

Audio Transcript of Sermon
December 16, 2023
Vengeance Belongs to God

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Each of us has been treated wrongly at some point in our life and the typical human reaction is to get even, to seek vengeance. Even if we haven't been wronged but we think that we are about to be wronged, and many of us prematurely jump into thoughts of getting even. It makes no difference where we are in our life. We can be young or old and getting even comes to mind very quickly. Having an attitude of getting even can cause us to do things we never thought possible, and for every minute we are focused on getting even, we cannot be focused on other and more meaningful things in our life. What we think of as getting even is called vengeance in the Bible, and the Bible has several examples and lots to say about vengeance.

We'll begin our look at vengeance near the very beginning of the Bible. Adam and Eve were no longer in the Garden of Eden and had children, giving birth first to Cain and then to Abel. Cain was a farmer and Abel was a shepherd, both noble professions. Both Cain and Abel brought an offering to God and God respected the offering of Abel but not Cain, causing Cain to be very angry. We aren't told why God didn't respect Cain's offering or why God respected Abel's offering, just that it did not compare to Abel's offering. Naturally they offered different things to God with Cain offering produce and Abel offering the first born of his flock. The respect that God had for Abel's offering and the no respect of Cain's offering probably centered around the concept of the first born. There is no indication that Cain brought the first of the produce of his fields to God.

Cain felt slighted and in a discussion with Abel, he killed Abel, exacting his vengeance on him. God cursed Cain while also protecting him explaining that any who would seek vengeance on Cain for killing Abel would suffer seven times more grief than Cain exacted on Abel in taking his life. Genesis four verse one.

Genesis 4:1-15

1. And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

- 2. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.**
- 3. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.**
- 4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:**
- 5. But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.**
- 6. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?**
- 7. If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.**
- 8. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.**
- 9. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?**
- 10. And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.**
- 11. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;**
- 12. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.**
- 13. And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.**
- 14. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.**
- 15. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.**

Cain was not a man after God's own heart, but the man who was, David, took another approach when given the opportunity to exact vengeance. Saul, King of Israel had travelled to the wilderness of Ziph to find David, and David heard about the efforts to locate him. David sent spies to verify the information and when it came back true, David sought to confront Saul and when his location was confirmed and David and Abishai came to the camp. Abishai understood the turn of events to mean that God had delivered Saul into their hands and that David

should kill Saul. David understood that Saul was God's anointed and knew he could bring no harm to Saul. He believed that God could bring death to Saul at any point through battle or natural causes and therefore needed to take no action. David did though take Saul's spear and water container to let Saul know he was there. When given the opportunity to exact vengeance, David refused leaving vengeance to God. First Samuel twenty-six verse one.

1 Samuel 26:1-12

- 1. And the Ziphites came unto Saul to Gibeah, saying, Doth not David hide himself in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon?**
- 2. Then Saul arose, and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph.**
- 3. And Saul pitched in the hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the way. But David abode in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul came after him into the wilderness.**
- 4. David therefore sent out spies, and understood that Saul was come in very deed.**
- 5. And David arose, and came to the place where Saul had pitched: and David beheld the place where Saul lay, and Abner the son of Ner, the captain of his host: and Saul lay in the trench, and the people pitched round about him.**
- 6. Then answered David and said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Abishai the son of Zeruiah, brother to Joab, saying, Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp? And Abishai said, I will go down with thee.**
- 7. So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him.**
- 8. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.**
- 9. And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?**
- 10. David said furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish.**
- 11. The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.**

12. So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

What David did was unusual and if given the opportunity to kill a person trying to kill them, many would find a way to justify that. Getting even, exacting vengeance, seems to be engrained in so many. In the Old Testament, even the idea of getting even seemed to be taught. With a life required for a life, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, and so on. Exodus twenty-one verse twenty-two.

Exodus 21:22-27

22. If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine.

23. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life,

24. Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

25. Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26. And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

27. And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

Jesus very well knew about this during his earthly ministry and yet taught his disciples to do something different. Instead of seeking vengeance, Jesus taught to go the second mile with them, a totally different approach. Instead of seeking vengeance, Jesus taught to accept what had happened without seeking vengeance. Matthew five verse thirty-eight.

Matthew 5:38-42

38. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.

41. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Even though the Old Testament had its eye for an eye standard, the Old Testament also taught not to seek vengeance or to hold a grudge against others, and that was taught with many other concepts, including being truthful with each other, not using God's name to deceive others, not defrauding others, or bringing harm to people with disabilities. Also taught was the need to be righteous in judgment, meaning not respecting people because of who they are such as the poor or mighty, but to treat all people with equality. The people were also told to not gossip or take any action that could possibly bring harm to another. They were not to hate others and never to seek vengeance. Leviticus nineteen verse eleven.

Leviticus 19:11-18

11. Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.

12. And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

13. Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

14. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD.

15. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

16. Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.

17. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

18. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Vengeance and getting even belongs to God. These are not ours to take for ourself because when people act with vengeance or seek to get even, bad things will come to them. When we allow God to seek vengeance or get even on our behalf, we allow God to protect and advocate for us, and that becomes the best possible situation for us. Deuteronomy thirty-two verse thirty-five.

Deuteronomy 32:35-38

35. To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36. For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.

37. And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted,

38. Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be your protection.

When we allow God to seek vengeance or to get even for us, we know we have a jealous God who will protect those who His from adversaries. If we are God's people and somebody else seeks to bring us harm, that will make God angry and when it is best, God will deliver us from that harm in ways we may not comprehend. For instance, God can use weather phenomena, like what today we might call climate change to exact vengeance. He can also use what we call natural disasters like earthquakes to exact vengeance. When God exacts vengeance, the vengeance is not petty like what man will seek. When God seeks vengeance it is easy for everyone to see the result, even if they do not comprehend that God is seeking vengeance. This world fears climate change and natural disasters as it should and it is sad that this world does not understand that God can use these to exact vengeance. When we see climate change and natural disasters we know we are looking at snippets of prophecy and we are also be looking at the vengeance of God. The good news for the people of God is that God knows who His are and protects them according to His plans for individual people. Sometimes people of God might die in these events, but what we think of as climate change and natural disasters is overlooked by this world that God is exacting vengeance. Nahum one verse two.

Nahum 1:2-8

2. God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.

3. The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet.

- 4. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.**
- 5. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.**
- 6. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.**
- 7. The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.**
- 8. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.**

When people stop doing what God expects of them, God can bring vengeance to them. In the example of Jerusalem from Isaiah, it is shown that once it was a city filled with judgment and righteousness, but no longer with what appears to be meaningful to be nothing of value, a city where the leaders are the biggest thieves and readily take bribes ignoring the needs of the people they are supposed to protect. God will use vengeance to avenge Himself with these situations so that the righteousness of Jerusalem can be restored. Isaiah one verse twenty-one.

Isaiah 1:21-26

- 21. How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.**
- 22. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water:**
- 23. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.**
- 24. Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:**
- 25. And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:**
- 26. And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.**

When the people of God are persecuted and the world begins to think it has gained victory, it is then that God brings vengeance to the world. When the

people of God are cast into what looks like a barren wasteland it is God Who will make it into a land of plenty. When the world brings fear and concern to the people of God, God protects His people through vengeance to save them. Isaiah thirty-five verse one.

Isaiah 35:1-7

- 1. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.**
- 2. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.**
- 3. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.**
- 4. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.**
- 5. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.**
- 6. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.**
- 7. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.**

It is God Who sees evil, Who also repays evil, so that all who do evil will fear God. It is God Who uses righteousness and salvation coupled with vengeance and zeal to make His case, and when God chooses to repay evil, God's payment comes in a fury, and it makes no difference where that repayment needs to occur, God will repay evil. Isaiah fifty-nine verse sixteen.

Isaiah 59:16-19

- 16. And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.**
- 17. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.**

18. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

19. So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

Jeremiah writes of the whirlwind of God moving forward in anger. Like tornados and hurricanes which leave destruction, when God's anger arrives it is a painful thing to see. Jeremiah thirty verse twenty-three.

Jeremiah 30:23-24

23. Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked.

24. The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.

When people use vengeance and hate to come after the people of God, God will destroy them through God's vengeance and fury, so that those who come against the people of God will know Who is God. Ezekiel twenty-five verse fifteen.

Ezekiel 25:15-17

15. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred;

16. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.

17. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

When the sixth seal of Revelation is opened we see a series of natural disasters, eclipses, and meteor showers that are so intense these bring fear to the people as they perceive what they are experiencing is the wrath of God, and the people begin to wonder if they can survive God's wrath. Revelation six verse twelve.

Revelation 6:12-17

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16. And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

As people of God we become subject to the vengeance of God should we choose to walk away from the faith and return to the life we had before faith. Should we ever make that choice, there is no longer a sacrifice for sins and we should fully expect to bear the brunt of the vengeance of God knowing it is fearful to fall into the hands of God when God is seeking vengeance against us. Hebrews ten verse twenty-six.

Hebrews 10:26-31

26. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Psalm ninety-four describes the vengeance of God showing that vengeance belongs to God. It also shows what can be frustrating for the people of God is when it looks like the wicked and workers of iniquity prosper. During this lifetime it can seem like the wicked and workers of iniquity prosper while bringing harm to the righteous. These evil people do what they do never considering that God will intervene. What we need to remember is that God is aware of all of this and knows that man's thought play to vanity and ego, and God to Whom vengeance belongs will show himself. Psalm ninety-four verse one.

