

# God is Righteous/Just

## Points to Consider

1. What Does it Mean that God is Righteous
2. God's Righteousness Demands a Payment for Sin
3. There is Hope

## What Does It Mean?

**Righteous** - ...in the broad sense, the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness; the condition acceptable to God (from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, PC Study Bible)

God's Righteousness? What standard does He have to live up to in order to be "as he ought to be?"  
Is God righteous because He does the right things or are things right because God does them?

**Deut 32:1-4** *"Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. 2 Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass. 3 For I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God. 4 He is the Rock, **His work is perfect**; For all **His ways are justice**, A **God of truth and without injustice**; **Righteous** and **upright** is He.* NKJV

Moses gives the Children of Israel a song to remind them that God is **perfect**, just, truth, righteous and upright.

God does not submit to a standard of righteousness because He **is** righteous. He is the standard!

**Ps 119:137** *Righteous are You, O Lord, and upright are Your judgments. 138 Your testimonies, which You have commanded, Are righteous and very faithful. 139 My zeal has consumed me, because my enemies have forgotten Your words. 140 Your word is very pure; Therefore, Your servant loves it. 141 I am small and despised, Yet I do not forget Your precepts. 142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth. 143 Trouble and anguish have overtaken me, Yet Your commandments are my delights. 144 The righteousness of Your testimonies is everlasting; Give me understanding, and I shall live.* NKJV

The psalmist declares that God's righteousness is **everlasting**, so His judgments are upright, His word is pure and His law is truth.

**Ps 19:7-11** *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, And in keeping them there is great reward.* NKJV

The **judgments** of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

**Prov 28:5** *Evil men do not understand justice, But those who seek the Lord understand all.* NKJV

Richard Strauss - While the most common Old Testament word for just means 'straight,' and the New Testament word means 'equal,' in a moral sense they both mean 'right.' When we say that God is just, we are saying that He always does what is right, what should be done, and that He does it consistently, without partiality or prejudice. The word 'just' and the word 'righteous' are identical in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Sometimes the translators render the original word 'just' and other times 'righteous'

with no apparent reason (cf. [Nehemiah 9:8](#) and 9:33 where the same word is used). But whichever word they use, it means essentially the same thing. It has to do with God's actions. They are always right and fair. God's righteousness (or justice) is the natural expression of His holiness. If He is infinitely pure, then He must be opposed to all sin, and that opposition to sin must be demonstrated in His treatment of His creatures. When we read that God is righteous or just, we are being assured that His actions toward us are in perfect agreement with His holy nature.

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A.W. Tozier said it this way, *"It is sometimes said, 'Justice requires God to do this,' referring to some act we know He will perform. This is an error of thinking as well as of speaking, for it postulates a principle of justice outside of God which compels Him to act in a certain way. Of course there is no such principle. If there were it would be superior to God, for only a superior power can compel obedience. The truth is that there is not and can never be anything outside of the nature of God which can move Him in the least degree. All God's reasons come from within His uncreated being. Nothing has entered the being of God from eternity, nothing has been removed, and nothing has been changed.*

*Justice, when used of God, is a name we give to the way God is, nothing more; and when God acts justly He is not doing so to conform to an independent criterion, but simply acting like Himself in a given situation. . . God is His own self-existent principle of moral equity, and when He sentences evil men or rewards the righteous, He simply acts like Himself from within, uninfluenced by anything that is not Himself."*

## God's Righteousness Demands a Payment for Sin

**Gen 6:5-8** *Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.* NKJV

God's righteousness meant that the extreme wickedness of man had to be punished. In His righteousness, He destroyed man from the face of the earth.

**Gen 6:9-12** *This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.* NKJV

In direct contrast to the wickedness of most men, Noah was just. He was right with God.

**Gen 18:16-24** *Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. 17 And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, 18 since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? 19 For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." 20 And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, 21 I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know." 22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord. 23 And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" NKJV*

God chose Abraham so He could teach his children the way of the Lord which included doing righteousness and justice.

Abraham appealed to God's justice by asking Him, "Would you also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" God was righteous when he **destroyed** Sodom. He was righteous when he allowed Lot to **escape**. He was righteous when he turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt.

**Gen 15:12-16** *Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."* NKJV

It was right for God to **wait** until the iniquity of the Amorites was complete before He sent Israel in to destroy them and take their land.

When God sent the Israelites into the land and told them to kill everyone, including women and children, He was **just**.

God was righteous and just **every** time He punished people in the Old Testament.

**Matt 7:21-23** *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"*

Jesus **clearly** communicated that those who do the will of His father will be saved, not those who think they are doing His will.

**Matt 12:33-37** *"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."* NKJV

We will give account for every word we speak. Our words will justify us or condemn us.

**Matt 13:40-43** *Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* NKJV

Jesus said that those who practice lawlessness will be cast into a furnace of **fire**, but the righteous will shine in the kingdom of God.

**Acts 17:30** *Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.* NKJV

God has appointed a day on which He will **judge** the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ.

**1 Peter 4:3** *For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they*

*think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. 5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*

God will judge the living and the dead.

**Acts 5:1-11** *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. 6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. 7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." 9 Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." 10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. 11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things. NKJV*

God was just when he struck Ananias and Sapphira dead for lying.

## There is Hope!

**Rom 3:9** *What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. 10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." NKJV*

None of us is righteous on our own.

**Rom 3:21-26** *But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. NKJV*

We are justified by the blood of Jesus Christ!

The Just One paid the price for my sins by having His Son die for them.

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