The background of the entire image is a pair of golden scales of justice. The scales are positioned centrally, with the vertical pillar and the horizontal beam clearly visible. The two pans hang from the beam, and the entire structure is set against a dark, mottled brown background that has a slightly grainy texture. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic sheen of the scales.

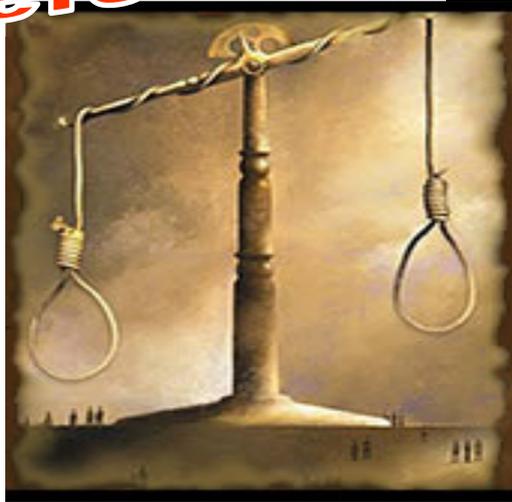
THE DEATH PENALTY

Defended

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Introduction

The question of the implementation of the death penalty or capital punishment for first degree murder was first raised by Illuminism in the French Revolution and after as a means to protect its agents from death for the manifold conspiracies of murder they had committed, if they were caught. The move was not a sincere desire in sympathy to civilize Man and to prevent violence as is now claimed, these were the rational baits used to achieve its abolition.

However, today, especially through the United Nations Organization, and through some of its NGOs, which contain the same teachings of Illuminism that led to the French Revolution, the abolition of the death penalty is being advocated, and many nations under the political philosophy of Western Democracy, which have been influenced by Illuministic philosophy, have accepted this tragedy that has resulted in cheapening the esteem of human life in the eyes of the public, and in rising murder and other crimes.

Thus, when God gave the death penalty for violent murder shortly after the great Flood, at the outset of new civilizations being created, He intended that governments should carry it out to protect the world from descending into the state of chaos, lawlessness and insecurity as it did through the influence of Cain and his descendants before the Flood.

Those who advocate the non-implementation of the death penalty today are therefore doing the same baleful work of Illuminism even though they are all fighting against God Himself who commanded capital punishment. But what is even more outrageous, is that a minister of religion, who should know better being instructed out of the Bible by the Holy Spirit, and a religious denomination that claims to be the true remnant church raised up by God with messages to deal with the current state of the world, that he should warp judgment and truth to lead away from the Bible and create in people's minds hate for the death penalty as something barbaric.

This book answers the pastor's two articles that downgrades the death penalty. The notes from the studies that were broadcasted on radio are here presented to all interested that they may receive actual quotations of important points to fight against the concepts that advocated abolition of the death penalty for capital murder that is demoralizing society.

May God help all to understand the points written therein, and may abolitionists repent of their folly and accept the true Christ of Faith and practice. Amen.

PART ONE

IS THE DEATH PENALTY A GOOD THING TO DEAL WITH CRIME?

1. We must beware of ministers that mislead people with false teachings that deny the Bible. 2 Corinthians 11: 13-15.

2. One example is a about the death penalty in an article written by a pastor Terrance Browne of the Seventh day Adventist Church in an article titled, "The Bible and the death penalty."

The pastor said:

"There is a diabolic thirst for blood that has descended on our once blessed nation. Criminals are callously and indiscriminately murdering, not only innocent people, but also each other. Over 160 murders have been committed for the year {June, 2005} already."
Sunday Mirror, p. 10.

3. But where the pastor goes wrong begins in this senseless statement.

"And if we think that's bad, it becomes even more gruesome: out of a population of about 1.3 million people, the majority are calling for the State to murder 78 young men and six women who are on Death Row." **Ibid.** p. 10. (*Emphasis Supplied*)

4. What is wrong with this statement? First, the call for the implementation of the death penalty is not a call for the State to murder, implementing the death penalty, is not what the word murder means.

a. The word murder means an unlawful killing with premeditated malice. The state does not have these things (premeditated malice), nor is the death penalty unlawful.

"**MURDER** ... The act of unlawfully killing a human being with premeditated malice, by a person of sound mind. To constitute murder in law, the person killing another must be of sound mind or in possession of his reason, and the act must be done with malice, aforethought or premeditated; but malice maybe implied, as well as expressed."

Noah Webster, **1828 American Dictionary of the English language**.

b. The death penalty is lawful, because it is the law of the land, and God gave it, and required man to carry it out. Genesis 9: 6.

- c. Furthermore, the Biblical injunction “Thou shalt not kill” should really be translated, “Thou shalt do no murder, thus what is called murder, as we defined before, is what the Law of God forbids, and this does not fit the description of the State carrying out the death penalty, so the pastor misrepresents what the State is seeking to do. Exodus 20: 13.

“Turning now to the sixth commandment, we read, “You shall not commit murder.” Regrettably, the KJV made a most unfortunate translation as, “Thou shalt not kill.” The LORD mandated the killing of animals and birds at every one of the blood sacrifices. The prerogative of slaying dangerous beasts of prey is often referred to. And, certainly, in the practice of warfare, such as the conquest of the Holy Land, there was a great deal of killing on the battlefield.” **The Old Testament Study Bible, Exodus**, p. 216.

- d. The Lord instructed men to kill. Now, if this was the same as murder, then we would have to say that God instructed men to break His Law. But God did no such thing, thus killing as a God ordained penalty (as in Genesis 9: 6) is not the same as murder as the pastor erroneously presented. Num 15:35, 36. Num 32:20-23. Numbers 25:1-5. Leviticus 24:17. Exodus 21 12. Numbers 35:16-19.

- e. Furthermore, we are told concerning the sixth commandment.

“The sin denounced in this commandment almost always refers to what is defined as deliberately premeditated manslaughter with malice a forethought, or what we call today first-degree murder. To be sure, the term is also used of cases amounting to unintentional taking of human life, leading to the appointment of six cities of refuge where the man-slayer might be preserved from retributive assassination by the kinsman-redeemer, or nearest male relative of the deceased.” **Ibid**, p. 216.

“To return to the verb ratsach, it should be noted that it is unique to the Hebrew language; no cognates to this root appear in any of the other Semitic languages. It serves very accurately as a *terminus technicus* for first degree murder.” **Ibid**, p. 216.

5. Furthermore the pastor judges many of the citizens of the country with his own uneducated bias when he said:

“We are at the state where the majority of the population are of one mind: that killing is the answer to settle disputes and conflicts; the murderer and the average citizen see it this way.” **Sunday Mirror**, June 26, 2005, p. 10.

6. This is a lie; the population does not see the need for implementing the death penalty in the same way as the criminal who exacts the revenge of death on another criminal, it is not seen by the citizenry as the answer to “settle disputes”. To the average man it is seen as a means of reducing the high rate of murder in the country, and of securing people’s safety

from crime. This is Biblical, because, the death penalty in ancient Israel was seen as a means of putting away various evils from the nation. Deuteronomy 17: 5 -7. Deuteronomy 17:12, 13; Deuteronomy 21: 21, 22; Jude 20:12, 13.

