

## GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD

The apostle Paul wrote: “Behold then the goodness and severity of God” (Rom. 11:22a). In context, Paul recounted that God was severe toward His chosen people, the Jews, because they “fell” in unbelief. In His goodness, however, He accepted the Gentiles because of their faith, but warned them that He would also reject them if they fell.

This historical account demonstrates a fundamental aspect of God’s nature: The balance of mercy and wrath. Men tend to view God in extremes. Some depict Him as a mean, wrath-filled ogre Who makes arbitrary judgments and delights in our suffering. Others view Him as a cosmic Santa Claus who is utterly indulgent toward us, never calling anyone to account for his sins or errors. Both extremes are equally flawed. The Bible provides ample illustrations of both goodness and severity in the Divine Nature.

### ***The Goodness of God—***

- He created mankind in his own image, sinless, capable of responding to His will, and with immortal souls that can live with Him eternally (Gen. 1:26–27).
- When Eve and Adam sinned, God announced His plan to provide a Savior (Gen. 3:15).
- He providentially and historically worked through various persons to create the right time and conditions to send that virgin-born Savior (Gal. 4:4).
- He revealed the Bible through inspired men (2 Tim. 3:16–17) and placed in the Gospel the power to save (Rom. 1:16).
- He offers salvation to all, greatly desiring that all be saved from sin and Hell (Mat. 11:28–30; 2 Tim. 2:4) through faith and obedience (Mat. 7:21; Mark 16:16; Heb. 5:9).

- The death of His Son on the cross for our salvation is the ultimate proof of His goodness (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).

### ***The Severity of God—***

- He drove Adam and Eve from Eden and placed a curse upon them because of their sins (Gen. 3:16–24)
- He destroyed the world, because of its exceeding wickedness, by a flood (Gen. 6:5; 7:4).
- He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness—sodomy (Gen. 19:24–25).
- He caused Nebuchadnezzar to take the Jews, His chosen people, into captivity because of their idolatry and apostasy (Eze. 7:8–9).
- He will pour out His wrath against all sin at the Judgment (Mat. 7:22–23; 25:41, 46; Rom. 1:18; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 The. 1:7–9; et al.).

God will be “good” or “severe” to each one, depending on the response of each one to His revealed Word (John 12:48).

—Dub McClish  
Denton, TX

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