressed. I don't know what it is, but she goes in her room, she won't talk to us, she's actually really mad. And so I found out that what it was is that her mother and father put so much pressure on her and her academics that she was being crushed by it.

And so eventually the next year is like, well, it's still the same problem. Love your daughter, but don't love them more than God. But I want to say again as well, none of these things are bad things in and of themselves.

It isn't wrong to have nice things. It isn't wrong to have a nice house, a nice car, to have managed your money well. It isn't wrong to have a favorite sports team that you root for.

When it becomes wrong is when we make it an ultimate thing. When we make it more important than God himself. That's when we start acting stupid. Mark 8, 36 through 37, Jesus says it very clearly, for what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, right, to gain all of these different things and yet forfeit his soul?

For what can a man give in return for his soul? And the answer to that is nothing. So, I want to help you locate your idols. Because we all have them from different times.

[34 : 18] One of the ways that you can do this, first of all, is by paying attention to what you daydream about. What do you daydream about? What are you envisioning? And it could be that that image is what you are idolizing.

Or you can locate them according to your worst fear. What's the worst thing that you think could happen to you? For some of us parents, it's that something terrible would happen to our kids and I completely understand that.

But then, in fear of that, we become like helicopter parents and we put them in a bubble and we don't allow them to live their lives. And once you've identified them, confess that to the Lord.

God by this time, Israel had become satisfied, they had been full of pride, and they had become forgetful.

And God to them had become a distant and forgotten memory. I'll tell you, we often compare the Christian life to a series of peaks and valleys, don't we? And if you notice, it's down in the valley that we want to avoid.

[35 : 22] That's where all the growth takes place. If you look at valleys, it's a place that is teeming with vegetation. But it's the peak where we want to be, but you notice that not much growth takes place on the peak.

And when we get up on the peak, we start to get a little too full of ourselves, and it's not long before we start falling back down into the valley. And so we've got to be careful.

If that's not you this morning, if you feel like you are not in the valley, but you're up on a peak, beware that you become lazy and forgetful of what God has done for you. Third, we see that God's wrath is intense.

Verses 7 through 11. God's destruction of His people for their disobedience to the covenant is likened both in metaphor and simile to the attack of wild animals.

Verse 7 and 8, it says there we see that God is slow to act, but when He does act, it is fearful. He says, I'm a lion, I'm a leopard, I'm a bear, and I will devour.

[36 : 27] Next, we see that God is slow to act, but when He does act, people are helpless against it. For what can you do when God and His wrath are directed towards you?

As we read, God's holiness is the reason for His being a consuming fire, and it burns everything that is unholy. Isaiah writes, tremble before Him.

Who of us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burning? And then He answers that question by saying that only the righteous can withstand the consuming fire of God's wrath against sin, because sin is an offense to God's holiness.

But Isaiah also assures us that no amount of our own righteousness will be sufficient. So now we have a problem here. We've been going through Hosea and we see that God says, how could I ever give you up?

He talks about though they've sinned that He will forgive them, that He still loves them. But here we see through these verses that God's wrath is coming and there's nothing that they can do against it.

[37 : 38] So what is it? Does He love them or does He just want to destroy them? Those two themes don't seem to jive well in our fallen understanding.

What we've got to understand is that what God is doing here is going to result in the greater good for all people which will be His glory.

So now I hope you see that if you're a sinner you know that you are in the sights of God and His wrath.

That you understand that there is no good deed that I can do to thwart His wrath or to divert His wrath. So what hope is there?

Is there any hope? Well I want to conclude with that hope. Number four, God's wrath is extinguished at the cross. Jesus. You know that Jesus during His earthly ministry wasn't afraid of anyone or anything.

[38:53] He was not a weak, meek, mild man. This was the Son of God. He stood toe to toe with Satan in the wilderness after he hadn't eaten or drank in forty days.

He entered the temple, remember, soon after that and he wasn't afraid to see people sitting in the temple and go in there and make a whip of cords and drive them all out and flip over the tables. This was a man who did not know fear of other people. He wasn't afraid to confront the Pharisees and the Sadducees and their sinfulness.

He was soundly asleep in the midst of a great storm while all the rest of his disciples were terrified. He went to Lazarus' tomb where he had been dead for days and he stared into the cold, hard blackness looking death in the face and he commanded his friend to rise and come back to life. Not showing even the slightest ounce of being afraid. But there was one moment where he was terrified.

[40:18] Do you remember that moment in the Garden of Gethsemane? Moments before he would be on his way to the cross. Do you remember in that moment?

We talked about this on Easter. He was sweating drops of blood. I've been stressed. I've been afraid. I've not come close to sweating even one drop of blood.

He was sweating drops of blood and he was pleading with his father, remember, let this cup pass. And we know from Scripture whenever we're referring to this cup from the Old Testament, it's referring to the cup of God's wrath.

But yet he says, not my will be done, but yours. Why was he so afraid? It wasn't because of the scourging, though that would have been so intense and so brutal and so bloody.

He wasn't terrified because of the pain that is associated with crucifixion, though that was the most harmful and horrifying way to die. Do you know what he feared?

[41:35] Do you know what terrified him? Being separated from his father as he endured his wrath towards the sins of his people.

This is not something that we should wink at or try to sweep under the rug. Matthew 26, 38-39.

Again, this moment in the garden, Jesus said to them, my soul is very sorrowful, even to death. Remain here and watch with me. And going a little farther, he fell on his face and he prayed, saying, my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.

Nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will. And then on the cross, Matthew 27-46, as our Lord was suspended there between heaven and earth, being crushed by the wrath of God, he cried out in the ninth hour with a loud voice, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, that is, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And then the Apostle Paul gives us clarity even more so on what was happening here at this moment, 2 Corinthians 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.

[43:01] This is the good news, my friends, that one has come, that one lived and fulfilled all that the law required.

He knew no sin as we read. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, completely and totally righteous, he willingly endured God's wrath for our sins.

And as I said on Easter, he, as a believer, he endured your hell in your place. The great news is that though he died, yet he lives.

And on the third day he arose from the grave as proof that he was victorious over sin and death. As proof that for those of us in Christ, we know that the wrath of God towards our sin has been extinguished in his body, in his wounds.

By his wounds, we have been healed. And there is no greater news to rejoice in this Mother's Day than that good news. Thank you.