7. Again, the pastor misrepresents the facts when he says the following:

“I am further traumatized by some of the quarters from where there is this rabid call for the State to hang convicted killers... I listened to Bishop Clive Griffith, in his deliberate call for death, as he abused Genesis 9:6: *“Whosoever sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”* At no time did the goodly pastor speak of the Biblical theocracy or God’s covenants in dealing with different people.” **Ibid.** p. 10._

8. This is a false representation. At the time Genesis 9:6 was given, there was no Israel whom God made a covenant with, thus no theocracy. The timing of this outlining of the death penalty for murder was when there were only eight people alive on the earth just after the massive global Flood had subsided; God gave the death penalty as a standard for all nations that would come from Noah's three sons, thus it was for all nations, and not for Israel alone, and had nothing to do with the covenant He made with Israel about 1,000 years after the death penalty in Genesis 9: 6. The timing is seen in Genesis 9:1-7.

9. The following Biblical commentary further illustrates what we are saying:

“It should be noted that this was the very first requirement laid upon Noah after the Flood, according to Gen. 9: 6 “Whosoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.” Upon this foundation of justice, all human government was to be built.” **The Old Testament Study Bible, Exodus**, p. 216._

10. The death penalty for other crimes as well as for murder did not only apply to Israel while they were under God’s covenant; it applied to Gentiles as well, even though God did not make any covenant with them (Leviticus 24:16-17, 22; Numbers 15:14-16, 29 - 31).

11. Again here is an extravagant statement by the pastor in his evil effort to draw men away from the bible as a means to teach the legitimacy of the death penalty for murder.

“I want to state categorically that we cannot use the Bible to support the death penalty if we are narrowing it to murder alone. The Bible speaks of the death penalty for homosexuality, murder, adultery, rape, worshipping on Sundays and other days instead of Saturday the Sabbath, bestiality and a host of other debased acts.” **Sunday Mirror**, p. 10.

12. This statement is very wrong for various reasons. Here are some of them.

a. First of all, there is no death penalty anywhere in the Bible for worshipping on Sundays and other days as well instead of the Sabbath. This is a statement that is made erroneous because it is extreme. The penalty of death was for Sabbath breaking not keeping Sundays and other days as well instead of the Sabbath. Here is proof. Numbers 15: 32-36.

- b. All Scripture is given to make all men wholesome in all good works, and this includes understanding the need to administer the death penalty. 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
- c. The death penalty does not have to be applied to killers only if they commit the other acts for which it is prescribed also, as the pastor so foolishly implies; it is given to deal with individual acts that warrant the death penalty.

Any single act that deserves the death penalty, in this case, murder, can cause justly such an execution. If the Law of the land prescribes prison sentences for certain crimes like stealing, rape, perjury, bestiality, etc., can one not quote that law to justify prison sentences to someone who commit only one of the crimes that prescribes such a penalty? Yes you can. In this case, the issue is murder, thus the Bible can be quoted to justify the death penalty if only murder alone was committed. Deuteronomy 19:11-13.

- 13. Again the pastor betrays his ignorance when he tells us that only divine supernatural intervention could have given a just and true verdict of the death penalty without mistakes, in ancient times.

“...God spoke to the prophet, who spoke to the king. Where the breastplate of the priest had lights that would be lit or dimmed when a lie was told to him; where we had cities of refuge and systems of compensation. It was God’s system of compensation. It was God’s system, and the innocent and the poor could not perish through judicial mistakes.” **Ibid**, p.10.

- 14. This is a foolish reason for not implementing the death penalty for murder that is proven in court, with a fair trial by jury, and the provisions to appeal. Remember the death penalty was given for murder before “God’s system” in Israel. It was given to all nations about 1000 years before Israel, and with no guarantee of super natural help in dealing with a trial. Genesis 9:6.

- 15. The pastor erroneously calls the death penalty “State sponsored murder”.

He says:

“The argument by pastors that it’s the law, and that God in Romans 13:1-3 allows for State sponsored murder is a betrayal of every Christian principle in the Bible.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

- 16. This statement is wrong for various reasons.

- a. If the death penalty is State sponsored murder, then this is what it was when God commanded the death penalty in ancient times and in ancient Israel. It would mean that God is responsible for this “murder”. Certainly this absurd. Numbers 32:20-23; Numbers 25: 1-5.

b. The death penalty is not a betrayal of Christian principles. It was Jesus Christ Himself who gave the death penalty in the Old Testament, to Israel. He cannot betray His own principles. (1 Corinthians 10: 1-4; Matthew 16:18; Nehemiah 9:12 -15; Deuteronomy 32: 3, 4, 31).

c. Christian principles did not come into the world with the first advent of Christ in flesh, it existed from the moment Grace was given even in the Old Testament, and yet the death penalty was given by Christ who is God. (Revelation 13:8; 1 Peter 1:10, 11).

17. Now here is the pastor knocking up a “strawman” to knock down. Again, the extremism of his statement is what make it erroneous.

“If we should adopt the argument that Romans 13 gives the State unbridled authority, we would not be able to frown on apartheid, slavery and colonialism, which were the law.”
Ibid, p.10._

18. The issue of Romans 13 is not unbridled authority. Government is given the mandate to bear the sword to punish evil doers, by God Himself, there is nothing “unbridled” in the Scripture. Romans 13: 1-6.

a. The sword is not borne by the Government to merely planarse the evildoer, civil law, penalty and authority is given to the government to strike “terror”, to cause “fear” and to “execute wrath” upon the evil doer, this wrath is all kinds of civil penalty, which includes the death penalty. Romans 13: 3, 4; 1 Peter 2: 13, 14.

19. The pastor of the Seventh – day Adventist Church who should have more wisdom, now drinks from stupid, ignorant criminologists, as he has cast the Bible aside. He agrees with their faulty “no deterrence” idea of the death penalty by saying:

“If the Bible cannot be used, then the only real argument can be the deterrence aspect as a credible threat of punishment. However, there is no real evidence to prove the effectiveness of deterrence in potential killers. While Prime Minister Patrick Manning and the Attorney general John Jeremie may argue that the death penalty is an effective deterrent, virtually no criminologists agrees. In fact, a methodology is yet to be discovered to prove that the death sentence works as an effective crime deterrent.” **Ibid**, p. 10._

20. Well in answer to what the pastor has just said; we cannot see how the criminologist can ever develop a method to know that the death penalty works to deter the committal of crimes in at least some people. Here is the reason why.

a. To know that the threat of the death penalty has deterred potential killers, one would first have to know every potential killer in a country, one would have to be able to read their minds to know how much of them decided not to kill because of fear of death. One would also have to know of every situation that would have led to murder and how through the threat of the death penalty, it was avoided: Obviously, this, no man can

know. Only God can tell, because He can look at the heart of man. 1 Samuel 16: 6, 7.

