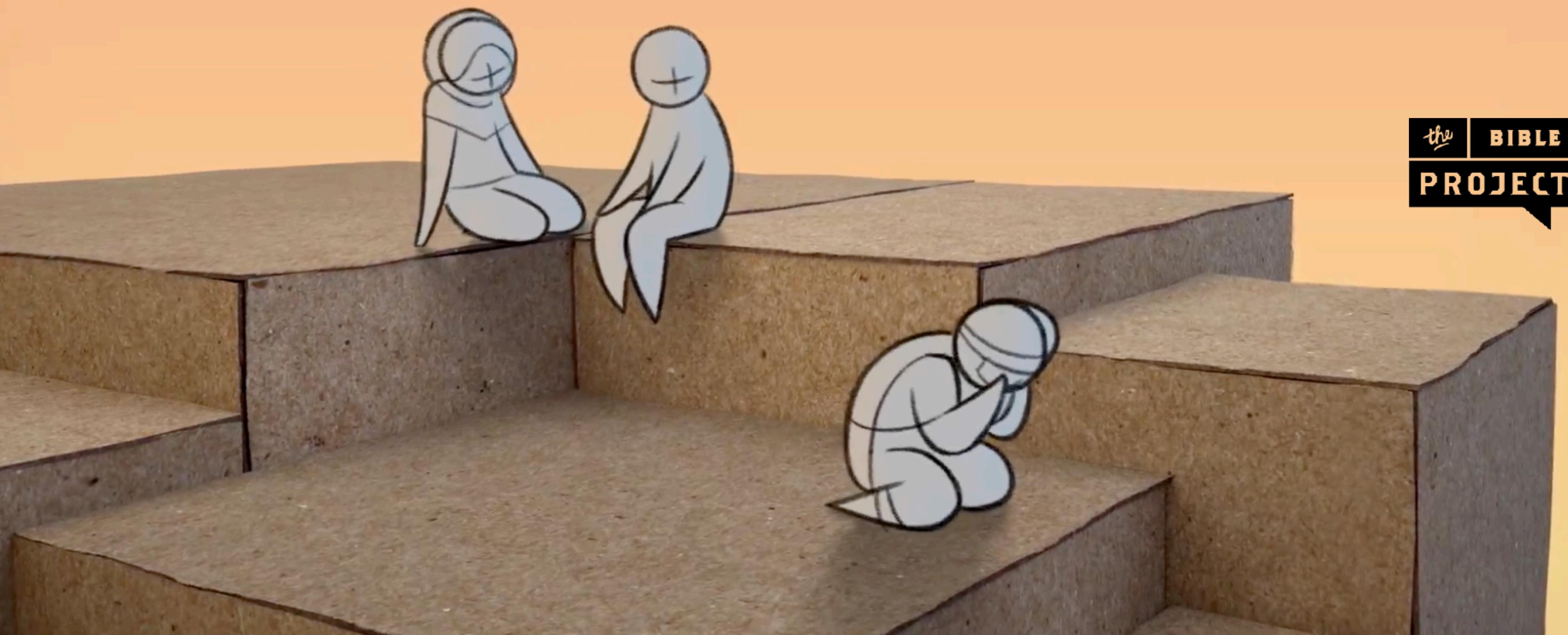


J U S T I C E





Annie Dillard

(*The Atlantic*, 1973)

There is not a people in the world that behaves as badly as praying mantises. But wait, you say, there is no right and wrong in nature; right and wrong is a human concept. Precisely: we are moral creatures, then, in an amoral world.

DEFINING JUSTICE

maximizing welfare (utilitarianism)

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respecting freedom (libertarianism)

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maximizing welfare (utilitarianism)

respecting freedom (libertarianism)

promoting virtue (moralism)

We apologize
for out-of-stock items.

We are working hard with suppliers to replenish quickly.
Please limit purchases, if possible,
so our community can stay prepared.



What is the biblical
view of justice?

Jeremiah
9:23-24

This is what the LORD says: “Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, **justice (*mishpat*)** and **righteousness** on earth, for in these I delight,” declares the LORD.

Ezekiel
18:5,7-9

Suppose there is a **righteous** man who does what is **just and right**. ... He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. He does not lend to them at interest or take a profit from them. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between two parties. He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws. That man is **righteous**; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign LORD.

“justice” (*mishpat*)

retributive
justice
(10%)

“justice” (*mishpat*)

retributive
justice
(10%)

restorative
justice
(90%)

Restorative justice is a proactive justice that seeks equality and dignity particularly for those who are the most vulnerable to abuse in society.

Proverbs
3:8-9

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.

Job
29:14-17

I put on **righteousness** as my clothing; **justice** was my robe and my turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth.

Zechariah
7:8-10

And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: "This is what the LORD Almighty said: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress **the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor**. Do not plot evil against each other.'

Psalm
146:6-9

He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— he remains faithful forever. He upholds the cause of **the oppressed** and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets **prisoners** free, the LORD gives sight to **the blind**, the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves the righteous. The LORD watches over **the foreigner** and sustains **the fatherless** and **the widow**, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Micah
6:8

He has told 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?

Every human being has
equal dignity and worth
because we are all made
in the image of God.

Genesis
9:6

Whoever sheds human blood,
by humans shall their blood
be shed; for in the image of
God has God made mankind.

James
3:9

With the tongue we praise
our Lord and Father, and
with it we curse human
beings, who have been
made in God's likeness.

Isaiah
11:1-4

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,

Isaiah
11:1-4

or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with **righteousness** he will judge **the needy**, with **justice** he will give decisions for **the poor** of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

As recipients of God's
restorative justice, Jesus
calls us to a ministry of
restorative justice and
mercy to the needy.

2 Cor
8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Luke
14:12-14

Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite **the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,** and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

James
1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after **orphans and widows** in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.



Scot
McKnight
(The Blue Parakeet)

For James, a pure Christian, the kind God approves of, was one who showed compassion to orphans and widows and avoided being polluted by sin at all costs. Frankly, we emphasized the not being polluted by sin, but we defined “polluted” in ways that had nothing to do with compassion for the marginalized and suffering. For instance, we were dead set against movies, drinking wine, and sex before marriage. But the one thing we didn’t do was follow everything James said!



Scot
McKnight
(The Blue Parakeet)

As I kept looking around me, this began to disturb me. How in the world were we reading the same Bible? One thing was clear, we were all reading the Bible the same way, and that meant we had somehow learned not to follow the plain words of James.

What I learned was an uncomfortable but incredibly intriguing truth: Every one of us adopts the Bible and (at the same time) adapts the Bible to our culture. In less-appreciated terms, I'll put it this way: Everyone picks and chooses.

