

**The Attributes of God**  
***Attribute #19 – Righteous/Just***

- I. Righteous/Just - Because God is holy, He demands holiness of His Creation. Therefore, all unholiness is an offence to His nature and must be punished, It is God's righteousness or justice (the same word in the original text) that demands a "just" recompense for violating His moral government and standards. Justice carries with it the idea of being "straight" and "rightness (Hebrew) and "equal" and "conformed to what is right" (Greek).
  - A. Thus, God is the Judge of the universe
    1. Gen.16: 5; Judges 11:27; 1 Chron.16: 33; Psalm 11:4-5 2. Psalm 26:1-2; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 5:13;
    3. Heb. 10:30-31
  - B. God is not described as being fair (a human standard) but as being just (a divine standard). Whatever God does is always the "right thing". Regarding judgment, the following may be said:
    1. The judgment is impartial – Deut. 10:17; Job 13:6-12 Psalm 75:7
    2. The Judge is righteous; that is, He is the standard by which judgment will be made – Gen. 4:7; 18:25; Psalm 62:12; Acts 10:34-35
    3. The guilty will not go unpunished – Ex. 20:7; Neh.1: 3
    4. The Judge can not be bribed – Deut. 10:17
    5. The unrighteous are judged both temporally (Lev. 26:14-39; Deut. 28: 15-68) and eternally (Matt. 13:30; 25:31-46)
    6. The righteous are rewarded both temporally (Matt. 5:4-7; 19:29; Mark 10:30) and eternally (Matt. 5:8; 16:27; 1 Cor. 3:10-15)
    7. The eternal judgment will be according to opportunity given and works done – Gen. 4:7; 1 Sam. 26: 23; Prov.12:14; 24:11-12; Isa.3:10-11; 9:18; Jer.17:10; 32:19; Hosea 4:9; 12:2; Zech. 1:6; Luke 12:47-48; 13:6-9; John 3:19-20; Romans 2:5-12; Gal.6:7; Rev. 2:23; 20:12-13).
- II. God's Justice Defined – Justice is to give everyone his due. It is the rectitude of His nature whereby He does that which is righteous and equal.
  - A. Because He is just, He always does what is right – Deut. 32:4
    1. Job 37:23
    2. Psalm 89:14
  - B. In God, power and justice meet; power is the scepter and justice is the balance.

- C. God is an impartial judge; He judges the cause; man judges the person, which is not justice but malice.
  - 1. Prov. 24:12
  - 2. Gen. 18:21
  
- III. God's Justice Explained - God cannot be but just. His holiness is the cause of His justice. Holiness prevents Him from doing anything but what is righteous. He can no more be unjust than He can be unholy.
  - A. God's will is the supreme rule of justice; it is the standard of equity. His will is wise and good. God wills nothing but what is just; therefore, it is just because He wills it.
  - B. God does justice voluntarily. Justice flows from His nature. Men may act unjustly because they are bribed or forced; God will not be bribed, because of His justice; He cannot be forced because of His power. He does justice out of love to justice.
    - 1. Heb. 1:9
  - C. God never did nor can do the least wrong to His creatures. God's justice has been wronged, but never did any wrong. Our mercies are more than we deserve, and our punishment less.
    - 1. Ezra 9:13
  - D. God's justice is such that it is not fit for any person to demand a reason for His actions. God has not only authority on His side, but also equity.
    - 1. Isaiah 28:17
    - 2. It is below Him to give us an account of His proceedings - Romans 9:20
    - 3. The plumb line of our reason is too short to fathom the depth of God's justice – Romans 11:33
    - 4. we are to adore God's justice, even when we cannot see a reason for it.
  
- IV. God's Justice Applied – It is seen in the distribution of rewards and punishments. It is distinguished as “rectoral”, or that which is concerned in the imposition of righteous laws and in their impartial execution; and “distributive” or that which is manifested in the righteous distribution of rewards and punishments.
  - A. God always does the right thing – Gen. 18:25
    - 1. In rewarding the righteous – Psalm 58:14
      - a. The saints shall not serve Him for naught; He will reward them, though they be losers for Him, they shall not be losers by Him.
      - b. He gives a reward, not because we have deserved it, but because He has promised it – Heb.6: 10
    - 2. In punishing offenders – Romans 4:15

- a. God punishes sinners by a law. He has given mankind a law and we have broken it; therefore, He punishes them justly.
- b. God is just in punishing the wicked because He never punishes them without full proof and evidence. The greatest evidence is for a person's own conscience to be a witness against himself. There is nothing that God charges upon a sinner but conscience sets its seal to the truth of it.

V. God's Justice Questioned –

Objection #1 - How does it seem to be consistent with God's justice that the wicked should prosper in the world?

- A. Answer: The wicked may be the instruments to do God's work. While they do not design His glory, they may be used to promote it.
1. Ezra 1:7 – Cyrus was instrumental in the building of God's temple in Jerusalem.
  2. Rev. 2:21 – God let's people go on in sin so that they will found more inexcusable. If a person does not repent, God's patience will be a witness against them and His justice will be more glorious in their condemnation.
  3. Psalm 9:16 – God does not always let people prosper in their sin. Some He punishes openly, that His justice may be noticed (Num. 25:14 – Zimri and Cozbi in the acts of uncleanness).
  4. If God lets people prosper a while in their sin, His vial of wrath is becoming more full; His sword is all the time getting sharper, and though He may forbear people for a while, His forbearance is not forgiveness. The longer God is in executing justice, the more sever it will be. As long as there is an eternity, God has plenty enough time to deal with His enemies.

Objection #2 – How can God be just and let His own children suffer persecution and affliction from the world?

- A. Answer: The Lord never afflicts His children without a cause. God's ways may be secret but they are not unjust. There is some good in the godly so the wicked afflict them; there is some bad in the godly so God afflicts them.
1. 2 Chron. 28:10 – God's own children have their blemishes. As spiritual diamonds, we still have our flaws. The sins of the wicked pierce His side; the sins of His children wound His heart.
  2. Isaiah 31:9 – The trials and sufferings of His children are to refine and purify them. Is there any injustice in God afflicting

His children to make them partakers of His holiness? (Heb. 12:10)

3. Psalm 19:75 – What proclaims God's faithfulness more than to ordain a course for His children that will make them better.
4. What injustice is it in God to inflict a lesser punishment and prevent a greater one? The best God's children have in them that is meritorious is only meritorious of hell. Does God do us wrong if He uses only the rod when we have deserved the sword? Is the father unjust if he only corrects his child when the child deserved to be disinherited? If God deals with His children in such a manner, He is only putting wormwood in our cups when He could have placed fire and brimstone. Really, we should admire His mercy rather than complain of His injustice.