

The End of Injustice

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Tonight in the course of our exposition we come to Psalm 58 and I would invite you to turn to Psalm 58 for our study tonight. This is a wonderful text for those who perhaps feel as though they are under attack and they can clearly see the unrighteousness of the attack as they go through life and yet it speaks to even more transcendent issues than anything in our personal lives with the subject matter that it addresses.

Psalm 58, we'll begin in verse 1. David writes and says,

1 Do you indeed speak righteousness, O gods? Do you judge uprightly, O sons of men? 2 No, in heart you work unrighteousness; On earth you weigh out the violence of your hands. 3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth. 4 They have venom like the venom of a serpent; Like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear, 5 So that it does not hear the voice of charmers, Or a skillful caster of spells. 6 O God, shatter their teeth in their mouth; Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD. 7 Let them flow away like water that runs off; When he aims his arrows, let them be as headless shafts. 8 Let them be as a snail which melts away as it goes along, Like the miscarriages of a woman which never see the sun. 9 Before your pots can feel the fire of thorns He will sweep them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike. 10 The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. 11 And men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely there is a God who judges on earth!"

Psalm 58 is not the most familiar Psalm by a long shot in the Psalter. When we think of Psalms, we would think of Psalm 1, Psalm 23, Psalm 90 maybe, Psalm 100, Psalm 119. Psalm 58 is not a Psalm that gets a whole lot of attention, I think it's fair to say, and it's tone, as you have just heard as I read it, is stark.

What is it talking about? What is the general thrust of the Psalm? Well, we'll let the 19th century commentator, Perowne, introduce it for us this evening. He says and I quote, "This Psalm is a bold protest against unrighteous judges. It opens with an indignant protest against their deliberate perversion of justice while they pretend to uphold it. It lays bare their character and that of those whom they favor, as men thoroughly,

habitually, by their very nature, corrupt. And finally, because they are thus beyond all hope of correction or amendment, it calls upon God to rob them of their power and to bring all their counsel to nought."

So this Psalm is written in a rebuke to those who have human authority and abuse it. It rebukes those who are charged with upholding righteousness from their position of authority but use it and corrupt it and turn justice on its head and turn it upside down. The very people who should be upholding righteousness are the ones who are implementing wickedness and it's just the nature of life that that's the way things so often go. And once again, we are met with the realism of Scripture and we find comfort in the fact that God's word speaks to that which we find going on around us in our culture and in our own personal existence. So this Psalm is expressing righteous indignation against injustice.

Now, in our present age of tolerance, there is little room for the concept of righteous indignation and therefore some of the things that are said in this Psalm by David strike our ears as harsh and severe. But beloved, let me encourage you to let your perception of this Psalm be guided by Scripture and not by the world around us. The fact that we live in a society that not only tolerates but celebrates wickedness should not condition us away from scriptural judgments against the very thing that God plans to bring his judgment upon, right? We want to align ourselves with God against wickedness and this Psalm helps us to do that.

So we're going to open, first of all, with the picture of unrighteous judges in the first five verses. The picture of unrighteous judges in the first five verses and David opens this Psalm with a rhetorical question to human rulers.

Look at verse 1 where he says,

1 Do you indeed speak righteousness, O gods? Do you judge uprightly, O sons of men?

Now it's important to understand right from the start that the term in the NASB, New American Standard version of the Bible, it's translated "gods" is subject to various different translations in the Hebrew. For our purposes, when you and I hear the word "gods" we immediately think about it in terms of deities, whether real or false. But for our purpose, it's enough to know that he's not addressing these men as true deities, he's not ascribing deity to these men that he's speaking about, he's simply addressing those who have authority to judge as the parallel line shows.

Look at verse 1 remembering that Hebrew poetry is often written in parallelisms where the second line is echoing the meaning of the first line. So he says, "Do you indeed speak righteousness, O gods?" Then we see what he means by that when he says, "Do you judge uprightly, O sons of men?" So he's speaking to those who have the authority to judge on the earth. So he's speaking to people who have positions of power and authority over others. That's who he is addressing here in this Psalm. It's a narrowly focused, it's a targeted Psalm in that sense.

