

God Is Just (Subtitle: God is the Judge)

Romans 12:9 (New American Standard Bible)

*Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: "Vengeance is Mine, I will **repay**," says the Lord.*

Introduction

This morning, as an ongoing effort to know the Lord our God, we are going to think about one of His attributes: Justice. Our God is just and fair. In fact, He is the fairest Judge of all.

Content

We all experience and suffer from injustices on all levels, personal and corporate, don't we? Here are some cases of injustice beginning with mine.

Cases of Injustice

Case 1: In Middle school. One time, with another student, I was put in charge of homeroom for a week. Our duty was to keep everything tidy in the classroom. One afternoon, the teacher pointed out the soccer ball stain on the wall. Asked who done it. Nobody came forth. Holding me and the other student accountable, he asked both of us to come forward. I did first. Don't be eager when it is about bad things. When I stood before him, without warning, he slapped my face. The other guy came behind me didn't get any punishment. I went back to my seat and sobbed. Not because of the pain on my face, but because of injustice and unfairness of the teacher. It happened 53 years ago, but I still remember the teacher's name and still cry out in my heart 'Unfair!' Yes, I have forgiven him for sure, but it still stings.

Case 2: A case of injustice against an innocent citizen. Ahab King of Israel coveted his neighbor's vineyard and confiscated it. 1 Kings 21: 1-10. *Naboth had a vineyard beside the palace of Ahab, the king of Samaria.² And Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard so that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard in place of it; if you prefer, I will give you what it is worth in money."³ But Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid me that I would give you the inheritance of my fathers!"⁴ So Ahab entered his house sullen and furious because of the answer that Naboth had given to him. He lay down on his bed and turned his face away and ate no food.*

⁵ But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?"⁶ So he said to her, "It is because I was speaking to Naboth, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in place of it.'

But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" ⁷ Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth."

⁸ So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city. ⁹ Now she had written in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people; ¹⁰ and seat two worthless men opposite him, and have them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

¹¹ So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did just as Jezebel had sent word to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them. ¹² They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth at the head of the people. ¹³ Then the two worthless men came in and sat opposite him; and the worthless men testified against him, against Naboth, before the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones. ¹⁴ Then they sent word to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

¹⁵ And when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."¹⁶ When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab got up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth, to take possession of it.

¹⁷ Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah, saying, ¹⁸ "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. ¹⁹ And you shall speak to him, saying, 'This is what the Lord says: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'The Lord says this: "In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick up your blood, yours as well.'"

Such injustice must have happened often in Israel so much so that God sent His prophet Isaiah and spoke against it.

Isaiah 10:1-3--- Woe to those who enact unjust statutes and to those who constantly record harmful decisions, ² So as to deprive the needy of justice and rob the poor among My people of their rights, so that widows may be their spoil and that they may plunder the orphans. ³ Now what will you do in the day of punishment, and in the devastation which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help? And where will you leave your wealth?

Case 3: How about cases of injustice against Christians? E.g. "Moses Joseph grew up in a Christian family that attended church every Sunday and read daily devotions together in their home in Nigeria. One Saturday in 2021, Moses' father left for his farm and never returned home. When villagers searched for him the next day, they discovered his body in the field where he grew corn, peanuts, and other crops. He had been slashed on the back with a

*machete and shot once in the head. “I believe it was Muslim Fulani herdsmen,” Moses said, “because they had just attacked our community a few days before he was killed.” Killings like that of Moses’ father have occurred with increasing frequency in southern Kaduna state (where Moses family live---kc). Moses is traumatized by news of these ongoing attacks, and he is filled with fear when he sees Fulani men. But he has learned to take his worries to God. Recently, he has even started to pray for those who killed his father. “I lost my father,” Moses said, “but I hold no grudge against the Muslim Fulani men who did this. **I have left everything in the hands of God**”” (The Voice of the Martyrs, Vol. 56, No. 8, p. 8-9).*

Speaking of martyrs, throughout Church history, numerous believers lost their lives due to their faith in Christ. In Heaven, their souls cry out to God asking when He will avenge their blood. Revelation 6:9-11. ⁹ *When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained;* ¹⁰ *and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who live on the earth?”* ¹¹ *And a white robe was given to each of them; and they were told that they were to rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers and sisters who were to be killed even as they had been, was completed also.*

Case 4: The biggest case of injustice on a universal scale happened on the cross. Christ the sinless was punished for sinners. He had done nothing wrong that deserved such harsh and violent punishment. It was so unfair to the point where Christ Himself cried out, *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* (Matthew 27:46). However, God allowed such injustice to happen to His beloved Son for a reason a mystery to our eyes. In fact, it was planned so from the beginning of the universe. For our sake, God planned such injustice and suffering for Christ so that He would bring us to God in reconciliation and peace (1 Peter 3:18). Injustice for Christ is our righteousness and peace with the just God.

By His grace, God took care of our iniquities through the death of the Righteous. Such grace continues today. 1 John 1:9---⁹ *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just / righteous, so that He will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

The Lord is the Judge.

The Lord our God is a judge. The fairest Judge. He is the only one absolutely qualified to be the Judge for the day of judgment. How? Because righteous and just is He. Did you know that *righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne* (Psalm 97:2) and *mercy and truth go before Him* (Psalm 89:14)? On these principles does God judge. No one can question the integrity of His judgments, because His judgments are true and just (Revelation 19:2).

Divine Retribution

Please understand that the heart of the divine justice is retribution. The essence of the judge's task is to reward good with good and repay evil with evil (Romans 2:6-11).

There was a former slave, let's call him, Adam, who was a believer in Christ. After he was emancipated, he attended a church where he heard the pastor preaching about Heaven where everyone is accepted no matter what. As soon as he heard the sermon, he was thinking of his former master who had abused him for years. *If that man is going to be in Heaven, Adam thought, if that is the Christian belief and teaching, I will have nothing to do with it.* You see, Adam was crying out for God's retribution for injustice he suffered for years.

We often complain that there is no justice. Be assured that there will be God's retribution for the wrongs you suffered. God remembers and repays (Revelation 18:5-6). His divine judgment is guaranteed where all wrongs will be righted (Revelation 19:2). *When?* you may ask. When Jesus returns. Jesus, the Savior, will come again as the divinely appointed Judge (Acts 10:42, Romans 2:16). *"On the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"* (Romans 2:5). That day God will throw Satan into Hell (Revelation 20:10). That day we will *all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad* (2 Corinthians 5:10, Revelation 20:13). We can count on Him for justice.

Action Point: while we await His return, God wants us to walk in justice and righteousness as He does (Proverbs 8:20). We are familiar with the following verses: Micah 6:8--- *He has told you, mortal one, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?* Amos 5:24. *But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!*

God also wants us to look after the orphans, widows, and foreigners in the land. James 1:27--- *Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit **orphans** and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.*

Practice justice at home, work, and in your community.

Conclusion

To those who still want justice to be served on personal level, God speaks in Romans 12:9: *Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: "Vengeance is Mine, I will **repay**," says the Lord.* Leave it to God who is just. He will repay. Fair and square. Amen.