

## “Is YHWH the Harsh-God of the Old Testament?”

Many readers of the Bible perceive that the Old Testament contains countless verses describing an angry revengeful God who is about to slay the wicked, punish the idolater, and wipe out entire towns for their evil deeds. Many in Christendom are told that the God of the Jews is a harsh judgmental God, full of rage, pouring out wrath, revenge, and vengeance.

People read Psalms 137:9 “Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones”, and are repulsed by a God that would encourage “dashing babies against the rocks (to kill them)” as revenge. People read Zechariah 14:12 “Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths”, and cannot believe that God would do such things, and on purpose kill people.

Reading such scriptures many perceive the God YHWH of the Hebrew Text, [‘YHWH’ Hebrew to English, ‘Yahowah’ in Aramaic], as a God who is just looking for a chance to punish in vengeance, who will fly into angry emotional outbursts, and in a fit of temper will slay thousands of people in revenge.

**But this characterization of Yahowah is not correct.** The modern English Bible reader is not provided with a valid translation for the key words “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance”. If provided with the correct translation of these words, they would instead understand that Yahowah is very reluctant to punish, and **when He does punish it is to ensure that righteous Judgment and Justice is being accomplished.**

At the root of these wrathful scriptures is the foundational concepts of “anger”, “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance”, and what is done while being “angry”. In our modern culture (it did not use to be this way) we are taught that it is wrong to get angry. We are told never to do anything in anger. The emotion of doing something “in anger” is essentially considered to be a serious flaw. We are taught to view anyone exhibiting anger as “being in the wrong”.

Thus, we can perceive a shocking disconnect when we read about Yahowah avenging, revenging, and punishing people “in His anger” as vengeance. Thus, “the wrath of God” is seen as an evil emotional outburst. We are taught to be in conflict with such scriptures that seemingly tell us that Yahowah is killing people in emotional revenge.

However, **being angry is not a sin.** Ephesians 4:26 “Be ye angry, and sin not”. It is possible to be angry and not be doing evil. Thus, Yahowah will get angry, but He is not sinning or doing an emotional outburst. Rather, Yahowah is ensuring that “Justice” is done. Here below is why this assertion is correct.

### **The short way to state this assertion is:**

**“These key trigger words do not mean the same today as they did circa 1600, when the first English language Bibles were being printed.”**

Essentially, the concepts being discussed center on these phrases:

“If you do ‘this’, I will avenge.

“Since you did ‘this’, I will revenge.

Adding the concept of “being angry” to this:

“If you do ‘this’, I will get angry, and I will avenge.

“Since you did ‘this’, I am now angry, and I will revenge.

**The typical reader will now object to the above.** The objection **will assert that the words ‘avenge’ and ‘revenge’ are evil actions.** To us ‘revenge’ is an illegal and spiteful activity which is not allowed. Thus, if Yahowah does anything in anger and in revenge, then Yahowah must be “wrong”, or, the Text describing Yahowah as having such character traits must be “wrong”.

Referencing the 1828 Footnote below, **reading a dictionary printed around 200 years ago**, we are informed that the words ‘avenge’ and ‘revenge’ were formally synonymous. When the KJV was created these words had no evil connotation, and doing them was defined as **“warrantable and just”**.

Quoting part of the 1828 Footnote below: “In consequence of a distinction between avenge and revenge, **which modern usage has introduced, the application of this word to the Supreme Being appears extremely harsh,** irrelevant, and offensive”.

**This is important:** even 200 years ago it was considered “modern usage” to change the meaning of the word “revenge”. The meanings of words have changed over 400 years, and we forget to read the Bible using their definitions, instead of our modern definitions. A “gay man” in the 1890’s is not a “gay man” in 2015.

For this reason, these words, “anger”, “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance”, must be understood using the definitions they understood when they used them. To those reading the English Bible 400 years ago, **Yahowah was in no way exhibiting an evil and emotional outburst** when getting angry enough to take revenge and vengeance on evil doers. Instead, He was properly ensuring the **“warrantable and just”** accomplishment of Judgment and Justice.

**The remainder of this article will now use these words as they were used 400 years ago.**

I suggest that every culture in the world, modern and ancient, accepts these two phrases as being inherently valid. For example, you cannot raise a child without telling them “if you don’t stop it right now, I will get angry enough to make you go to timeout”, and “okay, that did it, I am now angry enough to force you into timeout”.

Likewise, you cannot keep order in a courtroom without this concept being inherently valid. You cannot run a business or keep the assembly line moving without this validity. The list of examples is endless.

But what is missing so far in these above two phrases is the concept of “avenge” and “revenge” being elevated in severity to deserve dire punishment or death. Adding the concept of “dire punishment”:

“If you do ‘this’, I will get angry, and I will avenge with dire punishment.

