

Capital Punishment and the Bible

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Introduction

God, the God of life, is pro-capital punishment. This is one of the easiest of all Bible truths one to expose. So, there are three primary questions that apply to man concerning this topic.

Question one: Does God share this privilege and responsibility with man?

Question two: If so, for what offenses can one man take another man's life?

Question three: What is the process culminating in execution?

"Whoa there!" I hear you say. *"You are ready to start executing people and haven't even established if God is pro-capital punishment or not! You can't simply assert 'God, the God of life, is pro-capital punishment' and expect me to blindly accept that!!"* Okay, okay ... let's back up. So, is God really pro-capital punishment? Let me approach it this way. I want to ask you a question. *If you answer it Biblically - case closed.* So, here is the question.

Why are you going to die? Here is the Bible's answer to this inquiry. *"Just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, so death spread to all men, because all sinned (A)ll have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins"* (Ro 5:12, 3:23, Eccl 7:20). The Author of the Bible has made some determinations about this thing called "sin." First, everyone has done it. Second, the penalty is death. *"The wages of sin is death"* (Ro 6:23). According to the Bible, you are going to die because you have sinned. That is *why* you are going to die. But this immediately raises several questions. First, *what is sin?* Second, *why is God provoked about sin?* And third, *who imposes this penalty for sin?*

What Is Sin?

Before I started reading the Bible for myself, I thought "sin" was something invented by the Pope, or somebody, so as to make people feel guilty over various things and then give money to the church. But in my own reading, I began finding the Bible did assign right and wrong, good and evil, moral and immoral, to all kinds of behavior, activities and aspirations. Everything on the bad side is called, "sin." And while there are sins of *commission*, I soon realized there are also sins of *omission*. That means guilt is not only assigned for the commission of prohibited things, but is also levied if one fails to do things one should have done!

There are hundreds and hundreds of sins listed throughout the Bible's pages. Some fall in the "religious" realm (commands between each person and his/her Creator), and others fall into the civil realm (commands on how to act, or react, toward other people). There are even commands on the treatment of animals as well as commands toward all kinds of inanimate objects like the earth, money, pride, etc., etc., etc. There is a very simple assertion in John 5:17, *"All unrighteousness is sin"* I have not always automatically agreed with the Bible's assertions of *"unrighteousness."* But time after time, I have become persuaded I am in error and have abandoned my position(s). But even in those contentions, I knew I was only dealing with *one tree* - while standing in a forest. Sin, according to the Bible's definition, is all around me and permeates my inside being as well. We live in a mass of sin, and we all sin *in mass*. Do you doubt this? Well, consider the two great command. *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself"* (Lk 10:27). In my natural state (pre-Christian) *I never did this.*

That means, from God's perspective, I sinned continually. Now, in my Christian state, I fulfill these commands *some of the time*. The bulk of humanity is unsaved. And there are a lot of "Corinthian" type believers. So, how do you stack up?

Why is God Provoked About Sin?

I am the first to admit that I only have a vague grip on the answer to this question. If I really grasped how deadly serious He is about sin, I wouldn't keep doing so much of it. So with that backdrop, I will forward some information on this question. But I am sure this material will only scratch the surface.

When King David's sins of *adultery and murder* were exposed by the prophet Nathan, David's response was, "*I have sinned against the Lord*" (2Sam 12:13). In Psalm 51:4, David stated, "*Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight.*" Uriah the Hittite (the murdered husband) and Bathsheba (the stolen wife) were off the radar screen. David rightly understood his sins were *primarily* an assault on God Almighty. In my natural state (pre-Christian days), a thought like that *never entered my mind*. As stated earlier, I didn't even think "*sin*" was a valid concept. Even now, when I sin, I do not always think, "*I am sinning against God.*" But God sees it that way. When I sin, He registers that as an assault on Him. And why does God regard this as a personal assault? I think the reason is because He made us in His likeness and image (Gen 1:26,27 & 9:6). While there is debate on what this means, here may be a partial answer. God plans, creates, and communicates. He has crowned us with like abilities. When we use any of these abilities in a contrary way, this defilement, twisting, and corruption of one of these "*crowns*" is a sin. God logs each violation of these shared traits *as a treacherous, personal assault on Him*. And this angers Him. So, how angry is He?

Our sins form "*a certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us which (are) hostile to us*" (Col 2:14). This "*certificate of debt*" is a death warrant ... "*the wages of sin is death*" (Ro 6:23). This leads to three questions that need answering.

Question One: Who decided *death* is the penalty for sin? **Answer:** The God of life.

Question Two: Who imposes this penalty? **Answer:** The God of life. "*See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me. It is I who put to death and give life ... and there is no one who can deliver from My hand*" (Deut 32:39).

Question Three: When, where, and how is the sentence carried out? **Answer:** At the time, place, and method of His choosing. Harsh stuff.

To add insult to injury, those outside of Christ have been "*judged already*" and are now living on death row (Jn 3:18). In fact, God is so serious about this sin deal that He has actually created *three deaths* - and most people will encounter all three. For a thorough discussion on the three deaths created by the God of life, I refer you to my Ebook, "*Death and the Bible*" at www.freelygive-n.com. But, for our purposes here, the death we are interested in is our physical expiration. Now you know "*why*" you physically die. Death comes because of your own personal sin. You also know "*Who*" the executioner is. God invented capital punishment.

One time, Jesus was asked (challenged), "*Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*" This is the question of all questions. What does a person need to do so he/she might live forever ... and ever ... and ever ... *where death will be eternally absent*? If it is possible there is a legitimate answer to this, isn't it worth a full investigation? *Eternal Life*? How long is that? Well, if you counted *one grain* of sand per year, when you finished counting *every one* on the globe ... you would still be at the beginning of eternity. Here was Jesus' response. "*What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?*" The man said, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,*

and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus said, “*You have answered correctly; do this **and you will live***” (Lk 10:25-28). Jesus told His questioner that if he kept the commands he had correctly enunciated, he would live *forever!* He would never die! If *anyone* fulfills these commands, God will have absolutely no quarrel with that sinless one. Death will not, *and cannot*, come. From God's viewpoint, here we learn: where sin is absent, death is absent.

Now, we must decide something about Jesus. He either lived and spoke in delusion, or He knew exactly what He was talking about. He either knew the truth about life (even eternal life) and death, or He did not. Once I became convinced He indeed rose from the dead, that settled things for me. With the ability to rise from the dead ... it seems reasonable to assume He knows what he is talking about on anything He wants to address.

So, according to the Bible, death is not an inorganic, random, naturally occurring reality as Evolutionists would have one believe. Death is *an act of God*, a “*thing*” created **by God**. It is an imposed, determined, personal judgment levied by the eternal Creator in response to the wickedness of sin - my sin. You, too, my friend, are in His cross hairs.

Obviously, most people do not believe this. Nor do people believe God keeps track of *every sin* a person commits. This unbelief is manifested in trillions and trillions of ways every day. The outcome of this unbelief is distilled in one verse: “*Because sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the human heart is fully set to do evil*” (Eccl 8:11). But justice delayed does not mean justice will be denied. “*... it is appointed for men to die once, and then comes the judgment*” (Heb 9:27). We live in a virtual slaughterhouse. I wouldn't be surprised if a quarter-million people die each day. Concerning the Executioner's feelings on this, He once stated, “*I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies, declares the Lord God. Therefore, repent and live*” (Ezk 18:32). Pleasure does not drive this grim reality - necessity does.

I can hear the objections even now! “*But, what about babies who die? They have never sinned! And what about the severely retarded, or the insane? They are incapable of knowing right from wrong! And what about plants and animals? They are not even capable of sin, yet death dominates them all!*” Do you really think I am comfortable with the assertions above without having made these inquiries myself? I address these matters in my free Ebook, “*Death and the Bible.*” But presently, these are irrelevant concerns. We are talking about *you*. You are not a baby, or retarded, or insane and you are not a plant. You are a morally accountable human being - accountable to the One who created you. So, don't worry about all those other situations. You have enough to be concerned with.

But, now to these questions. “*Has God delegated the executing power **He possesses** to man? If so, for what reason(s) and under what circumstances?*”

Pre Law

With Noah, a significant edict was granted to man. “*Whoever sheds man's blood, **by man** his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man*” (Gen 9:6). God delegated this duty to man. This was right after the flood - with the earth's population reduced to just eight people. It seems reasonable to assume this was not to be “lynch mob” justice, but probably an action imposed after a deliberative process by some sort of “primitive” governing council. But even if it was a vigilante system, by the time of the formation of Israel, definite judicial procedures were instituted.

The Law - A Nation Under a Theocracy

Technically, all nations are under God's rule. In that sense, every nation is under theocratic rule. Every governing authority of every age, culture and governing system will account to Him. I will discuss this later. But, according the Bible, there was a unique situation at the time of Moses. God decided to visit humanity in a unique way. He chose a group of people (Israel), and gave them direct

revelation for their laws and governing procedures. God set up the one and only true *practicing* Theocracy to be seen in this Age (from Adam through the Last Day). What is often called “*The Law of Moses*” is actually the Law of God. Moses did not come up with one word of it. Moses dictated. For many reasons (which I will skip over in this treatise), it was not God’s plan to extend this government to the present. But fortunately, its precepts and Laws have been preserved for us. I am convinced of this one central truth: to the extent that any governing body adopts any of that Law (except for the religious parts that were shadows and types fulfilled in Christ), to that same degree a just government will emerge. Simply stated, the Law, through Moses, composed the best laws for governing sinners.

Let’s now examine Capital Punishment in God’s Law. These were not *guidelines* for Israel - they were **commands**. God, as King, gave laws to be obeyed. Failure to obey would bring severe penalties - and it did. Ultimately, this one-time Theocracy did not fail Israel ... Israel failed it. God often described Israel as “*stubborn and obstinate*” (Ezk 3:7, Hos 4:16). But, any other ethnic group would have failed as well. So, here are the capital offenses of the Theocracy, the procedures for capital offense cases, and the promises for obedience to this area of The Law.

