Thankful For God’s Righteous Judgment

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday March 5th, 2023

Text: II Timothy 4:7-8

**Intro**

1. The Northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed, and her people carried away into captivity by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.
	1. II Kings 17: The Israelites repeatedly refused or killed God’s prophets, rejected His word, worshiped false gods and failed to execute justice and righteousness.
2. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was destroyed, and her people carried away into captivity by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.
	1. II Chronicles 36: The Jews repeatedly refused or killed God’s prophets, rejected His word, worshiped false gods and failed to execute justice and righteousness.
3. God foretold all of this by Moses in Deuteronomy 28-30.
	1. Deuteronomy 30:15-20

30:15: “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

30:16: in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

30:17: “But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them,

30:18: I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You will not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.

30:19: “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,

30:20: by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

* 1. God fulfilled His promises to remove His faithless people from the land which He gave them when “there was no remedy” (II Chronicles 36:16).
	2. In each of these cases, even though it was promised by God, both blessing and curse, many years before by Moses, God sent prophets trying to get His people to turn back to Him.
	3. That demonstrates God’s mercy, compassion, and His patience and gives us hope today!
1. There is still a Day of Judgment set for all people in an hour only He knows (II Corinthians 5:10)
2. People in the world call saints judgmental as an insult, but we are to be like God and (by the world’s standards) He is judgmental.
3. Christians, as the people of God, should be thankful and full of praise for God’s judgments for these reasons: He is Righteous, His laws are clearly defined, the wicked will be punished, but the faithful will find mercy and compassion!
4. God’s Judgment is Righteous
	1. In the world we see the miscarriage of justice all the time.
		1. We hear of someone in prison for 20+ years and then found to be innocent by new DNA evidence…
			1. October 2000: 75 prisoners — including eight on death row — have been freed nationwide because of DNA testing. <https://thedailyrecord.com/2000/10/26/even-as-prisoners-go-free-law-and-science-of-dna-remain-at-odds/>
			2. October 2018: DNA Evidence Exonerates a Man of Murder After 20 Years in Prison: Horace Roberts, 60, was freed from a California prison this month after DNA evidence showed that he had been wrongfully convicted of murder nearly two decades ago. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/16/us/20-years-exonerated-dna-prison.html>
			3. October 2022: Maurice Hastings, 69, in prison for 38 years freed by new DNA evidence: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-63437208>
	2. Our justice system is flawed because we are flawed people, but God is perfect.
5. Isaiah 11:4: God judges with righteousness.
6. Revelation 19:11: God judges in righteousness.
7. II Timothy 4:7-8: God is the Righteous Judge.
	1. God doesn’t make mistakes: The Day of Judgment will see reward and punishment dealt out to those who are faithful who He has compassion on and to those who are wicked and deserving of an eternal punishment (Matthew 25:31-46).
	2. Let us give thanks for God’s righteous judgment for we can confidently say He knows who the faithful are and who the faithless are!
8. God’s Laws are Clearly Defined
9. How often do we hear of a traveler (often American) locked up in a foreign jail because they broke a law they didn’t know about?
	* 1. CBS reported back in February 2022 that about 40 Americans are imprisoned abroad, not by terrorists, but by foreign governments and are considered “wrongful detainees.” <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/wrongful-detainees-american-hostages-60-minutes-2022-02-27/>
10. This is not the case with God. He has clearly laid out what He expects of all people.
11. Acts 17:30-31: God commands all people everywhere to repent!
12. Ephesians 3:4: God’s word, the mystery, can be understood when read!
13. God’s word has been preserved and given to all the world.
	* + 1. Romans 10:18: Gospel has gone to the ends of the world.
			2. Isaiah 40:8: Word of God stands forever.
			3. Titus 2:11-14: Just as Israel was once forewarned of all the calamity that would befall them if they rejected God’s word, so the gospel has gone out teaching all men to “deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age” (Titus 2:12).
			4. John 12:48: Jesus said, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”
14. There are no secret rules with God – All men will be judged according to the standard of Christ! (Romans 2:16)
15. The Wicked Will Be Punished
16. Today we are often bothered by all the people who break the law or commit evil acts and get away with it. (“Where are the police when you need them?”)
17. The wicked are not punished for their evil deeds due to: money, corruption, political power, etc..This has been a problem since ancient times.
	1. Psalm 73:3-13: Wicked are at ease.
	2. Job 21:7: Wicked are powerful.
	3. Ecclesiastes 7:15: Wicked live long life.
	4. Amos 5:7, 12: Israel’s rulers accepted bribes and oppressed the poor and rejected justice.
	5. Isaiah 1:23; 5:23: The rulers of Judah accepted bribes from the rich and powerful and justice was perverted (Habakkuk 1:4).
18. But with God, the wicked will be punished, for He cannot be bribed or distracted.
	1. Hebrews 10:29-31: Terrifying to fall into God’s judgment.
	2. Revelation 20:11-15: All men will be judged by their deeds. No excuses, no bribes, no fall guys or framing an innocent person, but the guilty will face their sins.
19. Those who have persecuted, and harmed God’s people will be judged.
	1. Luke 18:1-8: Jesus told a parable to teach His disciples not to lose heart and to pray often. He told the story of a wicked judge who wouldn’t give justice to a widow but finally after her persistence he granted it. The moral of the story was this: “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” (Luke 18:7-8).
	2. II Thessalonians 1:6-9: God will repay.
	3. Romans 12:19: Vengeance belongs to God.
20. God “knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment!” (II Peter 2:9)
21. The Faithful Receive Mercy
	1. We all slip up from time to time. How many have never gotten a ticket? (Speeding, parking, moving violation, fix-it, etc.)
	2. We will never be able to follow God’s law perfectly, but God has mercy and grace for those who love Him.
		1. Romans 3:23-25: God’s grace forgives our sins.
		2. Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9: Made alive by God’s mercy & grace through faith.
		3. Titus 3:5: Saved by God’s mercy through baptism.
		4. Hebrews 4:16: We can receive mercy and grace in our time of need!
		5. I Peter 1:3: Born again to a living hope from God’s mercy.
		6. Hebrews 10:10-18: Because of Jesus’ offering for sin, once for all, It is fulfilled what was written in Jeremiah 31:34, where God says, “AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.”

“Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin” (Hebrews 10:17-18).

* 1. We do not need to fear punishment if we love Him.
1. 1 John 4:18: Perfect love casts out fear.
	1. Even those who feel they have sinned greatly can find grace and mercy.
		1. When we are in sin, we don’t want the “justice” of God but His “mercy!”
		2. I Timothy 1:13-16: Paul, a blasphemer and persecutor, found abundant grace and mercy in Christ.
		3. I John 1:9: If we confess our sins and repent, God will forgive!
		4. In Jesus there is grace, compassion, mercy and pardon for those who are obedient to Him (John 14:15; Hebrews 5:9)!
	2. The Righteous Judge will award the “crown of righteousness” to those who love Him (II Timothy 4:7-8)!

 **Conclusion**

1. There is no perfect system of justice in this world, but God is the Righteous Judge.
	1. Romans 14:10-12; II Corinthians 5:10: Every knee will bow before the judgment seat of Christ and each one will give an account of what they have done, whether good or bad!
	2. Luke 8:17: Every secret thing will be known!
2. God says, “Vengeance is mine. I will repay” (Romans 12:19) because He can punish the guilty far better than any earthly court can!
	1. We need to make sure we are not in opposition to God’s word so that we may receive grace and mercy and not the justice we deserve!
	2. James 4:6-10: God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.
3. Let us be thankful for God’s judgments: Saints will one day be vindicated to the world as God exalts the humble (James 4:10) and punishes the wicked (Matthew 25:41, 46).
4. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized! Humbly obey the gospel that can save your soul (James 1:21).
5. If a Christian in sin, don’t hesitate to make it right with God! Ask for forgiveness now so that you may receive mercy and pardon from Jesus!
6. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!