

When Does God Provide His Divine Justice?

Intro:

1. Why is it that when bad things happen to good people, God just sits there & lets it happen?
 - a. When someone cheats or lies to you, steals or hurts you, takes advantage of your vulnerability - why doesn't the God of justice step in & immediately zap the persecutor?
 - b. Where is God when the innocent are persecuted?
2. God created us with free will & honors the choices we make, good or bad. That's a part of being created in God's image & likeness.
3. The bad choices (sin) produce consequences that are not fair. ILL: Adam & Eve's consequences.
4. Some even believe nature & weather are affected by human sin.
5. God has chosen to postpone His judgment so, for now, life is unfair.

II Thessalonians 1:6-12

- 6: But He has given us this promise: **And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.** - Rom 8:28.
 - a. God's ultimate results for you will be good & just.
 - b. The time will come when . . .

I. v6-9 - The Lord Will Judge the Unjust

A. Who are they?

1. **v6** - Those who have persecuted His children.
 - a. The Lord commanded you not to seek revenge (Matt 5:38-39).
 - b. But notice why. **Rom 12:19 - Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.**
2. **v8** - Those who do not know God.
 - a. Maybe this means: those who have never been introduced to the gospel. **Rom 2:14-15 - Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.**
 - b. Maybe this means: those who refuse to recognize God, the atheists who deny God's existence in spite of the evidence!
3. **v8** - Those who do not obey the gospel.
 - a. These are the ones who know God but choose not to obey Him. **Rom 1:21 - For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.**
 - b. How do you "obey the gospel"?
 - c. You can't obey a fact - but you can obey the likeness of a fact.
 - d. The gospel is the story of the death, burial & resurrection of Lord Jesus.
 - e. You identify with the gospel message when you are baptized by symbolically dying to your old life, burying the corpse to rise in a new life!
 - f. Obey here means not only submitting to Him in baptism but also recognizing His authority as Lord in your life afterwards.

B. What will happen?

1. **v7** - The Lord & His angels will come. Remember **I Thess 4:16** - **For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**
2. **v6-7** - He will take revenge with flaming fire.
 - a. Everything will melt from fire. (**II Pet 3:10a**)
 - b. The earth will be burnt up. (**I Pet 3:10b**)
3. **v9** - The result: the unbeliever will be eternally destroyed.
 - a. **Destroy** (ὄλεθρος) means “destroy”, but here it could mean “separate” from the Lord’s presence & majesty.
 - b. Whatever this implies, it will be forever!

II. v10-12 - The Lord Will Exalt the Just

A. Who are they?

1. **v10** - His **holy people** (ἅγιος) = saints, sacred people, holy ones, dedicated, pure, those separated apart for God.
2. **v10 & 12** - These holy people are you!
2. **v10** - Those who believed the apostle’s testimony - the word of God.

B. What will happen?

1. **v10** - To the Lord.
 - a. He will be **glorified** (ἐνδοξάζομαι) = be honored, given high esteem; in His holy people - you.
 - b. He will be **marveled at** (θαυμάζω) = amazed, astonished; by all those who believe.
2. **v11-12** - To His disciples.
 - a. **v7** - They will have **relief** (ἄνεσις) = rest.
 - b. **v11** - They will be considered worthy of their calling - the cross.
 - c. **v11** - He will fulfill all of your good purposes which were prompted by your faith.
 - d. **v12** - They will be glorified by the Lord’s grace.

God is going to make everything right -
but it may not happen until He comes again!