

The Avenger—“*Shall not God avenge his own elect?*”

Luke 18:1-8 (text v. 7)

This parable is commonly called “the parable of the unjust judge” (v. 6). Jesus asks a couple of questions in this parable (vs. 7-8).

We see five important truths taught in this parable.

➡ **It teaches something about...**

I. The COMING of Christ (v. 8).

- A. The SETTING is Christ’s teaching about His second coming for Israel at the end of the tribulation period. [It is not about Christ’s rapture of the church.] The context is what it will be like before He returns to set up His Kingdom (cf. 17:22-37 cf. v. 8).
 1. The ones being avenged are God’s “*own ELECT*” (v. 7). These are Jews in the Tribulation (Isa. 45:4; 65:9; Mt. 24:22).
 2. Those who refuse to take the mark of the beast will be beheaded (Rev. 20:4). Their souls continually cry out to God to be avenged (Rev. 6:9-11). At the end of tribulation period Christ will return and avenge them *speedily* (Dt. 32:41-43 cf. Rev. 18:20; 19:2-3).
- B. The SURENESS of His coming. Not “if” He comes, but “**WHEN the Son of Man cometh...**” Our lives should be lived accordingly.
- C. The SEARCH at Christ’s coming (v. 8). Will He find faith when He returns? The implied answer is, “not much” (cf. 17:26-30). Eight people were saved in Noah's day, and only four out of Sodom. Instead of faith, we have apostasy today (1 Tim. 4:1).

➡ **It teaches something about...**

II. The CONTINUITY of prayer (v. 1).

- A. Prayer keeps us from fainting spiritually. Someone who faints has stopped praying.
 - The word “*faint*” describes a believer who is about to give up. I remember a couple of times when I fainted. It is the most helpless feeling I have ever experienced. I could feel myself passing out, but I couldn't do anything to stop it!

- That's what it is like *"to faint"* spiritually. You begin to get weak until you eventually lose "spiritual consciousness."
- B. What did Jesus mean, *"men ought **always to pray?**"* It is similar to Paul's exhortation to *"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing."* You ask, "How can I "always rejoice?" The answer is "always pray." The more you pray, the more you will rejoice.
1. *"Pray without ceasing"* doesn't mean to spend all your time on your knees or go around "saying" prayers.
 2. It means maintain an attitude of prayer in everything you do. Live constantly in an environment or atmosphere of prayer.
 3. Prayer should be as natural as breathing. Prayer is our spiritual breath. We breathe without thinking much about it. As we breathe without ceasing, so we pray without ceasing.
 4. It is living in unbroken communion and fellowship with the Lord. It is having your mind stayed on God (Isa. 26:3), at your job... in school... doing your housework... mowing your lawn... driving in your car, etc..
 5. *"Continue in prayer"* (Col. 4:2). Prayer is more than saying words. Prayer must come from the heart. In 1 Samuel 1, Hannah prayed without saying a word out loud.

HUMOR: A mother was tucking her four year old into bed. As the little girl said her "good night" prayers her voice became very soft and faint. Then she finally said, "Amen." Her mother gave her a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I could not hear a word you prayed." Her daughter answered, "That's okay, Mama... I wasn't talking to you."

6. Communication is the "life blood" of any relationship. When the communication is restricted, like the flow of blood being restricted from a part of our body, it will become numb. We must keep the lines of communication open between us and God 24/7.
 - So, take your choice: **Pray or faint.**

➡ It teaches something about...

III. The CRUELTY of our adversary (vs. 2-5)

- A. The WRONGED widow. Her husband has died and she was done wrong. Widows were particularly vulnerable to being cheated. God gives some severe warnings about the treatment of widows. Jesus rebuked those who "*devour widows' houses*" (Mt. 23:14). The early church was serious about the care of Christian widows (Acts 6:1; 1 Tim. 5:3-10; James 1:27).
- B. The WICKED adversary. We don't know exactly what the adversary did. Someone probably swindled her out of the property her deceased husband left her. The widow was seeking the judge to have the property restored to her.
 - Practically, the widow pictures God's people, who have suffered at the hand of our Adversary—The Devil (1 Pet. 5:8).

➡ It teaches something about...

