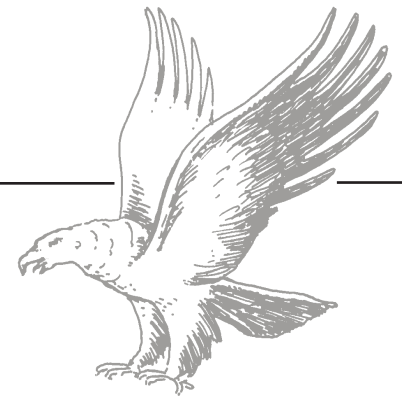


Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



June 4, 2017

Where Does Justice Come From?

Regardless of our political, religious, or philosophical leanings, all of us believe in the concept of justice. But few of us stop to consider where that universal awareness comes from.

“The Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him” (Isa. 30:18).

“I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet” (Isa. 28:17).

“Who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of justice?” (Isa. 40:14).



The Hebrew word for justice used in these verses (*mishpat*) carries the idea of judgment rendered in a legal proceeding. More importantly, it is a judgment that is *correct* or *right*. Justice is the foundation of every stable human society. People cannot live together in peace unless there is a prevailing understanding that everyone is treating each other with basic standards of fairness and integrity. That’s why the concept of “human rights” forms the foundation of every attempt to build an orderly society (see: the Declaration of Independence, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, etc.).

Humans seem to be born with an innate sense of justice. Even little children learn early how to complain,

“That’s not fair!” when something doesn’t go their way. They understand when they are being mistreated, and they don’t like it. (The parents’ job, of course, is to get them to respect that same natural desire for fair play in others, too.)

But where does this universal longing for justice come from?

For all their screaming about justice, today’s social justice warriors generally have no firm bedrock upon which to base their demands. Most of those in positions of power (who therefore are empowered to enforce standards of justice) do not believe in God or an objective standard of right and wrong. In such a climate, “justice” has become whatever those at the top say it is. That’s why governments often operate with such arbitrary and oppressive power.

But if governments of men cannot be trusted to define and defend justice, we’re left in a quandary. Is justice determined by the majority? Or by whoever wields the most power? Or is there some outside, higher law to which all human beings are subject, and by which all can be judged? And who makes that law?

The answer is: *God*. As Isaiah noted, no one had to teach God the path of justice, because God *IS* justice; it is in His very character. It is God who “makes justice the measuring line” to which all of us are held accountable.

But if God is so just, why is this world so unjust? Why doesn’t God step in and fix all the oppression and misery? Oh, He will fix it—in His own time. Instead of criticizing how He runs His universe, we ought to ponder where our concept of oppression and misery came from. If the whole universe (including us) is nothing more than a blind accident with no purpose or meaning, then any feelings of “justice” or “oppression” we might have are just that: human feelings that have no greater significance than what we attach to them. *In the absence of God, there is no justice*, because there is no “right” or “wrong.” Life just is, and we have no grounds for complaining.

Of course, there is another option. We can recognize God as the First Cause of all things and ourselves as creatures made in His image, having an awareness of justice imprinted on our souls.

– David King



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