

(e.g., hatred, maligning, retaliation). So don't incur sin because of him (Lev. 19:17). How should you rebuke him? As David did (1 Sam. 24:12–15). Point out the wrong. Tell him, "The Lord will avenge me!" Or, "The Lord judge between you and me!"

If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; For you will heap burning coals on his head, And the LORD will reward you (Proverbs 25:21).

But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you (Matthew 5:44).

**L**ove him as you love yourself (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44). If he's hungry, feed him; if he's thirsty, give him some water (Prov. 25:21; Rom. 12:20–21). Look for opportunities to love him by supplying his needs. That heaps coals of fire upon his head (Prov. 25:22; Rom. 12:20). And don't forget to pray for him (Matt. 5:44–45).

Do not say, "I will repay evil"; Wait for the LORD, and He will save you (Proverbs 20:22).

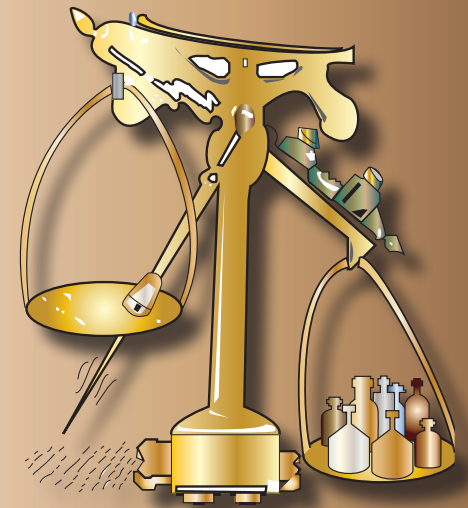
**W**ait for God to avenge you. He decides how and when (Prov. 20:22; Rev. 6:9–11).

**I**t's interesting that you can love your enemies, pray for them, do things to supply their needs, and at the same time have righteous indignation, rebuke them, and pray to God to avenge you. Loving those who wrong you and supplying their needs is the last thing most people want to do. They want revenge—sweet revenge. But when you love them and refuse to take your own vengeance, God is glorified. Why? Because it demonstrates to them and to others that obeying God's command is more important to you than your own personal feelings. Now that's a powerful witness!



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**VENGEANCE**  
ROMANS 12:19



**N**ever take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written,

"VENGEANCE IS MINE,  
I WILL REPAY,  
SAYS THE LORD."

Do not say, "I will repay evil";  
Wait for the LORD, and He will  
save you (Proverbs 20:22).

Do not say, "Thus I shall do to him  
as he has done to me; I will render  
to the man according to his work"  
(Proverbs 24:29).

Never pay back evil for evil to any-  
one (Romans 12:17a).

**I**n a world full of people with sin  
natures, sooner or later someone  
is going to hurt you, wrong you,  
humiliate you, take advantage  
of you, drag your good name  
through the mud—and you're go-  
ing to feel like getting even. What  
should you do in times like this?  
Let me offer some suggestions  
from the Bible.

You shall not take vengeance, nor  
bear any grudge against the sons  
of your people, but you shall love  
your neighbor as yourself; I am the  
LORD (Leviticus 19:18).

Vengeance is Mine, and retribution,  
In due time their foot will slip; For  
the day of their calamity is near,  
And impending things are has-  
tening upon them (Deuteronomy  
32:35).

Don't avenge yourself (Lev. 19:18;  
Prov. 20:22; 24:29; Rom. 12:17, 19).  
Why? Because God has promised  
to avenge you (Deut. 32:35; Rom.

12:19). Claim this promise: "Ven-  
geance is Mine, I will repay *them*,"  
says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). Why  
is revenge prohibited? Because  
vengeance must be based on jus-  
tice, and God is the only one who  
can repay injustices fairly. We're  
too emotionally involved to be fair  
(Prov. 6:34–35; Exod. 2:11–15; Acts  
7:23–29). Besides, we don't know  
all the facts.

BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT  
SIN; do not let the sun go down on  
your anger (Ephesians 4:26).

**Y**ou have a right to be angry—  
God is (Rom. 12:19)! That's  
righteous indignation (Eph. 4:26;  
cf. John 2:14–16). Justice has been  
violated. The greater your sense of  
justice, the greater your righteous  
anger will be.

Appoint a wicked man over him;  
And let an accuser stand at his  
right hand. When he is judged,  
let him come forth guilty; And let  
his prayer become sin. Let his  
days be few; Let another take his  
office, Let his children be father-  
less, And his wife a widow. Let his  
children wander about and beg;  
And let them seek sustenance far  
from their ruined homes. Let the  
creditor seize all that he has; And  
let strangers plunder the product  
of his labor. Let there be none to  
extend lovingkindness to him, Nor

any to be gracious to his father-  
less children. Let his posterity be  
cut off; In a following generation let  
their name be blotted out (Psalm  
109:6–13).

Let me see Thy vengeance on  
them, For to Thee have I committed  
my cause (Jeremiah 11:20).

**A** desire for vengeance is not  
wrong. Vent your righteous  
anger to God in prayer, asking  
Him to avenge you (Psa. 109:1–13,  
20; Jer. 11:18–23; 15:15; 18:18–23;  
20:12; Rev. 6:9–11). Such prayers  
are called imprecatory prayers.

A man's discretion makes him slow  
to anger, And it is his glory to  
overlook a transgression (Proverbs  
19:11).

**O**verlook the wrong if you  
can and be defrauded (Prov.  
19:11; 1 Cor. 6:7).

**I**f you can't overlook the wrong  
without harboring resent-  
ment, go to the person who  
wronged you and rebuke him in  
private (Lev. 19:17; Matt. 18:15;  
Luke 17:3). If he apologizes and  
makes amends, forgive him (Matt.  
6:14–15; 18:21–35; Luke 17:3–4;  
Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13) and don't hold  
a grudge (Lev. 19:18). Be careful!  
Righteous anger can lead to sin