

Capital Punishment - Death Penalty

THE DEATH PENALTY IS MORAL AND JUST - Judicial execution for the purpose of maintaining justice and punishing murderers is well established in human history. Against a backdrop of global humanism, more recent death penalty executions in the United States have triggered protests from various anti-capital punishment factions. Often shouting the loudest are liberal clergy (Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish) who erroneously claim to speak for God. These 'blind guides' are grossly confused and seriously wrong. Here's why. On the surface, the effectiveness of capital punishment for deterring murder and contributing to an overall civil society is at first glance counterintuitive. We must look to God's Word to get God's perspective on the matter.



FACT -- As recorded in the Book of Genesis, the inhabitants of Earth had grown corrupt, wicked, and full of violence. God the Creator sent a worldwide Flood to destroy mankind, but in His grace saved Noah, his three sons, their four wives, and a host of creatures from the animal kingdom for the purpose of repopulating the Earth. As the waters receded, God initiated a formal agreement (covenant) between Himself and all mankind, as well as the animals and the Earth. Noah was chosen as the 'representative' mediator in the transaction and thus we call it the 'Noahic Covenant'. The detailed account is found in Gen. 8:21–9:17. This covenant mandates the death penalty for the crime of murder and was to serve as a deterrent against pre-Flood violence and corruption. God, who is Justice personified, demands from all mankind *"an accounting for the life of his fellow man."* This accounting requires that *"whoever sheds the blood of man [commits murder], by man [government] shall his blood be shed [death penalty], for in the image of God has God made man."* Gen. 9:5-6. God mandates this form of accountability for the crime of murder because the origin of humankind was in God's image—which is transcendent and sacred. The "image" is not a physical one, but includes the attributes of intellect, emotions, and will.



FACT -- God gave the covenant a time frame [duration] - "As long as the earth endures" (Gen. 8:22) as well as ratified the covenant by placing the rainbow in the sky (Gen. 8:12,13). The rainbow serves as the signature line on the contract. When the rainbow appears, the text states that God remembers His universal agreement with the Earth (Gen. 9:14-17). The Noahic covenant has remained to this very day, and when you see a rainbow, you should remember that the ratified agreement is still in place and binding upon both you and me. Those who oppose the death penalty have, in one way or another, repudiated (breached) this agreement either through ignorance or willful rejection. God by the lips of the

prophet said: *"You have profaned Me among my people...By lying to my people, who listen to lies, you [false prophets] have killed those who should not have died and have spared those who should not live."* Ezekiel 13:19.

Contemporary...is it not? Liberal humanists either 1) advocate the murder of the innocent, or 2) spare the guilty from the death penalty, or both. Contrary to what some religionists think, God's intention to establish calculated justice in response to murder is meant to protect the truth of the vestigial *sacred* nature of human life. Ignore this principal, and the value assigned to human life in society's collective consciousness declines and vanishes. Thus, we experience a cheapening of life in the rise of abortion, euthanasia, etc. Any so-called "consistent" ethical principle does harm because it fails to clearly see the distinction between those who commit capital crimes and those who are the victims of capital crimes.

The Founding Fathers of the American Republic, wrote *"...they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life..."*, and rightly understood that the 'right to life' is an **imputed** right, not an **inherent** one. Thus the right could be forfeited. These constitutional "Rights" are "unalienable" only in the sense that they cannot be taken away by other men, either individually or collectively. However, the Creator who originally endowed mankind with "life" can legally resend the endowment. The murderer forfeits his 'right to life' through his own criminal action.

Pursuant to the authority delegated by God (Gen. 9:6), government has a moral and just basis to withdraw "life" from those guilty of murder. While government must strive for fairness, perfection regarding trial proceedings is not required. God delegated this responsibility to society with full knowledge that men were imperfect. Those who oppose government's execution of murderers are in fact rebelling against God and what God has commanded through His covenant.

"But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word, the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3:5-7. Copyright © 2005 - withChrist.org