The Capital Offenses

I have arbitrarily divided the 28 offenses into five categories:

- 1) Civil Violations
- 2) Sexual Violations
- 3) Civil *and* Sexual Violations
- 4) Religious Violations, and
- 5) Civil *and* Religious Violations.

These divisions are more for my benefit. Following what are clearly capital offenses, I will list all the “cut off” offenses. That will be followed by the “Twelve Curses” from Deuteronomy. While some of these called for the execution of the offender, I am not sure they all did. So, what violations are to end with execution of the offender?

Civil Violations

1. Striking a man so he died (had an earlier anger or hatred in heart. Thus, murder). Ex 21:12-14, Num 35:9-34, Deut 19:4-13.
2. Striking one’s father or mother. Ex 21:15.
3. Kidnaping. Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7.
4. Cursing one’s father or mother. Ex 21:17, Lev 20:9.
5. If men were fighting and accidentally struck a pregnant woman and she died, the responsible one(s?) were to be executed. Ex 21:22-24.
6. A stubborn, rebellious, disobedient son who was a drunkard or glutton. Deut 21:18-24.
7. If someone is exposed as a false witness, and they were attempting to have their target executed, then the false witness himself/herself was to suffer that fate - execution. Deut 19:15.
8. If local jurisdictions had a case too difficult to decide, they were to take that case to a judge or Levitical priest at Jerusalem. If the locals then failed to obey the ensuing decree, the ones bringing the case were to be executed. Deut 17: 8-13.
9. If an ox gored someone to death, and had gored previously (and the owner had been warned), then the owner of the ox was to be executed. However, a ransom could be demanded (by relatives?) instead of execution. If he paid, he could live. This was the *only time* a capital offense could be waived, and the power to do so rested with the victims. Ex 21:28-32.

10. If one was convicted of manslaughter (accidental killing of another), that person had to stay in one of the six cities of refuge until the death of the High Priest. But if the one convicted of manslaughter left the city of refuge early, the blood avenger could kill him. Num 35:9-28.

Sexual Violations

Where people are involved, the following are all consensual sexual encounters.

11. Bestiality. The man and animal, or woman and animal, were both put to death. Ex 22:19, Lev 20:15,16.
12. Adultery. Both the man and woman were to be executed. Even if only one was married, both were executed. Lev 20:10, Deut 22:22.
13. If a man had sexual relations with his father's wife, both were to be executed. Lev 20:11.
14. If a man had sexual relations with his daughter-in-law, both were to be executed. Lev 20:12.
15. Homosexuality. Two males in sexual relations were to both be executed. Lev 20:13. In Leviticus 18:22, God calls male homosexuality an abomination. Lesbianism is not referenced.
16. If a woman marries, and is supposedly a virgin, but then found not to be so, she was to be taken to her father's doorway and stoned to death. This might be considered a civil and sexual crime. Deut 22: 13-21. I must say, this passage as a whole does bother me. A husband falsely accusing his new wife was only to be chastised and fined and he could not divorce that slandered wife all his days. I think he should have been executed. He framed her and was trying to get her killed. Maybe, because of the societal construct, an executed husband would leave her in a hapless state, so his lack of being executed would be to her best advantage.
17. If a man is found with an engaged virgin in the city, both were to be executed. The virgin did not cry out, so is determined as complicit (consensual). Deut 22:23,24.

Civil and Sexual Violations

18. If a man has sexual relations with an engaged virgin in the field (outside the city), only the man is executed. It is assumed to be a rape, as she may have called out for help, but no one could hear her and thus come to her aid. This may or may not be true, but the female was given the benefit of the doubt, while the male was given no such consideration. This also includes kidnapping which was a civil crime. Deut 22:25-27.

Spiritual Violations

19. Anyone who cursed God, or blasphemed "The Name," was to be stoned to death. Lev 24:15.
20. Anyone who worked on the Sabbath was to be executed. Ex 35:2, Num 15:32-36.
21. Anyone sacrificing to other gods was to be executed. Ex 22:20.
22. Anyone seducing others to serve other gods was to be executed. Deut 13:6-9, Deut 17:2-7.
23. Anyone who has served or worshiped other gods, or the sun, moon, or any of the heavenly host were to be stoned to death at the city gates. Deut 17:2-7.
24. If a prophet or dreamer came up with true signs, yet was saying to follow some other god, that prophet or dreamer was to be executed. Israel was being tested by God. Deut 13:1-5.
25. If a prophet's assertion proved erroneous, that "prophet" was to be executed. Deut 18:20-22.
26. A sorceress, or anyone practicing witchcraft, casting spells, interpreting omens, calling up the dead, or any medium or spiritist, was to be executed. Ex 22:18, Deut 18:10-13.
27. If a city in Israel was found to have gone after other gods, the rest of Israel was to destroy everything, including the cattle, then burn everything. That city was to never be rebuilt. Deut 13:12-17.

Civil and Spiritual Violations

28. Anyone involved in offering children to Molech was to be executed. This involved sacrificing children by burning them alive to this god. This is more than a spiritual violation as it is also premeditated murder (a civil offense). Lev 20:1, Deut 18:10.

Offenders who were “Cut Off” from Israel

There are several passages that talk about violators being “cut off.” It is clear this means death by execution in several instances, but it is unclear to me (at this time) if all of these “cut off” offenses were to end in execution. I will list them in three categories. The first will be certain execution offenses, the second will be possible/probable, and the third are offenses which may be “cut off” in terms of banishment. This third category may be a total fabrication on my part, so if you can enlighten me, please do. It seems like a good idea to know exactly what God means by “cut off” before you start executing people. I will list my reasoning as I progress.

A. “Cut Off” Equaling Civil Execution

1. Ex 31:14 - Working on the Sabbath.
2. Lev 20:3 - Sacrificing children to Molech.
3. Lev 18:20 - “Intercourse with your neighbor’s wife” (adultery).
4. Lev 18:22 - Homosexuality.
5. Lev 18:23 - Bestiality.

B. Probable/Possible “Cut Off” Passages Equaling Civil Execution

1. Lev 20:6 - Anyone turning to spiritists and mediums.
2. Num 15:30,31 - Defiant sin contrary to the word of the Lord, as this is seen as blaspheming Him.
3. Ex 30:33 - Anyone making the holy oil or pouring it on someone when he/she has not been commissioned to do either one.
4. Ex 30:38 - Anyone making incense (as prescribed by God for the Tabernacle/Temple) for perfume (profane) purposes.

C. “Cut Off” for Seeing Nakedness - Sexual Violations?

There are several instances when God speaks of seeing one’s nakedness, or taking one and seeing her nakedness. If it is correct to assume this is another way of referencing intercourse, then these violations may have called for execution. You will have to find someone more educated than I to determine if this is a valid assumption.

5. Lev 20:17 - A man taking his sister or half sister so that he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness.
6. Lev 18:6-17 - There is a whole list of blood relatives that one was not to approach to uncover his/her nakedness. This includes one’s mother, father’s wife (step mother?), sister, half-sister, granddaughter, aunt (including an aunt by marriage - one’s uncle’s wife), daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, a woman and her daughter, nor that woman’s granddaughter(s).
7. Lev 18:18 - Not to take as wife two sisters while both are alive.

D. “Cut Off” Equaling Banishment or Some Other Kind of Penalty?

It is at this point I am really speculating. Maybe *none* of the following “cut off” injunctions call for execution - maybe *some do* - maybe *all do*. I don’t know, but here are the rest. It is the last one in particular (which I will comment on) that has prompted this category of “cut off” offenses equaling

banishment or some other kind of penalty. It would be my hope the offender could repent in an effort to reverse course and correct the error. But one thing I am certain of - these were all very serious violations to be avoided.

1. Ex 12:15,19 - Eating leavened bread during the seven days before Passover.
2. Lev 7:20,21 and Lev 22:3 - Anyone who is ceremonially unclean, yet eats of the peace offerings.
3. Num 19:13-20 - Anyone not purifying himself after touching a human corpse.
4. Lev 7:25 - Anyone eating the fat of a sacrificial animal.
5. Lev 19:5-8 - Anyone eating of peace offerings third day (or beyond?).
6. Lev 17:3,4 - Anyone slaughtering an ox, goat, or lamb, inside or outside the camp, and failing to present it before the Tabernacle (this was while Israel was in the wilderness).
7. Lev 17:8,9 - Anyone offering a burnt offering or sacrifice, and not presenting it before the door of The Tent of Meeting to the Lord.
8. Lev 23:27-32 - Violating the Day of Atonement by not humbling oneself.
9. Num 9:13 - A clean man who was not on a journey, yet neglects Passover.
10. Lev 7:27, Lev 17:10,14 - Anyone eating blood.
11. Lev 20:18 - A man having intercourse with a menstrual woman - both were to be cut off.
12. Gen 17:14 - Anyone not circumcised the eighth day (the Covenant between God and Israel).

It is this last “cut off” offense that makes me question if “cut off” equals execution. Sometimes, as seen earlier, “cut off” offenses call for execution of the offender. But in this last one, the infant is totally dependent upon his parents to obey the Covenant Law. Is the infant to be executed for the sins of the parent(s)? That would violate the clear injunction that no one was to be executed for the sins of one’s father (Deut 24:16). Now you know what “cut off” offense opened this entire category to me. As you have seen, I dumped eleven other offenses into this category - and I may be in total error here.

The Twelve Curses

Just before Israel went into the promised land after the wilderness wanderings, the people said “Amen” to these twelve curses. Several curses clearly called for man’s hand in public execution. What about the others? Or would Israel “cut off” the violator upon conviction (banishment)? Or would one simply step back and allow God to act in the time and place of His choosing? Well, here they are for your review.

Deut 27:11-26.

