

**SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON**

**Bible Study/Prayer meeting**

**Date 12<sup>TH</sup> July 2023**

**Preacher Pastor Philip Knowles Ps/Hymns Read**

**Deuteronomy 32:1-4 Text Deuteronomy 32:4**

**Series – The Doctrine of God series (22) Title The Justice Of God**

**The** passage read in **Deuteronomy 32**, Moses says of God, in **verse 4** ***“He is the Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, Just and Right is He.”***

Now while there is much truth expressed in these words concerning the nature of God, yet today I want to take the phrase, **Just and Right is He**, to speak concerning the **Justice of God or God is just**.

When we use such terms as **the justice of God or God is just** what does that mean?

The best definition of the justice of God, is found in **Genesis 18:25** ***Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?***

**God’s justice is God doing right or righteously.**

In other words, God justice is giving His creatures what they deserve, either in Christ or out of Christ, either by the reward of Christ’s obedience on their behalf, or the penalty of Adam’s disobedience on their behalf.

Look at Moses words again, ***He is the Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, Just and Right is He.”***

God will only do that which is in keeping with His Holy nature.

He will never act out of character. He is just and because He is just then He will judge and act right when it comes to mankind.

Having previously considered that God is holy and righteous, then it can only follow naturally that God is Just.

Gods Justice flows His holiness and righteousness. God can only act according to His own nature.

It is interesting to note that both the **Shorter Catechism Q 4** and the **Larger Catechism Q7** in answering the question what is God, place justice after holiness.

The only difference is in the Larger Catechism it states "**God is ...most holy most Just...**"

The truth that God is just is revealed throughout Scripture, but in namely a few, notice, **Ps 89:14** "***Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne...***"

**Ps 103:6** "***The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.***"

**Jeremiah 23:5** "***Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.***"

**Isa 45:21** "***...there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me.***"

**Acts 7:52** "***the Just One.***"

**Revelation 15:3** "***And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.***"

**I FIRST, THE DESCRIPTION OF GOD'S JUSTICE.**

**1 God's justice is impartial Justice.**

To be **impartial** means **to be unbiased or fair**. Earthy judges may judge partially meaning their judgment may be biased, unfair with regard to the case before them.

In taking the case they may already have biased toward the person or situation, the judge may be swayed by public opinion, or the ramifications of what the final verdict will have.

Have you ever heard, when awaiting the final decision of a trial, depending on the verdict, the people will take to the streets in protest.

**Earthy judgments may be partial**, they may rule a certain way due to pressure or corruption.

Since God is infinitely and eternally perfect, He must be impartial in His judgments and always treat His creatures according to His righteousness.

**God is just** and He always acts in a way consistent with the requirements of His character as revealed in His law.

Therefore, God is an impartial judge. He judges every case in light of the unbiased evidence set before him. **1 Peter 1:17** “*who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work...*”

**Charles Spurgeon** said, God “*is a swift and impartial administrator of justice. Our King surpasses all earthly princes because he pays no deference to rank or wealth, and is never the respecter of persons.*”

His law is the standard of right and wrong, and therefore, He judges according to His standard. He judges according to His law. He is the law giver. His law is truth and therefore He judges according to truth.

**The Puritan Thomas Watson** said “*God wills nothing but what is just and therefore it is just because He wills it.*”

God's law is a reflection of His own nature. Paul said in **Romans 7:12** "**Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.**" **Rev 16:7** "**even so Lord God almighty true and righteous are thy judgments.**" He gives to every one what he is due.

## **2 God's justice is impeccable justice.**

Since God's justice flows from His holiness, then His justice will be holy, impeccable without error.

God's holiness will not allow Him to do anything unjust.

When God executes His justice it is impeccable, which means God is not able to do that which is against His nature. His justice is without sin, without fault, His judgment is eternally perfect.

His justice can never be questioned. His justice will never be wrong. **Job 34:12** "**yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the almighty pervert judgment.** **Romans 9:14** "**Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.**

Earthly judges are not perfect, they make mistakes, wrong judgments due to a lack of evidence, they may be bribed or threatened to make a certain decision.

But God never makes a mistake or comes to a wrong verdict as He is Omniscience, all knowing.

He never lacks evidence. He knows what took place, when it took place.

He knows who did what.

His is Omnipotent all powerful therefore, none can control Him or force Him to judge in a certain way. His actions and decisions are true and right, **2 Chron 19:7** "**...for there is no iniquity with the LORD our God.**"

## **3 God's justice is inflexible justice.**

That means **God's justice is unbendable**. God will not turn a blind eye to sin, He will not bend the rules, nor His law, nor lower His standard to accept sinners.

He does not need to reconsider His just demands of perfect conformity of His law.

In **Gen 2:16-17** “**the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat <sup>17</sup> But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.**” This was a legal command for there was a reward for obedience or punishment for disobedience.

Adam legally represented all humanity, we earned what he earned.

God demanded perfect obedience to His law, but Adam and Eve failed, they broke God's law, setting of the penalty for disobedience, “**thou shalt surely die.**”.

Sin must be punished, and death is it's penalty.

**Now if God did not punish sin, He would be unjust. If God forgive sin without punishing sin He would be unholy.**

His justice demanded to be satisfied, His law honoured by full payment, either by the sinner personally being punished in hell for all eternity which is eternal death.

Or by a substitute provided for the sinner to meet the laws demand and pay the penalty which was eternal death.

But God's justice demands that sin be punished and His law upheld. Therefore, His justice is inflexible, none negotiable.

**4 God's justice is immutable justice.**

The Justice of God does not change. God means what He says and says what He means.

God did not change the standard whereby sinners can enter heaven.

