

**Sent out 7/28/19**

## **Vengeance**

3 lessons Vengeance

Lesson #1, 7/10/19

### **Romans 3:5, 6,**

Romans 3:5 *But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?*

*I speak as a man.* “And in the present case, where he is not expressing his own sentiments, *κατα ανθρωπον λεγω* is designed to declare that he is not speaking in his character of an apostle or Christian, but speaking as others speak, expressing their thoughts, not his own.” (C. Hodge)

That is, he is simply speaking as others of his day speak.

Typical of Paul, he answers a question before it is asked: "I am part of God's chosen people. And since my unrighteousness reveals the righteousness of God in all he does, even as sin takes its natural course, why does God take vengeance against me?"

V. 5. Speaking from their position of self-importance, the Israelite Jews say, *But if our unrighteousness proves the righteousness of God*, then is not God unrighteous to take vengeance against us? Does not our unrighteous bring glory to God?

"Since we are God's people whom he supernaturally delivered from Egypt, and even our wrong actions bring glory to him, why would God judge us as wicked sinners?"

### **Paul's answer:**

How can God be accused of being unrighteous, or unfair, when his vengeance is against all sin?

V. 6, *how shall God judge...* Paul is speaking to the Israelites who were secure in their heritage to Abraham, and in the fact that their nation had been chosen by God.

(How like many Christians of our day: vengeance against us! How can that be? Aren't we serving God?)

Paul asks, How shall God judge the world if he does not judge all sin even among his chosen people, Israel?

Though fallen man overlooks his sins, God does not. God cannot act as if nothing is wrong. Chapter 2 told us that God, in his patience, grace and mercy many times postpones the just rewards of sin, or vengeance against sin as he gives man the chance to repent and submit his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. But though it may be very long coming, his righteousness requires vengeance, or justice.

### ***V. 5, Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?***

The vengeance of God is not a popular word today in or out of the pulpit. However, we see in v. 6, that without vengeance against all sin in his people, there can be no righteous judgment of the world.

The word of God is clear that vengeance and Christianity do not go together. (Today's "Entertainment" that involves vengeance sells, e.g. Clint Eastwood.)

Modern, corrupt Christianity tells us that the Old Testament God was a God of wrath and vengeance, and the New Testament God is a God of love and mercy. **In other words, he overlooks sin because he loves us so much.** However, both Testaments speak very clearly of vengeance and of love:

**Deuteronomy 4:24** *For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.*

**Deuteronomy 9:3** *Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.*

In **Genesis 15:16**, Abraham was told that he could not take possession of the "promised land" yet because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. God sent Jacob/Israel into Egypt to prepare his army to take the "promised land" when the time was right. In God's patience, he gave the Canaanites a chance to repent. He used his army he trained and brought out of Egypt to exercise his righteous judgement upon the unrepentant wicked.

In **Acts 16:19**, Paul tells his hearers that God used his army, Israel, to destroy the seven wicked nation in the land of Canaan.

### **Conclusion:**

**Deuteronomy 9** tells us that God did not destroy the seven exceedingly evil nations that inhabited Canaan because his people were righteousness, but because of the wickedness of the nations. Though he waited 400 years, his righteous vengeance came against the ungodly nations.

The law and the prophets prove that the God of the Old covenant was a vengeful righteous God against ungodliness.

**Hebrews 12:29** *For our God is a consuming fire* brings the fact of his righteous vengeance to the Gospel Church.

**Vengeance means retribution; vengeance is a defense of justice; vengeance is retribution against evildoers.**

The Hebrew word for vengeance means to vindicate, **to reestablish the cause of justice.**

Therefore, those who speak against the ministry of vengeance deny justice, and support evil. The attitude of our day is that justice must be set aside in the name of love. However, love that avoids righteous vengeance destroys justice, and anarchy soon follows.

The doctrine of God's vengeance is firmly established in his law-word.

**Jeremiah 15:15** *O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and **revenge me of my persecutors**; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.*

**Nahum 1:2** *God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD **will take vengeance on his adversaries**, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.*

Paul uses the law of vengeance in his letter to the Corinthians.

**2 Corinthians 10:6** *And having in a readiness to **revenge all disobedience**, when your obedience is fulfilled. 7:11* *For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, **what revenge!** In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

Paul complements the Corinthians for taking godly vengeance against sin in their church and in their own lives as recorded in 1 Corinthians 5. That self-vengeance brought about **repentance and change.** (Numbers 35:19, 21, 24, 25, 27, &c.)

Our call is to exercise God's vengeance in our lives and in our churches, or face God's just vengeance against sin. In the case of 1 Corinthians, that vengeance was to turn over the sinners to the devil for the destruction of the flesh.

How does God's vengeance against evil in his church manifest itself today?

