

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? (Psalm 94)*

God has resolutely and absolutely reserved vengeance to Himself (Lev. 19:18, Deut. 32:35, Romans 12:19). Our discontent with this arrangement is one of the very reasons He has made it. We are not altogether certain that He will exact enough vengeance to suit us. We would prefer that our tormentors received their just deserts at our hands and knew that it was at our hands. And we would gain much more satisfaction of the retribution were taken care of while our anger is hot. Waiting until after our anger and indignation has cooled takes all the fun out of it.

But vengeance must be left to God. It is justice. The margins on both sides of this paper are “justified:” that is, they come out even. Vengeance is merely getting even. God alone is qualified to execute justice. He is the only one wise enough to know how much retribution is necessary to square the accounts, the only one **righteous and objective** enough to administer every bit of that, and not a whit more; and He is the only one with **power** enough to get it done without fail. Human governments have “departments of justice,” but justice is never administered in them. They would be more properly called departments of legal manipulations and social engineering. Those who charge that the death penalty is unjustly administered are correct. But every other transgression that comes before the courts is also unjustly administered.

We must rid ourselves of the hankering to “have the last laugh” in the face of the wicked, those who have worked to abuse, deny, shame, and triumph over us. We must come to see that their transgressions must be regarded as, not against our persons, but against God and righteousness. Our inclination to make it a “personal” vendetta is itself sin, and if we insist upon doing so, we are in danger of also being recipients of God’s vengeance, for we will have usurped for ourselves that which belongs to God alone. We will have no peace about these things we suffer at the hands of other men until we come to be content to leave execution of justice to the certain and undefeatable Hand of the Almighty. The judge of all the earth will do right.

But how long will it be before God arises and puts an end to the triumph of the wicked? The wicked will be permitted to continue until he has fulfilled the measure of his guilt. God has him on a leash, and will let him run until his string runs out. He must “fill up the measure of his iniquity.” He will not be stopped until his foolishness and wickedness is evident for all to see. God will give him enough room to hang himself. He will not cut him short and leave him to be fallaciously admired and venerated. His end will be that of a fool, not a hero.

The wicked will be allowed to discomfort, persecute and harass the saints until God’s gracious purpose in them is fulfilled. We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom, and these vessels of wrath are well-suited to be employed in that business. Pharaoh and every other wicked world leader is raised up for this sovereign purpose of God *unto His glory and our salvation!*

And God will permit the wicked to triumph over us until all our clever human resources have been exhausted and proved futile. We will have no help from the Almighty until He is the *only* hope we have. He will not share His glory with another. Our idols will all be toppled into the dust when He arises. His will be all the glory. Ours will be all the joy. Not that we “got even” with our tormentors, but that our Great God and Saviour is Glorious, and worthy to be served, adored and praised!

-C.M.