

The Importance of Establishing a Biblical Sense of Justice in Our Land

Introduction:

1) Key Scripture Passage:

a) Deuteronomy 16:18-20

You shall appoint for yourself judges and officers in all your towns which the LORD your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment. You shall not distort justice; you shall not be partial, and you shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and perverts the words of the righteous. Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, that you may live and possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you.¹

- b) This scripture sets the foundation for our understanding that justice is a key part of God's command for His people, and it is critical to maintaining righteousness in a nation.

2) Opening Statement

- a. An example from a story by Yehoshua

i. Luke 18:1-8.

Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. There was a widow in

¹ All scriptures, unless otherwise noted shall be from the *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*. (1995). The Lockman Foundation.

that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’” And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly.

However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

- ii. This story introduces a clear understanding of the importance of justice.
- iii. I believe we all know examples of how important true justice is in our society.

- b. In today’s lesson, my goal is to cover why establishing biblical justice is critical for a healthy, godly society and how it applies to our personal lives, our community, and our nation.

3) Overview of the Lesson:

- a) What is justice according to the Bible?
- b) Why must we establish justice in our land?
- c) How does biblical justice benefit individuals and society?

Main Body:

I. Justice is Rooted in God's Character

A. Definition of Biblical Justice:

1. Psalm 89:14 -- *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Lovingkindness and truth go before You.*
2. Justice is one of the key attributes of God. It means being fair, impartial, and ensuring that people are treated with dignity and equity. It's not just about punishment for wrong but about maintaining the right relationships between individuals and communities.

B. Justice as Reflecting God's Nature:

1. In Genesis 18:25, when Abraham is interceding for Sodom, he asks, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" Even Abraham recognized that justice is central to God's identity.
2. **Applying This to Us**
 - a. As individuals: We are created in God's image, which means we are called to reflect His character, including His justice. In our daily lives, we must ensure that our actions toward others are fair and righteous.
 - b. As a society: Our legal systems, laws, and community actions must reflect God's standard of justice, prioritizing fairness, integrity, and righteousness.
3. **Illustrations**
 - a. While the world focuses on punishment and incarceration, The Almighty focuses on restoration and healing for the victims.

- b. While the world's justice is often biased and unfair, The Almighty's justice is impartial and fair.

II. The Importance of Establishing Justice for Society's Well-being (5-7 minutes)

A. Justice Brings Stability and Peace:

1. **Scripture:** Proverbs 21:3 – To do righteousness and justice Is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.
2. **Explanation:** The Almighty is more concerned with how we treat each other than with religious rituals. Justice ensures that societies function smoothly because it promotes peace and equality. Without it, societies crumble under oppression and corruption.
3. **Example from the Bible:** In 2 Samuel 8:15 we read
So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and righteousness for all his people.
and as a result, his kingdom was stable and blessed.

B. Justice Reflects Love for Others:

1. **Scripture:** Matthew 22:37-40 – Yeshua summarized the law with the command to love God and love your neighbor as yourself.
And He said to him, “‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

2. **Application to Us:**

- a. As individuals: Living out biblical justice means treating others fairly, standing up for the oppressed, and loving our neighbors by promoting fairness in our workplaces, homes, and communities.
- b. As a society: When justice is established, everyone benefits. It ensures that the vulnerable are protected and that resources, opportunities, and rights are shared fairly. Communities are strengthened when justice prevails.

3. **Illustration:** The Boston Miracle in the mid-1990s.

- a. Called Operation Ceasefire
 - i. In 1990 there were 152 homicides in Boston, mostly involving gang violence.
 - ii. Gang violence was met with severe consequences while offering alternatives.
 - 1. Education
 - 2. Job training
 - 3. Community support
 - iii. Clergy, community leaders, and law enforcement joined forces
 - iv. First offenders were offered grace while repeat offenders were given swift and severe punishment
 - v. In 1996 homicides had dropped 60%. Youth related homicides dropped from 73 in 1990 to 10 in 1996
 - vi. Relationships between police and the community saw great healing.

III. Justice Protects the Vulnerable

A. God's Concern for the Poor and Oppressed

1. Scripture: Isaiah 1:17

Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan,
Plead for the widow.

2. Explanation: Throughout the Bible, God shows a special concern for the vulnerable—widows, orphans, the poor, and the oppressed. His justice is about ensuring that those who cannot protect themselves are defended.

3. Biblical Example: In the story of Ruth, Boaz acts justly by protecting and providing for Ruth, a vulnerable foreign widow. His actions demonstrate God's desire for His people to care for those in need.

B. Justice in Practice

1. Scripture: Proverbs 31:8-9 –

Open your mouth for the mute, For the rights of all the unfortunate. Open
your mouth, judge righteously, And defend the rights of the afflicted and
needy.

2. Application to Us:

- a. As individuals: We are called to be advocates for those who are overlooked or marginalized. This can mean speaking up when we see injustice in our communities, workplaces, or even within our own families.
- b. As a society: Laws and systems must protect those who cannot protect themselves, ensuring fairness in legal matters, access to resources, and equal treatment for all.

3. Illustration: Share a contemporary story of how a person or community advocated for justice for the vulnerable, such as a legal case where advocates fought for the rights of the underprivileged or an organization that works to end modern slavery.

Application and Conclusion

1) Recap the Key Points:

- a) Justice is central to God's character and, therefore, essential for our lives and society.
- b) Establishing biblical justice creates stability and peace, and it reflects our love for others.
- c) Justice must protect the vulnerable, ensuring fairness for those who cannot defend themselves.

2) What This Means for Us:

- a) **As Individuals:** Consider areas in your life where you can act more justly—how you treat others, how you advocate for fairness in your community, and how you live with integrity.
- b) **As Members of Our Synagogue:** As a community, we can stand together to promote justice by being a voice for the oppressed, contributing to fair causes, and ensuring that our congregation reflects fairness and equality in all its actions.
- c) **As a Society:** We must advocate for laws and leaders who uphold justice, ensuring that society treats all people, especially the vulnerable, with fairness.

3) Action Step:

- a) Let us reflect on one area of our life where they can make a change toward justice. Whether it's how they interact with others, how they support community

efforts for fairness, or how they stand up for someone who is vulnerable, encourage them to take practical steps this week.

- b) Consider organizing a synagogue outreach or justice-related project where the community can actively participate in promoting fairness or helping those in need.

4) Prayer:

- a) Close with a prayer asking God to give us the wisdom and strength to act justly in all areas of our lives, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him. Pray for our synagogue and society to uphold His standards of righteousness and justice.