- b. While the criminologists cannot know how to detect deterrence, yet the pastor should know that God Himself shows that death penalty does effect deterrence from the crimes it is attached to. Here is what God said. Deuteronomy 17: 5 -7; Deuteronomy 17: 12, 13; Deuteronomy 21: 21. Jude 20: 12, 13.
- c. Not all potential killers will even listen to the threat of the death penalty even if it were carried out, and they will still commit these crimes; such hard hearted people will eventually face the death penalty for their committal of corresponding crimes.
- d. Even the criminal is smarter than the criminologist enough to know that if he threatens his victim with death (not penalty though), he usually achieves him surrendering private property or some other right. If the criminal knows that the threat of death yields the desired reward, why in his own mind it cannot yield compliance with the law? He who kills to hide his crime fears the penalty, for man has fear of death. Hebrews 2: 15.
- e. Furthermore, if such a horrible thing as death cannot scare the criminal to the point of deterrence, then nothing else will, certainly not living in jail and being maintained by the taxpaying victims. Jude 20: 12, 13.
- f. When we look at the basic psychological studies on punishment and rewards, we see that punishment does indeed create deterrence, so it does with the death penalty as a punishment.

“Campbell and Church (1969) argue that punishments are, if anything, a stronger influence on behavior than incentive effects of reinforcements...” Richards D. Gross, **Psychology the Science of the mind and behavior**, p. 180._

“Other experiments have shown that the strength and duration of the suppression effect depend on the intensity of the punishment and the degree of deprivation ... Howe (1980) points out that when alternative ways of obtaining reinforces are available, punishment has a more powerful suppressive effect on the punished behavior.’ **Ibid**, p. 180._

- g. Basic psychological concepts about averting antisocial behavior (under which comes murders), definitely point to punishment. It is shameful that criminologists and the unlearned pastor could not see this clear fact.

“Punishment is one of the most common methods used to control behavior. Parents routinely spank their children for misbehavior, undesirable personal or social behavior often result in censure snubbing, disapproval or social banishment; and our legal system is based on punishment such as fines, incarceration, and removal from society.” David G. Benner, editor, **Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology**, p. 969._

21. We are further told this gross speculation by the pastor.

“There are also researches, which seem to suggest that the imposition of the death penalty leads to a rise in murders and deviant behavior within the society. While the link has not been established, the data strongly give life to this viewpoint. **Sunday Mirror**, p. 10.

22. Such researches are fishing for excuses to get rid of the death penalty. How can one expect an effective deterrent, when there are so much inconsistencies in carrying out capital punishment? First, silly lawyers block the death penalty from being carried out, then the potential killer is given the message that it is hard exceedingly for the State to carry out the death penalty, yet how can one blame the implementation of the death penalty as the cause of the deviant behavior.

Here are the real facts.

- a. The problem is not the capital punishment itself, but how it is carried out.

“...Many of the unfavorable outcomes associated with punishment are due to the faulty application of punishment procedures rather than any inherent shortcoming in the concept of punishment. In fact, much of human behavior is learned and closely regulated by natural aversive consequences without any serious ill effects.” David G. Benner, **Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology**, pp. 969 - 970._

- b. Thus if these procedures are applied to punishment, which would imply swift execution of the death penalty as equitable to murder, and if consistency is applied, the desirable results will be achieved.

“All other considerations aside, punishment as a response normally reduces its occurrence. Several characteristics can make a punishing stimulus more effective. 1) Aversive stimuli that have a sudden onset (e.g., a slap) are more effective than stimuli whose aversiveness grows gradually. 2) A punishing stimulus is more effective if it is delivered immediately after the response has been made rather than after some delay, unless the delay is bridged cognitively (e.g., through verbal instructions) or with a conditioned stimulus. 3) The suppressive properties of an aversive stimulus are related to its intensity; the greater the intensity, the greater the suppression. 4) Continual punishment of an undesirable behavior is more effective than intermittent or occasional punishment. 5) Punishment that is consistently applied is more effectively than the haphazard or ambiguous application of aversive consequences.” **Ibid**, p. 970._

“However, when the punishment is discontinued, the punished response may reappear.” **Ibid**, p. 971._

23. A summary of what we were being told about the proper procedures to effect the desired response from punishment (which includes the death penalty) is as follows:

- a. Sudden punishment works.

- b. Swift punishment with no delay.
- c. Equitable punishment to suit the crime.
- d. Continual punishment with no long break.
- e. Consistently applied punishment.

24. This is in harmony with Biblical concept, it shows us the following:

- a. Swift penalty deters. Ezra 7: 26. Ecclesiastes 8:11.
- b. Quid pro quo, or equitable punishment to suit the crime also deters crime. Leviticus 24: 19, 20. Deuteronomy 19: 19 - 21.
- c. The death penalty for murder. Genesis 9:6. Leviticus 24:17.

25. Having totally cast the Bible aside, this fully blinded Seventh day Adventist pastor now proceeds and feels free to vilify the very idea of a death penalty, despite the fact that it was God Himself that ordained and gave the death penalty to human society, the idea came from God Himself into human society.

The pastor says:

“To support the death penalty is to aligned with barbarism.

Regardless of the brutality of the murder, the state deliberately and calculatedly planning to carry out the execution of a defenseless convict is worse; it is cold-blooded and brutish.

“**The Sunday Mirror**, p. 10. (*Emphasis Supplied*)

26. That statement is Satanic, because it accuses God who invented and gave the death penalty with barbarism, deliberateness, calculatedness, cold-blood and brutish. Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 24: 17.

- a. It was these same silly and misguided sentiments for the vicious criminal that created such unreasonable denunciation of the death penalty, that God sought to extirpate when He said the following. Deuteronomy 7:15, 16; Deut 13: 8-11; Deuteronomy 19: 11-13.
- b. In carrying out the death penalty, the State is not acting in personal, emotional revenge, neither is the State malicious. Barbarism, cold-bloodedness and brutishness cannot be justifiably applied to the State. The State is doing what God ordained it to, and it is openly declared, thus it is not calculated or deliberate. Romans 13: 4, 5.
- c. Why should the condemned convict be called defenseless? Should he be given weapons to defend himself from going to the gallows that the death penalty may seem fairer? Wasn't his victim defenseless? Didn't the criminal have a chance to be defended before the courts? Does he not already have so much appeals? This being the case, how does one answer that statement?

27. The pastor then perversely said:

“The message we are sending to the murderers is that killing to settle scores are an accepted civilized method.” **Ibid**, p.10. (*Emphasis supplied*)

28. This is a very erroneous conclusion for various reasons.

a. In the first place, the death penalty, which was given by God Himself was never meant to “settle scores”, but to extirpate evil from the midst of the nation. Deuteronomy 21: 21. Jude 20: 12, 13.

b. The need to understand what is “civilized” and “civilization”, and to understand that the death penalty is not uncivilized, barbaric, and brutish, must be taught to people. In fact, the presence of a death penalty in a civil code is part of what preserves civility against rogue elements and ultimately civilization. First, we need to understand that civil government is ordained by God.

