

Discovering Jesus through Biblical Themes & Jewish Roots



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Studying the Bible using Biblical Themes

- **Why Biblical Themes?**

- Patterns

- Sin, forgiveness, reconciliation
 - Exile and return
 - Sacrifices needed

- Metaphors

- God as parent, shepherd
 - God as Light, Bread, Rock

- Foreshadowing

- Prophets tell of a final savior
 - Restored heavens & earth

- Thematic study is another way for us to understand God's plan & see the complete picture of God's word, a cohesive account



Considerations

- **Language**
 - Bible languages: **Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek**
 - *Not* our alphabet or vocabulary
 - Ancient languages always require interpretation
- Example: Shakespeare's writings
 - In just 400 years, many words are obsolete or have different meanings in the English language
- **Culture & Historical Context**
 - Bible spans thousands of years (4,000+ years)
 - And thousands of years of interpretation!
 - We must consider context (culture and time)



Free Bible Study Tools

- The best Bible? The one you read!
- Electronic Bibles are helpful to look at several translations for understanding & free word studies are available
- Phone/Tablet: **YouVersion** App (from Bible.com)
 - 50+ English versions; daily devotions, reading plans
- Websites for e-Bibles & study tools:
 - [Bible.com](https://www.bible.com)
 - [BibleGateway.com](https://www.biblegateway.com)
 - [BibleHub.com](https://www.biblehub.com)
 - [BlueLetterBible.com](https://www.blueletterbible.com)
- Hebrew Scriptures: [Sefaria.org](https://www.sefaria.org) (Hebrew/English)
- Interlinear Bibles (Greek & Hebrew with English): [BibleHub.com](https://www.biblehub.com)



Exploring Justice and Peace through the scriptures



Weeks 1-3: Justice **Weeks 4-5:** Peace **Week 6:** Pulling it all together

Week 1: Justice & related words - word studies in Hebrew & Greek scriptures

Week 2: God's commands about Justice

Week 3: Consequences of not following God's justice: Prophets & Writings;
Gospels & New Testament writings

Week 4: What is peace? Word studies; Hebrew scriptures

Week 5: Gospels & New Testament writings

Week 6: How do we then live? When do we get it wrong? When do we get it right?



How do you define *Justice*?

Dictionary:

- the system of laws in a country that judges and punishes people
- the quality or condition of being fair or just

English word originates from the Latin jūstitia

Famous statements about *justice*

Martin Luther

Peace is more important than all justice; and peace was not made for the sake of justice, but justice for the sake of peace.

Dwight Eisenhower

Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

“But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”
Amos 5:24

Cornel West

“Justice is what love looks like in public.”

Scriptures on *Justice*

Isaiah 30:18

Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the LORD is a **God of justice**. Blessed are all who wait for him!

Micah 6:8

He has showed you, O man, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but **to do justice**, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Luke 11:42 (Jesus speaking)

But woe to you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect **justice** and the love of God; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

Jesus speaks of justice matters often, usually quoting Hebrew scriptures

Justice throughout scripture

- Depending on your English translation, the word “justice” appears anywhere from 220x (CEB) to 116x (NIV) to 28x (KJV)

(Take a look at a e-Bible site and run a word search)

- Other Biblical words associated with *justice*:
 - Righteousness (52x in RSV)
 - 4 categories of people: The fatherless, the immigrant, the widow, the poor
 - Judgment
 - Peace
 - Love

Biblical words associated with *Justice*

Justice + righteousness – 52x (RSV)

Gen 18:19 (*3 men or God with Abraham on the way to Sodom*)

No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by **doing righteousness and justice**; so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him."

1 Kings 10:9 (*Queen of Sheba visiting King Solomon*)

Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel for ever, he has made you king, that you may **execute justice and righteousness.**"

Psalm 33:5

He **loves righteousness and justice**; the earth is full of the steadfast **love** of the LORD.

Justice + righteousness

Psalm 89:14

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of thy throne; steadfast **love** and faithfulness go before thee.

Psalm 106:3

Blessed are they who **observe justice, who do righteousness** at all times!

Proverbs 21:3

To **do righteousness and justice** is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

Isaiah 33:5

The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will **fill Zion with justice and righteousness;**

Jeremiah 33:15

In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring forth for David; and he shall **execute justice and righteousness** in the land.

Questions about righteousness & justice

Can there be justice without righteousness?

Luke 18:1-8 – The parable of the widow & the unjust judge

⁶ And the Lord said, “Listen to what the unjust (or unrighteous) judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? ⁸ I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly.

