



When Judges Pervert Justice

When one reads through the Old Testament prophets one picks up on the theme that judges ought to be righteous in their judgments. Isaiah pleads with them: "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isaiah 1:17). Jeremiah scolds them: "They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge" (Jeremiah 5:28). Micah preaches to them:

Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. (Micah 3:9-12)

When we think of the standard for Moses recalls setting the

standard for righteous judgment in Deuteronomy 1:16, "And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him." Moses also tells us that the point of having judges to begin with is to uphold that which is right and condemn that which is wrong. He writes, "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the



righteous, and condemn the wicked" (Deuteronomy 25:1). Seemingly more and more, however, judges in our country are condemning the righteous and justifying the wicked. Indeed, if a judge does not judge righteously then state corruption and anarchy are the ultimate results.

Lest we think that judges in our country are blameless in this regard, consider the case of Robert Harlan, a man convicted of rape and murder in Colorado 10 years ago. During the sentencing phase, the judge in the case instructed the

jury to make an "individual moral assessment." Taking this to heart, several jurors researched Bible passages and discussed them with other jurors during deliberation. Based upon these deliberations, the man was sentenced to death. Recently, however, the Colorado Supreme Court reviewed the case and found (by a vote of 3 to 2) that the jurors had acted improperly in so consulting the Bible. The man's sentence was changed to life without parole simply because the jurors consulted the Bible in making their own "individual moral assessment." Is this justifying the righteous and condemning the wicked? It is just the opposite.

In contrast, consider the case over which America has been gripped this past week, Terri Schiavo. Here is a woman who could have lived and been cared for by parents who loved her, but because of the actions of one man and many judges, was starved to death over a period of twelve days. What kind of judge would allow someone to take food and water away from the weak, needy, and defenseless? In contrast to a man guilty of murder who will now live the rest of his natural life and be cared for at the expense of the taxpayer, this woman was, more or less, sentenced to death simply because she was disabled and could not express her desire to live. Even noted liberal Jesse Jackson said, "I feel so pas-

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“This is a moral issue and it transcends politics and family disputes.”
(Jesse Jackson)

sionate about this injustice being done, how unnecessary it is to deny her a feeding tube, water, not even ice to be used for her parched lips." He then said, "This is a moral issue and it transcends politics and family disputes." I couldn't agree with him more, yet the judges that reviewed this case and intervened in this situation failed to see what Jackson clearly saw, namely, that we have a moral obligation to help, not destroy, the weak. Again we ask, is this justifying the righteous and condemning the wicked? It obviously is not!

David understood the potential havoc that a corrupt judiciary could wreak upon a nation. He wrote about it in Psalm 82. David pleads for justice, but ultimately concludes that in the face of wicked judges, God will ultimately judge a nation. (Please note that "the gods" in this passage refers to Israel's judiciary.)

God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

What will happen if our judges continue to condemn the righteous and justify the wicked? God says through Jeremiah, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a

nation as this?" (Jeremiah 5:29). I'm afraid for our country and what God will do to her should we continue on the course that our judiciary is currently taking us and God would be right in so destroying us if that's where we're headed.

Kevin Cauley



A Prayer for Righteousness

Heavenly Father, keep our nation pure by giving us judges that will discern between right and wrong. Help our elected officials appoint and confirm judges who will defend the weak and helpless. And give us a heart and spirit to show love and mercy we beg in Jesus name, amen.



Bible Studies for the week of April 3rd, 2005

- AM Sermon..... The Issues of Life
- Scripture Reading..... Proverbs 4:23
- PM Sermon..... Ephraim Grieving
- Scripture Reading..... Jeremiah 31:
- Sunday Class The Book of Hebrews
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Job

Kevin's Korner

Well this past Monday afternoon was a beautiful day and we took our trip down to the Buffalo River to see Hawksbill Crag. We left after the kids got out of school and got back to town around 8:00. The crag is located in the upper buffalo wilderness area part of which is managed by the forestry service. The trail to the crag is about a mile and a half and there is a nice waterfall on the way. Several small streams crossed our path as we made our way down the hill to the bluff line. We had some good views of it from some distance away and soon we were on it. The rock that makes it up is a lot bigger than it looks standing away from it. We took a few pictures there and then headed out on another trail. Unfortunately, on the way out, we got side tracked by what appeared to be an "emergency" trail because we soon ran into a dirt road. We hiked the dirt road back to the

parking area having been slightly chilled by the evening air. The sun had set and we made it back just as twilight was fading away. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the short trip and got some good exercise in. I figured we walked somewhere between 3-4 miles.

For those of you who have e-mail addresses, you may be interested to know that you can now get some Bible Studies direct to your e-mail inbox. On our web site (<http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>) is an announcement about a new Bible Study service to which you can conveniently subscribe. I've recently committed to writing studies for Saturdays and Sundays. These studies may be found on the Internet as well at http://www.preachersfiles.com/daily_bible_study.htm. During the week, the study will focus upon the book of Genesis, then on Saturdays we will study Old Testament

Poetry. Sundays the study is focused on the gospels and Acts. Right now we are beginning the book of Job and the study should complement our Wednesday evening Bible Class. Sunday's study is focused on the book of Matthew which we have almost completed at the nursing home and which we will begin to study after we complete Hebrews this year. There are already over 300 subscribers to this regular Bible study.

Our web site is also continuing to do well. This past month we averaged 569 visitors per day. That's up from 490 per day in the month of February. For the month we had 10,173 unique visitors who viewed a total of 36,192 pages. Visitors from some 77 countries viewed our pages. We're thankful that God has truly blessed our efforts on the Internet, please remember this work in your prayers.



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Records for the week of March 27th, 2004

Sunday Bible Class	65
Sunday AM Worship.....	78
Sunday PM Worship.....	62
Wednesday Night Study.....	61
Contribution.....	\$1854.21
Budget.....	\$1662.00



Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- We express our sympathies to the family and friends of Wilma Cantrell who passed away this last week. Services were this past Tuesday in Green Forest.
- Please remember the following in prayer: Jessica Anderson, Clay Bozarth, Kathryn Davis, the Duncan family, Mary Foster, John Gass, Evelyn Johnson, Charlene Pinkley, and Frank Smith.
- Please remember our shut-ins: Curtis and Opal Hull and Edith Mischler.
- Our monthly men's breakfast will be this coming Saturday at 7:00 A.M. Cooks come earlier.
- The monthly elders and deacons meeting is tonight after services. If anyone has an item to be addressed, please see one of these men.
- Next Sunday night is question and answer night. If you have a Bible question you would like answered, please place it in the box.
- Our Bible study at the nursing home will have a two week break due to nursing home scheduling conflicts. We will resume our study on April 21st.
- Family and Friends day is May 22nd! Flyers are in the back. Get some today and tell your friends!
- Our pantry item is: Liquid Softener.



Welcome!

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	April 3rd, 2005	April 10th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Brent Stevens	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Leon Duncan	Bob Moore
Scripture Reading:	Ray Duncan	Perry Foster
Lord's Table	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
	Dan Hand	Glenn Quigley
(assist)	Brandon Foster	Bruce Foster
	Jerry Roller	John Gass
Closing Prayer	John Gass	Jerry Roller
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Bruce Foster
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bruce Foster	Dale Pinkley
Scripture Reading:	Dale Pinkley	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	John Gass	George Eddings
	Jack Gentry	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer	Rusty Windle	Glenn Quigley
Wednesday		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Ken Smith	Ken Smith
Invitation:	Rusty Windle	Dan Hand
Closing Prayer:	George Eddings	Ervin Hand

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