- *Cursed is the man who makes an idol or image - sets it up in secret. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who dishonors his father or mother. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who moves his neighbor’s boundary mark.
- *Cursed is the man who leads astray the blind on the road.
- *Cursed is the man who distorts justice due to the alien, orphan, or widow.
- *Cursed is the man who lies with his father’s wife. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who lies with any animal. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who lies with his sister. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who lies with his mother-in-law. (Execution).
- *Cursed is the man who strikes his neighbor in secret. (If result is death, then execution).
- *Cursed is the man who accepts a bribe to strike down the innocent. (If the innocent one is killed, then the bribe *taker* was to be executed. Centuries later, Judas took a bribe in exchange for delivering up God in the flesh to his enemies. But, after feeling remorse, he told the chief priests and elders he had “*sinned by betraying innocent blood*” (Mt 27:4). Those “Law-keepers” did not want to hear that confession - and clearly did not act upon it. Based on this alone their sin was greater than that which

Pilate incurred [Jn 19:11]. Concerning Judas, it truly would have been good if he had not been born).
*Cursed is the man who does not confirm the words of this Law.

Procedures for Capital Offense Cases

What Minimal Protections Were Afforded All Citizens?

1. No one could be put to death on the testimony of only one witness. There had to be two, or more, and the witness' hands were to be the first in stonings (at least in some cases - maybe all). Num 35:30, Deut 13:6-9, Deut 17:2-7, Deut 19:15.
2. Fathers could not be held accountable for the son's sins, nor could a son be held accountable for sins by the father. Each person was liable only for his/her own actions. Deut 24:16.

Who Convicted the Guilty?

1. The elders of the cities who "sat in the gate" (the place of official judgment) decided many of the cases. Deut 22:13-21, Deut 21:19.
2. In cases that were too difficult to decide, it was to be brought "*to the place which the Lord God chooses*" (eventually Jerusalem after settling the land?). The Levitical priest or judge of that day would declare the verdict. Deut 17:8-13.

Where Were the Executions to Take Place?

1. It appears the executions were very public affairs. Many were at the city gate. This was the main thoroughfare and entrance to the city. Deut 22:24, Deut 17:5.
2. In one case, the unvirgin "virgin" newlywed was to be stoned at the doorstep of her father's house. Deut 22:21.

Who Was to Carry Out the Actual Execution?

1. In some cases, it was "*the people of the land,*" or "*all the people*" Lev 20:1, Deut 17:7.
2. The "*avenger of blood*" carried out executions particularly in reference to those convicted of first degree murder. Num 35:16-21, Deut 19:12.
3. Sometimes "*all the men in the city*" were the executioners. Deut 21:21, Deut 22:21.

Method of Execution

Stoning was a primary method of execution. The blood avenger may have used a sword, and in one case, the guilty parties were to be burned with fire (See Lev 20:14). When destroying a wayward city, whatever accomplished the goal was probably acceptable. It will be interesting to see how the "*cruel and unusual punishment*" protesters fare when they stand before the One who *commanded* these methods. Human beings have no idea Who they are dealing with.

Promises for Obedience

These promises are contingent upon the consistent, impartial, and fair implementation of the death penalty.

1. Israel was to avenge innocent blood so "*that it may go well with you.*" Deut 19:13.
2. The land was thus cleansed from pollution. Read Numbers 35:29-34. This is extremely interesting.
3. Fear will be put into the heart of the people so as to not commit these offenses. This is a critically important point to be addressed later. God declares that capital punishment is a deterrent to criminal activity. Deut 17:13, Deut 19:20, and Deut 21:21.

It is clear that God was pro-capital punishment in His Theocratic rule. But can other governments rightly execute its citizens? The short answer is, “Yes.”

The Role and Responsibility of Governing Authorities

Romans 13:1-4, concisely defines the role and responsibility of governing officials. *“Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil Do you want to have no fear of authority Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a **minister of God** to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not **bear the sword** for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil ...”* (Ro 13:1-4).

Governing authorities are called *“theou gar diakonos”* - a *deacon* of God, a *servant* of God, a *minister* of God! Each government official is a *minister of God* and is to *serve* those under his/her charge. I wonder how many officials know this? And how does this work out in practice? The answer is quite clear – they are to support the law-abiding and punish evildoers. Of course, that brings up a couple of big questions. First, if there is no accountability for that service by some superior power, who cares about such a mandate, and second, what constitutes a law-abiding or lawbreaking citizen?

Accountability. As stated earlier, this entire world is technically a theocracy. Following His resurrection, Jesus made this declaration. *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth ...”* (Mt 28:18). But He actually had *“all authority”* before He rose from the dead. At the last supper, we find this almost parenthetical remark. *“Jesus, **knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands** ... rose from supper, and laid aside His garments ...”* - and proceeded to wash the feet of His disciples! But even earlier, John the Baptizer rightly stated, *“The Father loves the Son, and **has given** (a perfect tense, which is action in the past with present results) **all things into His hands**”* (Jn 3:35). So what are the *“all things”* that had been placed in His hands? And what does it mean to have *“all authority”*? Well, a thousand years before Jesus appeared in human history, the Bible declared this about the Son: *“Now therefore, **O kings, show discernment: take warning, O judges (leaders) of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Do homage to the Son (kiss the Son), lest He become angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath may suddenly (quickly or easily) be kindled”*** (Ps 2:10-12). In the New Testament, we find this: *“For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things have been created through Him **and for Him**, and He is before all things and in Him all things hold together ...”* (Col 1:16,17). Jesus *“is **the head** over all rule and authority”* (Col 2:10) and is often called *“the King of kings and Lord of lords”* (Rev 19:16, 17:14, etc.). He is the King over each king and He is the Lord over each and every lord. That constitutes a Theocracy - whether these underlings know it or not - or believe it or not. He is *“the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God”* and *“the King of the nations ...”* (1Tim 1:17 and Rev 15:3,4). These claims permeate the Bible and are various ways of calling Him - **the Boss**.

Concerning the governing bodies that arise in this world, it is a mistake to think of “The State” as a faceless institution. “The State,” *is simply a collection of individuals in various governing capacities.* When looking at these individuals, Romans 13:1 flatly states, *“Let every person be in subjection to the governing **authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**”* Jesus was quite direct on this matter when He was standing before Pilate. The Jews had been accusing Jesus of several things and Pilate was trying to get information from Jesus. Pilate became angered when Jesus would not answer him, and tersely stated, *“‘You do not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?’ Jesus answered, ‘You would have no authority over Me, **unless it had been given to you from above**’”* This remark so alarmed Pilate that he began making a determined effort to release Him (Jn

19:10-16). But does this incident with Pilate, and the passage in Romans 13 apply to Hitler as well? The answer is, "Yes." As hard as that is for me to say, the Bible is clear on this matter. No one has authority on any level unless it has been granted to that one from above. And here is the real clincher on this matter. Every lawmaker of every culture from Adam forward will account to *The Lawmaker* on Judgment Day. From tribal chiefs, to kings, dictators, presidents, legislators, judges - all earthly rulers, on all levels, will not only account for their *personal* behaviors, but also for their *public duties* and how they wielded the power God granted them. They will answer for each law crafted or decision rendered, *and also for the effect each action had*. God alone will ferret out the exact impact of each person who functioned in government. To the degree each governing authority fails to support law-abiding citizens (or fails to bring retribution upon evildoers), culpability will be assigned to the one *raised up by God to govern*. Judgment Day will be the ultimate moment *of a complete reckoning*. At that time, God will fully exert the power many believed (and hoped) He did not possess. No one will be able to hide behind Constitutions, philosophies, beliefs, body guards or guns. "*All things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do*" (Heb 4: 13). Everyone accounts to Him, "*the great and the small*" (Ro 20:12). Entrusted to each governing official is the life and well being of those under his/her jurisdiction. A person in that capacity has one primary responsibility before God - each law or judgment rendered is to be in line with the values and priorities of God - and will be measured by *that* standard. It is the duty of each governing official to learn what God expects of them - and this should be done before stepping into the role. Would you like to stand in Hitler's shoes on that day? How would you like to be one of the jurists who legalized abortion in the USA through Roe V. Wade? You can wait until you have read my Ebook, "*Abortion: How (and Why) Abortion Resides in the Weakest Form of Human Thought and Valuation*," before answering that one if you want.

It is painfully clear these claims are not believed by the bulk of humanity *or by the bulk of governing forces*. Corruption, greed, vice and murder permeate governments of yesterday and today. But, for His own reasons (though not always clear to us), God has allowed all kinds of governing bodies to arise throughout history. While some have been relatively benign, many have been extremely violent. Sometimes that violence has been directed at other societies, but other times it has been directed at its own citizens. Oftentimes, the violence has been directed both ways. There is no surprise that victims who have suffered and perished by a State's sword have wondered, "*Is there a God?*" and if so, "*Does He care?*" And because so many governments have been (and are) so reckless with this power, it is not surprising that many people do not want *any* government over them. Theologically, questions arise asking why God has allowed (and allows) so many ruthless individuals to ascend into power with the ability to kill - and cause so much grief and destruction. While I can forward relatively easy answers to these "complaints," if I become the victim of governing forces using their sword in an unauthorized way, I will be hard pressed to accept this as part of God's plan and simply look to The Judgment for vindication and restoration. I hope I am spared this kind of challenge. There are many challenges I hope to be spared from. This age reeks with injustice, evil violence, and the ascension of worthless individuals. It has been that way from Adam to the present. Who "won" - Cain or Abel? Many Bible writers complained of this mess (See Job 21:1-11, Psalm 73, and Jeremiah 12:1-4). But God promises He will abort these human stains from the realm of life - in His time.

So, here is the conclusion on this part of the discussion. This entire world, from Adam to the Last Day, is a theocracy. It's just these tin-horn dictatorships, democracies, kingdoms, and tribes don't know it - and do not want to know it. But the trumpet sound is coming, and the tin-horn trumpets will be blown from each governing official's hand. Each one will then stand all alone, butt naked, before the Creator to account for his/her governing. There is no vote on this matter. Human desires, or opinions, are not solicited and are completely irrelevant.

So What Actually Constitutes a Law-abiding - or a Law-breaking - Citizen?