The ministry of vengeance or the ministry of justice is not placed in the hands of individuals.

**Leviticus 19:18** *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD. 19 Ye shall keep my statutes.*

Three commands?

**First**, personal acts of vengeance are forbidden to man. Note that a “grudge” is an act of vengeance in the heart.

**Second**, instead of vengeance, "*thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*"

**Third**, *keep my commandments.*

Our God absolutely forbids personal thoughts and efforts of vengeance.

In **Romans 12:19** *Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather **give place unto wrath**: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

Albert Barnes:

“the command is, to avoid a spirit and purpose of revenge. But this command is not to be so understood that we may not seek for justice, in a regular and proper way, before civil tribunals. If our character is assaulted, if we are robbed and plundered, if we are oppressed contrary to the law of the land, religion does not require us to submit to such oppression and injury without seeking our rights in an orderly and regular manner.” (Albert Barnes)

***give place unto wrath.***

Adam Clarke:

“Leave room for the civil magistrate to do his duty, he holds the sword for this purpose; and if he be unfaithful to the trust reposed in him by the state, leave the matter to God, who is the righteous judge: for by avenging yourselves you take your cause both out of the hands of the civil magistrate and out of the hands of God.” (Adam Clarke)

Again Adam Clarke:

“*Vengeance is mine* This fixes the meaning of the apostle, and at once shows that the exhortation, Rather give place to wrath or punishment, means, **Leave the matter to the judgment of God; it is his law that in this case is broken; and to him the infliction of deserved punishment belongs.**” For God will repay in his is own time and in his own way. (Adam Clarke)

In other words, we must not avenge ourselves, but leave room for divine justice either through the civil magistrate or through God's divine justice: "*for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*"

We must imitate Paul in Philippians 4:11 *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.* We live in a very discontented society, even in the church. However, we must **learn to be content** in whatever state we find ourselves, and wait for God's day of vengeance.

**Deuteronomy 32:35** *To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.*

The Lord promises payback to the evil doer according to his set time, and we know not God's timing. We must **learn to be content**, and wait for God's vengeance to take place.

Two methods of God's vengeance

**First**, civil government

**Romans 13:4** *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

Only the state has the right and the duty to punish evil doers. Our command is Romans 12:9, "*Avenge not yourselves, vengeance is mine saith the Lord, I will repay*"

We will see that there are times to seek godly "vengeance" or restitution through the civil magistrate, e.g. theft of property, theft of our good name, &c.

Our obligation is to love our neighbor and our enemy, which clearly means fulfilling the 2nd table of the law as our Lord told the rich young man in **Matthew 19:16-22**:

**End of Lesson 19**

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**Lesson 20, Vengeance #2**

**7/16/19**

*3:4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. 5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?*

In v. 5, we see that without Godly vengeance, there can be no justice. God's vengeance means his righteous judgment will go over the whole earth. Righteous vengeance and righteousness must go hand in hand.

Our obligation is not to take vengeance on the evil doer. Rather, our duty is to love our neighbor and our enemy, which clearly means fulfilling the 2nd table of the law as our Lord told the rich young man in **Matthew 19:16-22**:

*And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? 17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. 18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, 19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** 20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? 21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.*

Paul says the same in **Romans 13:7** *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. 8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*

That is, “*Thou shalt not Kill.*” Respect your neighbors right to life.

“*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*” Respect the sanctity of his home.

“*Thou shalt not steal.*” Respect his property.

“*Thou shalt not bear false witness.*” Respect his reputation.

“*Thou shalt not covet,*” respect these things in thought as well as in word and deed.

Both Christ and Paul give us the two godly requirements needed to maintain social order:

**First, vengeance and justice** which must be left up to God, and his established representative here on earth, the state.

**Second,** faithful fulfillment of the second table of the law.

**What has happened? Why is our social order falling apart?**

**Hosea 4:9** *And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings.*

The people, even many professed Christians, do not want godly vengeance and justice, so they chose leaders like themselves.

The spiritual decline in society results in the spiritual decline in authority. People profess a desire for godly justice, yet they do not vote what they profess. They have no biblical basis for their vote, so they follow men according to what those men say, rather than according to godly precepts, such as men of good reputation.

However, the ungodly state is not interested in godly justice for **two reasons**:

**First**, the people do not want godly justice. The general attitude of the people is against godly justice. The breakdown of godly law and order in the state is because there is a breakdown of law and order in the people. The people may want vengeance and justice against others, but not for themselves.

**Second**, the breakdown of lawful justice works to benefit the ungodly state. That breakdown allows the state to increase its power over people, pass more laws even when present laws are sufficient.