And from the beginning, he is challenging them on the very basis of what they do. He goes and he immediately rebukes them and says, "Are you judging in righteousness? Are you doing what is right from your position of God-like authority?" And he asks it in a somewhat rhetorical way but in verse 2 you can see he doesn't even allow them to speak. He answers his own question when he says in verse 2,

2 No, in heart you work unrighteousness; On earth you weigh out the violence of your hands.

So he's addressing that which we know far too well by our own sad experience, that those to whom authority has been entrusted use it to their advantage, they twist justice, they are willing to take bribes, they are willing to do that which would advance their own personal interests rather than uphold principles and righteousness that have been entrusted to them for the good of others and for the good of society. So David goes right to the heart of it and says, "Let's talk about what you are doing from your position of authority." And he rebukes them and he declares, "You are working unrighteousness. You are weighing out the violence of your hands."

Now, David is therefore wrapped up in a principle that often discourages us, isn't he? When we see corrupt politicians at work, when we see those who have authority abusing it and working against the interests of those that they are called to protect and defend, when we see courts upholding rights, so called, to abortion and homosexuality and other matters of the sort and saying that this is a human right and it is fine for blood to be spilled by a mother against her own child and that that is a good and righteous and lawful thing guaranteed by the US Constitution, well, we're outraged by that. We realize that that's a totally unjust wicked thing to do and this Psalm helps us give voice to that when – watch this – when we are not in a position to be able to do anything to stop it on our own.

It is remarkable that God has given us his word. He's given us his Holy Spirit. He's given us the Gospel which is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes. But he has not entrusted to the church the power to stop people from sinning. He has not given to the church the power to enforce justice at the highest levels of society. Sometimes we live and we suffer under wicked rulers.

Well, David here is giving voice to that and the question is: how did we ever get to a point where men who have the authority and the responsibility to uphold righteousness, how did we ever get to the point where those who are designed to uphold the law actually become instruments of law-breaking and unrighteousness? How did it ever get to that point? How did things ever get so distorted in society in general and in the wicked judge himself? Yes, I would like to preach this in the halls of the Supreme Court but I won't get that opportunity, I'm quite sure, so I'm content to preach it to you tonight and let you carry it out as you will.

How did it ever get to this point? Well, David answers again his own question in verse 3 when he says,

3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.

These men and these women are wicked as adults because they were born wicked at birth. They were corrupt at birth. This is a statement of the reality of total depravity and of original sin; that men are born into sin; that we are born with corrupt hearts, all of us, not just the wicked judges of which David is speaking here. David could say of himself in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." So David says, "I was born into sin. Sin attached itself to my soul from the very point of my conception." The human race is corrupt and so when men are born, they are born into corruption, they are born into sin, they are born with hearts that are prone to wickedness.

So it's not surprising, then, that as they go from infants with corrupt hearts and grow into adulthood, it's not surprising that corruption goes with them along the way. David is explaining how did you ever get to a point where wickedness so marks you? We can trace it all the way back to your birth. There was never a point where you were not inclined to righteousness. You have always been inclined to wickedness. That is true of every man, woman and child ever born into the human race since Adam. We're born with corrupt hearts that are inclined to wickedness, not toward righteousness.

So for the sake of what David is saying here tonight from Psalm 58, what he's saying is that this fraudulent leadership did not suddenly happen overnight. This is the natural outgrowth, this is the natural outcome of men who are born into sin, and the fact that we have wicked rulers is an indication that we are part of a wicked human race. So the injustice of it all, the unrighteousness of it all, the sinfulness of it all, is simply the natural result of what came before in their lives. It's a result of who they are. They act in this manner, their lives show forth these works because it's who they are. Their lives, their actions, their official rulings, are giving way, are giving display to what they have always been in their hearts, David says, and the problem is that they are beyond reproof.

David illustrates that with a very jarring word picture in verses 4 and 5. Look at it with me here. Speaking of these wicked judges he says,

4 They have venom like the venom of a serpent; Like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear, 5 So that it does not hear the voice of charmers, Or a skillful caster of spells.