Psalm 94:1-11

- 1. O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.**
- 2. Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud.**
- 3. LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph?**
- 4. How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves?**
- 5. They break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and afflict thine heritage.**
- 6. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.**
- 7. Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.**
- 8. Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?**
- 9. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?**
- 10. He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?**
- 11. The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.**

When the vengeance of God comes is up to the will of God. God's ultimate plan is to bring as many people to salvation as possible, so when it comes to the people of God dealing with wicked and evil things, we may not always have an easy ride. We may come face to face with wickedness and violence. We may hear words of deceit that are nothing more than a poison. When faced with all of this and not knowing when God will exact vengeance, we do know God will do so. When we see God taking vengeance on those who have brought us harm, it will give us cause to be happy. We will see what has happened to the wicked and more importantly we will once again have reaffirmed to us that there is a reward for the righteous through God. Psalm fifty-eight verse one.

Psalm 58:1-11

- 1. Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?**
- 2. Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.**
- 3. The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.**
- 4. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent: they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear;**
- 5. Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.**
- 6. Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD.**
- 7. Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.**
- 8. As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away: like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun.**
- 9. Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.**
- 10. The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.**
- 11. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.**

In looking at the vengeance of God and the concept of vengeance, vengeance is never for us to take. We never plot against another person by acts of revenge. If we feel we have been harmed by a person, we will take steps to protect us but not to bring harm to that evil person. We will wait on God who will save us from evil and allow God to repay that person and bring vengeance to them. Proverbs twenty verse twenty-two.

Proverbs 20:22

22. Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

God's ways are not our ways, and when we seek vengeance, it is not like how God seeks vengeance. God's ways are superior to our ways and His thoughts are better than our thoughts. God has told us many times not to seek vengeance and

to rely on Him, and we need to honor that from God knowing God will seek vengeance on our behalf when vengeance is warranted. Isaiah fifty-five verse eight.

Isaiah 55:8-11

8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Putting distance between God and mankind, God is slow to anger and has a great deal of mercy. Somehow because we as people are quick to anger and tend to lack mercy, many have this image of God as always angry and unforgiving. God does not always repay us for every last sin we commit because of that mercy and has pity on us. With that in mind when we feel God should avenge us and that doesn't happen right away, maybe it is because God is also having mercy and pity on those we think should be the recipients of vengeance. Psalm one hundred three verse eight.

Psalm 103:8-14

8. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger forever.

10. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

Instead of hating our enemies, Jesus taught that we are to love our enemies and bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us. Instead of seeking vengeance, that is what we should be doing, so that we can be perfect as God our Father in heaven is perfect. Matthew five verse forty-three.

Matthew 5:43-48

43. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you;

45. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47. And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

As we look forward to the Kingdom of God knowing all things will be made new, we also need to understand that God wants all people to come to repentance, and when it comes to God's vengeance, God always works with that desire in mind. We may not be immediately and decisively avenged because we feel that is what we deserve. God will exact vengeance so that all can come to repentance. Second Peter three verse eight.

2 Peter 3:8-13

8. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

- 11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,**
- 12. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?**
- 13. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**

If we feel we should be avenged, it is likely because something bad has happened to us. Instead of seeking something equally bad happen to the person who brought that bad thing to us, we should be seeking a blessing for that person as we focus on doing good while hating evil. First Peter three verse eight.

1 Peter 3:8-12

- 8. Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:**
- 9. Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.**
- 10. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:**
- 11. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.**
- 12. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.**

When we feel the need to exact vengeance, we need to remember not to repay evil for evil but to focus on that which is good. Understanding that vengeance belongs to God and not us is one way how we can focus on what is good. First Thessalonians five verse fourteen.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-22

- 14. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.**
- 15. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.**
- 16. Rejoice evermore.**
- 17. Pray without ceasing.**

- 18. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**
- 19. Quench not the Spirit.**
- 20. Despise not prophesyings.**
- 21. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**
- 22. Abstain from all appearance of evil.**

When we seek vengeance what we seek may or may not be righteous as seen by God, but when God seeks righteous, it is always righteous, even when God use tribulation as means to repay a person for harm brought against us, even if ultimately that vengeance means that person's eternal death in the lake of fire. Second Thessalonians one verse six.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

- 6. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;**
- 7. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,**
- 8. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**
- 9. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**
- 10. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe because our testimony among you was believed in that day.**

For us, when we seek vengeance, it may or may not be righteous as we are people and God is God. We never can give place to anger which is an emotional manifestation that we have been wronged in some way. It is not up to us to exact vengeance. Vengeance belongs to God Who will repay the wrong done to us. Instead of vengeance, we are to overcome evil with good and as much as possible, to live peaceably with all people. Romans twelve verse sixteen.

Romans 12:16-21

- 16. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.**
- 17. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.**

- 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.**
- 19. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**
- 20. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.**
- 21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.**

Each of us has been treated wrongly at some point in our life and we have at some point all felt the typical human reaction to get even, to seek vengeance. As the children of God we know vengeance belongs to God, and instead of ever seeking to bring vengeance to another person, we will instead seek to overcome evil with good. We will never bring harm to another person through vengeance knowing that when God brings vengeance, with God vengeance is always done with righteousness.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.