“Since you did ‘this’, I am now angry, and I will revenge with dire punishment.

Essentially, by adding the concept of “dire punishment” we have inflated the ‘this’ to be something so heinous and vile that the “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance” is “warrantable and just” enough to inflict “dire punishment”, even death.

Often the Text “eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth” is presented with a demeaning connotation. However, this principle is not a demand for “blood”, it is a limitation on the punishment that can be inflicted. One tooth for one tooth is a limitation principle. The judges in a matter are to employ the principle that “the punishment must meet the crime”. For example, the nobleman who loses a tooth in a fistfight cannot demand that the slugger who did it must lose two teeth as punishment. Thus, a judge inflicting “dire punishment” must, in principle, match what was done to deserve it.

From this we understand that Yahowah does get “angry”, but is never “too angry” so that the “dire punishment” He measures out matches the crime, and is “warrantable and just”. I am confident that when Yahowah melts eye sockets, and condones men killing babies on rocks, that **it is because those people did something of like kind to others**. For examples: did they use H-bombs on others? Did they pluck out the eyes of their enemies? Did they riot and smash the babies of others on rocks? Although we cannot answer these questions with certainty, we can be certain that **Yahowah follows His own principles, and ensures that Justice is done, exacting “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance” in only a “warrantable and just” manner.**

With this understanding, these offensive Texts are only offensive to us because we use modern word definitions. To the Hebrew and English readers of the past, these Texts were not offensive. **The Creator of all life has every right to ensure that proper Judgment and Justice is done.**

#### Footnote A:

Taken from the first edition of the “American Dictionary of the English Language”, by Noah Webster, **1828** (circa 200 years ago).

**AVENGE**, verb.

1. To take satisfaction for an injury by punishing the injuring party; to vindicate by inflicting pain or evil on the wrong doer.
2. To take satisfaction for, by pain or punishment inflicted on the injuring party.
3. To revenge. To avenge and revenge, radically, **are synonymous.** **But modern usage** inclines to **make a valuable distinction in the use of these words,** restricting **avenge to the taking of just punishment,** and **revenge to the infliction of pain or evil, maliciously,** in an illegal manner.

**VENGE**, verb. To avenge; to punish. [Not in use] [See Avenge and Revenge.]

**VENGEANCE**, noun. The infliction of pain on another, in return for an injury or offense. . . . When such infliction proceeds **from a mere love of justice,** and the **necessity of punishing offenders** for the support of the law, **it is vengeance, and is warrantable and just.** In this case, **vengeance is a just retribution,** recompense or punishment. In this later sense the word is used in Scripture, and frequently applied to the punishments inflicted by God on sinners.

**REVENGE**, verb.

1. To inflict pain or injury in return for an injury received.

[**Note.** This word and avenge **were formally used as synonymous**, and is so used in the common version of the Scripture, and applied to the Supreme Being. “O Lord – revenge me of my persecutors” Jer. xv. In consequence of a distinction between avenge and revenge, **which modern usage has introduced, the application of this word to the Supreme Being appears extremely harsh**, irrelevant, and offensive. Revenge is now used in all ill sense, for the infliction of pain maliciously or illegally; avenge for inflicting just punishment.]

2. **According to modern usage**, to inflict pain deliberately and maliciously, contrary to the laws of justice and humanity, in return for injury, pain or evil received; to wreck vengeance spitefully on one who injures or offends.

**Further:**

**This information points out a very serious problem with the modern Bibles.** Theoretically, the modern translators are supposed to translate the Hebrew and Greek Text into modern English. **But they do not!** They know that the “**avenge**”, “**revenge**”, and “**vengeance**” words used in the KJV, do not mean today what they mean in the original Hebrew and Greek Text. Thus, today they should not translate those Hebrew and Greek words using words like “avenge”, “revenge”, and “vengeance”. **Instead they should be choosing other words, which do not carry the modern negative connotations.**

Likewise, other KJV English words no longer mean the same thing today as they did then. For example the Hebrew and Greek words for the KJV “**spirit**”, “**faith**”, and “**law**”, do not mean the same thing anymore. Yet the modern translators still use these same KJV English words in the modern Bibles, allowing the reader to misunderstand things, instead of finding different modern words that mean what the original Hebrew and Greek words mean.

This Bible translation bias, the more you think about it, demonstrates a deliberate “**lying**”, which is distributed in numerous languages around the world, having enormous consequences on billions of people.

In Service To The Brethren,  
Wayne L. Atchison, an Elder in the Body of the Messiah - [Credentials](#)

Two Tassels Ministry



Living By Both Covenants  
Empowering His Communities  
Standing Up for the Gospel of the Christ as it is Proclaimed in the Greek Text !  
[www.YhwhIs1.com](http://www.YhwhIs1.com)