You've all seen pictures or maybe videos of Eastern men playing a flute while a snake is rising up from their midst and it looks like he's charming the snake. What is David saying here? Why does he illustrate his point about wicked judges with that kind of scene? Well, one commentator explains it this way. He says, "I'm told that snakes do not actually hear very much, if anything. They are controlled more by the motion of the flute than by the tune but that is irrelevant to the writer's image. His point is that people intent on evil will

not listen to those trying to dissuade them, either to man or God, therefore they are equally deaf both to reason and to revelation."

Why is it that people who are pursuing a course of unrighteousness, why is it that when you've tried to talk to your family members who are going into sin or living a life that is dominated by sin and you talk with them and you plead with them, why is it that it's like that you might as well be talking to a brick wall? Why is it that these wicked judges will not pay attention to David even though he is so obviously speaking the truth to them? "Men, you are appointed to uphold justice and you're not doing it. Why do you do this? Let me explain why that is, it's because you are corrupt from birth." There is an implied call to repentance in everything that David is saying. And yet you know by your own sad experience as well as I know from my sad experience both in life and in ministry, that so very very often when you talk to people about issues and confront them in their sin, what you get is this: people sticking their fingers in their ear and absolutely refusing to hear anything that you have to say. They will not heed a call to repentance. They will not yield an inch of ground to say, "You're right. I'm wrong. I'm sinful. I need help."

Why is that? Why do people refuse to listen? One of the consequences of being a sinner is this: men become skilled in their sin and because, as Jesus said in John 3, we'll turn there, because they love their sin, they refuse correction. They will not let someone correct them on the very point of darkness that they love for themselves.

Look over at John 3 for a moment. John 3 in verse 19 gives us this same principle from another perspective, from a New Testament perspective. Jesus says in John 3:19, "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed." Why is it that the judges wouldn't listen to David? Why is it that your loved ones won't listen to you when you try to call them out of sin? It's because they are in chains to darkness and they like it that way. They refuse to listen because they don't want to come to the light, they want to stay in the darkness.

So they're like a snake that stops up its ear and does not respond to its charmer anymore and the venom of a viper that strikes is in their lives. And here's the thing, beloved. I told you this was kind of a stark Psalm, right? I'm delivering on my promise. What can I say? Here's the thing. What I'm about to say has very practical application for all of us and we have to come to grips with this. When men are like that, it is beyond your human power to change it. You cannot argue them out of it. You can't nag them out of it. You can't scare them out of it. Look, if they wouldn't listen to Christ when he was on earth, what on earth makes you think that a sinner is going to listen to you in your own words of human wisdom?

This helps us understand where the problem is. This helps us understand where we need to go for our help and assistance. We can have, beloved, we can have – and, oh, this is helping me right now – we can have no confidence in the person themselves that we're talking to, that there is anything in them that is going to incline them to respond

favorably. We need to set aside our confidence and our hope in human ability, human perception, a human ability to receive correction. That doesn't mean that we don't have hope, it just means we have to know where the hope lies and what we do with that.

When this occurs, beloved, in your personal life, when it occurs in society, here's what Psalm 58 tells us to do, what it teaches us to do: when this occurs, what you have to do is to consciously, deliberately, urgently and dependently turn the matter over to God because you do not have the power to argue somebody out of their sinful inclinations. All of a sudden you realize that you're in the midst of a spiritual battle that you don't have the power to win. And one of the reasons that God brings you into those circumstances, one of the reasons that you are allowed, God allows you to feel that kind of heartache, that kind of threat to your well-being even, one of the reasons that God brings you into that is for this purpose: that he would teach you through that circumstance to be dependent upon him and to pray urgently to him about the matter at hand, and to not trust in your human ability to solve it.

Now, some of us more than others, we don't like that. We like to be in control. We like to win the argument. But sometimes people are too hardened in sin or they have too much power to listen to you and you have no leverage to change it. Well, when that happens, beloved, we need to realize that the humbling that needs to take place here starts with you rather than the other person. Yes, that person needs to be humbled by God to come out of their sin, but as you continually bounce against the wall and continually get no response or continually see the wickedness and depravity of society going deeper and deeper and deeper, rather than getting angry, getting upset, getting whatever, what this is designed to do is to humble you and to, as it were, fall on your knees and look up and say, "God, I can't do anything about this. I have to appeal to you. I have to appeal to an omnipotent God who hears my prayers. I have to appeal to him because there is no human solution to this problem at hand."

