

Genesis Series

Lesson #048

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Dean Bible Ministries

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“The death penalty is no more effective a deterrent than life imprisonment ... It is also evident that the burden of capital punishment falls upon the poor, the ignorant and the underprivileged members of society.”

**~United States Supreme Court Justice
Thurgood Marshall**

1. The U.S. has executed over 800 people since 1976, and as of December 2002, over 3,700 men and women were on death rows across the country.

2. The United Nations Human Rights Commission has passed a resolution calling for all nations that continue to execute to restrict the number of offenses for which the death penalty may be imposed and to suspend executions with a view toward abolishing the death penalty.

3. Historical background in the U.S.

4. Arguments used against Capital Punishment

a. Everyone is stopping it.

**“Governments All Over the World
Are Eliminating the Death Penalty.”**

b. It neither deters violence nor makes society safer.

c. It is discriminatory

1. A recent study of death sentences in Philadelphia found that African-American defendants were almost four times more likely to receive the death penalty than were people of other ethnic origins who committed similar crimes.

2. Over 80% of people executed since 1976 were convicted of killing white victims, although people of color make up more than half of all homicide victims in the United States.

3. A defendant who can afford his or her own attorney is much less likely to be sentenced to die. Ninety-five percent of all people sentenced to death could not afford their own attorney. (From Amnesty International)

4. From 1930 to 1957 in the U.S. more than half the executions for murder involved non-whites (1,554 of 3,096), and in the South more than twice as many blacks as whites were executed.

5. Of all people legally executed in the U.S. between 1930 and 1980, about 53.3 percent were black, even though U.S. population during that period was only about 10 percent black.

Statistics also show that wealthy people accused of capital crimes are unlikely to be convicted, for they can afford good legal counsel.

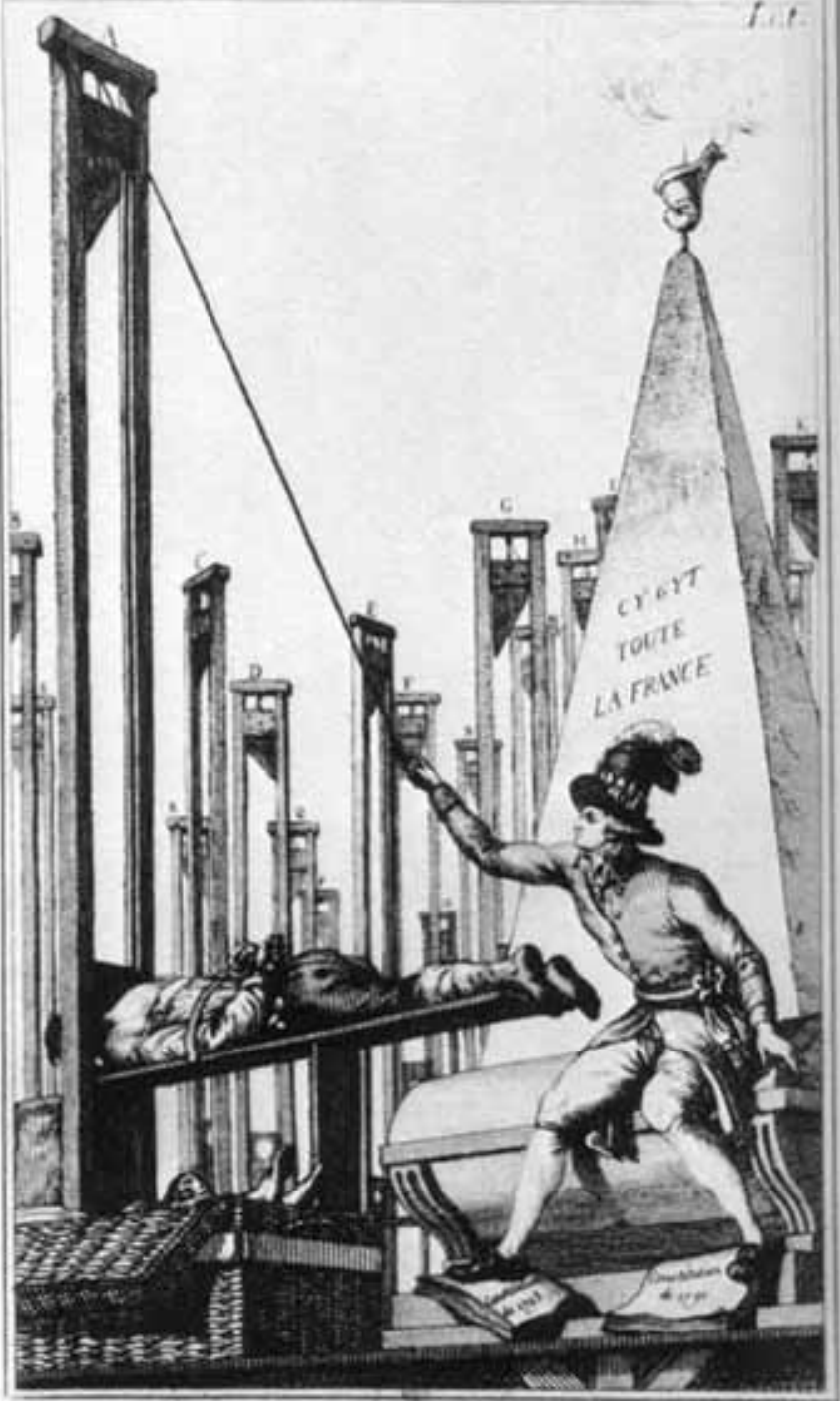
d. It's used to silence, it's a tool of political repression to silence political opponents.

