Righteous Indignation

I. THE DEFINITION
A. **Righteous.** Of actions: Characterized by justice or uprightness; morally right or justifiable.
B. **Indignation.** Anger at what is regarded as unworthy or wrongful; wrath excited by a sense of wrong, or by meanness, injustice, wickedness, or misconduct; righteous or dignified anger.
C. God has righteous indignation – holy anger, fury, and jealousy – at sinners (Ps 69:24; 78:49; Isaiah 30:27,30; 34:2; Jeremiah 10:10; Ezekiel 21:31; 22:31; Nahum 1:6; Malachi 1:4; Micah 7:9; Habakkuk 3:12; Zephaniah 3:8; Zechariah 1:12; Romans 2:8; Heb 10:27; Rev 14:10).
D. God hates the wicked and is angry with them at all times (Ps 5:4-6; 7:11-13; 10:3; Matt 7:23).
E. God may have righteous indignation at His own sinful people (Deut 32:15-25; Heb 10:30).
F. Men may have natural indignation at mean acts inciting disgust (II Kgs 3:27; II Sam 10:1-7).
G. Men may have righteous indignation against their own sins (II Cor 7:11; Je 31:19; Eze 20:43).
H. Men may have unrighteous indignation against good men (Esther 5:9; Dan 11:30; Mark 14:4; Luke 13:14; Acts 5:17) or with hypocritical judgment (Genesis 38:24; II Samuel 12:5).
I. Righteous indignation is anger and hatred for evil that pleases God (Ex 32:19; Ps 45:7; 97:10; 101:3; 119:128,163; 139:19-22; Prov 8:13; Am 5:15; Mark 3:5; Rom 12:9; Ep 4:26; Heb 1:9).
J. Until you have righteous indignation against all sin, then you have not known God (Ps 97:10).
K. Until you have righteous indignation against all sin, then you have not repented (II Cor 7:11).
L. Do we have holy anger and hatred for sin and sinners that pleases God? May God give it us!

II. The BASIS
A. The true God is a God of wrath (Deut 9:19-20; 32:35-43; Ps 7:11; Nah 1:1-6; Rev 11:17-19).
B. The true God is a terrible God of judgment (Ps 9:16-17; 37:28; 66:5; 89:14; 99:4; II Co 5:11).
C. The true God is a God of hatred (Prov 6:16-19; Is 1:12-14; Rev 2:6,15; Psalm 5:4-6; 11:4-7).
D. Jesus knew anger (Mark 3:5), called names (Matthew 23), and promised judgment (Matt 23).
E. Saints love judgment (Ex 15:1-21; Ps 52; 58:10-11; 64:7-10; 68:1-2; 107:31-43; Pr 11:10).
F. Saints show great zeal against evil (I Sam 11:7; 15:33; II Kgs 10:16; 23:1-25; II Chr 15:8-16).

III. The EXAMPLES
A. Moses had righteous indignation against Israel for worshipping the golden calf (Ex 32:19-29).
   1. His anger waxed hot when he witnessed Israel dancing before a golden calf (19).
   2. He cast the tables of stone from God on the ground and broke them to pieces (19).
   3. He took the calf, ground it to powder, put it in the water, and made them drink it (20).
   4. He angrily confronted Aaron for this heinous act of sin against the Lord (21-24).
   5. He drew a clear line of zealous commitment to the Lord and demanded zealots (25).
   6. He charged his fellow Levites to kill their closest relatives and companions (25-29).
B. The Levites had righteous indignation against their closest relatives for the calf (Ex 32:25-29).
   1. When Moses called for zealots for the Lord, the sons of Levi came to him (25-26).
   2. When charged to kill their closest relatives and companions, they did it (27-28).
   3. They were consecrated to God by this glorious act of righteous indignation (29).
   4. God and Moses later remember this holy zeal for the Lord in a blessing (Deut 33:9).
   5. They fulfilled a warning and commandment God would later give (Deut 13:6-11).
C. Phinehas had righteous indignation against an Israelite and his pagan paramour (Nu 25:1-15).
   1. God told Moses to hang Israel’s leaders’ heads up for their whoredom and idolatry to turn away His fierce anger that had brought a fatal plague on the congregation (4-5).
   2. When a wickedly bold Israelite brought his Midianite whore to his tent before the whole mourning camp, Phinehas took a javelin and made shish-ka-bob of them (6-8).
   3. Do not miss God’s great blessing on Phinehas for his righteous indignation (10-13).
   4. David praises Phinehas later in a psalm ascribing righteousness to him (Ps 106:28-31).

D. Jael had righteous indignation against Sisera as a great housewife (Judges 4:12-17; 5:24-31).
E. Jehu had righteous indignation against Ahab, Jezebel, and Baal worshippers (II Kings 9-10).
F. Jesus Christ had righteous indignation against religious profiteers in the temple (Jn 2:13-17).
G. Paul had righteous indignation against the fornicator and church at Corinth (I Cor 5:1-6).
H. Jehoshaphat was a bad example by not having righteous indignation (II Chronicles 19:1-3).