And David shows us that, as we go into our second point here this evening. We saw the picture of unrighteous judgments, they are like deaf snakes that won't listen to correction. Now, secondly, we look at the prayer for judgment. We saw the picture of the unrighteous judges, now we see the prayer for judgment and that's going to take us through verses 6 through 9. And this section of Scripture, these four verses, are remarkably picturesque. The pictures are painted in somewhat dark tones, perhaps, but David uses a series of illustrations in what he says here to illustrate what it is that he is asking God to do. And sometimes preachers will use one or two or three illustrations to make their point here, however, David is using illustrations to make the point of what it is that he is asking God to do.

Now before we look at these one by one and we'll look at them rather quickly, let me just say that what he's about to say in these following four verses, again, it shakes our modern ears. These are vivid, stark prayers that he is making in this Psalm and it almost sounds to some, it sounds to some commentators, I don't feel this way about it at all, but to some commentators they would say, "Is this even a righteous way to pray?" Wow. That just gives us a sense of how severe it sounds.

But before we go into it, just let me remind you of this: David here in Psalm 58 is praying. He is not taking matters into his own hands. He is not like the guy who goes out and shoots an abortion doctor in order to stop the wickedness. He's not taking justice into his own hands that way. He is praying to God. He's asking God to intervene according to his holy justice. He's appealing to the righteousness and the holiness of God saying, "God, in light of all of this wickedness that is going on around me, in light of the evil that is at place in high places, and because, God, I don't have the ability to stop this myself, therefore I appeal to you – watch this – God, I appeal beyond the opposition. I appeal beyond the wicked rulers and I appeal directly to your holy throne and I ask you to do something that no man can do." And the mere fact that this Psalm is in Scripture, part of the inspired Canon, should give us the sense that God intends us to take this and to understand it and to somehow incorporate this into our view of him.

Enough of that. Let's see the illustrations that David uses. They are so vivid. He says in verse 6, remember who he's praying against, wicked people in high places. Verse 6 he says,

6 O God, shatter their teeth in their mouth; Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD.

Let's go through them all and then we'll come back and pick them up verse by verse.

7 Let them flow away like water that runs off; When he aims his arrows, let them be as headless shafts. 8 Let them be as a snail which melts away as it goes along, Like the miscarriages of a woman which never see the sun. 9 Before your pots can feel the fire of thorns He will sweep them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike.

Now, what I want you to do here is to just see the word pictures, the metaphors, the similes that he's using here. He talks about shattering their teeth; the fangs of young lions. He uses water as one of his illustrations. Arrows as another illustration. Like a snail, like a miscarriage, like a pot where the fire goes out. All of that just to help you see that in rapid-fire succession he is using a number of different illustrations to give voice to the prayer that he is making to God to deal with these wicked rulers. He's making illustrations here.

And what is it that these illustrations are saying? Well, look at verse 6 with me again. "O God, shatter their teeth in their mouth; Break out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD," Yahweh, faithful covenant keeping God. Let's put it this way: a lion needs its teeth to rip its prey. It needs its teeth to be able to chew and to attack its prey. Young lions without teeth aren't able to do that. They are defanged. They are virtually rendered powerless. If they were to lose their teeth, they would lose the source of their defense and their attack. Why does David say that here? In that prayer David is asking the Lord to remove the power of these wicked judges so that they're not able to carry out their wickedness in fact. "God, if you remove their ability to do it, then they're just going to be gnawing on

something without getting anywhere. Make it so that they don't get anywhere, God," is what he's saying here. "Remove the effectiveness of their evil intentions. Take away their power to carry it out."