Righteousness – definition

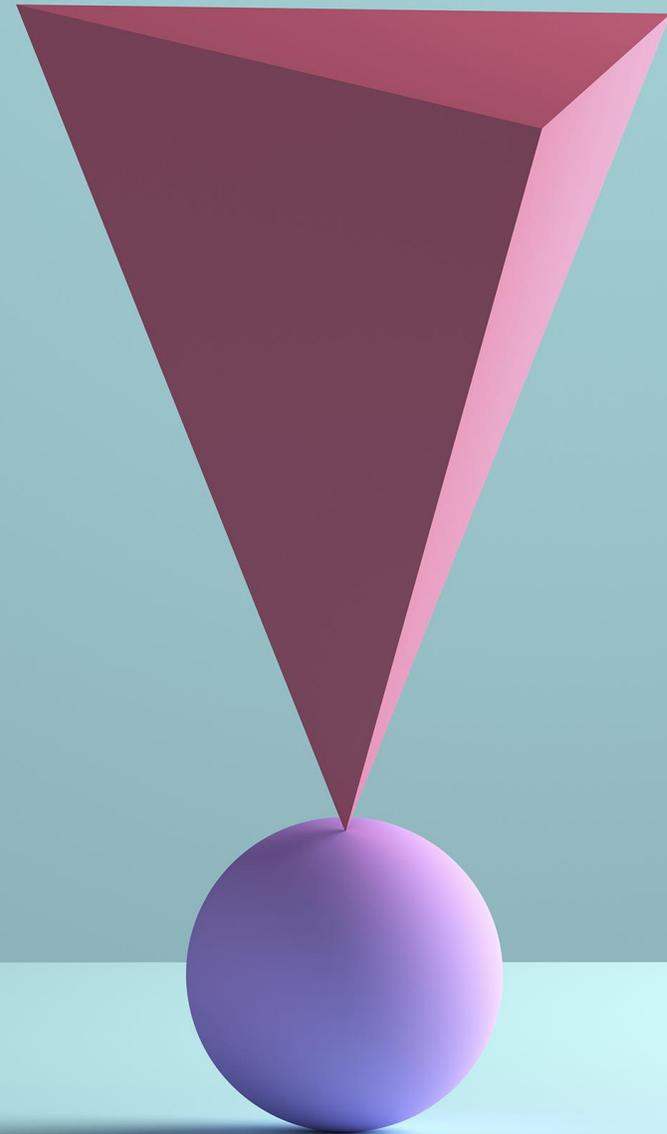
- the quality or state of being just or rightful
- morally right or justifiable

Righteousness comes from Old English – meaning upright; straight

(*rightwise* – John Wycliffe first used *righteousness* in his Bible translation – late 1300's)

*Eventually it came to have a moral or religious meaning

Archaic today in common language use



Justice +

Justice for the most vulnerable: fatherless, widows, immigrants, poor

Deuteronomy 10:18

He [God] *executes* justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the immigrant, *giving* him food and clothing.

Deuteronomy 24:17

You shall not *pervert* the justice due to the immigrant or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge.

Psalms 10:18

... to *do* justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.

Psalms 82:3

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.

Isaiah 1:17

... learn to do good; *seek* justice, correct oppression; *defend* the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Jeremiah 22:3

Thus says the LORD: *Do* justice and righteousness and *deliver* from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. *And do no wrong or violence* to the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

Notice that these are all action statements, not passive!

God's Law for vulnerable people

Deuteronomy 10:18; 24:17; 20-21; 26:12

- Leave what remains for the **foreigner**, the **fatherless** and the **widow**
- When you have finished setting aside a tenth of all your produce in the third year, the year of the tithe, you shall give it to the Levite, the **foreigner**, the **fatherless** and the **widow**, so that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied.
- God gives strong commands concerning immigrants/foreigners:
 - **Leviticus 19:33-34; 23:22; 24:22**
³³ “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. ³⁴ The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.
 - **Numbers 15:15; 29** (same law applies to all)
¹⁵ The community is to have the same rules for you and for the foreigner residing among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the foreigner shall be the same before the LORD:
 - **Deuteronomy 10:19** And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.

Justice + Love

Micah 6:8

He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but **to do justice**, and to **love kindness**, and to walk humbly with your God?

Luke 11:42 (Jesus speaking)

...but you neglect **justice** and the **love of God**.

Jeremiah 9:24

but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, **that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth**; for in these things I delight, says the LORD.

Hosea 12:6

"So you, by the help of your God, return, **hold fast to love and justice**, and wait continually for your God."

How do you think Love and Justice go together?

Next week

**Word studies on Justice (and Righteousness):
Hebrew and Greek**