Without biblical vengeance against the evil doer, anarchy must reign. That breakdown of justice results in anarchy, which allows the state to increase its power over people. The breakdown of the social order also gives the state reason to spy on everyone. (The spy cameras made in China send all the information back to China to be recorded.)

**Third**, the dream of the ungodly state is to create their own New World Order. So, the ungodly urge social, moral and fanatical chaos so they can bring about their imagined perfect Order.

The eternal desire of fallen man is to succeed where the tower of Babel failed. So, the Nimrods of our day encourage or even create chaos, with the goal of instituting their new world order according to their vain imagination as describe in Psalms 2.

It seems as though the sinful chaos described by **Jeremiah 5:7-9** is being fulfilled right before our eyes, everyone, horses neighing after his neighbor's wife.

*7 How shall I pardon thee for this? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods: when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. 8 They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed*

*after his neighbour's wife. 9 Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*

Covetousness reigns in the hearts of the people, so covetousness reigns in the hearts of those who are in authority, both in and out of the Christian community. Lack of vengeance allows covetousness to reign.

God's final complete and total vengeance and justice shall be accomplished in the final judgment when all men must stand before him for judgment. To deny the vengeance of God is to deny the final judgment.

**The denial of vengeance not only denies Christianity, but it denies justice, and destroys the social order.**

*V. 5, Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?*

**God has two methods of executing vengeance.**

**First, vengeance through the civil magistrate.**

**Second, vengeance through Divine Providence.**

The 1629 Mayflower Compact was a covenant made with God through Jesus Christ. Though that covenant was erased from history and all memory, it was not erased from God's memory.

In addition to the state, vengeance is also executed by acts of God in history by his providential dealings, and by his judgments. His final complete and total vengeance and justice will be accomplished in the final judgment when all men must stand before him for judgment. The denial of vengeance is to deny justice, and to destroy the social order.

**God's vengeance through Providence.** Everything that takes place is according to God's predetermined plan.

**Natural events:** God uses natural events, such as rain, floods, hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, to execute his vengeance.

**Foreign invaders: God uses** foreign invaders to execute his vengeance. We are in the midst of a foreign invasion from the south.

**Wicked rulers: God uses** wicked rulers to execute his vengeance.



**Judicial blindness: God uses judicial blindness** to accomplish his vengeance against the ungodly. Israel of Christ's day was supernaturally blinded, so they would crucify the Lord of Glory, and so he could bring upon them the just reward for their wicked deeds, Matthew 23, 24.

**False teachers: God even uses** false teachers who profess to represent him to execute his vengeance. They give false hope to the wicked as the wicked willfully and contentedly march toward their self-chosen destruction.

To here , 7/16/17

Lesson 21. 7/24/19

Vengeance #3

Though his people cannot seek self-vengeance, we are told to **seek God's vengeance:**

**Luke 18:1-8** *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; 2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: 3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; 5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. 7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? 8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*

Some important points as we talk about the vengeance of God.

**First**, *always to pray, and not to faint* not is in the context of prayer in response to the lack of proper vengeance and justice by the judicial system. Obviously, the application calls for prayer in all situations.

**Second**, the judge has no interest in justice.

**Third**, rightful vengeance and justice were granted only because of the continued cry for righteous vengeance. Because the widow continued in her plea and pestered him endlessly, he finally granted her justice.

**Fourth**, God's people have forgotten to pray for God's vengeance against the wicked who are in authority and refuse to provide justice.

**Our lesson here is** that in the face of no justice, we are to pray for God's avenging justice against the evil doers. Luke 18 tells us that we are to pray for God's vengeance upon evil. We are to pray for God's vengeance against those who seek to undermine the command-word of God, whether it is done by the ungodly, or whether it is done from supposed "Christian" preachers and teachers who proclaim man's imaginative ideas in place of God's truth.

We should pray for God's vengeance against those people, societies and states as well as individuals who are guilty of the theft of property.

"Thou shalt not steal." Those who destroy property destroy the social order.

Property is the foundation of human society. Destroy property and you destroy the foundation of the home: destroy property and you have unleashed covetousness: destroy property and you find that when respective property goes down so does the respect for life.

Property is attacked not only by simple theft, but by inflation which is a very clear act of theft. Inflation replaces love with confiscation of property.

The vengeance of God is also proclaimed against all who are guilty of taking the name of the Lord in vain or blaspheming God.

**Blaspheming** is made evident in every kind of false doctrine presented in the name of the Lord: Modernism and unbelief, the death of God, the social gospel, socialism, communism, welfarism, and the toleration of all kinds of evil such as homosexuality and false modesty in the name of the Lord. Not only do these things call for the vengeance of God against them, but people who bear the name of Christ yet do not live what they profess also are asking for the vengeance of God.

We should be praying for God's righteous vengeance against those workers of iniquity.

Three times we are told that our God is a consuming fire.

