

BIBLICAL JUSTICE FOR FURTHER STUDY

Consider the following as you read through the attached scripture:

1. Of what kind of justice does each text refer? Restorative (remedy of past wrongs, by self or others)? Retributive (retribution for violation of rights, goods, services, honor, freedom)? To whom is the author writing/speaking (audience & context), and what does this infer?
2. What do these texts (and the type of justice they speak to) suggest about our role in “doing justice” (Micah 6:8)? How can you apply these truths to your own life? To the lives of others?
3. To better understand justice in both the Old and New Testaments, take time to underline or circle the word and any synonyms in these texts. It may be helpful to do this directly in your Bible for future reference. Pay attention to repeated themes and phrases, and ask yourself what this says about God, His desire for people, and His desire for you. If you really want to dig deep, look up cross references and other passages with justice themes. There are many more scriptures pertaining to justice than the ones included here.

OLD TESTAMENT (ESV)

GENESIS 1:27

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

LEVITICUS 19:13

¹³ "You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning."

LEVITICUS 19:34

³⁴ You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.

JOB 29:11-17

¹¹ When the ear heard, it called me blessed,
and when the eye saw, it approved,
¹² because I delivered the poor who cried for help,
and the fatherless who had none to help him.
¹³ The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
¹⁴ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
¹⁵ I was eyes to the blind
and feet to the lame.
¹⁶ I was a father to the needy,
and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know.
¹⁷ I broke the fangs of the unrighteous
and made him drop his prey from his teeth.

PSALM 89:14

¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

PROVERBS 31:8-9

⁸ Open your mouth for the mute,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

MICAH 6:6-8

- ⁶“With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
⁸ He has told you, O man, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

JOEL 3:1-3

- ¹“For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,
²I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter
into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because they
have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land, ³and have cast lots for
my people, and have traded a boy for a prostitute, and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk
it.”

AMOS 8:4-6

- ⁴Hear this, you who trample on the needy
and bring the poor of the land to an end,
⁵saying, “When will the new moon be over,
that we may sell grain?
And the Sabbath,
that we may offer wheat for sale,
that we may make the ephah small and the shekel great
and deal deceitfully with false balances,
⁶that we may buy the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and sell the chaff of the wheat?”

ISAIAH 58:6-10

- ⁶ "Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
- ⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
- ⁹ Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'
If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
- ¹⁰ if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.

JEREMIAH 22:3

- ³ Thus says the Lord: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

NEW TESTAMENT (ESV)

MATTHEW 5:1-12

¹ Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.

⁵ "Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ "Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons[*a*] of God.

¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

MATTHEW 23:23

²³ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

MATTHEW 25:31-40

³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, [a] you did it to me.’

JAMES 1:27

¹ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

JAMES 2:14-17

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

I JOHN 3:17-18

¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.