In verse 7 it's a similar kind of prayer. Think of these five illustrations as like spokes on a bike wheel rolling out, all radiating out from the same hub, saying similar things in their intent. In verse 7 he says, "Let them flow away like water that runs off." Well, you know what that's like on a hot summer day, you spray the sidewalk and the water is there for a moment but it dissipates quickly and things are back to the original state. The water just runs off or if water is running down the street after a rainstorm, it goes but it doesn't stay. It's just gone soon enough, quickly enough. David is saying, "God, let them be like water that evaporates on a hot day. Let them dissolve away from their place of power and have no effect when it's gone, when they're gone." Then he goes and he says, "let them be like headless shafts of arrows."

All of a sudden you start to get the picture of what he's saying, right? Lions without teeth, no power. Water that dissipates, it's here today and gone the next moment. A headless arrow, a broken arrow, you know what that's like far better than I do some of you. You take the head off an arrow and shoot it and what's it going to do? It's just going to flutter around and just fall to the ground harmlessly. It's not going to go anywhere. All David is saying here is, "God, act by your sovereign power so that the wickedness that they intend, O God, God, I pray that the wickedness that they intend would flutter away and fall to the ground harmlessly without getting anywhere near the target." I love the picturesque nature of this poem.

So David is asking God in this prayer, having pictured the wicked judges, now in this prayer he's asking God to make these men pass away so that they leave nothing of their intended evil behind; that there is nothing that follows them in their wake that would show success to the wicked plans that they had conceived of.

Look at verse 8. He continues on. Those of you that are a bit more squeamish in nature could get kind of grossed out maybe by the picture of cobras and snails and that kind of stuff, but that's alright. Verse 8, "Let them be as a snail which melts away as it goes along." What appears to happen when you watch a snail going along on a sidewalk, it appears that he's simply wasting away as he slowly moves along. It looks like, from human perspective, it looks like he's just dissolving along the way. He's saying in similar way, he's saying, "God, just let this dissolve. Slow them down and just let it all come to naught. Don't let them leave anything behind."

Then he uses a more poignant picture at the end of verse 8. Look at it with me in verse 8 when he says, "Like the miscarriages of a woman which never see the sun." And I comment on this with a measure of restraint and compassion for those of you that have lost children to miscarriages. This verse does not diminish the compassion of God for those that have felt that sorrow in their lives but David isn't writing as a pastor here addressing those who have gone through the sorrow of losing a baby. He's writing as one who sees wickedness at high levels of society and is explaining to God what it is that he's

asking to be done and the miscarriage gives him a picture to give. A miscarriage, a miscarried baby does not have the opportunity from a human perspective, an earthly perspective, to do anything productive in life. It is simply an illustration, it is simply a being, a human being that did not have opportunity to do anything with the very brief life that was given to it. What David is saying is, "God, let those men be like that. Let their wicked schemes be like that. Oh, they might conceive the deed but let it never come to fruition. Let it never have any productivity to what they intended to do, O God. Let them be as though they never were, just like a miscarriage, never lived out a human life." So you get the picture, right? Stark and yet there is a clarity in what David is saying here. "God, they are intent on wickedness. Work in a way that makes it go away."

Now, commentators struggle to translate and interpret verse 9. Look at verse 9 with me. You can find a variety of ways that this is translated and we won't go into all of it here this evening. Verse 9, "Before your pots can feel the fire of thorns He will sweep them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike." The idea is this: picture a campfire, those of you that like camping, picture a pot of meat over a campfire and the fire has just barely been lit and a whirlwind comes and blows the fuel away. The fire never gets hot enough to do any cooking and you're left simply with the uncooked meat. There is nothing productive in it. You can't eat it. You can't use it. You can't do anything with it. Once again, you see the picture. The time building that fire was wasted. What David is saying is, "God, let all of their efforts and designs toward wickedness be wasted. Let all of the energy that they put into that trying to get something productive for themselves out of the wickedness, Father, let it be wasted. Let it just go completely – watch this, theological term coming up here – Lord, let it go completely to pot." That's right, I said that. "Just let it go to waste, God. Don't let there be anything fruitful come from it. God, don't let them finish what they've started."