He did not change His law, Otherwise He would be unholy, unjust, He would not be God. **Ezek 18:20** “*The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*” This will never change, all who live and die without Christ will face His righteous judgment in hell.

Earthly judges may need to change decisions based upon new evidence, they may even need to revisit a case as new facts have been discovered leading him to change his verdict.

Someone said “*Justice is not an optional product of His will, but an unchangeable principle of His very nature.*”

**Acts 17:31** “*He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained...*” **Hebrews 9:27** “*it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

**I FIRST, THE DESCRIPTION OF GOD’S JUSTICE.**

**II SECOND, THE DIVISIONS OF GOD’S JUSTICE**

In this section I will continually repeat certain phrases and definitions, that is to help our understanding. So hopefully it will be a help and not be an hinderance in understanding God’s justice.

God’s justice can be divided into two main sections they are first **Rectoral** also known as legislative Justice, and secondly **Distributive justice.**

**we can also say the legal requirements and the results.**

**First, God's Rectoral justice** also called ***His legislative justice*** is His requirement for all His creatures to conform perfectly to His law.

*The reason being, God's legislation or His law is the standard of His judgment. He judges by His law, we have thought of that already.* God sets before His creatures, a law and a standard which is absolutely holy and just.

The reward or the penalty is exactly suited to the actions. His laws are righteous laws. This is **Rectoral or legislative Justice.** **This is God's requirement.**

Then there is **God's Distributive Justice**, which continues on from God's **Rectoral or legislative Justice.** **This is the results.**

**God's Distributive Justice** is seen first, by His **Re-munerative Justice** which the **distribution of rewards for obedience to His creatures**, and then secondly His **Retributive or Punitive Justice** which is **His penalty and punishment for disobedience which is sin.**

So God's **Distributive Justice** includes both rewards for obedience and punishment for disobedience.

Therefore, **Rectoral** refers **to the law itself**; **Distributive** refers **to the enforcement** of the **rewarding** and **punishing** of men and woman equally, as seen in **Isa 3:10-11** **Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. <sup>11</sup> Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him."**

Now in taking a closer look at **God's Distributive justice** as seen both by the distribution of rewards to His creatures for

obedience, and then secondly His *distribution to His creature for disobedience. Notice.*

***The distribution of rewards to His creatures for obedience.***

The reward for God's people is not based on anything they have earned, rather based on their relationship to Jesus Christ in the Covenant of Grace.

**Psalm 58:11** “*verily there is a reward for the righteous: in His law states Ex 20:6 “**And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.***”

**Heb 6:10** “*For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.*”

Believers having suffered for righteousness sake, Christ said in **Matthew 5:12** “*Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven...*” **James 1:12** “*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. 2 Tim 4:7-8 **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.***”

Believer's are not seeking a reward on earth, their reward is reserved in heaven, above all it is Christ Himself.

Not only has God promised Christ a people for His reward in obeying the terms of the everlasting covenant of grace, but also, God has promised His people Christ as their inheritance.

***Retributive or Punitive Justice***

***The distribution to His creature for disobedience.***



**When sinners are punished for disobedience, and are cast into hell, it is because of their own sin.**

**Eternal punishment is God's justice in giving sinners what they deserve.**

**Always keep that before you, God's law states regarding false idols, in [Ex 20:5](#) "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;**

**Today people say God would never send anyone to hell, but remember God sends sinners to hell because they refused the very truth that would spare them.**

**[Ps 9:17](#) "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."**

When Christ returns God will take in [2 Thess 1:8-9](#) **vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>9</sup> Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**

**I FIRST, THE DESCRIPTION OF GOD'S JUSTICE.**

**II SECOND, THE DIVISIONS OF GOD'S JUSTICE**

**III THIRD, THE DEMONSTRATION OF GOD'S JUSTICE**

The greatest demonstration of God's justice is found in the sufferings and death of Christ upon the tree at Golgotha.

The question is asked in in [Job 9:2](#) **"I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?"**

The Bible states in [Romans 3:10](#) **"There is none righteous, no, not one: [Romans 3:20](#) "by the law is the knowledge of sin. [Romans 3:23](#) "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"**

Therefore, God justice demands that sin be punished, **Romans 6:23** *the wages of sin is death...*

How can God as **Romans 3:26** states “*be just, and the justifier...*” at the same time?

How can God be just upholding His law and punish sin and at the same time justify sinners without compromising His holiness, Righteousness and justice?

Paul gave the answer, “*of him which believeth in Jesus.*”

Faith in Jesus Christ alone. Peter said it this way in **1 Peter 3:18** “*Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh...*”

God’s justice demanded perfect obedience inwardly and outwardly which I a sinner could never give.

However, Jesus Christ meet the demands of perfect obedience.

He came to earth to take our humanity apart from sin into perfect union with His deity, Though He was man He never ceased to be God.

The one chosen to save men must be related both to God and man, acceptable to both and capable of representing both, in order to bring men to God and God to men.

Jesus Christ lived a perfect life, inwardly and outwardly, in private and public, this is why He could lay down His life as a willing substitute, to be made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Pilate’s wife spoke of Christ to her husband in **Matthew 27:19** “*Have thou nothing to do with that just man...*” The law demanded perfection and demanded a penalty to be paid. **Phil 2:8** “*and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled*

***Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”***

Upon the cross, Christ paid the penalty for all who would trust in God, so they would never pay the penalty.

On the Cross, He represented all His believing people as their substitute. His payment was our payment. He satisfied divine justice. His obedience is viewed as our obedience. **1 John 1:9**  
***“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***

Therefore, **God’s justice is God doing right or righteously.**