

Luke 18:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

Analysis

Jesus describes the judge: 'Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.' This judge had two defining characteristics: he 'feared not God' (τὸν θεὸν μὴ φοβούμενος, ton theon mē phoboumenos) and he 'regarded not man' (ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἐντρεπόμενος, anthrōpon mē entrepomenos, didn't respect people). He was utterly corrupt—answerable to no one, driven purely by self-interest. Such judges were common in first-century Palestine under Roman occupation—appointed officials who exploited their positions for personal gain. If even this worst possible judge eventually grants justice (v. 5), how much more will the perfectly just and compassionate God answer His children's prayers? The parable argues from lesser to greater.

Historical Context

Roman-occupied Judea suffered from corrupt judicial systems. Local judges often accepted bribes and perverted justice. The prophets consistently condemned unjust judges (Isaiah 1:23, Micah 3:11). This judge represents the worst possible scenario—no fear of divine judgment, no concern for public opinion, driven entirely by selfishness. Yet even he eventually grants justice. Jesus uses this extreme negative example to teach about God's character by contrast: if the worst judge can be moved to act justly, infinitely more will the righteous, loving heavenly Father respond to His children's persistent prayers. The parable doesn't compare God to the unjust judge but contrasts them.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does the unjust judge's character emphasize God's goodness by contrast?
2. What does this parable teach about persistence in prayer when answers seem delayed?
3. How should understanding God's justice and compassion shape your prayer life?

Interlinear Text

λέγων,	Κριτής	τινι	ἡν	ἐν	τινι	πόλει	τὸν	θεὸν
Saying	judge	a	There was	in	a	city	G3588	God
G3004	G2923	G5100	G2258	G1722	G5100	G4172		G2316

μὴ φοβούμενος καὶ ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἐντρεπόμενος

not	which feared	neither	man	not	regarded
G3361	G5399	G2532	G444	G3361	G1788

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 29:7 (Parallel theme): The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it.

Luke 18:4 (References God): And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

