**revealed**] The statement of ver. 17 was,  
that the RIGHTEOUSNESS *of* GOD is revealed. The necessary condition of this  
revelation is, the DESTRUCTION *of the  
righteousness of* MAN by the revelation of  
God’s anger against sin.

**is revealed**,not *in the Gospel*: not *in men’s consciences: not in the miserable state of the  
then world*: but (as implied indeed by the  
adjunct **from heaven**,—that it is a *providential, universally-to-be-seen* revelation)  
in the PUNISHMENTS which, ver. 24, God,  
has made to follow upon sin, see also ch.  
ii. 2. So that revealed is said of an *objective reality her*e, not of an evangelic internal and subjective unfolding.

**the wrath of God** is put, but with the  
deepest truth, for *the righteousness of  
God in punishment* (see ch. ii. 8; v.  
9; Eph. ii. 3; Matt. iii, 7; John iii.  
36). It is the opposite, in the divine  
attributes, of *Love*.

**ungodliness**] (i.e. godlessness, living without God),—and **unrighteousness** (i.e. iniquity, injustice of thought and conduct). Neither  
term is exclusive of the other, nor to be  
formally pressed to its limits. They overlap and include each other by a large margin: the specific difference being, that  
ungodliness is more the *fountain* (but at  
the same time partially the result) of *unrighteousness*,—which *unrighteousness* is more the *result* (but at the same time partially the fountain) of *ungodliness*. **Unrighteousness** is the *state* of the thoughts  
and feelings and habits, induced originally  
by forgetfulness of God, and in its turn  
inducing impieties of all kinds. We may  
notice by the way, that the word *ungodliness* forms an interesting link to the  
Pastoral Epistles, where it, and its opposite, *godliness*, are the ordinary terms for an unholy and a holy life.

**of men,who hold down (or hold back) the truth in  
unrighteousness**] who, possessing enough  
of the germs of religious and moral verity  
to preserve them from abandonment, have  
checked the development of this *truth* in  
their lives, in the love and practice of sin.  
That this is the meaning here is plain:  
see the discussion in my Greek Testament.  
  
This meaning, ‘*keeping back*,’ ‘*hindering  
the development of*, admirably suits the  
sense, that men had (see vv. 19 ff.) knowledge of God sufficient, if its legitimate work had been allowed, to have kept them  
from such excesses of enormity as they  
have committed, but that this *truth* they  
*held down*, or *back*, in unrighteousness,  
i.e. *crushed, quenched*, in (as the element,  
conditional medium) their state and practice of unrighteousness. It is plain that to take in unrighteousness for *unrighteously*,  
is to miss the force of the expression altogether—the pregnant ‘*in and by*’ implying that it is their unrighteousness,—the very absence of *righteousness* for which  
the argument contends,—which is the  
*state wherein, and the instrument whereby*they hold back the truth lit up in their  
consciences.

**19.**] because may either  
give the reason *why the anger of God is  
revealed*, and thus apply to all that follows  
as far as ver. 32, being taken up again at  
vv. 21, 24, 26, 28: or may explain the  
phænomena of these men holding back the  
truth in unrighteousness: which latter  
seems most probable : the words understood  
being, ‘(this charge I bring against them,)  
because.’ For he proves, first (ver. 20)  
that they *had the truth* ; then (vv. 21 ff.)  
*that they held it back*.

**that which is known**, the objective knowledge patent  
and recognized in Creation:—not, as A. V.,  
inconsistently with the meaning of the  
word in the original, ‘*that which may be  
known*,’ which would assert what, as  
simple matter of fact, was not the case,  
that *all which could be known of God*  
was manifest in them. He speaks *now*  
not of what they *might have known of  
God*, but of what they *did know*. Thus  
the expression will mean, *that universal  
objective knowledge of God as the Creator*,  
which we find more or less in every nation  
under heaven, and which, as matter of historical fact, was proved to be in possession of the great Gentile nations of antiquity.

**is manifest in them**, i.e. *in their  
hearts*: not, *to them*,—nor, *among them*,  
for if it had been a thing acknowledged  
*among them*, it would not have been *held*