What a great prayer for you personally when people are plotting evil against you and you know it; when you know that there are designs of people who have authority over you, who makes threats against you, to be able to simply look beyond that and without any sense of fear or trepidation simply look up to your God who is faithful, look up to your God who is powerful and able to do all that he promises, look up to your God who works all things together for good for those who love him and are called according to his purpose, to look beyond the person and to look up to the throne and say, "God, don't let this go anywhere. Just let it all fizzle out like wet fireworks on the Fourth of July." And to have the confidence in your God that he'll hear your prayer and he'll answer and you walk out from your prayer closet confident and renewed and saying, "My life is in my God's hands and that's all I need to know."

What's the ultimate point of this Psalm? What is this Psalm teaching us about the nature of God? Let's sift through the metaphors and sift through the strong prayers and get to the point of what David knew to be true about God and how that drove his prayer. What is this Psalm saying? What this Psalm 58 is saying is: God is a God of holy justice. God is righteous and he is not indifferent to the evil plans and evil schemes of men. He is not passive and indifferent when wicked people threaten harm against his own and therefore this Psalm teaches us that we have biblical grounds to appeal to our God to frustrate their

wickedness when we see it unfolding in earthly life. When we see wicked leaders pulling out the stops to accomplish wickedness, to take society in a sinful direction, we have biblical grounds to say, "God, defang them. Take away their power. Stop them. Hinder them. Don't let this go forward."

And in your own personal life when you're under the threat of wicked people to go and to trust your God enough and to leave your case with him, not to take vengeance into your own hands, not to live in fear, not to retaliate or anything like that, just to say, "God, you see what's going on here. I ask you to deal with it and I'm going to trust you and I'm going to leave it with you. I don't need to take matters into my own hands, O God. I appeal to you and that is enough." And we all groan under the weight of the prevalence of evil men; we groan under the weight of what our own wicked justices in the United States have done over years gone by. We groan under that and as months turn into years and years turn into decades under the wicked reign of it all, you might be tempted to give up, to say, "What's the point? There is no outcome that can help here." And when that comes, beloved, what you need to do is to remember that Scripture speaks plainly of a coming judgment that will right the wrongs that God does not prevent in the course of time.

You know, and it's not just America. There are others that have suffered under wicked regimes, aren't there? There are those that have lost their property and lost their loved ones under the hands of despots who were happy to carry out their wickedness with no human recourse to it, and that which families gave generations to, taken away from them. Yeah, there's an appeal to God at times like that. There is an appeal to God and we remember that there is a coming judgment, beloved, that will right the wrongs of earth; that God because he is holy, because he is just, he will not tolerate the evil forever. There will be a time of accounting. There will be a day of reckoning that comes and we trust in that and we rest in that and we look to that and we find our comfort in that even when there doesn't seem to be answers in time in earth.

And David takes us there in our third point here when he talks about the prediction of satisfaction. The prediction of satisfaction. We saw the picture of unrighteous judges, we saw the prayer for judgment, and now briefly we're going to see the prediction of satisfaction. And before I read verse 10, let me just say this: that once again Scripture cuts against modern sensibilities, and I love that about God's word. Verse 10 of Psalm 58 says,

10 The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

Wow. That's severe but let's give some biblical perspective to it so that we would understand it rightly. When God judges the earth, when God brings his day of judgment to pass, he will throw down Satan. Revelation 20 says that Satan will be cast into the abyss never to be recovered again. When God brings his judgment, he will cast down evil men, he will cast down evil rulers who have sinned and abused their authority and there will be a great final accounting of a fearsome measure of judgment that eye has not yet seen nor ear has not yet heard. And beloved, what this teaches us is that God allows the

injustice for a time and we may not see the correction of it in our lifetime but always come back to who your God is. Always come back to the fact that God is a God of righteousness, he's a God of holy justice, he is a God of infinite holiness, and he will not trifle with those who violate his law and abuse their positions of authority.

