

When and Why Does Injustice Occur?

Injustice exists in every city, province, state, and nation. People can identify it and almost everyone has experienced it at some point in their life. Injustice is simply defined as the absence of justice, but that definition misses something. King Solomon captures the sense of oppression that accompanies injustice. He wrote,

Then I looked again at all the acts of oppression which were being done under the sun. And behold I saw the tears of the oppressed and that they had no one to comfort them; and on the side of their oppressors was power, but they had no one to comfort them. So I congratulated the dead who are already dead more than the living who are still living.
Ecclesiastes 4:1-2 (NASB)

King Solomon uses the phrase “under the sun” to refer to things that occur on planet earth. He says people shed tears because of oppression.

Oppression comes at us in many different forms. Injustice is just another form of oppression and it causes tears. He adds that power is on the side of the oppressor, and the oppressed are helpless. That is especially true of injustice. So, he concludes that it would be better to be dead than to experience oppression. But King Solomon does not tell us here why oppression or injustice occurs.

The answer is given to us in the opening verses of the book of Habakkuk when the prophet Habakkuk complained to God that evil was everywhere in the land of Israel. He complained that he had to see the violence. He complained that he had to see the wickedness. He complained that he had to see the strife and the injustice. Here is what he wrote in Habakkuk 1:2-4.

How long, O LORD, will I call for help,
And You will not hear?
I cry out to You, “Violence!”
Yet You do not save.



Tilting the Scales of Justice

Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises. Therefore the law is ignored And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the

righteous;
Therefore justice comes out perverted.
Habakkuk 1:2-4 (NASB)

Notice that Habakkuk complained about the wickedness in the land in verses 2-3. Then in verse 4, he complained that the law was ignored and justice was never upheld. The

Hebrew word that is translated as "ignored" means "numb." A literal interpretation means that justice had no feelings or, we would say today that justice was anaesthetized, or paralyzed. That is, justice could not function.

Then the prophet complained that justice was never carried out. Why? The answer that is given is that the wicked surround the righteous. The wicked were everywhere. They dominated the civil discussion. They controlled the government. Most of the judges, prosecutors, and the defense attorneys of that day were wicked. So, the judicial procedures and decisions were perverted. The Hebrew word for perverted in verse 4 means "twisted." Since the wicked were everywhere, justice became injustice. These verses reveal that injustice is rooted in wickedness.

Then in verses 5 and 6 God gives the prophet the solution to removing the evil in the land of Israel. He said that He was going to destroy the nation. The book of Ezekiel reveals that because Israel refused to repent and obey God, He sent the Babylonian army into Judah and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. God had them burned down. What was still standing was razed to the ground. That was His solution to wickedness and injustice.

If you were to do a search of the Bible, you would discover that righteousness and justice are linked together in 124 verses in the Bible. Ecclesiastes 3:16 connects the absence of justice with wickedness.

Furthermore, I have seen under the sun that in the place of justice there is wickedness and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness. Ecclesiastes 3:16 (NASB)

So, when and why does injustice happen? Injustice occurs when wickedness exists. When the wicked surround the righteous, injustice will explode. Why is this true? Because justice is rooted in righteousness.

Look at Proverbs 28:5. It is a verse we should memorize and take it to heart. The verse says,

**Evil men do not understand justice,
But those who seek the LORD understand all things.**

Proverbs 28:5 (NASB)

The first line tells us that wicked men cannot understand justice. They may read the law books, but true justice escapes them. The wicked do not understand or identify with real justice. They seek to change the laws to accommodate their evil thoughts and hearts.

In contrast, the second line says those who seek the Lord, that is the righteous, are those who understand or perceive all things. Consequently, God helps the righteous understand all things which includes justice. So, it is the righteous who understand justice in its much greater sense. The righteous are people of integrity and uprightness.

So, what are the benefits of righteousness? There are three benefits.