Probably one of the greatest values of studying the Theocratic system lies right here - it defines what human behavior is in, or out, of bounds. But in order to use the Law lawfully, one must identify and excise that part of the Law *which pertains exclusively to the Covenant between God and Israel*. The moment Jesus died, some parts of that Law system ended forever. For example, the Levitical priesthood, and all the laws pertaining to them, ceased. (By the way, that includes the tithe. Get my free Ebook, “*No Tithe for the Christian*”). Other parts of the religious law also expired as much of it consisted of shadows and types that *were fulfilled* in Christ. So, commands for things like Sabbath keeping, or the feasts and festivals, with attendant duties, ceased. But the *universal* civil law can be extracted relatively easily if one has the desire to do so. This creates the grounds for defining a law-abiding, or a law-breaking, citizen. Governments are charged to protect the law-abiding and punish the law-breaking according to His definitions of each category. “Ignorance” will not stand as a defense for governing officials.

Parring Down the List of Possible Capital Offenses

There are five capital offenses exclusive to the Old Covenant. These ended the moment Jesus died. Once excised, a government could rightly adopt the rest *of this part* of The Law. Having stated this, when a government adopts certain governing principles, some capital offenses, by necessity, terminate. Indeed, some governing philosophies strike them all down. If one views this first parring down as the conservative position, you will see what governing rationales move a government toward becoming liberal in reference to capital punishment.

Let’s first abandon all the “cut off” offenses, and see what part of this Capital Punishment system could be adopted by a government today.

I. Excising Capital Offenses Exclusive to the Old Covenant

Here is the list of capital violations I believe could be righteously used today by any governmental system. I have left the original numbering intact. Deleted are 8, 10, 16, 20 and 27. You can look back at the original list and easily identify what offenses have been deleted. I have kept my arbitrary categories intact as well. Now 23 of 28 capital offenses ending with execution are still in play.

1. Striking a man so he died (had an earlier anger or hatred in heart. Thus, murder). Ex 21:12-14, Num 35:9-34, Deut 19:4-13.
2. Striking one’s father or mother. Ex 21:15.
3. Kidnaping. Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7.
4. Cursing one’s father or mother. Ex 21:17, Lev 20:9.
5. If men were fighting and accidentally struck a pregnant woman and she died, the responsible one(s?) were to be executed. Ex 21:22-24.
6. A stubborn, rebellious, disobedient son who was a drunkard or glutton. Deut 21:18-24.
7. If someone is exposed as a false witness, and they were attempting to have their target executed, then the false witness himself/herself was to suffer that fate - execution. Deut 19:15.
8. Deleted - Deut 17: 8-13.
9. If an ox gored someone to death, and had gored previously (and the owner had been warned), then the owner of the ox was to be executed. However, a ransom could be demanded (by relatives?) instead of execution. If he paid, he could live. This was the *only time* a capital offense could be waived, and the power to do so rested with the victims. Ex 21:28-32.
10. Deleted - Num 35:9-28.

Sexual Violations

Where people are involved, the following are all consensual sexual encounters.

11. Bestiality. The man and animal, or woman and animal, were both put to death. Ex 22:19, Lev 20:15,16.
12. Adultery. Both the man and woman were to be executed. Even if only one was married, both were executed. Lev 20:10, Deut 22:22.
13. If a man had sexual relations with his father's wife, both were to be executed. Lev 20:11.
14. If a man had sexual relations with his daughter-in-law, both were to be executed. Lev 20:12.
15. Homosexuality. Two males in sexual relations were to both be executed. Lev 20:13. In Leviticus 18:22, God calls male homosexuality an abomination. Lesbianism is not referenced.
16. Deleted - Deut 22: 13-21.
17. If a man is found with an engaged virgin in the city, both were to be executed. The virgin did not cry out, so is determined as complicit (consensual). Deut 22:23,24.

Civil and Sexual Violations

18. If a man has sexual relations with an engaged virgin in the field (outside the city), only the man is executed. It is assumed to be a rape, as she may have called out for help, but no one could hear her and thus come to her aid. This may or may not be true, but the female was given the benefit of the doubt, while the male was given no such consideration. This also includes kidnapping which was a civil crime. Deut 22:25-27.

Spiritual Violations

19. Anyone who cursed God, or blasphemed "The Name," was to be stoned to death. Lev 24:15.
20. Deleted. Ex 35:2, Num 15:32-36.
21. Anyone sacrificing to other gods was to be executed. Ex 22:20.
22. Anyone seducing others to serve other gods was to be executed. Deut 13:6-9, Deut 17:2-7.
23. Anyone who has served or worshiped other gods, or the sun, moon, or any of the heavenly host were to be stoned to death at the city gates. Deut 17:2-7.
24. If a prophet or dreamer came up with true signs, yet was saying to follow some other god, that prophet or dreamer was to be executed. Israel was being tested by God. Deut 13:1-5.
25. If a prophet's assertion proved erroneous, that "prophet" was to be executed. Deut 18:20-22.
26. A sorceress, or anyone practicing witchcraft, casting spells, interpreting omens, calling up the dead, or any medium or spiritist, was to be executed. Ex 22:18, Deut 18:10-13.
27. Deleted - Deut 13:12-17.

Civil and Spiritual Violations

28. Anyone involved in offering children to Molech was to be executed. This involved sacrificing children by burning them alive to this god (extend this to any child sacrifice). This is more than a spiritual violation as it is also premeditated murder (a civil offense). Lev 20:1, Deut 18:10.

II. A Further Parring Down for All Non Bible Governments

For governments that reject the God of the Bible as the focal point for their law, there are additional offenses to be excised. All secular governments, pluralistic governments, and non-Biblical "theocratic governments" could employ the list below. Now deleted are number 8, 10, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27. Again, I have kept the original numbering and categories intact. So, 16 of 28 execution violations are still viable.

1. Striking a man so he died (had an earlier anger or hatred in heart. Thus, murder). Ex 21:12-14, Num 35:9-34, Deut 19:4-13.
2. Striking one's father or mother. Ex 21:15.
3. Kidnaping. Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7.
4. Cursing one's father or mother. Ex 21:17, Lev 20:9.
5. If men were fighting and accidentally struck a pregnant woman and she died, the responsible one(s?) were to be executed. Ex 21:22-24.
6. A stubborn, rebellious, disobedient son who was a drunkard or glutton. Deut 21:18-24.
7. If someone is exposed as a false witness, and they were attempting to have their target executed, then the false witness himself/herself was to suffer that fate - execution. Deut 19:15.
8. Deleted - Deut 17: 8-13.
9. If an ox gored someone to death, and had gored previously (and the owner had been warned), then the owner of the ox was to be executed. However, a ransom could be demanded (by relatives?) instead of execution. If he paid, he could live. This was the *only time* a capital offense could be waived, and the power to do so rested with the victims. Ex 21:28-32.
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Spiritual Violations

19. Deleted - Lev 24:15.
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21. Deleted - Ex 22:20.
22. Deleted - Deut 13:6-9, Deut 17:2-7.
23. Deleted - Deut 17:2-7.
24. Deleted - Deut 13:1-5.
25. Deleted - Deut 18:20-22.
26. Deleted - Ex 22:18, Deut 18:10-13.

27. Deleted - Deut 13:12-17.

Civil and Spiritual Violations

28. Anyone involved in offering children to Molech was to be executed. This involved sacrificing children by burning them alive to this god (extend this to any child sacrifice). This is more than a spiritual violation as it is also premeditated murder (a civil offense). Lev 20:1, Deut 18:10.

III. These Same Governments Who Jettison Sexual Violations as Capital Offenses

If a government excises all sexual violations, here is what is left of the entire Capital Punishment system. Additional deletions are 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 18. Again, the numbering and categories have been left intact. 9 of 28 are still viable.

1. Striking a man so he died (had an earlier anger or hatred in heart. Thus, murder). Ex 21:12-14, Num 35:9-34, Deut 19:4-13.
2. Striking one's father or mother. Ex 21:15.
3. Kidnaping. Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7.
4. Cursing one's father or mother. Ex 21:17, Lev 20:9.
5. If men were fighting and accidentally struck a pregnant woman and she died, the responsible one(s?) were to be executed. Ex 21:22-24.
6. A stubborn, rebellious, disobedient son who was a drunkard or glutton. Deut 21:18-24.
7. If someone is exposed as a false witness, and they were attempting to have their target executed, then the false witness himself/herself was to suffer that fate - execution. Deut 19:15.
8. Deleted - Deut 17: 8-13.
9. If an ox gored someone to death, and had gored previously (and the owner had been warned), then the owner of the ox was to be executed. However, a ransom could be demanded (by relatives?) instead of execution. If he paid, he could live. This was the *only time* a capital offense could be waived, and the power to do so rested with the victims. Ex 21:28-32.
10. Deleted - Num 35:9-28.

Sexual Violations

Where people are involved, the following are all consensual sexual encounters.

11. Deleted - Ex 22:19, Lev 20:15,16.
12. Deleted - Lev 20:10, Deut 22:22.
13. Deleted - Lev 20:11.
14. Deleted - Lev 20:12.
15. Deleted - Lev 20:13.
16. Deleted - Deut 22: 13-21.
17. Deleted - Deut 22:23,24.

Civil and Sexual Violations

18. Deleted - Deut 22:25-27.

Spiritual Violations

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20. Deleted. Ex 35:2, Num 15:32-36.
21. Deleted - Ex 22:20.
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26. Deleted - Ex 22:18, Deut 18:10-13.
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28. Anyone involved in offering children to Molech was to be executed. This involved sacrificing children by burning them alive to this god (extend this to any child sacrifice). This is more than a spiritual violation as it is also premeditated murder (a civil offense). Lev 20:1, Deut 18:10.

IV. If a Government Further Abandons All Internal Family Violations Where No One Died, Then Here is What is Left

This purges number 2, 4, and 6. So, 6 of 28 capital offenses are still viable.

1. Striking a man so he died (had an earlier anger or hatred in heart. Thus, murder). Ex 21:12-14, Num 35:9-34, Deut 19:4-13.
2. Deleted - Ex 21:15.
3. Kidnaping. Ex 21:16, Deut 24:7.
4. Deleted - Ex 21:17, Lev 20:9.
5. If men were fighting and accidentally struck a pregnant woman and she died, the responsible one(s?) were to be executed. Ex 21:22-24.
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16. Deleted - Deut 22: 13-21.
17. Deleted - Deut 22:23,24.