“This genius of civil order springs from God; its exercise within its legitimate sphere is ordained of God; and the Declaration of Independence simply asserted the eternal truth of God when it said, “Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.” It matters not whether they be exercised in one form of government or in another, the governmental power and order thus exercised are ordained of God.” Alonzo T. Jones, **The Rights of the People**, p. 46.

c. How civil society is formed, and what it is formed for, makes it civil, thus civility itself includes quid pro quo or equitable punishment for crimes, this would obviously mean the carrying out of the death penalty for murder according to the Bible.

We are told:

“When societies are formed, each individual surrenders the personal exercise of certain rights, and, as an enjoyment for that surrender, has secured to him the fuller enjoyment of these, and all other rights pertaining to person and property, without the protection of which society cannot exist. Each person has the natural right to protect his person and property against all invasions, but if this right is to be personally exercised in all cases by each person, then in the present condition of human nature every man’s hand will be against his neighbor. That is simple anarchy, and in such a condition of affairs society cannot exist. Now suppose a hundred of us are thrown together in a certain place where there is no established order; each one has all the rights of any other one. But if each one is individually to exercise these rights of self-protection he has the assurance of only that degree of protection which he alone can furnish to himself, which we have seen is exceedingly slight. Therefore all come together, and each surrenders to the whole body that individual right, and in return for this surrender he receives the power of all for his protection. He therefore receives the help of the other ninety-nine to protect himself from the invasion of his rights, and he is thus made many hundred times more secure in

his rights of person and property than he is without this surrender.” **Ibid**, pp. 42-43.

- d. Anarchy and civil disorder is prevented by denying each the ability or freedom to take justice into their own hands, because all men’s judgment and sense of equity may not be fair, and hate and prejudice may perpetrate many a slaughter and bloodshed for simple crimes and because of misjudgments. Humanity’s sense of justice would be left unsatisfied sowing the seeds for more vigilante actions. All this chaos in civil society is what government is supposed to prevent, because the powers of civil government pertains solely to men in their relations one to another.

We are told:

“Our duties under civil government pertains solely to the government and to our fellow-men, because the powers of civil government pertains solely to men in their relations one to another, and to the government.” **Ibid**, p. 35.

- e. Civil government is to preserve order in civil society and guard against civility from breaking down.

“By all these evidences is established the plain, common-sense principle that to civil government pertains only that which the term itself implies, — that which is civil. The purpose of civil government is civil Its functions is to preserve order in society, and to cause all its subjects to rest in assured safety, by guarding them against all incivility,” **Ibid**. pp 27 - 28.

- f. Thus civil government punishes infractions of civil law.

“To the authorities of civil government pertains the punishment of incivility, that is, the transgression of civil law.” **Ibid**. p. 24.

- g. The State or civil government returns punishment for crime upon the criminal. The criminal’s dastardly deeds is returned upon him by the State.

“A crime, or breach of justice, is a deed of the individual, which the State, by its judicial acts, returns on the individual. The State furnishes a measure for crime, and punishes criminals according to their deserts. The judicial mind is a measuring mind, a retributive mind, because trained in the forms of justice, which sees to it that every man’s deeds shall be returned to him, to bless him or to curse him with pain.” **Ibid**, p. 30.

- h. Thus, if men are allowed to transgress one another’s rights with impunity, then anarchy would reign, and the true purpose of civil society, which is to ensure civility of behavior, would be multiplied. This is what the current teachings against the death penalty is leading to.

“In declaring the equality of all men in the possession of these inalienable rights, there is likewise declared the strongest possible safeguard of the people. For, this being the

declaration of the people, each one of the people stands thereby pledged to the support of the principle thus declared. Therefore, each individual is pledged, in the exercise of his own inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, so to act as not to interfere with any other person in the free and perfect exercise of his inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Any person who so as to restrict or interfere with the free exercise of any other person's right to life, or liberty, or the pursuit of happiness, denies the principle, to the maintenance of which he is pledged, and does in effect subvert the government. For, rights being equal, if one may so act, every other one may do so; and thus no man's right is recognized, government is gone, and only anarchy remains." **Ibid**, p. 53.

29. It is social and psychological teachings like the following that destroys the sense of equitable punishment, especially for murder, thus cheapening human life while claiming to hold it sacred, and creating more of the prevailing crime wave of these times. Observe the false principles presently carried out in the penal system. Such false principles are reinforced by the SDA pastor's ignorant words.

"Parke, in a review of several studies (1972, 1977), concluded that, when a rationale accompanies punishment:

- (i) Mild forms of punishment becomes just as effective as severe punishment at producing resistance to temptation;
- (ii) Delayed punishment becomes as effective as early punishment;
- (iii) Punishment from an aloof and impersonal adult becomes as effective as that from a warm, friendly adult;
- (iv) Resistance to temptation is much more stable over time." Richard D. Gross, **Psychology The science of Mind and Behavior**, p. 811.

30. Thus the stupid pastor makes this statement that borders on blasphemy.

"The death penalty differentiates with the murderer's act only in who is doing it, but it remains also as an assault on the dignity of life, for the image of God is in man." **Sunday Mirror**, p. 10.

31. But there are two things the pastor has blindly painted himself into a corner of ignorance to not see, and so finds himself attacking God's order.

They are:

- a. That God Himself gave to the State or government the authority to issue punishment for infractions of the civil code. Romans 13:1-6.
- b. God Himself set the measured response, quid pro quo, or equitable punishment for

murder, it is death, and this is because man was made in the image of God as the pastor so wrongly applied. (Leviticus 24: 19, 20; Genesis 9:6).

32. Then the pastor wrongly tells us:

“Those clamoring for the death penalty argue that the execution of an offender brings comfort and support for the families of the homicide victim. Although this has never been proven, in their thirst for blood they argue that death by homicide is one death the family can never forget.” **Ibid**, p.10.

33. Either this pastor never suffered for the death of a loved one in a violent homicide, or his warped judgment does not help him to understand the sense of justice the mind cries out for. It was this that God meant when He told Cain that Abel’s blood was crying out. Genesis 4:10.

34. A corrupt murderer like Lamech even understood the cry for justice or vengeance, yet this pastor cannot. Genesis 4:23, 24.

35. It was this cry for justice that God took into account by providing the cities of refuge for the fleeing murderer against the family of the murdered one. But we must note that the legitimacy of the cities of refuge was only for accidental deaths, or what we call manslaughter, and not for first degree murder. The fleeing murderer would have to pay for murder at the hands of the pursuing relatives who sought to satisfy the urge or thirst for justice. Deuteronomy 19: 1-13.

36. Again the pastor says:

“When a convicted murderer is killed, he is not punished; he is dead, and only his family, friends and those who loved him are being punished.” **Ibid**. p.10.

