

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK!

Should babies be baptized today? This is a question that the Bible gives a clear answer to. So let us **"LET THE BIBLE SPEAK"** on this subject. In Matthew 18:3 Jesus said, **"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."** When a person is converted, he becomes as a little child, that is, innocent in the eyes of God. That is why the Bible speaks of a new convert as a **"babe in Christ."** (1 Pet. 2:2) Furthermore, in Matthew 19:14 Jesus says, **"Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."** Again this scripture points out the innocence of little children. Since the Bible plan of salvation involves **"belief in Christ (Jn. 3:16), repentance from sins (2Cor. 7:10), confessing Christ before men (Rom. 10:10), and baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21),** then little children and infants do not need to be baptized, nor do they qualify to be baptized for they cannot speak to confess Christ and they have no sins for which they need to repent.

"THOU SHALT NOT KILL!"

In the Old Testament in the 10 Commandments is listed the statement **"Thou shalt not kill."** Many people quote this statement against CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, saying that this commandment is a prohibition against killing of any kind. But a literal translation of the Hebrew text of Exodus 20:13 says **"Thou shalt do no murder."** It is translated this way in the New American Standard Version of the Bible. Furthermore, if people would just take the time to move ahead to Exodus 21:12-17, they would realize that Exodus 20:13 is not a prohibition against killing of any kind, for these verses certain individuals are to be **"put to death"** for crimes such as **"murder and kidnapping"**.

Furthermore in Exodus 22:2 we read **"If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall be blood be shed for him"** In other words, **"killing someone in self-defense"** is not a crime. This same principle is also taught in Matthew 24:43.

In every dispensation of Bible history, we see that CAPITAL PUNISHMENT was a part of that culture. For example, in the Patriarchal Period we read in Genesis 9:6 that **"Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, BY MAN SHALL HIS BLOOD BE SHED, for IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN."** The reason that God demanded the death penalty for the crime of murder is to emphasize the value that He himself places upon human life!" And the execution of the murderer was to be carried out by man.

In the Mosaic dispensation, we find the verses Exodus 21:12-17, which were already mentioned above as approving of the death penalty for certain serious crimes. Exodus 21:12 says **"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death."** This law is found in other verses as well. (Numbers 35:16-19, 30-31; Lev. 24:17, Deut. 19:11-12)

In the Christian dispensation we read that the CIVIL GOVERNMENT is ***"the minister of God to thee for good for he beareth not the sword in vain."*** (Romans 13:1-4; read also 1 Peter 2:13-14)

It is and interesting to note the fact that Jesus himself recognized the authority of the government to execute the death penalty. When Pilate told Jesus that he had the power to put him to death, Jesus said he had this power only because it was given to him from above. (John 19:10-11) The Apostle Paul also recognized the validity of the death penalty when he said in acts 25:11 ***"if I have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die."*** This shows that Paul recognized certain crimes were worthy of the death penalty.

It is very clear that the Bible from beginning to end approves of and even demands the death penalty for certain serious crimes. Therefore, the only way to argue against capital punishment from the Bible is to pervert the clear meaning of scripture.

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

Jonah was the prophet in the Old Testament that was swallowed up by a great fish. He was spoken of as being inside the fish for 3 days and 3 nights. Jesus speaks of this event in the New Testament as a parallel to His death, burial, and resurrection. (Matthew 12:40)

Cyrus the king of Persia, was the king who made a decree for the Jews to return to Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1-4)

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MONTH:

1. Who was the first person to see Jesus after His resurrection?
2. What was the name of the man who was struck blind by Paul for being a false teacher? (What was the name of the man that this false teacher was seeking to lead astray?)