Civil and Sexual Violations

18. Deleted - Deut 22:25-27.

Spiritual Violations

19. Deleted - Lev 24:15.

20. Deleted. Ex 35:2, Num 15:32-36.
21. Deleted - Ex 22:20.
22. Deleted - Deut 13:6-9, Deut 17:2-7.
23. Deleted - Deut 17:2-7.
24. Deleted - Deut 13:1-5.
25. Deleted - Deut 18:20-22.
26. Deleted - Ex 22:18, Deut 18:10-13.
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28. Anyone involved in offering children to Molech was to be executed. This involved sacrificing children by burning them alive to this god (extend this to any child sacrifice). This is more than a spiritual violation as it is also premeditated murder (a civil offense). Lev 20:1, Deut 18:10.

To be sure, some governments abandon capital punishment completely. Murder, kidnapping, accidentally killing a pregnant woman, framing one for execution, culpable liability for causing death, or child sacrifice are all deferred to a lesser punishment. There are many reasons governments (or societies) reject capital punishment for capital offenders. Below are a few I have witnessed in the USA.

Common Objections to Capital Punishment

These are not in any particular order. If you have others - forward them.

Objection 1 - “*Thou Shalt Not Kill!*”

Every time an execution takes place, invariably a placard is displayed by a protester stating, “*Thou shalt not kill! (Ex 20:13)*” The protester is claiming, by the authority of God, that the State is violating God’s command – indeed, *The State* is committing murder. But, if these individuals would read into the next chapter in Exodus, they will find the 13th verse is the beginning of commanded executions of particular offenders. As seen earlier, the list does not end until at least 28 execution worthy offenses are enunciated. A person does not have to be a Hebrew scholar to begin to suspect the sixth command of the ten commandments engraved on tablets of stone is actually saying, “*Thou shalt not murder.*” With only a little investigation, one will quickly confirm this is the case.

The Bible repeatedly warns about misrepresenting God. He gave us the Bible so we could learn of Him - His will, ways, and priorities. To misrepresent Him to people in extreme need of accurate information (us), is a tremendous offense. “*Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall receive a stricter judgement*” (Ja 3:1). This is directed *at Christians* who are under *the pardon of God* - yet **they** are warned about misrepresenting Him! That warning is directed at me - and includes accountability for the material I am forwarding in this treatise! There is a point when a deadly line is crossed and one is declared by God as twisting and distorting the Scriptures “*to their own destruction*” (2Pet 3:16). I would not want to be standing in the shoes of one holding that placard outside a prison. The placard carrier is slandering God *on a life and death justice issue*. That is itself ... criminal.

Objection 2 - “*But This is the Age of Grace!!*”

“*We are under Grace! This is the Age of Grace! We are not under the Law! You need to get out of the Old Testament and get into this Age! This whole thing is wrong-headed!*” I know some readers have been wanting this shouted from the rooftops as the previous paragraphs unfolded. This objection is worthy of address. If, *if*, I neutralize this objection, the previous material may read a little different

a second time through it.

It is unfortunate we refer to the Hebrew Scriptures as, “The Old Testament.” It is really the Old Covenant. A covenant is a pact, or agreement, between two or more parties. In this case, God entered into a covenant with Israel. It explained how one (or the nation as a whole), was to properly approach and relate to God (religious law) and to one another (civil law). God initiated this “program,” and set the rules and procedures. Israel agreed, as a nation, to enter into, and abide by, the rules. The New Covenant is a change in those rules. But this is a change *in procedure*, not a change in the nature of *either party*. God has not changed - nor has man. And governments are today engaged in the *exact same business* as they have been in since Adam’s descendants began congregating in communities. Governments are charged with the responsibility of *governing sinners*. After the Flood of Noah’s day, this was God’s assessment of man: “... *(F)or the intent (inclination) of man’s heart is evil from his youth*” (Gen 8:21). This assertion has then been confirmed, exposed and explained throughout the Bible (See Ps 53:1-3, Eccl 7:20, Ro 3:23, etc.). So, here is the point. The Law of Moses included civil law - how sinners were to interact with other sinners. Government is to enforce those boundaries when people refuse to appropriately govern themselves. This reality, and need, in any society has not changed. In fact, as much as I detest saying this, the need may now even be greater for proactive governing between sinners. Jesus, when speaking of the end times, stated, “*(a)nd because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold*” (Mt 24:12). The word translated “love” has a primary meaning of, “*respect,*” or “*to esteem because of a perceived, intrinsic worth.*” Jesus predicted people would be increasing callous toward one another, and violate one another more often - and more aggressively. But this need for “more government” intrusion I begrudgingly just forwarded is based upon an assumption that the government will itself be just, fair and righteous. That is a faulty assumption because government is composed of citizens from each societies own number. If the society is degrading, it only stands to reason that those who then enter governing functions are also morally polluted in varying ways and to varying degrees. And their particular flaws become exponentially damaging as people under his/her jurisdiction are impacted by that rule.

It is error to believe God has radically changed in His dealings with sinners. While He has committed Himself to redeeming individuals “*from every tribe and tongue and people and nation*” (Rev 5:9), He is still aggressively intervening and taking individuals *out of this age*. Ask Ananias and Sapphira about that (Acts 5:1-11), or Herod (Acts 12:20-23), or the recipients of the last two trumpets (Rev 9:12-21). We are also told, all “*who are outside, God judges*” (1Cor 5:13 - present tense). While God has indeed expanded His reach in mercy, He has not vacated His Hand of judgment. And in this “Age of Grace,” He has not called upon governments to lay down the sword. He is calling upon governments *to use it correctly*.

As shown in the parred down lists of Capital Offenses above, the New Covenant has clearly ushered in *some changes* in what constitutes a Capital Offense. It is fairly simple to look at the New and Old Covenants and determine what offenses were attached exclusively to the Old Covenant. For example, in Colossians, Sabbath keeping is specifically mentioned as something now fulfilled in Christ. “*Let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival day or a new moon or a Sabbath day - things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the reality however is found in Christ*” (Col 2:16,17). If we are not to allow someone to act as a judge against us in this matter, it doesn’t appear we should fear being executed for failure to obey this Old Covenant requirement.

Objection 3 - “But executions do not deter crime!”

So what? Even *if* crime is not deterred, so what? Who says deterrence is *the primary* reason for executing capital offenders anyway? The main purpose is to remove the offender from the earth. That

assures the party will never inflict any further damage to the society. Execution ends the possibility of a repeat offense - or any other offense - by that person. That, more than likely, has deterred crime. But, capital punishment does deter crime by others *when imposed correctly*. If citizens know the certainty of this punishment by the State for clearly delineated crimes, it will put fear into the heart of the people so as to not so readily commit those offenses (See Duet 17:13, 19:20 and 21:21). But, this is an incidental *side benefit*. It is not a trivial benefit (indeed it is a great boon for any society), but deterrence is not the main reason for executing capital offenders.

Objection 4 - “Execution is murder by the State! Two wrongs never make a right!”

The second conclusion is true - that two wrongs never make a right. But, is the first conclusion true - that execution is murder by the State? Well, this entire argument above rests upon two foundational points with two conclusions.

Foundational Starting Points:

1. Capital Punishment is *a premeditated act* by the State.
2. Capital Punishment is *murder* by the State.

Conclusions:

1. Therefore, as murder, Capital Punishment is *wrong*.
2. And, *two wrongs cannot make a right* (the offender's wrong plus the State's wrong).

The first *foundational* point is correct. An execution by the State is clearly premeditated. Many governments meticulously plan an execution - down to the exact minute. *If* this is murder, as the second *foundational starting point* claims, then the conclusions above are also correct. On the other hand, if that second foundational point is error, then both conclusions fall apart.

So, are State executions “murder”? **The answer:** sometimes they are and sometimes they aren't. As we have seen, God commanded executions for at least 28 offenses. Anytime The State executes citizens duly convicted of any of those (minus the 5 offenses peculiar to Israel's Theocracy), this is **not** murder. Just as God cannot lie (Tit 1:2 and Heb 6:18), or tempt anyone (Ja 1:13), so also, He never commands a government to sin (1Jn 1:5). Indeed, if The State fails to execute the guilty - that itself constitutes *an evil act!* However, if citizens are executed for offenses beyond those in the Mosaic Law, the State may indeed be guilty of murder. Case in point: Jesus was murdered *by the State!* So, here is the *Biblical position* to this argument above (this objection 4).

Correct Foundational Starting Points:

1. Capital punishment *is a premeditated act* by the State.
2. Capital punishment, for valid capital offenses, is *not murder* by the State. Indeed, it is a responsibility of the State.

Correct Conclusions:

1. Valid Capital Punishment is *right*.
2. Capital punishment is not an attempt to make something “right.” A wrong followed by a right (the execution) is not meant to equal “right.” This is not the calculation involved in executing capital offenders. In fact, capital punishment does not create or satisfy justice. Justice is often (maybe always) an impossible goal to attain. This assertion will now be addressed.

Objection 5 - “Justice is not created by an execution! Justice is an impossible goal to attain!”

I actually do agree with this objection. If a person has killed two people, will the execution of *the one* justly balance the murder of *the two*? What if the murderer killed three or four - or fifty people? But even an execution for the murder of *one person* does not achieve justice. What about the lifelong suffering inflicted upon the victim's family? How can the murderer's execution compensate for that? And what about the suffering and humiliation inflicted upon the murderer's *own* family? Justice has not been addressed there. And justice for the loss incurred by society has not been compensated either. That cannot even be measured. If Hinkley had killed President Reagan, the Soviet Union might still be here - oppressing its own and threatening the rest of the free world. Who knows, a mutually assured destructive exchange may have occurred by now. Only God can deal in these realms. But there are other effects a murderer's deed has created. What about the trauma passed on to friends, neighbors, co-workers, or those who may have discovered the grisly murder scene? Where is the justice for them? No, an execution does not create justice. It can't.