e. It's irreversible

f. It's not a solution.

g. It's just vengeance, retribution.

h. It's cruel and unusual punishment.





Excavation block

Excavation block
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EXECUTION, BY HANGING, OF TWO REBEL SPIES, WILLIAMS AND PETERS, IN THE ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND, JUNE 9, 1862.—[SKETCHED BY MR. JAMES K. MAGIE.]





****Remember, because we are fallen, sinful, creatures living in a fallen, sinful, world, every structure from national government to church government will fail to one degree or another because of sinful, flawed humanity. But that never provides an excuse or rationale for disobedience or modification of the divine principles.**

1. Capital punishment is first and foremost an issue of theology.

2. Capital punishment was not a part of the first two dispensations.

3. Capital punishment is as much a part of the Noahic Covenant as the promise to not flood the earth again and the authorization to eat meat.

4. The authorization for capital punishment comes from God, not man.

5. The authorization for capital punishment is a mandate, not an option.

6. The authorization for capital punishment is not based on pragmatics such as deterrent effect, but on an absolute: man is in the image of God.

7. Thus the authorization for capital punishment provides the basis for human government. Human government can exist in many forms: tribal, clan, village, city, region, state, or nation. The existence of some authorized, legitimate ruling authority is not synonymous with nation.

8. The Noahic Covenant legitimizes capital punishment for only murder, but this does not restrict its application in other areas.

9. The Mosaic Covenant provides a divinely authored government constitution showing that capital punishment may be applied in other areas. But application in these other areas is not mandatory. It was for Israel as a nation, but was not binding on Gentile nations.

Mosaic Law Death Penalty Crimes

Murder—Ex. 21:12; Num 25:26-31

Sabbath violation—Ex. 35:2

Cursing parents—Lev. 20:9

Adultery—Lev. 20:10

Incest—Lev. 20:11–12

Sodomy—Lev. 20:13, 15–16

False prophecy, Deut. 13:1–10, 18, 20

Idolatry—Deut. 17:2–7

Incorrigible juvenile rebellion; Deut. 21:8–21

Rape—Deut. 22:25

Animals that kill a human—Ex. 21:29

Kidnapping—Ex. 21:6

**Aliens that intrude into a sacred place—Num. 1:5,
13:10, 17:7**