The first benefit is broad in scope. The righteous are a blessing to others. We have already discovered that the righteous understand justice and that helps them to identify injustice and to help others. Also, being righteous brings blessings to others. Here are just a few important passages from the book of Proverbs,

**The curse of the LORD is on the house of the wicked,
But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous.
Proverbs 3:33 (NASB)**

**Blessings are on the head of the righteous.
Proverbs 10:6 (NASB)**

**The wages of the righteous is life,
The income of the wicked, punishment.
Proverbs 10:16 (NASB)**

**Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a disgrace to any people.
Proverbs 14:34 (NASB)**

**He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous,
Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.
Proverbs 17:15 (NASB)**

**When the righteous increase, the people rejoice,
But when a wicked man rules, people groan.
Proverbs 29:2 (NASB)**

These verses reveal that God blesses the marriages of the righteous. He blesses the homes of righteous parents. He blesses cities, states, and nations when they have righteous leaders. The reason God includes these verses in the Bible is so we will understand the source of blessing is not through the wicked, whether we call them atheists, agnostics, or the so-called morally neutral, secular individuals. For men and women are either wicked or righteous. There are no morally neutral people. For Jesus said that we either are for Him or against Him (Matthew 12:30).¹

The second benefit to being righteous is personal for Matthew 5:6 says,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Matthew 5:6 (NASB)

Every person seeks satisfaction. When we are unhappy, we seek satisfaction through eating, sex, the praise of others, drinking, or maybe playing games. We seek to be satisfied through the act of chasing satisfaction. But God tells us that satisfaction is found by hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Then satisfaction is the result or the benefit. John 4:14 teaches us that those who thirst after the water that Jesus gives will never thirst again, for they will have eternal life (John 7:37-39). That satisfaction will be like water flowing out of us. Ephesians 5:17-6:5 describes the result of a righteous person being filled with the Holy Spirit. It describes a life of happiness, satisfaction, and joy. For when a righteous person is filled with the Holy Spirit, they gradually become more and more righteous and the fruit of the Spirit grows within.

The third benefit of being righteous is that God is

¹ The reason the so-called morally neutral secularists claim that secularism is superior to Christianity is that they are against Jesus. They sought to eliminate Christianity from the public square initially. Recently they have been trying to eliminate Christianity eventually from our homes and consciences. This is oppression and injustice to the highest degree. This is the wicked's view of happiness.

glorified. Every Christian is to give God glory in all that he or she does. The apostle Paul wrote these words in 1 Corinthians 10:31,

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 10:31 (NASB)

This is a simple verse. But we should notice two things. First, it tells us that in whatever you or I do, we are to do all to the glory of God. The Greek word that is translated as "all" is *pas*. It means all. In all we do, we are to give glory to God - in all that we think, in all the words we speak, and in all our actions. The Greek word translated as "all" simply means all. The Greek word for "glory" is *doxa*. It can mean to give splendor, glory, honor, and to praise. So, as Christians we have the privilege of reflecting on God's glory in ALL we do.

This reminded me of a statement that John MacArthur made early in his ministry. He said,

In 2 Samuel 12:26-31, when Joab won the victory against Rabbah and got possession of the enemy's crown, he sent for David so he could present the crown to him. This is a good illustration of how the Christian should act toward the Master.²

This is the first way we usually go about giving God glory. We use our lips or our pen by praising or thanking Him. But *pas* means all. That is, in all we do. In every thought (Philippians 4:8), and in our every action we are to give glory. In Matthew 5:16 Jesus said,

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 5:16 (NASB)

Jesus tells us that you and I give glory by our every action and effort.

Therefore, when and why does injustice occur? It occurs

² John MacArthur. "How to Live for God's Glory." [gty.org \(https://www.gty.org/library/Articles/A181/How-to-Live-for-Gods-Glory\)](https://www.gty.org/library/Articles/A181/How-to-Live-for-Gods-Glory)

as wickedness grows. The reason why it occurs is because that is the nature of wickedness. Wickedness is immoral. Only righteousness results in justice. Only righteousness results in God pouring out His blessings through Christians onto others. Only the righteous produce justice. Only the righteous bring blessings upon others, as God blesses them. Only the righteous glorify God by reflecting His holiness to others.