I was an apartment manager when a thief broke into an apartment and stole a few things. It was a petty crime. But that thief has no idea what kind of activity followed that deed. Police were called in, and time and effort was given to reports, etc. Several residents added locks to doors and windows. All these expenses far outweighed the cost of the few stolen goods. But even more important was *the terror* that spread to people in the complex - particularly to the widows. The theft itself constituted *a very small part of the actual offense*. Only God can mete out true justice for a misdeed. And He has committed Himself to do just that. It is called Judgment Day. Capital punishment, delegated to man, is simply *an opportunity* to be able to permanently remove capital offenders from this scene so they are unable to inflict further physical or emotional harm. So, even though capital punishment is incapable of delivering full justice, it is valuable enough that God has graciously delegated that privilege to man.

Objection 6 - "What about insane individuals? How can they be held accountable?"

"...(T)he hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives. Afterwards they go to the dead" (Eccl 9:3). Insanity defined: "*mentally ill or deranged, very foolish, senseless.*" The Bible asserts that in our natural state ... we are all insane. It is only a question of *degree*. "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*" (Pr 16:25). Have you ever heard of Secular Humanism? "*Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter*" (Isa 5:20). Have you examined the official planks of the Democrat Party's platform?

Everyone who murders another human being is insane. The logic behind the act is extremely flawed somewhere along the way. The murderer has concluded he/she has the right to take the victim's life. This is a *lethal* insanity. I do realize this insanity defense is based upon the premise that one is so insane so as not to know the difference between right and wrong. Others use a slightly different angle. One lawyer phrased it this way. The question is if the client is "*sane enough to understand the death penalty and why it is being imposed upon him*" (Miami Herald, May 31, 1984). From a Biblical perspective, these defenses, in whatever context they are framed, are irrelevant concerns for a government. God expects a nation to put forward what *actions* are punishable, and then punish those who violate those boundaries. It is *obvious* the violator's thinking is flawed (insane). It is not The State's responsibility to figure out if a violator knows the difference between right and wrong. *The State judges deeds*. (While the Mosaic Law did have a provision for the high priest to offer a sacrifice "*for the sins of the people committed in ignorance,*" this was for pardon of *procedural* infractions on how to properly make offerings to God [Heb 9:7 from Num 15:22-31]. Sins for *moral* infractions had no such provision.)

Speaking of insanity, *if* you are ignoring the reality of your impending death, thus have never aggressively investigated the veracity of the claim that One physically rose from the dead, lives

forever, and gives eternal life to each one who comes to Him - well, is that not evidence of insanity?

So, here is the conclusion on this matter. Is the offender insane? Yes. Anyone committing a capital offense is insane. Is the offender responsible? Yes. After due process, the offender is to be executed by the ruling authorities. So, the verdict is, *“Insane and responsible.”*

Objection 7 - *“What about retarded people who commit a capital offense? They do not know what they are doing. They cannot be held accountable!”*

The basic argument just forwarded on the insanity objection applies here as well. The State is charged to protect its citizens from others who cross certain lines. Deeds are all that matter. The State cannot take the chance that one who crosses capital lines lives to do it again.

Objection 8 - *“What About Christian Conversions by Death Row Inmates?”*

Some years back, a Louisiana death row inmate had “gotten right” with the Lord. He had been sentenced to death for killing a man with a shotgun in a robbery. As his hour for departure approached, he spoke out against the death penalty. As you recall, there were two murderers crucified along with Jesus. One, who had initially been railing Jesus, changed course. He then rebuked the other murderer who was continuing to mock Jesus, saying, *“We are getting what we deserve, but this man has done no wrong.”* He then turned to Jesus and said, *“Lord, remember me when you enter into your Kingdom.”* Jesus responded with one of His seven remarks during His six-hour deathbed. *“Truly, truly I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise”* (Lk 23:39-43). This man, who was clearly received by Jesus, *affirmed* the validity of his own execution. He declared it as deserved and just. So, who should we listen to - the Louisiana death row inmate, or the man on the cross? Which of these two men spoke in the Spirit of God? Who was unquestionably in right standing with God? God is not ambivalent on this matter. The State has no responsibility for a person’s “after actions” following a capital offense conviction. Remorse, money compensation, promises of no recidivism, or a professed religious conversion are cries to what should be deaf ears of The State.

So, What is the Purpose of Capital Punishment?

First, it protects society at large by removing the wrongdoer from the earth. Second, it serves as a warning to others who may be inclined to commit the same type of offense. Certain execution serves as a restraining influence and is a deterrent to crime. But a third benefit has to do with public vindication for the victim and/or families of a capital crime. This has value (to some degree) toward the relief, healing, and future productivity, of the one(s) violated. To the degree any government acts in accord with these principles, that society will enjoy the broadest range of internal justice and peace.

The Sword Gone Wrong

It is clear many governments have violated its citizens with this tool. This is a massive understatement. Often, the guilty have been spared, constituting an *under-use* of the sword while many have been executed by their State for less than a capital offense - or no offense at all. This is an *over-use* of the God-given sword. In our era alone, the actions and policies of Hitler, Stalin, Amin, Tse-tung, Castro, Hussein (the list goes on and on) is atrocious. Those who misuse this tool granted by God are in for the severest of eternal penalties. This sword is not to be used for ethnic cleansing. This sword is not to be bought off by a capital offender.

But sometimes The State does more than misuse this tool in its governing. Sometimes it allows private citizens to unrighteously wield this sword. This is always error and is always wrong. An example of this dereliction can be seen in one death activity allowed by, protected by, and sanctioned by my government - abortion. Originally, I was going to make the abortion subject an Appendix to this

Ebook, but it soon became longer than this work itself! It does belong in this discussion on Capital Punishment, as it is such a horrific abuse of the sword, but, it is now its own Ebook, entitled, “*Abortion: How (and Why) Abortion Exists in the Weakest Form of Human Thought and Valuation.*” You can get it free at www.freelygive-n.com.

Why Might a Government Misuse the Sword?

Governments often build themselves on faulty assumptions on the nature of man. Some believe a particular race, or ethnic group, is innately superior to others. These governments then operate *in partiality* toward the *favoured group* - and oppress the inferior group(s). There are varying degrees of partiality and/or oppression in these systems. This leads to an *over-use of the sword*. Other governments begin with the assumption that man is *basically good* and opt for expanding freedoms and plurality and a general nonjudgmental environment. This leads to an *under-use of the sword*. The Bible rejects both assumptions.

In reference to the first system (a *favoured group*), the Bible asserts each person has been fashioned by God, in His image, and each one is judged *by actions* ... not inherited accidentals of race, ethnicity, social position, gender, etc. God let Israel know in the clearest of terms His choice of them had nothing to do with any innate superiority they possessed over any other group of people (Deut 9:4-29). But the second assumption of man being, at the core, *basically good* is opposite of God’s starting point. Man, at his core, is *basically evil* and naturally tends toward evil (i.e., Gen 8:21, Ps 53:1-3, Mt 7:9-11, etc.). Faulty assumptions by governments lead to either an *over-use* of the sword, or an *under-use* of it. These errors cause compounded wounds. It is difficult to determine which error is more damaging to the citizenry. But when a government *does both*, it speeds its doom. These three errors (over-use, under-use or doing both) are worth further comment. But know I am making a cursory swipe at all three abuses as they each open a tremendously expanding wound.

Over-use of the sword

For The State to kill individuals, or allow them to be killed, when they are not guilty of a capital violation, is an incalculable blunder. Not only has that life left this earth prematurely, but lives that would have been influenced by that departed one never occur. Despots, who arbitrarily kill the citizenry, ultimately damage the power and future of his/her own State. This includes the killing of the preborn. Any society participating in this, or allowing this, is losing much of its future. While a small percentage of the aborted might prove to be bad apples, the majority would have been producers. It is an astonishing understatement to simply say that abortion is a massive societal mistake. Future laborers, statesmen, entrepreneurs, doctors, artists, soldiers, inventors, and educators are exterminated and thrown in the local dump. Obviously, this loss cannot be measured. What I have just stated is only the tip of the iceberg of what you will find in my Ebook, “*Abortion: How (and Why) Abortion Resides in the Weakest Form of Human Thought and Valuation.*” Even if you reject some points I raise, I know you will not view abortion the same when you finish reading it.

Under-use of the sword

Under-using the sword results in a *multiplied societal damage* - and is also incalculable. To begin, capital offenses often damage *the producers* of a society. That initial damage is a direct, but immeasurable, loss to the society. Then if The State fails to execute the perpetrator(s), a whole chain of unintended consequences ensue. First, the immediate victim (if alive) and his/her family lose the benefit of a ringing public vindication. Life sentences are no substitute. Hanging over the victim(s) is the knowledge the guilty party may one day be set free. This does impact the victim’s degree of recovery and future productivity. On the other hand, if the violator is executed, the closing of a chapter

has occurred. The victim(s) of the crime can begin rebuilding in a more cleansed environment.

Another consequence of this failure by The State is *the restraining power* on specific crimes is lost. God made it very clear to Israel that one of the societal benefits for just executions would be restraint power (Deut 17:33, Deut 19:20, and Deut 21:21). When the citizenry *knows* certain execution awaits those who cross the capital lines, there will be a reduction in the number of those deeds by the citizenry. This means that citizens who are “on the bubble” will refrain from committing capital offenses *but in a more liberal environment they will cross those capital lines!* This is a great violation by The State *against those borderline citizens* - as well as against the citizens who become victims of these otherwise restrained offenders! That is why I called this a “*multiplied societal damage.*” This is a compound fracture. Murders occur that would not have, as well as rapes, kidnappings, etc. The citizenry pays dearly for this failure by their State. At every turn, what is lost is productivity. The well being of a State’s producing citizens is sacrificed for an unrighteous protection of capital offenders. I could go on and on with examples of the *multiplied damages* incurred by citizens who are under a government that under-uses the sword.

Simultaneous Over-use and Under-use of the Sword

When a government over-uses *and* under-uses the sword, the productivity of that society is attacked from both directions. Societies will collapse under this weight. Errors in this area cut too deeply as the consequences for this governing failure are so horrific. But these errors are more than just errors - they are sins. And these sins are not solely against the citizenry.

