

THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

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The struggle for justice by Louis Wallis

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LOUIS WALLIS

**THE STRUGGLE
FOR JUSTICE**

THE STRUGGLE ^{c f} FOR JUSTICE

By
LOUIS WALLIS
Author of Sociological Study of the Bible



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TO
WILLIAM F. COCHRAN
WHOSE INTEREST IN THE SOCIAL VALUE
OF THE GOSPEL HAS MADE POSSIBLE
THE PUBLICATION OF THIS BOOK

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FOREWORD

Two great movements are uniting in our day, like two rivers flowing together to form a larger stream—the social awakening and the modern, scientific interpretation of religion and the Bible.

At first glance, it seems as if there can be no relation between academic scholarship and our new search for social justice. Yet these movements have an extremely intimate and vital connection, which comes into view as we go behind the scenes and carefully observe the working of the forces that control the evolution of human society.

The main thought of this little book has been expressed more technically and at greater length in the writer's earlier volume, entitled *Sociological Study of the Bible*. The friendly reception given to that work has suggested this briefer presentation.



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JUSTICE AND RELIGION

Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.—Amos 5:24.

The world today is moving between the urgency of two extremes. On the one hand are those who would have us leave all things as they are. On the other hand, the apostle of violence would shatter the physical fabric of civilization with high-power explosives.

The world will adopt neither of these alternatives. It will not stand still and preserve the *status quo*; nor will it follow the lead of the dynamiter. But it will presently discover that the call of the future is along the path of moderation.

Middle ground is the public destiny—not mere compromise, which settles nothing, but the genuine adjustment between conflicting interests which recognizes the inherent claims of all human beings and results in justice. For that is the real nature of justice: an adjustment which weighs all factors and which inclines toward the exclusive claim of no single class or interest.

Justice is not a thing to be laid hold of suddenly; nor is it handed out from the clouds. It

is a gradual discovery. Various fractions of justice have been realized through the struggles of the past. The time was when arbitrary theories of government ruled the world. The masses of men were controlled by a specially privileged upper class. But one privilege after another has been abolished. Divine kingly right and absolute rule have given way to representative democracy and popular legislation; chattel slavery has been wiped out; women are being emancipated; and so the process goes on. Justice comes not abruptly. Its dawn is gradual; and we are yet living in its morning hour.

The struggle for justice grips the feelings and appeals to the heart. It is a religious matter. The power of religion broke the tyranny of the Stuarts in Britain and the manacles of the slave in America. What is more, the modern school of scientific biblical interpretation is helping us to see that the book which all our churches venerate as holy has grown out of the first great victory over injustice in the history of the world. The struggle among the Hebrews for the worship of the One God, as opposed to the cults of the many gods, was not a mere theological contest between certain wise people who served a real God and certain foolish people who served unreal gods. It was a warfare between the principles of justice