37. Again, we can justifiably ask, what kind of wrong sided concept is that?

- a. Punishment is to the person who did the wrong whether it be death penalty or whatever. God showed that the death penalty is punishment for the killer. Isaiah 13: 11, 12; 2 Thessalonians: 8, 9.
- b. Family members being traumatized over the death penalty for a member of the family for committing murder is a perverted sense of sympathy, such as what causes the person to be spoilt and go unchecked by no adequate punishment until the errant one drifted into committing murder. The murderer’s family should have their sympathy towards the murder victim’s family. But to their murdering family, the one who did the murder, God said, they should have no pity nor spare. Deuteronomy 7:16; Deuteronomy 13: 8, 9; Deuteronomy 19: 12, 13, 19-21.
- c. They need to be careful lest they be a partaker in their murdering family’s evil deeds. God even forbade Aaron to even cry over the punishment-deaths of two of his sons. This is

righteous. Leviticus 10: 1- 6.

38. Finally, this statement is a 1, 000 times much better than all that the pastor has said, thus we have quoted it.

“In more recent times, all through the twentieth century, the would-be humanitarian reluctance to put murderers to death has led to a far greater number of homicides than would have been the case in earlier times, when Christendom paid more attention to the Bible than is true today. The resort to life imprisonment, greatly shortened by early parole, has led to the far greater loss of human life inflicted by murderers who have been released to prey on the public because of their so-called “good behavior.” Thus, the courts become courts of injustice that fail to protect society from this scourge, encouraged by soft-hearted juries who care nothing at all about the future victims they have doomed to death. The folly of attempting to improve upon the wise and righteous guidelines of God has served only to protect and proliferate crime on our city streets, where even elementary school students regularly carry revolvers to school for self-protection, or for criminal aggression.” **The Old Testament Study Bible, Exodus**, pp. 216-217.

39. Thus we are warned of pastors who muddy up the waters that their flock is to drink Ezekiel 34: 1, 2, 10, 18, and 19.

40. This final warning applies to this misled SDA pastor. Malachi 2: 7, 8.

PART TWO

THE BIBLE COMMANDS THE DEATH PENALTY FOR TODAY

1. In a follow up article, a Seventh - day Adventist pastor is justifying his former statements against the death penalty for murder, and against using the Bible to prove that capital punishment should be continued in society today.

He says the following:

“I raised several issues why, in my opinion, it will be hypocritical for us to use the Bible as our basis for the implementation of the death penalty.”

*A New Testament perspective to kill or not to kill ... why I have difficulty accepting state-sponsored murder, by pastor Terrence Browne (Seventh-Day Adventist), in, **Sunday TNT Mirror**, Sunday Sept. 18th, 2005, p. 10.*

- a. But the facts are, the Bible is to be used to justify the use of the death penalty, for it shows that capital punishment puts away evil from society, thus gives citizens security. Deuteronomy 19: 11-13.
- b. There is no hypocrisy in isolating the crime of murder and applying the death penalty to it alone from the Bible. This is also done in the Bible, even though the pastor does not see this. Genesis 9: 6; Deuteronomy 19: 11-13.
- c. Again it is folly to call the death penalty “State sponsored murder”, because it was God that instructed the State to kill the murderer, and such a silly charge implicates God. Leviticus 24: 10-17.
- d. Also, what the State does cannot be called murder, since the definition of “murder” does not fit what the State is called upon to do.

“**MURDER** ... The act of unlawfully killing a human being with premeditated malice, by a person of sound mind. To constitute murder in law, the person killing another must be of sound mind or in possession of his reason, and the act must be done with malice, aforethought or premeditated; but malice may be implied, as well as expressed.” Noah Webster, **1828 American Dictionary of the English Language**.

2. The pastor refers to his erroneous reasons in his former article, why he is against the death penalty.

He says:

“My core issues in the article were: 1. Difference of governance in our time and Bible theocracy. 2. The various applications for death penalty in Bible times. 3. And questions of Jesus’ response.” **Sunday TNT Mirror**, Sept. 18, 2005, p. 10.

- a. However, a theocracy means a government ruled by God. But that had nothing to do with God issuing a death penalty. We do not need a theocracy for it to be divinely legitimized. In fact, God gave the death penalty before there was a theocracy, thus it can be used. Genesis 9:5, 6.
 - b. Various applications of the death penalty in what he called Bible times does not mean that one cannot single out murder one for the death penalty. One can still single out murder and apply the death penalty to it as the Bible says, because it does not say that murder should be punished with death ONLY if the other wrongs in the Bible that have the death penalty are also punished today with death. In the Bible, death through murder as a single event is given the death penalty. Leviticus 24: 17. Deuteronomy 19:11-13.
 - c. With regards to Jesus’ response, as the pastor referred to, Jesus was the Savior in the Old Testament. The Savior was Jesus (the Second Person) before He came to the earth as a man. (Matthew 1:21; Isaiah 45:21, 22; Hosea 13:4; Isaiah 43:11).
 - d. It was Jesus Himself that spoke in the Old Testament and gave all commands. (John 1:18; John 5: 36-39).
 - e. He is the same yesterday, today and forever, He never changes. Hebrews 13:8.
 - f. So, in the New Testament He has no problem with the death penalty. He did not change His view because of Grace or salvation. (Matthew 5: 25, 26; Acts 5: 8-10).
3. The pastor then gave his distorted misrepresentations of the speaker of “Escape for Thy Life” radio program, and his response in the former grossly erroneous article.

The pastor said:

“What happened after is unbelievable, an unschooled theologian with a combative un-Christian deportment, launch a five-week radio attack on the article, boldly demonstrating week after week his ignorance of research and analysis, hermeneutics, biblical backgrounds and biblical languages.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

- a. However, to the pastor Paul warns of those who use fair or eloquent speech to deceive,

such persons would find my speaking (because that is all I do on the radio) as combative, and un-Christian in deportment; but to God, truth is spoken and nothing is wrong. Romans 16:17, 18.

- b. Some pastors resist the Spirit of God by artful reasoning which is deceit. Such we should be aware of. 2 Timothy 3: 7-9.
 - c. I am accused of ignorance of research and analysis, yet my response to the pastor's article, (16 pages in all), used by far more sources and analysis than him.
 - i. I used a total of five (5) different books.
 - ii. These books were together quoted about twenty (20) times.
 - d. The pastor accused me of not knowing hermeneutics, biblical backgrounds and biblical languages. But all of these are false. Where in the Bible does it say that these things are MUST to understand the Bible? The Bible gives fives (5) conditions for understanding the Bible.
 - i. Ask God in prayer for wisdom and He will give us wisdom liberally. James 7:17.
 - ii. Be sincere to want to do God's will and one will know the Truth. John. 7:17.
 - iii. Study as a workman rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2: 15.
 - iv. Compare Scripture, here a little, there a little. Isaiah 28: 9-11.
 - v. The Spirit will guide you into all truth. John 14:26; John 16:13.
 - e. How does the pastor expect the poor man, who did not go to a theology school to understand the Bible? God does not require such pursuits to know the Bible, let alone a simple little thing as the Biblical justification of the death penalty for murder. 1 Corinthians 2: 11-14.
 - f. Some pastors like to obfuscate simple truths by the use of big theological and scholarly terms to make it seem that the unschooled cannot learn the Scriptures, this increases their self-importance, and make them seem to be needed to guide the common people, or else these pastors would be seen to be of no use to society. But God's Spirit is for all flesh that all may know the truth. Acts 2: 16-18.
4. Again the pastor makes this erroneous statement. By associating the death penalty for man and beast together, as if they must go together for the death penalty for the murderer to be legitimate, he seeks to nullify applying the death penalty to the man who murdered.
5. " ... we cannot use OT laws to execute murderers while rejecting laws which prescribe execution of animals as mentioned in Genesis 9:5 [Quoted]." **Ibid**, p. 10.