The Horizontal and Vertical Sins of The State

A State’s violations are both horizontal *and* vertical. When The State errs against man, and the lawful pursuits of man, these are *horizontal* violations. But at the same time, these are also *vertical* violations as they are sins *against God Himself*. Improper sword use by The State is a major sin area. While accountability for improper sword use may not be seen in this lifetime, because these are offenses against God, and because The State is composed of individuals, a vertical reckoning will occur. But it will be on His timetable. Having said this, it is also true that God *also judges entire societies* for their collective vertical sins now. This is worth a word.

In Isaiah, it is stated, “*Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, and are regarded as a speck of dust on the weighing scales All the nations are as nothing before Him; they are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless*” (Isa 40:15,17). What an insult! No wonder so many nations reject this Book. But, in spite of this assessment on the “importance” of nations, it is clear God has decided to bring them into being. God causes governments to rise, to expand, and then, when their iniquity is complete, He brings them down. “...*(T)here is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God*” (Ro 13:1). “*He makes the nations great, then destroys them; He enlarges the nations, then leads them away*” (Job 12:23). Just as God is actively involved in the conception, birth, life and death of every individual, so also God is actively involved in the conception, birth, life and death of every society. God sets times and boundaries for every nation, and every nation has a clock set against it. No current government will be the eternal one. “*Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain*” (Ps 127:1).

God brings down countries in many ways. Very few countries simply melt away. Most come to a violent end. Most succumb to the assault of a superior force (the Soviet Union was an exception to the rule). For example, God told Abram two societies were going to be brought down before his future offspring (Israel). One was the enslaving nation (Egypt) and the other was the Amorites. But this would not happen until “*the iniquity of the Amorite is ... complete*” (Gen 15:12-16). Oftentimes, He gives space for repentance and renewal (i.e., Ninevah with Jonah’s preaching), but all societies eventually

fall. One way God “*leads (the nations) away*” is by placing foolish people in a nation’s power positions. He “*takes away the discernment of the elders*” and He “*deprives of intelligence the chiefs of the earth’s people*” making them “*stagger like drunken men.*” (Job 12:23,20,24-25 & 42:7). These leaders make stupid decisions and promote stupid policies. Stalin’s kingdom did not last too long. Hitler’s kingdom was even shorter. Hussein’s kingdom did not even out live him. These were lethal men - and foolish men.

Generally speaking, the closer a society is functioning according to the ways of God, the better is *its hope* for longevity. Of course, there are exceptions to this. Some nations are more accountable for their vertical sins than are others. Ancient Israel was on a shorter leash than other societies because of the extreme privilege they were granted in having the revelation of God readily at hand. God actually used nations that were more vile than Israel *to judge Israel!* For example, when God spoke to Habakkuk of the coming Chaldean invasion, He said, “*For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that fierce, bitter and impulsive people who march throughout the earth to seize dwelling places which are not theirs. They are dreaded and feared. Their justice and authority **originate with themselves***” This last phrase *was not* a compliment to the Chaldeans. Their law originated within themselves. God went on to describe them as lethal and fearless. But, He then concluded, “*they will be held guilty, whose strength is their god*” (Hab 1:6-11). God used them *as a tool of judgment upon Judah* in spite of Habakkuk’s objections (Hab 1:12-17 & 3:16). He dealt with the Chaldeans later. Last I checked, they are no longer with us. They, like all before and after them, had a date with their Creator that could not be avoided, postponed or cancelled.

Each one in the world has an appointment they will make.

Try as they might, it’s one they cannot shake.

It will be a shock to see - not a thing,

Not a single thing has been forgotten.

(From “Shoulder to Shoulder” verse three, by me).

God will destroy a nation because of its sin. “*He changes rivers into a wilderness, and flowing springs into thirsty ground; a fruitful land into a salt waste, **because of the wickedness of those who dwell in it***” (Ps 107:33,34). I have wanted to write this Ebook for more than twenty years. While reviewing my old drafts, I was shocked when I came to this part on the decadence of nations. I was astounded to see how far downhill the USA has gone in this twenty-year period. For example, at that time, hard core pornography had to be sought out. Now it is the click of a mouse away. Public profanity was restricted to movies in the theater. Now it fills the airways on cable, satellite, music and videos. But the most extreme example can be seen with the homosexual movement. It was in infancy twenty years ago when compared to the place it is now. Artificial insemination of a lesbian was unheard of. Movies and television series with homosexuals *in a presumed natural place in the plot* were unthinkable. And homosexual *marriage*, sanctioned by the State, with adoption rights for children of heterosexual origins, was not even imagined. And homosexuals being ordained in “Christian” denominations? “*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, **nor homosexuals**, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God*” (1Cor 6:9,10). There is only one place for those who practice any of these things to go. Sinners yelling at sinners for “*rights*” God does not grant, build a house of cards that will soon to be folded. Only God knows how much patience He has with this. I am surprised this sin area has been allowed to mature to this level, but maybe Sodom and Gomorrah were at this level of societal permeation - or even more. It is not that homosexuality is that much worse than other sins. It is just that when this one comes out, all

other sin is running rampant in a society. Look at this society. Murder is now commonplace. Just in the first few months of 2004, Louisville, Kentucky recorded more than thirty homicides. And it is not a major city by any measure. What was shocking twenty years ago is now common place.

I hope to complete this Ebook and get some circulation of it before God decides to let the clock strike midnight. I am not in a panic, but I do feel an urgency. Only God knows when a society's "*iniquity is complete*" (See Gen 15:12-21). We may be on the doorstep, or perhaps God will grant a deep renewal as He did for Nineveh. He is a God of great mercy (See Jonah - it's only forty-eight verses). And God knows that when He does judge, **then it is over**, and eternal fates are sealed. One source of hope for this country lies in the fact that God does have a number of His children in this society. To these, I encourage you to read my Article, "*The Best Thing You Can Do for Your Country.*" This is an extremely important, Biblically sound Article. You will be encouraged, and changed, when you read it.

But there is one other reason I am hopeful the USA may have more life left. Many of our most serious national offenses have been thrust upon the people *by judicial tyranny*. Much of the immorality has come by judicial coup. For example, a twisted understanding of "freedom of speech" allows the airwaves to be polluted. A warped interpretation of "freedom of expression" has degraded the arts. An initially correct position on a "right to privacy" has been perverted so many wombs are now murderous killing fields. And in the name of Church and State separation, laws based upon Biblical morality are targeted for overthrow. Similarly, "homosexual rights" are couched as legitimate "civil rights." But all these perversions are being *imposed* on the society - none by majority consent. This has been, and is being, accomplished by a successful power grab by an unelected judiciary. They are operating as legislators, and have positioned themselves as unchallengeable by the other two branches of government - or by the citizenry. What a coup - without a shot! Liberals, who have enabled this tyranny, have strategically changed their name so as to fool the uninformed. They now call themselves "Progressives." But their social agenda is only progressive in one area - it progresses the nation to a quicker date with God. But because these people are still in the minority in this country, God may be giving the populace a bit more time - time to get this house in order.

However, in spite of my optimism, there is a wild card that might overshadow all my hopes for God's continued patience. Here it is. This nation has had the full revelation of God freely accessible to every citizen *from this country's inception*. That automatically creates a high degree of accountability. Furthermore, when a nation claims to be a *Christian nation*, that nation actually puts itself in an even more culpable position *vertically*. A nation making that claim will be judged *by Him* for that representation to the rest of the world. Many in my country (USA) make this claim. But just in this *one* area of law, Capital Punishment, how much of God's ways are encoded in our law? First degree murderers are *sometimes* executed in *some* States - but how many rapists? How many kidnapers? How many false witnesses who falsely accuse in a capital trial. If we do not execute individuals based upon the prescription of the Law of Moses, then from where does our law originate. Doesn't it, like the Chaldean's, simply arise *from our own selves*? We have decided what "rights" we have and what "rights" we do not. And this makes for a "Christian nation"? This is a self deception that is going to be demolished. God alone decides what "rights" human beings have. Maybe we should take some time in the footnoting of this Ebook, and discuss the various rights we think we have and see if they are *Biblically* valid. Ironically, the premier right every single human does have *is absent from our law*. It is the right to life *from conception to "natural" death*.

Taking the Life of Another

Only The State can end the life of another human, and only in these instances:

1. The State executing a convicted capital offender.
2. The State conducting a Holy war.
3. The State conducting a Defensive war.

There is one exception to this. One citizen can defensively kill another when a potentially lethal, imminent, unlawful threat exists. Such an event would be subject to a full vetting by The State in an effort to validate the legitimacy of such an act.

“Holy War? Defensive War? An Explanation is in Order!” I Agree.

God grants the sword to governments so citizens are protected from *internal* attacks of murder, rape, etc. In my mind, *it seems reasonable* that a government can use that same power to protect those same citizens from *outside forces* intent upon murder, rape, etc. Subjugation by an outside force is never intended to exalt the conquered people. Let’s quickly address this.

There are three kinds of war: Holy War, Offensive War and Defensive War.

Holy War. There are no Holy Wars today. The only legitimate Holy Wars ever waged were by Israel when directly under Theocratic rule. Seven nations were to be totally destroyed by an invading Israel (Ex 23:20-33 and Deut 7:1-5). Nothing that breathed was to be left alive (Deut 20:16-18). That included women and children. These were real people with real lives. They had real families and real aspirations and real social relationships. They were not comic book characters. God decided when their iniquity was complete (Gen 15:16), and He ordered Israel to kill them all. When fighting others outside of the seven nations of Deuteronomy 7, Israel was only to kill the men. All of them. The women, children, animals, and possessions were booty (Deut 20:10-15). But only the wars *He called for* were Holy. Israel sometimes took it upon themselves to go to war, and God was *not* with them (See Numbers 14). Today, there are no genuine theocracies operating under the command of Jesus Christ. Therefore, today, there are no genuine Holy Wars. There may be conquests in the name of some false god, but the only true God is not directing any nation in a physical war campaign for Him.

Offensive War. Offensive wars are an abuse of the governmental sword. These are wars of *conquest* directed at others when *no legitimate cause* for aggressive action is justified. These are driven by many sordid motives. No government has the right to invade and subjugate another country. Ideally, every society should be able to peacefully exist in its own borders and develop its own identity.

