

Life of David

A Man After God's Own Heart

Vengeance and Revenge

- Definitions and Vocabulary
 - Vengeance – punishment inflicted in retaliation for an injury or offense
 - Revenge – an act or instance of retaliating in order to get even
 - Hebrew vocabulary:
 - נָקַם (naqam) – take vengeance [Lev 19:18]
 - נִקְמָה (nəqamah) – vengeance [Psalm 18:47]
 - גָּאַל (ga'al) – to avenge [Num 35:12]
 - Greek vocabulary:
 - ἐκδίκησις (ekdikēsis) – vengeance [Heb 10:30]
 - ἐκδικέω (ekdikeō) – take revenge [Rom 12:19]
 - ἀποδίδωμι (apodidōmi) – pay back [Rom 12:17]
- Development and Application
 - Vengeance belongs to God [Deut 32:35].
 - ✦ This is in accordance with His righteous character [Isa 59:17; Jer 11:20].
 - ✦ This is part of His care for His children [Lam 3:58-66].
 - ✦ This is part of His just dealings with His covenant nation Israel [Lev 26:14-25].
 - ✦ This is part of His just dealings with Gentile nations that are adversaries of Israel [Deut 32:36-43].
 - ✦ God sometimes uses human agents of His vengeance [Num 31:1-11; Jer 50:14-16; 51:11; 2 Kgs 9:1-10].
 - ✦ Secular authority has the right to take vengeance as delegated by God [Gen 9:5-6; Rom 13:1-4].
 - This right is exercised by kings [1 Sam 14:24].
 - This right is exercised by nations [Esth 8:13].
 - ✦ Sin and rebellion result in God's vengeance [Jer 5:7-9, 25-29; 9:8-11].
 - The Lord provides warnings concerning His vengeance [Lev 26:23-25; Deut 32:41-43].
 - The Lord will fulfill His promised vengeance in time [Ps 99:8; Nah 1:2-8; Luke 21:20-22] and eternity [2 Thess 1:8-9].
 - The righteous cry out to God for vengeance [Jdgs 16:28; 1 Sam 24:12; Psalm 94:1-10].
 - ✦ God's vengeance is cause for rejoicing [Psalm 58:10-11; 149:5-9; Jer 20:12-13].
 - ✦ God's vengeance is cause for courage [Isa 35:3-4].
 - Men are forbidden from taking vengeance (revenge) [Lev 19:18; Rom 12:19].
 - When men do take their own vengeance, judgment results [2 Sam 4:8-12; Ezek 25:12-17].

- Conclusions
 - The desire to take our own vengeance (to get revenge) is rooted in the sin nature's arrogance.
 - Vengeance is solely in God's domain and for man to execute only under His delegated authority.