
GOD'S TWO BEAUTY SPOTS

EXODUS 22:16-31



What would God say and do if he was Mayor of Portland? The actual Mayor of Portland refuses to punish rioters who are destroying his city. The rioters are not arrested or if they are, they are released within hours to re-join the riots again. Evil is not being punished which means the weak are abused, lawlessness and anarchy abound, and wickedness grows rampant and triumphant.

What would God say and do if he was mayor of Portland? Exodus 22:16-31 gives us the answer. God protects the innocent by punishing the wicked. Let's see how God does this by learning who God is.

LEARNING

WE ARE DEBTORS

In verses 16-31 God reveals himself as the protector of society, but especially of the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable. He protects young women (16-17), the community (18-19), religion (20), immigrants (21), widows and orphans (22-24), the poor (25-27), authority (28), the harvest (29-30), and health (31)

These words reveal God as the compassionate protector. That's highlighted and underlined when God says of the poor man who has been the victim of theft: **If he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate** (27). Through these words, we see God's tender heart for the weak.

WHEN LAWLESS RIOTS ARE RUINING THE POOR,
GOD'S COMPASSION IS MOVING TO THE POOR

But what about action? Tender words of protection are nice, but what's he going to do about evil-doers?

GOD IS THE PUNISHER

These verses not only reveal God as the protector of the innocent, but as the punisher of the guilty. He pronounces various punishments for those who do evil. For example: He punishes with fines (16-17), with death (18-20), and with war (24).

When God sees people mistreating widows, he says, **If you mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless** (23-24).

God is the protector and the punisher. He protects the innocent and punishes the guilty. He protects the innocent by punishing the guilty. A lot of people want God to be a protector but not a punisher. However, we can't have God as Protector without God as Punisher. God's protection and God's punishment are both perfections of God. It's not that one is a beauty spot and the other is an ugly scar. Both are beauty spots. Both are connected. Each makes the other more beautiful.

GOD'S PUNISHMENT OF EVIL IS
A BEAUTY SPOT NOT AN UGLY SCAR.

LOVING

We see these two beauty spots in Christ's life. As the perfect image of God, he repeatedly taught, demonstrated, and revealed how God is a protector and punisher, one who protects by punishing.

We see these two beauty spots most clearly in Christ's death. There we see the ultimate revelation and demonstration of God's protection and God's punishment. But there, God protected the guilty by punishing the innocent. Have a think about that.

LIVING

Give protection through punishment and get protection through punishment.