God also declares that part of his ministry of justice, or vengeance, is to separate his people from those who are ungodly. That line of separation is brought about by judgment and by the providence of God. God makes clear that his day of vengeance and justice is about to come.

Every day in spite of themselves, the false professors of Christianity and false Christian churches become more and more obvious for what they are. The evils that lurks in the heart of professed Christians is becoming more and more obvious as they openly separate from the Christian faith which they profess.

1 Corinthians 11:19 *For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*

As God and his justice continues to show the truth about the false "Christian churches," and institutions, the flow of honest Christians out of them increases.

I do not have much contact with Orthodox Presbyterian churches, but the Orthodox Baptist community is growing.

As we face the world of our day, we need to rejoice that it is under God's judgment, that his ministry of vengeance is in operation today. We need to be mindful of our responsibility to be in prayer that God's justice or vengeance will be accomplished.

See Zech 5

We need to be crying with the widow, "Oh Lord, avenge me of mine adversary."

**Psalms 50:16-23** *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? 17 Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. 18 When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. 19 Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. 20 Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. 21 These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou **thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself**: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. 22 Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. 23 Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*

God is patient, so our natural tendency is to over time forget whatever evil we might have done, and we think God is **such an one as thyself**.

We fail to be consistent in our prayer for God's righteousness and justice to prevail over the whole earth. Justice can only prevail when vengeance against evil deeds is in place.

Lord, avenge us of our adversaries who are trodding under foot your justice. Avenge us of those who are making a mockery of your word and of your Son.

Paul says that God's word shall stand, and it shall be about righteousness in his proper time.

When God's professed people will not take God seriously, how can we expect the world to take him seriously??

Vv. 7, 8 sums up vv. 5, 6.

"Can a lie bring more glory to God? If so, why am I judged a sinner when I lie?"

I grew up in the Fundamentalist movement, and worked in it for 13 years. Its height seemed to last maybe 30-40 years, 1960s to 2000. Back then, vv. 7, 8 seemed to be the moto for building church buildings and church attendance. "Let us do evil..." Or "The end justifies the means".

Some churches still do that.

Someone subscribed to the "Sword of the Lord" for me, so I see what is still going on in Fundamentalism.

Several years ago, I published an article dealing with the very issue Paul discusses in vv. 7 & 8 – "Free beer and Pizza".

Back then the bus ministry was going big, and buildings were thought to be needed to "house" the increased attendance of children. The pastors pleaded with the people in order to build bigger and better. Then they went to the bank and use the bus attendance to show a large congregation in order to obtain a large loan to build. They used that money to build towers and monuments to themselves.

**Daniel 4:30** *The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?*

The first ministry where I worked full time was in Indianapolis. The church maybe ran 100 adults at the most, yet we brought in over 300 on the buses. That made the total attendance well over 400, which was impressive to the banks. They used fraud to finance the church.

Many churches of the 60s through 80s did this, and accumulated large amounts of debt based upon deceiving the banks.

There church in Louisiana did that. Maybe 300 in attendance, and another 300 on the buses looked good on paper.

The spirit of the law was certainly bent if not broken, and almost anything could be done in order to attract a crowd to hear the gospel. However, the gospel usually fell far short of the gospel as revealed by Paul in Romans. Though the Romans Road was used to present the gospel, the gospel was reduced to a prayer.

We are reading today of those same churches who went into debt on false numbers having to file bankruptcy, and their properties being foreclosed upon.

God's people have great privileges, yet with those privileges come great responsibility and accountability.

Luke 12:48 *For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

Believers, we who have been given much, have much required of us. What are we doing to accomplish what is required?

**Philippians 2:13** *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Vv. 9-20

Paul has dealt with unbelief, and has told the Romans that unbelief and doubt will not change God's Word.

V. 9, Paul refers back to v. 1, "What advantage is being a Jew, Israelite?"

3:9 *What then? are we better [than they]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*

Geneva: Another answer to the first objection: that the Jews, if they are considered in themselves, are no better than other men are: as it has been long since pronounced by the mouth of the Prophets. They are equally guilty of sin.

Paul continues his instruction to the Israelites at Rome. "Yes, we Israelites have been given great advantages and responsibilities by God, but are we Jews better than the non-Jews?"

He answers that though the Israelites out of Egypt had been given great advantages over the non-Israelites with the Law and its promises from the Mount, those advantages did not exempt them from the power and consequences of sin.

Certainly, the Jews had been given God's word, but it witnessed against them, and added to their accountability. The word they had been given proved that all are sinners, and at this point, the Jews were not superior to the Gentiles.

Sin placed everyone on the same level before God. In fact, everything the Israelites had boasted in and depended on only witnessed against them.

End of lesson 21, Vengeance #3.