a. But this is an effort to create objection where they do not exist. Today in most societies, if an animal killed a person, that animal is shot and killed. But even if that were not to be done in a society that has lost its true sense of the value of humans above animals, all they would be doing if they were to give the death penalty to murderers, is obeying part of what God says. This, however, does not make the use of the Old Testament injunctions for murder invalid. This is a deliberate attempt to mislead people.

5. In continuing his objection to the death penalty, the pastor associates other wrongs for which the death penalty was given by God to ancient Israel. He claims we can only use the Bible to justify the death penalty for murder if we also agree or it for the other wrongs as well.

“Or for witches [Ex 22: 18 quoted], or adulterers [Lev20: 10 quoted], or disobedient children [Ex 21:15 quoted], and sundry other infringements including keeping Sunday holy instead of the seventh day Sabbath.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

a. But this is a masterful deception coming from a pastor that should have known better. God could have only given the death penalty to all those infractions of His Law to Israel, because they knew the true God in contrast to the pagan nations, and made a vow to serve Him agreeing with His principles; this all the nations of the world today have not done. Exodus 19: 3-8. Exodus 24: 3-8.

b. Plus ancient Israel was to be a moral example to all the nations around, of the wisdom of God’s Laws. Deuteronomy 4: 5-8.

c. This does not mean that any nation today cannot select the death penalty for murder from among the commands of the Bible and use it. They can since the death penalty for murder alone was given by God before Israel, and it is in the Bible. Genesis 9: 5, 6.

6. The pastor further tells us this folly:

“In the absence of a theocracy, Old Testament teachings should be adhered to if stated emphatically that it ought to be so or explicitly stated in the New Testament.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

a. But if the pastor’s SDA Church were to use his maxim to judge the Bible as he just states, his church would have no money to pay him. Because even though the New Testament refers to tithe (one tenth) paying, it is for historical reasons, and with no explicit command to do so in the New Testament. Heb 7: 4-12.

b. Also, we men can now all wear women dresses and even underwear, because while this is explicitly forbidden in the Old Testament, nowhere in the New Testament are we “explicitly” told not to do so. Deuteronomy 22: 5.

7. Furthermore, it is wrong for the pastor to separate the New Testament as being driven by love, and not say so also is the Old Testament.

“The New Testament is driven by love, or what some would say is the law of Christ [Matt 5:

43-44 quoted].” **Ibid**, p.10.

- a. But this is the Evangelical anti-nomian concept applied here, because both the Old Testament and the New is driven by love. Love was supposed to be the activating motive for all Israel’s devotion and obedience to the true God. Deuteronomy 6:1-6; Deuteronomy 10: 12, 13, 19; Deuteronomy 11: 1, 13, 22.
- b. The Law was to be kept by Love. Exodus 20: 6; Romans 10:8-10.
- c. Everything God did in the Old Testament was motivated and driven by Love. Deuteronomy 7: 7, 8. Deuteronomy 10:15. Isaiah 63: 9; Jeremiah 31: 3; Ezekiel 16: 8; Hosea 11: 3, 4. Hosea 14:4.

8. Again the pastor tells us:

“Revenge is forbidden in the New Testament, [Rom 12:17 quoted] forgiveness is the theme of the Christian life, it is his first response.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

- a. But this is wrongfully presented by the pastor showing that he lacks biblical exegesis, or is simply grabbing at straws to justify his senseless points. In the Old Testament revenge based upon holding some type of grudge in the mind is forbidden; and more than forgiveness indeed, Love is commanded. Leviticus 19:18.
- b. But at the same time, the type of revenge that is just, and called vengeance is justified by the God of Love. Leviticus 26: 25; 2 Kings 9: 7. Deuteronomy 32: 35, 41.
- c. No difference is made in the New Testament, for while God forbids revenge (Romans 12:17, 19) just as in the Old Testament, He Himself continues with the type of revenge called “vengeance”. And why is this? Because the death penalty is not the type of revenge that is wrong. Luke 18: 7, 8. 1Thessalonians 4: 6; Revelation 18: 20; Revelation 19:2; Romans 12: 19.

9. The pastor thus concludes erroneously:

“Jesus emphatically replaced retribution with the principle of reconciliation in Matt 5: 23, 24 [quoted].” **Ibid**, p. 10.

But God expects the state to carry out the death penalty, not seek reconciliation with the criminal. Even if one refuses to see the death penalty implied in the following Scripture, one must at least admit that Caesar did not carry the sword to seek reconciliation upon the criminal, he carried the sword to execute wrath or avenge evil. Romans 13: 3, 4.

10. We are told by the pastor:

“The inequalities of our justice system, where the rich and powerful can have trials start and finished in 90 days, have appeals heard and dismissed in 48 hours, while the poor and uneducated are made to languish in jails and receive substandard representation before the

courts, does not render us anamartetos [“without fault”].” **Ibid**, p. 10.

a. But this is still no reason why there should be no death penalty for murder. There were injustices and man has been faulty from since sin, yet God still had the death penalty implemented. The following g Scriptures show injustices while the death penalty was yet given. Isaiah 1: 21-23; Jeremiah 2: 34; Jeremiah 7: 5, 6, 8.

11. Again the pastor says:

“While Christ did not condemn the law, he demonstrated the Christian response to it. The Christian position should not be to call for the death penalty or to oppose the state if they decided to carry it out, but to work for man’s reception they decided to carry it out, but to work for man’s redemption and identify where there are social ills and injustices.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

a. But by lending his voice, pen, and influence against the state implementing the death penalty, by calling it “state sponsored murder”, the pastor did not demonstrate his Christian response appropriately. Proof of this can be seen in his previous article when he said:

“To support the death penalty is to be aligned with barbarism. Regardless of the brutality of the murder, the state deliberately and calculatedly planning to carry out the execution of a defenseless convict is worse; it is cold-blooded and brutish.” **The Bible and the Death Penalty, Sunday TNT Mirror, Sunday June 26, 2005, p. 10.**

12. Again, the pastor deliberately obfuscates or darkens the facts when he said the following:

“To use Genesis 9:6 as dogmatic scriptural basis for the death penalty is to be careless with the Hebrew, for this text may be predictive and not prescriptive. The Hebrew does not decide the issue, for the verbal form in verses 5-6 could be either imperative or indicative.” *To kill or not to kill, Sunday TNT Mirror, Sunday September 18, 2005, p. 10.*

a. This deliberate vagueness in an attempt to get away from the plain commands of the Scripture (Genesis 9:5, 6). Does the pastor want us to think that God is predicting that there will be death penalty for murder? Surely God is indeed prescribing it. Genesis 9: 5, 6.

b. The pastor does not know if God in Genesis 9: 5, 6 is telling us that the death penalty is imperative or must be carried out for murder, or if it points out that the death penalty is existing for murder. He seems not to know Hebrew; because he should have looked up the phrase in verse 6 “...shall... be shed...” Observe how this book explains the phrase “shall be shed...”