IV. The NEED
A. If we should fear God (Luke 12:4-5; I Pet 1:17), we should hate the sin that brings His anger.
B. If we seek His face, we must repudiate sin and the world (Ps 101; James 4:4; I John 2:15-17).
C. What is your spirit toward sodomy, abortion, pornography, welfare, integration, strikes, etc?
D. What is your spirit toward John Paul II, Madame Ohare, Jesse Jackson, Marilyn Manson, etc?
E. What is your spirit toward AIDS, gang murders, the Titanic, smoking deaths, accidents, etc?
F. What is your spirit toward excluded brethren, personal enemies, a neglectful spouse, etc?
G. What is your spirit toward public education, sports, television, news, politics, morality, etc?
H. What is your spirit toward “victimless crimes” as prostitution, drugs, gambling, occult, etc?
I. David describes (1) joy at judgment, (2) hatred of things, and (3) hatred of men in Psalm 101.

V. The HERESY
A. It is not politically correct or religiously correct in our effeminate society to have righteous indignation, jealous anger, or hate toward any but Bible-believing, holy-living Christians.
B. All modern Bible versions condemn any anger by corrupting the words of Matthew 5:22.
C. The modern mentality is one of compromising accommodation of any sincere behavior.
   1. As long as persons are sincere, they have the right to believe and practice anything.
   2. The libertarian concept of accommodating “victimless” crimes reflects this serious error.
   3. Where is jealousy for God? Where is zeal for the Lord? The victim is God Himself.
D. This perverse concept of right and wrong reflects the character of the god of this world.
   1. If God loves all men equally, then we ought to do the same. But God hates many men.
   2. If God accepts the church or conduct you choose, then so should we. But God judges.
E. It is the perverse mentality of atheists who pity the “innocent victims” of God’s judgments.
   1. God kills “innocent” infants (Ge 6:21-22; Nu 31:17; Jos 6:21; I Sam 15:3; Lam 2:20).
   2. God judges “innocent” heirs (Ex 20:5; 34:7; Ps 109:14; Jer 32:17-21; Mat 23:34-36).
VI. The OBJECTS
A. In the Old Testament, the church and the nation were one and the same, and the law of God was the law of both the religious and civil authority; therefore, the church/nation executed full religious and civil penalties (death, for example) against public sinners as prescribed by God.
B. In the New Testament, the church and the nation are separate, and God’s law is not the law of the land; so the church does not exact civil punishment (as death) against public sinners.
2. Our duty is to pray and submit to the national authority (I Tim 2:1-3; I Peter 2:11-17).
4. Know Paul’s ministerial righteous indignation and judgment at some (I Tim 1:18-20; II Cor 10:3-6; I Corinthians 4:17-21; II Cor 13:2, 10; II Tim 4:14-15; Titus 1:13).
C. Minor personal enemies are not proper objects (Proverbs 24:17-18, 29; Psalm 7:3-6; 35:11-16; Job 31:29-30; Matthew 5:43-48; I Peter 2:21-23; Romans 12:17-21).
1. Remember our Lord’s relative words: turning a cheek is not sacrificing your wife.
2. Giving a cloak does not mean giving away your house and children (Matt 5:38-42).
3. Personal enemies in small matters of offence are not to be hated but rather loved.
D. Enemies for Christ’s sake are not proper objects (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:54-60; I Pet 2:21-23).
E. Innocent victims relative to ourselves are not proper objects (Prov 17:5; Ezek 25:1-7, 15-17).
F. Saints overtaken in a fault – minor offences without malice – are restored (Gal 6:1; Jas 5:16).
G. God’s enemies are true objects (Ps 139:19-22; 83:1-18; 15:4; 26:5; 31:6; II Chr 19:2; Re 2:6).
H. Major personal enemies are proper objects (Jer 17:15-18; Psalm 18; 143:12; 109:6-20).
I. Observe how David divides between major enemies and minor enemies (Psalm 35:1-16).
J. We must always show the same or greater indignation against our own sins (II Cor 7:10-11).
1. We must hate and repudiate our sins to be rightly angry (Job 33:27; Jer 31:19).
2. God cannot stand the hypocrite who judges others and sins himself as shown below.

VII. The CONDUCT
A. There are guidelines and limitations to the godly exercise of righteous indignation by saints.
B. Hypocrisy in judgment is sin (Hos 1:4 cp II Kgs 10:29-31; Ob 1:10-16; Matt 7:3-5; Ro 2:1-3).
C. Excessive wrath for a case is wrong (II Sam 21:1-2; II Chr 28:9-11; Zec 1:14-17; Mat 7:1-2).
E. Anger against a brother without a cause is wicked, murder, and will be judged (Mat 5:21-26).
F. Our apostle warns us to keep our anger from sin and to not let personal anger linger (Ep 4:26).
G. The wise man would instruct us to use prudence in reproving evil to avoid trouble (Pro 22:3).
H. If the object and purpose are righteous, then joy at God’s vengeance (Ps 58:10-11; Judges 5).
I. If the object and purpose are righteous, pray for God’s vengeance (Ps 68:1-2; Rev 6:9-11).
J. We are to love our personal neighbors and enemies (Matthew 5:38-48; Luke 10:25-37).
1. This righteous standard was taught in the Old Testament (Ex 23:4-5; Prov 25:21-22).
3. These enemies should be understood primarily of minor enemies of personal offence.
K. We should not fret because of evil men, because God will judge them (Proverbs 24:19-20; Psalm 37:1-20; 73:1-22; 12:5; 140:12; Ecc 5:8; Eze 22:6-14; Amos 8:4-7; Mic 3:12; Mal 3:5).
L. The apostle Paul could have wished his damnation for the salvation of others (Rom 9:1-3).
M. Let us always remember to submit our heart and thoughts to the Lord (Psalm 139:23-24).