

Revenge is a Kind of Wild Justice

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"Revenge is a kind of wild justice," explain it.

Francis Bacon's (1561-1626) essay "Of Revenge" (1625) begins with the remarkable statement, **"Revenge is a kind of wild justice."** This powerful phrase sets the stage for Bacon's thoughtful exploration of the nature and consequences of revenge. Let's explore this idea through four key points from his essay.

Revenge Disrupts Law and Order: Bacon argues that revenge might feel like justice. It actually disrupts the proper functioning of the law. He writes,

The more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out.

This means that as people naturally seek revenge, it becomes even more important for laws to prevent it. If individuals take revenge into their own hands, it damages the authority and purpose of the legal system. This makes justice a disorderly and personal affair rather than a fair and organized process.

Forgiveness Shows Strength: According to Bacon, forgiving a crime shows greater strength and nobility than seeking revenge. He states,

But in passing it over, he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon.

Here, Bacon suggests that when people forgive, they rise above their enemy. This act of forgiveness is seen as princely, demonstrating true power and dignity.

Revenge Keeps Wounds Fresh: Bacon argues that holding onto a desire for revenge keeps emotional wounds open. Letting go of the desire for revenge allows for healing and peace. However, holding onto it eternalizes pain and bitterness. Instead of healing, we keep hurting ourselves by attaching to anger.

Dwelling on the Past is Futile: Another important point Bacon makes is that focusing on past wrongs is a waste of valuable time and energy. He asserts that intelligent and forward-thinking individuals concentrate on the present and future. Holding onto the desire for revenge keeps us attached to the past. It prevents us from making positive progress.

In his essay "Of Revenge," Francis Bacon thoughtfully explains why revenge is a "wild justice". It ultimately harms us more than it helps. Revenge proves to be destructive and unwise. Instead, Bacon advocates for forgiveness. He focuses on the present and future as paths to true strength and happiness.

LxNotes