“...shall be shed...” Niphal. imperfect.” John Joseph Owens, **Analytical key to the Old Testament, Vol. 1 Genesis-Joshua, p.34.**

c. Niphal is the stem of the verb “shall be shed”, this means that it is simple passive; it means the murderer receives the action of having his blood be shed. Genesis 9: 6.

d. Concerning Hebrew verbs we are told about the imperfect state.

“The state of the verb describes the kind of action that is involved, but not the time.”
Edward W. Goodrick, **Do It Yourself Hebrew and Greek**, p. 15:3.

e. Thus the “imperfect” means the state of the verb “shall be shed”. This means that the action of shedding the blood of the murderer is yet incomplete for it has not yet happened.

We are told:

“There is no tense in Hebrew: no form to indicate past, present, or future. The perfect state speaks of completed action, the imperfect of incomplete or linear action, but both can refer to past, present, or future. The only way you can tell the time in Hebrew is the context.” **Ibid**, p. 15:4.

f. Thus the verse, by its context, with its incomplete action can only be future on condition that the murderer sheds someone’s blood that his blood would be shed. Genesis 9: 6.

13. Again, the pastor confuses the facts by telling us.

“Furthermore it cannot be transposed into our era as is being done at present, for Genesis 9: 6 is a general prohibition for all murderers while the Pentateuch gives instruction for cities of refuge, for manslaughter etc.” **Sunday TNT Mirror**, p. 10.

a. But what does Mrs. Ellen G. White, the prophetess of the pastor’s SDA Church (and a true prophetess) say about Genesis 9: 6? She contradicts the pastor with her inspired commentary.

She says:

“How carefully God protects the rights of men! He has attached a penalty to willful murder.” Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” (Gen 9:6). If one murderer were permitted to go unpunished, he would by his evil influence and cruel violence subvert others. This would result in a condition of things similar to that which existed before the Flood. God must punish murderers. He gives life, and He will take life if that life becomes a terror and a menace.” Ellen G. White, **Manuscript 126, 1901**.

b. Thus statement of Mrs. White is very revealing, and the pastor needs to take note of the salient points of truth that he should not deny as an Adventist.

These points are:

i. The death penalty is about protecting man’s rights.

- ii. It is for willful murder and not all murders and not all murders including manslaughter as the pastor so wrongfully speculates.
 - iii. Unpunished murderers who do not get the death penalty subvert other people.
 - iv. Unpunished murderers causes society to descend into the lawlessness, chaos and disorder such as existed in the world just before the Flood.
 - v. Man carrying out the death penalty upon murderers is God Himself punishing the murderers.
 - vi. The murderer's life is a terror and menace to others, thus must be taken.
- c. How can the pastor sensibly reject these salient points? Crime is getting worse and worse because of those uneducated lawyers blocking the death penalty from being implemented. Part of the responsibility for the deterioration in society is the influence against the death penalty being taught by ignorant sociologists and foolish sentiments like taught by the pastor.
- d. Are we to assume that the death penalty of Genesis. 9: 6 cannot be transposed into our era when some human lives have become a terror and a menace to others as Mrs. White said? In the Pentateuch the misuse of the cities of refuge by a deliberate willful murderer is corrected with the death penalty to the murderer. Deuteronomy 19: 11-13.
14. Again, the pastor makes these horribly wrong statements.

“Moreover, even in the cases of intentional murder in the Old Testament as in the case of Cain, Moses and David it [the death penalty] was not applied.” **Sunday TNT Mirror**, p. 20.

- a. What does he think, that Cain escaped the death penalty because God disagreed with it, or because God was inconsistent in His application of the death penalty?? By referring to Cain, Moses and David, the pastor has served to do nothing else but to confuse people about the certainty about the application of the death penalty. If he read his own inspired text book from the Spirit of Prophecy, as his SDA Church is supposed to believe, he would know why Cain was spared, and what was the real issue of the death penalty.

Mrs. White says:

“Notwithstanding that Cain had by his crimes merited the sentence, a merciful Creator still spared his life, and granted him opportunity for repentance. But Cain lived only to harden his heart, to encourage rebellion against the divine authority, and to become the head of a line of bold, abandoned sinners. This one apostate, led on by Satan, became a tempter to others; and his example and influence exerted their demoralizing power, until the earth became so corrupt and filled with violence as to call for its destruction. In sparing the life of the first murderer, God presented before the life of the first murder, God presented before the whole universe a lesson bearing upon the great controversy.

The dark history of Cain and his descendants was an illustration of what would have been the result of permitting the sinner to live on forever, to carry out his rebellion against God. The forbearance of God only rendered the wicked more bold and defiant in their iniquity. Fifteen centuries after the sentence pronounced upon Cain, the universe witnessed the fruition of his influence and example, in the crime and pollution that flooded the earth. It was made manifest that the sentence of death pronounced upon the fallen race for transgression of God's law was both just and merciful. The longer men lived in sin, the more abandoned they became. The divine sentence cutting short a career of unbridled iniquity, and freeing the world from the influence of those who had become hardened in rebellion, was a blessing rather than a curse." Ellen G. White, **Patriarchs and Prophets**, p. 78.

b. Moses slaying of the Egyptian and not dying for it meant nothing about invalidating the death penalty, in fact, Moses fled from death for his crime. Exodus 2: 11-15.

c. Concerning Moses, the pastor's own inspired writing had this curious comment to make.

"It was at once determined by the monarch [Pharaoh] that he [Moses] should die; but, becoming aware of his danger, he made his escape and fled toward Arabia ... in slaying the Egyptian, Moses had fallen into the same error so often committed by his fathers, of taking into their own hands the work that God had promised to do ... Yet even this rash act was overruled by God to accomplish His purposes." **Ibid**, p. 247.

d. Concerning David, by giving the impression that the death penalty was wrong because it was not inflicted upon David, the SDA pastor has totally misrepresented what he knew or ought to have known from the inspired writings of his own SDA religion and even from the Scriptures. Because David repented of his sin God spared him the death penalty this is what the Bible says. 2 Samuel 12: 13, 14.

e. SDA inspired writings tells us that there was no one in Israel qualified to give its king the death penalty.

