**“Justice”**

Psalm 121

Genesis 32:22-30

2 Timothy 3:14—4:5

**Luke 18:1-8**

 Pentecost 19, Oct. 15/16, 2022

Jesus said: “Will not God give justice to His elect, who cry to Him day and night? Will He delay long over them? I tell you, He **will** give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, **will He** find faith on earth?”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**Bridge**

Literally, “justice” means **justified “vengeance”** and even a **deserved “revenge”**. Christ Jesus, Himself, wields a “**two-edged** sword” from His mouth, and that’s His Word (as the Book of Revelation tells us) and one of those edges is the justice of **judgment** which is **appropriate (justified) and correct (deserved)**. A “widow” (from the parable of Jesus) demanded a judge judged vengeance or “justice against an adversary”, and Jesus responded that, **from the Father**, a **gracious “justice to His elect” is to be had**. See, the **other edge of the Lord’s “two-edged sword” (His Word)** is **Gospel (grace)**: **justified “vengeance”** that’s **satisfied in Him** and **deserved “revenge” doled out** on **His flesh not deserving it**. It’s **“justification” (or “loving justice”) purchased with precious blood divine and gifted to anyone receiving it as needed and wanted … it’s given “by grace through faith …**

**Text**

**…** yet, Jesus said, **will “FAITH IN THAT” be found by the Son of Man “in His coming”?** The only obstacle to gaining the gift of a **merciful “justice”** instead of **what it** **would be without mercy** is our knowledge of our need for it and desire to have the gift of it.

Pure “justice” **IS** **fair by definition and intent**, largely upheld objectively, and appropriately. But in this world fallen we know that (even with that **intent**) it’s **doled out subjectively** … and that according to the character of **who the** **judge is**. Promises of intention get made by judges, which is no guarantee but promised to try and keep objectively (as much as character keeps to those promises) **“justice” is** **equitably provided** …

… and “the **wages** (or **end result**) of sin is **death**” as **God’s always told us (His Word speaking truth about that)**, saying, “All other trees in the garden are available as food, but **if you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** you **will die**” and, so, the system of **“just” and “fair” equity** demands differing ends upon differing actions. The **end results are “just” and “fair” to the actions**. In the truthful doctrine of the faith about this choice of activity, there is a fair and just **doctrine of sin**: **IT kills if you are guilty of any little bit of IT and you deserve the death no matter whatever little bit of IT you do**.

So what is **that** “**faith**” that Jesus demands “finding” in His coming? An **accurate awareness of sin and an appropriate or GIFTED “justice” upon it**. **“The faith” is just that (pro or con)**. Gracious “justice” is where Jesus “came to save sinners honest and acknowledging / listening and repentant”. **He provided (Himself) the sacrifice, suffering** **in His human existence was so the Heavenly Father could provide mercy in “justice”**. “**Christ died for sin … and, in that, Christ died for me**”. In receiving that, “the faith” is what it receives. And **will THAT be found on this earth … among us … where will it be found?**

And doubtless **you all** know this and are those “sinners” He saved by, yourselves, knowing you (by yourself) deserve the **penalty for that sin** and yet have heard the Gospel of the God’s Son assuming into Himself that penalty and that “**FOR US / YOU” / AND IT / THAT “SAVING YOU**” with God’s promise of it delivered by His own Words known trustworthy and as “justice” offered in **love by God for you**, Him sending His Son to die **in your place**, **baptizing you, then, into that action** and **gifting a continuance of that in the graciousness of regular forgiveness and renewal as you repentant**. And **that’s** **received and heard** **in joy as Good News spoken over and over into our ears**, and then **fed into you** **with the Supper of Jesus’ body and blood in bread and wine**. **You are (through baptism and THAT FAITH) on the gracious and THANKFUL side of God’s mercy (and aware of your need for it / your lostness if it weren’t given to you)**. You **know** the Father’s “justice” and **enjoy that** (not perfectly, of course, but again, repentantly) and **love hearing His commitments to forgive and reinstate you every time you come to Him**.

**Many**, however, **aren’t aware of this**: either **have** **not heard of it** or **have not believed the gift of the God’s fair and yet gracious-to-followers “justice”** (the **demand for death with sin yet it not doled-out onto repentant believers / the “elect” since that death got doled out on Jesus**). Some (having heard this) don’t think God **serious about “justice”** or oblivious to His expectation of **perfect obedience** that humanity knew to live up to.

The “widow” of Jesus’ parable **unwittingly fell upon it**: “Give **me** justice against my adversary” which (in the grand scheme of things) is sin, death, and the devil, not earthly things. She was **pesky for JUSTICE, AT LEAST IN NAME** so bugged an even non-Godly judge for it, gaining, at least, an earthly form of it: “though **I** neither fear God nor respect man, yet because **this widow** keeps bothering me, I will give her justice **in my earthly capacity to grant it** … so that **she will not beat me down by her continual coming**”.

Thus we have a **visual for the persistence and aggressively-sought determination for justice even from God**. It’s here and in Jacob’s physical match of wrestling for it (arm-to-arm in combat) **for the blessing of God, insisting to know Him and demanding finally (in the consummation of the event)**: **“Bless me!”** ….

And Jesus says that the Father will: “will not **God** **give justice to His elect, who cry to Him day and night?** **Will He delay long over them?**” And the answer is “**NO, HE WON’T**”. “I tell you” (and it’s **the Lord’s Word again that’s promising** so able to be **heard and relied upon and thankfully received as “the faith” that He wants to see**), **“I tell you the Father will give justice to His elect, those baptized into that covenant of promise and believing in “the faith”) … and He’ll give that “justice” SPEEDILY**.

**Application**

“Justice” is **truth, both good and bad, yet always honest and fair**. One thing missing from the English translation of what Jesus wants to find on this earth is “**THE** **faith**”. We live in a “**Post-Modern**” time where “faith” (without that “definite article”, “**the**”, that’s in the original text) gets defined **individually** as “A faith” of choice (how we’d each, individually, define it. Authority and “truth” then (“justice”) is thought **relative** and not expected as **fair** but **subjective and so, maybe, only “useful” at best**. But “faith”, Jesus says, needs to be identified. In **WHAT** do we have faith? One needs, always, to finish sentence …

… but Scripture notes that **sinful tendency**: “Nevertheless”, Jesus said, “when the Son of Man comes, **will He find THE faith on earth?”** And that’s **the question … the only one in this text**.

If there’s a leave-behind from these texts, hear about it in the clear instructions of Paul to Timothy on “THE FAITH” Jesus wants to “find on earth”. There’s 2 paragraphs of specifics which I don’t read it aloud again yet **you have it (so do take it home and “wrestle with it”, deliberating on God’s “justice” insisted upon as “THE FAITH” in Law and Gospel**. Truth / “justice” is **not relative** but expressed through Scripture that’s “God-breathed” so **certain and** **fair** as, by the way, it's always been (the Words and actions of God).

**We gather** to **acknowledge and submit to that very thing**. It is “**Thy** **kingdom** that we want to **come and be and author us** … and **that** here on earth as it is in Heaven”. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”