Defensive War. An underlying thesis in this Ebook has been the point that no one has the right to take the life of another individual unless that individual is guilty of a capital offense. And that offender can only be executed by his/her State after due process. *A foreign government has no right to initiate an attack and kill citizens of another State.* If one does, the attacked State has a duty to protect its own population from these unrighteous outsiders. Defensive wars are a legitimate exercise by an attacked society. A government has the responsibility to protect its law abiding, productive citizens from external assaults. To use its sword against illicit attackers is a correct action. If this is a correct assertion, the founding of the USA comes into question. The various tribal native Indians were here first. Their territories were invaded by outsiders. But that does not mean the Indians were a righteous lot. It just means they had a right to defend themselves from those invading forces. Once defeated, they, like all conquered people, found themselves at the mercy of the superior force. But that does not mean the superior force was righteous either. It just means they won. Superiority does not equal righteous. However, once this nation reached its forty-eight state border, it had a change of heart. It does not

colonize or invade other countries or territories *with the goal* of assimilation, conquest and subjugation. The USA has fought in defensive wars on several occasions, although some of the conflicts were ill executed and possibly ill conceived as well (Vietnam comes to mind. The goal was to stop the spread of Communism, but the effective way to stop it there was not realized - at least in the short run). As of this writing, the war against fundamentalist Islamists has rightly moved into preemptive actions against countries supporting, or harboring, these enemies of the USA. These offensive actions are truly *defensive* and are crucial in light of the types of weapons now available. This is a righteous use of the sword by the USA. That does not mean the USA is a righteous nation. It simply means this nation *can rightly use* the sword God has allowed it to have to defend its citizens from outside attackers. Indeed it is *the government's responsibility* to do so. The nations that have been, and will be, attacked by the USA *would not be if they kept their violence inside their own borders*. In fact, that is the message that must be communicated, and some are hearing it - like Libya and Pakistan, etc. These countries presently have no fear of attack by the USA, and the USA is not demanding religious change, governmental structure change, or cultural change other than controlling the violence of their citizens from attacking the USA and its interests. The USA is only present in any country by the host government's request and choice. If the USA is asked to leave a country, it does. Last I checked, the USA pulled all its military out of Saudi Arabia. The military came by invitation and left by request. The sovereignty of Saudi Arabia was never challenged. Does anyone doubt the USA could have, and still could, take that country by force if it wanted? And it would not be that big a deal to completely subjugate that population. Who would stop the USA - the French?

One other note. To be employed by a government for the *defense* of its people, and then to kill aggressors, is not murder before God. And if those warriors inadvertently kill non combatants in their duties, which is inevitable, the guilty ones are *the governing officials of the renegade government* who put those citizens at risk in the first place. Again, offensive operations that have sprung from a defensive war, are a proper use of that government's sword.

Why Have I Written This Ebook?

There are two main reasons. *First*, it would be a great honor to influence a society, whether mine or another, to examine its laws and adopt as much of God's determinations as possible. To the extent any society employs this Capital Punishment system (while excising the ceremonial part), that society will experience the highest levels of protection and justice for its citizens. I will expand on this in the next section, "*Practical Applications for a Government.*" My *second* goal is to expose this "side" of God to you and challenge your concept of God. This will be addressed in, "*Practical Applications for You.*"

Practical Applications for a Government

So, what should a government do with the sword God has granted? With as little comment as possible, I will just lay out recommendations.

1. Adopt as many of the capital offense laws as possible. After due process, faithfully execute offenders.
2. Retract laws that currently execute citizens if the offense is not substantively found in the Mosaic Law.
3. Do not relegate "the sword" to civilians. If you have, then take it back. No abortion.
4. Protect all human life. Only capital offenders, duly tried, are subject to "the sword."
5. If you have under-used the sword, then you have citizens who have committed capital offenses who would have otherwise been restrained. Because of this, I think it would be appropriate to allow a

convicted capital offender a little time before execution. To grant 90 days would give time to get one's "house in order." Victim(s) weren't granted such grace. Also, the convict should initiate any counseling.

6. After a period of consistent executions, this waiting time could be revisited. Maybe shortened.
7. Several methods of execution are probably okay. If God approved stoning and burning by fire, then other violent means are probably also acceptable. But if "peaceful" lethal injections would help a society execute all capital offenders, that seems acceptable, too. The means of exit is not the primary concern. What is primary is that the offender is removed from this age.
8. Do not start offensive wars.
9. Do not be deluded into believing holy wars exist today.
10. For a society to develop a military for defense from outside forces is right and necessary. To develop defensive alliances with other nations also makes good sense. Many governments now have internal enforcement separated from external defense protection. In such arrangements, the military should never be turned on its own citizens unless the internal civil forces are over run by lawbreakers in some extreme circumstance.

Practical Applications for You

There are two points to this. If you are not a Christian, I am interested in influencing your life now and your preparedness for Judgment Day. It is my hope you gain the conviction that our physical death is not some natural process, but you will see it for what it actually is - capital punishment levied by God Himself as a consequence of our sin against Him. When one calls upon Jesus Christ and receives pardon for one's sins, then peace is gained between that individual and his/her Judge and Executioner. Death is still an enemy but will be overcome. It no longer carries eternal force.

On the other hand, if you are a Christian, you have a destiny you will be called upon to fulfill. *"Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth (throat), and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishment on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute on them the judgement written; this is an honor for all His godly ones. Praise the Lord!"* (Ps 149:5-9). In Malachi, we find this. *"For behold, the Day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the Lord of hosts, 'so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear My Name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip like calves from the stall. And you will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under your feet on the day which I am preparing,' says the Lord of hosts"* (Mal 4:1-3). In the New Testament, Paul, when upbraiding a ragged Corinthian Church for fighting among themselves, dropped this bombshell: *"Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more the matters of this life?"* (1Cor 6:1-3).

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He does not change, *and that includes His morals and the moral requirements He has established for man's behavior.* At the final Judgment, will you find yourself seeing things *exactly the same way He does?* Are you going to be able to judge the world - and angels - *with the exact same depth of conviction as the Creator?* There can be no hesitation or difference of conviction on That Day. Have you made up your own god with the morals *you* want Him to have? What about this capital punishment material? Do you agree with it, or recoil?

There will be no fence to straddle at The Judgement. Every person will be on one side or the other. Which side do you think you will be on? To help you accurately answer this, here are some objective benchmarks by which to assess yourself. First, go through the list of capital offenses in the

first parred down category. At the end of each, take a moment and ask yourself if you are ready to execute the offender. Write “Yes,” “No,” or “I don’t know” beside each offense. How did you score? Be honest with yourself. But this exercise does not end here. Now, write down these sin areas in a column and put names and faces with each one (This list is garnered from 1Cor 6:9,10, Gal 5:19-21, Eph 5:5, and Rev 21:8 and 22:15): fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the effeminate, homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, swindlers, the impure, the sensual, sorcerers, those engaged in enmities, strife, jealousy, anger outbursts, disputes, dissensions, factions, envyings, carousings, the cowardly, the unbelieving, the abominable, murderers, and liars. Everyone practicing these sins (according to God’s definition of practicing) is doomed. Do you *whole heartedly* agree?

This is between you and God. It must be settled in the present. There is great risk in thinking, “*I will just wait until The Judgment and trust God will have me lined up with Him ... then.*” In case you are wondering, do not assume I score 100%. But that is *my* problem. And here is one more requested exercise. The people you have matched above with some particular sin - pray for them. Pray them out of those categories of sin. “*Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?*” (Jer32:27). No one is beyond His reach - but things must change on this side.

Conclusion

Anytime we are challenged by someone on our Bible understandings, it behooves us to respond to the challenge *with Scripture upon Scripture* - not unrenewed brainwave on top of unrenewed brainwave. To execute capital offenders is *an act of humility*. It is righteousness. It is a good deed. Not pleasant, yet good. God, as the primary executioner, only does good. “*For behold, **the Lord will come in fire and His chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord will execute judgment by fire and by His sword on all flesh, and those slain by the Lord will be many***” (Isa 66:15,16). Does anyone think this scene has played out yet? The parable of the Nobleman (Lk 19:11-27) is universally recognized as a reference to Jesus’ departure from this earth and yet to be realized Second Coming. The Nobleman had gone to a distant country and then returned. Concerning those who had rejected the Nobleman’s absentee rule, this is their fate. “*But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here, and **slay them in my presence***” (Lk 19:27). The executioners (plural) will be responding to the direct order of the King. The Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

While God will prove to be the primary executioner in human history, in the right environment and for the right reasons, He has delegated this privilege and responsibility to The State - and eventually to the saints. To obey Him in this matter is an act of humility and righteousness.

A capital offense is a capital offense - even if one’s government decides otherwise. Failure by man to comply with God’s standards has no impact on those standards. So even though many have escaped execution because of the moral failings of a liberal government, that does not mean they will escape God Himself. The sentence is only temporarily deferred.

Failure by The State to execute duly convicted capital offenders is a missed opportunity to serve the public. And, in a strange way, it is even a crime against the capital offender. Not only might the offender errantly conclude he/she has gotten away with murder (or rape, etc.), but that one may go on to commit other crimes - thus piling up more judgment against their own self.

It is my hope God will to use this Ebook to help governments, present and future, in understanding God’s design for the sword’s use in the complex task of governing sinners. If this material strengthens *even one judge* to pass execution sentences on those deserving them – it will be worth my effort here. I also hope God will use this material to protect all sanctioned executioners from false guilt. I also hope that soldiers, who have killed in their nation’s defense, will be internally strengthened and not feel a false guilt of murder. And, I do hope this will positively challenge all my

readers to examine themselves, and internally determine if they are ready to stand with God in the meting out of eternal judgements. The coming, eternal state will be the *unveiled* Theocracy - imposed, unchallenged, and unchallengeable, "*in which righteousness dwells*" (2Pet 3:13). For some, this will be an extremely benevolent rule, but for the rest, it will be the worst of all possible scenarios.

* * * * *

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