"Nathan the prophet was bidden to bear a message of reproof to David. It was a message terrible in its severity ... Nathan delivered the divine sentence unflinchingly, yet with such heaven-born wisdom as to engage the sympathies of the king, to arouse his conscience, and to call from his lips the sentence of death upon himself ... Though there would be found none in Israel to execute the sentence of death upon the anointed of the Lord, David trembled. Lest, guilty and unforgiven, he should be cut down by the swift judgment of God." **Ibid**, pp. 720-721, 722.

15. The pastor then asks this question:

"So how do we interpret the State's right to kill in the context of Genesis 9:6, that is being used by those who postulate holy killing ... yes killing, don't be confused by those who try to use politically correct terms as assassinate, murder, kill, slay to mean different things."

Sunday TNT Mirror, p. 10.

- a. The pastor has now lost his vision, that he can't see that the issue of the Biblical command to execute the death penalty is not about holy killing. Anyhow, his question is appropriately answered by the inspired writing of the SDA Church.

"In a trial for murder the accused was not to be condemned on the testimony of one witness, even though circumstantial evidence might be strong against him. The Lord's direction was, "Whoso killeth any person, the murder shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses; but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die." Numbers 35: 30. It was Christ who gave to Moses these directions for Israel; and when personally with His disciples on earth, as He taught them how to treat the erring, the Great Teacher repeated the lesson that one man's testimony is not to acquit or condemn." Ellen G. White, **Patriarchs and Prophets**, p. 516._

- b. Thus Jesus of the New Testament was not against the death penalty; preserving society with peace for human security was the important achievement of administering the death penalty.

"If the one tried for murder were proved guilty, no atonement, or ransom could rescue him." Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Genesis 9:6.

"Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death."

"Thou shalt take him from Mine altar, that he may die." was the command of God; "the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." Numbers 35:31, 33; Exodus 21:14. The safety and purity of the nation demanded that the sin of murder be severely punished. Human life, which God alone could give, must be sacredly guarded." **Ibid**, p. 516.

16. The pastor desperately tries to destroy the influence of Romans 13's justification of the death penalty.

He said:

"The passage of scripture used as a New Testament equivalent of Genesis 9: 6 as authority for State-sponsored murder is Romans 13. Nowhere in this passage is the death penalty authorized. The phrase: "It does not bear the sword for nothing." Has been twisted to mean that the State has the right to kill. While the word "sword" clearly refers to the State's right to punish evildoers, it does not demand State-sponsored executions and it must be understood within the context of Roman society at that time." **Sunday TNT Mirror**, p. 10.

- a. Certainly Romans 13 does refer to the God-given authority to the State to punish criminals, but if God meant to exclude capital punishment or the death penalty, He would have certainly mentioned it. Reading the Scripture reveals that it is not an explanation of what the Romans did in their judicial system, but what God has set up governments to legitimately do, and none of that task can therefore be called “state-sponsored murder.” Romans 13:1-6.
 - b. The death penalty is authorized in the Scripture, the executing of wrath includes capital punishment. The Scripture in the New Testament authorizing it is Romans 13: 4.
17. In his desperation the pastor gives this futile and evidently irrelevant point.

“Surely, Paul could not have been condoning the authority of Hitler's government, Apartheid South Africa, Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, and dictators and despots the world over.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

- a. But the deaths known to have been inflicted by any of the following dictators, which have given them infamy is not capital punishment for murder, but genocidal policies suppressing the rights of the innocent. Whether it is Mao Tse Tung’s mass murder of 66 million Chinese, Starlin’s mass-murder of 20 million Russians, Lenin’s mass murder of 10 million Russians or even the Israeli’s war crimes killings of innocent Palestinians or the US genocide of many Iraqis, or even any of the terrorist governments’ murder of innocent civilians, none of these are the implementation of the death penalty for murder, thus they should not be referred to in the discussion.
18. This statement of the pastor is senseless, the method of the Romans in executing the death penalty, and the extent of crimes covered under such penalty is not even the issue; the point is, they did have the death penalty, and it was also for murder.

Yet the pastor says this:

“Under the Roman Empire, most crimes were not punishable by death. Paul used the sword, as a symbol of authority, for Romans did not execute by the sword for capital offenses.” **Ibid**, p.10.

- a. Sure, the sword was a symbol of government authority, not only to the Romans, for the Scripture refers to all government to whom we pay tax, and part of their legal jurisdiction, is the death penalty for murder as is also commanded by God. (Romans 13: 1-7, Genesis 9: 6).
19. The following statement by the pastor is very stupid.

“The issue in Romans 13 was not over capital punishment but taxes, which had become offensive to the Jews and Christians, his message to the church was that they ought to respect the authority in Rome, for governments are established to maintain order. In the absence of a theocracy, governments are used by God to provide protection for His people

and avenue to the proclamation of the gospel. Furthermore, Paul does not say how the sword should be used in enforcing governmental authority.” **Ibid**, p. 10.

- a. But the real issue was NOT about taxes as the pastor claims, a proper reading of the Scriptures shows that it was about respect for government. Christians were being taught by Paul not to resist government’s demands in law and order even though they may persecute Christians. While the persecutions were wrong, this did not mean that Christians should be usurpers of government which was established by God to protect man’s Rights. In fact, that was why we pay taxes. Romans 13: 1- 7.
- b. Yes, as the pastor says, governments were to protect God’s people and thus facilitate the preaching of the gospel, but governments were also to protect the Rights of at large, they were to protect society by the sword or penalty.

Here is this quote from the U.S. Declaration of Independence, p.35. Numbers 35: 30 - 33.

“That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, during their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed ...” The **Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence**, p. 35.

- c. The pastor foolishly says that Paul doesn’t say how governmental authority should be enforced. But that is not Paul’s issue, he does not have to say so. But Paul does say that he doesn't have to say so. But Paul does say that he executes wrath upon the evil doer. And what does God says is the penalty for, for murder? Capital punishment or the death penalty, this is also the wrath government can legally execute. (Romans 13: 4; 1 Peter 2: 13, 14; Genesis 9: 6).

20. Again the pastor states his erroneous conclusion, the result of his destructive reasoning:

“I want to rest by saying neither the Old Testament nor the New, gave an unambiguous instruction on the death penalty as it relates to our time.” **Sunday TNT Mirror**, p. 10.

- a. But the issue is not “unambiguousness”, the Scriptures are relevant to this time, and as the death penalty was never abolished by God in the Bible, it is indeed relevant to this present time. 2 Timothy 3: 15 -17; 1 Corinthians 10: 5 -11.
- b. Finally, here is the beautiful comment form the SDA Bible Commentary, from the SDA pastor’s own Church.

“6. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood God would avenge or inflict punishment for every murder, not directly, however, as He did in the case of Cain, but indirectly, by placing in the hand of man judicial power. The word “sheddeth” implies willful murder and not an accidental taking of life, manslaughter, for which the law made other provisions than those mentioned here (Num 35:11). The divine injunction endows temporal government with judicial power, and places in its hands the sword. God took care to erect a barrier against the supremacy of evil, and thus laid the foundation for an orderly civil

development of humanity." **SDA Bible Commentary.**