Final judgment – mark it – final judgment will prove it. There will be a vindication. There will be a righting of every wrong. And Scripture speaks of true believers in Matthew 5:6 as those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Well, beloved, I know that for most of you in here, those of you that know our Lord Jesus Christ, this is true of every one of you, that in your heart there is a hunger and a thirst, there is a desire for righteousness. You might struggle personally with sin but you hate it in your own heart. You hate seeing the manifestation of evil in the world around you. You feel the weight of that. You groan under it. And yet in your heart there is this unquenchable desire that all of the frustration can't put out that is desiring for it to be right in the end. Well, do you know what? When the final chapter is written, your thirst will be satisfied. Your hunger will be filled. We will stand and watch, somehow we will see the display of God's judgment and his righteous vindication of his holiness and every earthly wrong will be called to account that has not been washed away in individual lives by the blood of Christ.

There is no getting away with sin. Those who have perpetrated wickedness will pay the consequences of it and the picture of bathing our feet in their blood is bold. It is contrary to the tolerant spirit of our age but what it is saying is this: that those of us who love righteousness are going to rejoice when God's justice is done and not out of a sense of personal retaliation against those who have done it, we are going to be glad that God is proven to be who he is. David is speaking in a word picture anyway, we are going to be glad that God has fulfilled his promise to his people when he said, "Justice will be done." When we see justice fulfilled, we're going to rejoice when it is.

Let me add one other thought or two to this. I'm not asking you to turn there, if you turn to Isaiah 63 you would find that God expresses the fact that he's appalled that no one will actually go with him to judgment. Turn over to Revelation 14. It's Isaiah 63:3 and 6 which I'm alluding to just in all too brief passing. But what we're saying here is that Scripture portrays God and portrays him carrying out justice in a way that men will die as a result of it and if we love God, we love his justice and we do not shrink back or speak against the fact that he's going to judge the world this way.

Revelation 14:19, "So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles." That sounds really severe and it is but, beloved, before we accuse God of injustice for spilling blood of wicked men, shouldn't we remember what God himself has done in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ? Think about it this way, beloved: did not the Lord Jesus Christ spill his own blood for the sake of those who would repent of their wickedness? Did not Christ shed his own blood to save sinners who had rebelled against him? God is no stranger to

bloodshed. Christ shed his own blood for us. Having shed his own blood in mercy, is it not just for him to require blood from those who sin against him and refuse to repent? Let there never be an accusation of injustice against God for bringing justice upon those who have rebelled against him.

Psalm 58 closes with an encouragement for us to wait patiently on the Lord. Look at verse 11 with me.

11 And men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; Surely there is a God who judges on earth!"

David having walked through the present condition of wickedness in the leadership around him, David having prayed to God and illustrating, "God, stop them! Make it all come to nothing!" ends on a note of hope and confidence as he says, "God is going to bring an end to this injustice and we will see it and rejoice," so that the wickedness around us, the pressure of that, as it were, lifts our chin up and makes us look upward to our God and we remember who he is, a God of holiness, a God of justice. And that reminds us that there is a time, that God is still sovereign over all the evil in the world and he will bring it to a conclusion and he will make it right in the end. And those of us who have trusted in Christ will be on the safe side of that judgment and we will see it and we will rejoice. All of the angst of the present day, of the present age, will be temporary and will yield itself over into glad satisfaction at the exertion of God's justice on the wicked.

If you're in Christ, find your comfort in that certainty and until then while we wait in the interim, wait patiently until God does what is right in his own time.

Let's pray together.

Father, as you know so well, we groan under the weight of the wickedness of this world and of the sorrow that sin brings into our own lives. Father, we've seen injustice over the course of history, we see it in our own time, sometimes we see it from time to time in our own lives. Father, for those that are in that sticky mud that they're trying to walk through, grant grace to them; lift their feet up, as it were, and place them on solid ground that they would walk in confidence of your goodness. And Father, as we think of those who are wicked and those who are outside of Christ, we pray first of all, especially as New Testament believers, that you would have mercy on them and that you would save them just as you did us; that the end of their wickedness would be found in salvation in Christ and a new nature imparted in them by the work of the Holy Spirit. Yes, Lord, we would pray to that end, but if men refuse to repent, Father, make all of their wicked plans come to nothing, to disappear into the air like the fog mist that fades away in morning and leaves the bright sunshine in its place. And comfort your people along the way, Father, that we would not lose heart but that we would always be confident in our God and confident in your ability to rule and superintend the world and to bring it all to right conclusions when you say it's time. We give these things all to you in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

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