IV. The CRY for justice (vs. 5-7).

- A. The COMING of the widow. This poor widow kept nagging and hounding the judge to avenge her of the wrong that was done to her. In spite of being put off she keep coming (v. 5).
- B. The COLDNESS of the judge.
 1. His lack of **concern**.
 - a) The judge was unconcerned about justice. He is called "unjust." The main concern of any judge should be to make sure justice is done in society. Sadly, such is not the case in too many court rooms today. Cases drag on because unscrupulous judges are only concerned about their own selfish interests.
 - b) The judge was not angered about injustice. Someone who was cheated did not upset him. When courts lose their indignation towards evil and compassion for the victim, cases will drag on, or be pushed aside and ignored. That explains so much of the problems with our courts today.

Gambling, abortion, homosexuality, and other crimes hardly concern most people today.

2. His lack of **compassion**.

- a) The judge was unmoved by the widow's plea. It did not bother him that she was a victim of a crime. The reason for his lack of compassion was (1) he had no *reverence* for God and (2) no *respect* or *regard* for others. These two things usually go hand-in-hand. Since he did not care about God and he didn't care about her either.
- b) But, because of this widow's continual coming he finally relented and avenged her of her adversary.

C. The CONTRAST to the Lord.

- Some parables teach a spiritual truth by *comparison* (cf. Mt. 13). Other parables teach a truth by way of *contrast*. Jesus uses this parable of the unjust judge to make a *contrast*.
 - Jesus was NOT comparing God to the unjust judge. Instead, He was *contrasting* the unjust judge to God. God is nothing like this unjust judge.
 - God is JUST... God CARES... God is COMPASSIONATE. God *does* regard man and *will* always do what is right.
1. God doesn't need to be pressured... pestered... or persuaded. If God does not answer immediately, that doesn't mean He must be continually prodded or coerced to answer. God will respond speedily when the timing is right.
 2. When we continually nag God to do something He is already aware of, we are saying, in effect, "*If God were just, He would answer me now... if He were just, I wouldn't have to keep begging Him to act.*"
 - Would you want God to answer you because you AGGRAVATED Him? Do you want God to give you something only because you wore Him out with your nagging? Not me!

3. Ask yourself, “Do I care more about my need than God cares? Is my situation more important to me than it is to God?” Maybe it is. In that case you need to shift your priorities.
 - But in most cases you will find God is well aware of your circumstance and will act according to His will and in His timing. You must simply believe as Abraham, “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” If you believe that, say “Amen!” “*Shall not God avenge his own elect?*” Amen! Yes He will!

➡ It teaches something about...

V. The CERTAINTY of God’s vengeance (v. 8– “...HE WILL...”).

- A. The ASSURANCE of the avenging. Nothing is more certain than the “*He will*” or “*I will*” of God. When God says “*He will*” do something, you can rest upon His promise.
 1. “**God is an avenger.** 2 Samuel 22:48; Psalm 18:47—“*It is God that avengeth me.*” Romans 12:19—“*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves... for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*”
 2. It is not our place to avenge ourselves when we are wronged. We must commit our case to God, the righteous judge, and trust Him to render justice.
- B. The ABRUPTNESS of the answer. “*Speedily*” does not refer to the waiting time before God answers, but the *suddenness* of His answer when it does come.
 - God’s answer may not come soon enough to your liking. God operates according to His schedule. He waits for the exact moment before He responds. He’s never late. Rest assured, the answer will come, and when it does it will come suddenly (cf Acts 1:4; 2:1-2).

SUMMATION: In my 40+ years of ministry, I’ve done many weddings and wedding rehearsals. Wedding rehearsals are not among my favorite duties as a pastor. Rehearsals seldom start on time, usually because someone is late.

At one rehearsal, the bride was 30 minutes late. Everyone was getting restless, except the groom. He calmly waited. He confidently said, “She will come.” He was waiting, not in order to make her come. He waited knowing she would come.

Jesus said, “*Shall not God avenge his own elect, though he bear long with them? I tell you that **he will** avenge them speedily.*” So, we patiently wait on God, not to make Him answer any sooner, but we wait knowing HE WILL ANSWER... *SPEEDILY!*”

As the song goes—“*He’s an On-Time God!*”