

Proverbs Week #62 (6:16-19cont.)

“There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers. Prov 6:16-19

We will continue over the next few weeks to look at this passage in more detail. We will consider the practical lessons it teaches us. This week’s family lesson will focus on the third thing that is an abomination to our Creator. We will examine the “hands that shed innocent blood.” Knowing the things God hates should serve us as warnings. They should cause us to examine ourselves and provide us discernment to avoid the company of those who are foolish and evil. To understand the warning of this verse we need to understand the respect due to men created in the image of God and the commandment against murder.

We learn in the Torah that God made mankind in His image. He placed them in the Garden of Eden and set them over the animals. The life of all mankind has value because God has placed His image on all. It is in this context that we should understand the importance of not shedding innocent blood.

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Gen 1:26,27

The Torah further explains this connection when God is telling Noah that animals could be eaten for food. He explains that the blood of the animal should not be eaten. Then God teaches something different about mankind.

“Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. “Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. “Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man’s brother I will require the life of man. “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.” Gen 9:3-6

The King James Version translates Exodus 20:13 “Thou shalt not kill.” A better translation is that one should not murder. There are times when taking the life of another does not require that the killer also be put to death. Consider this passage:

“If the thief is caught while breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there will be no bloodguiltiness on his account. “But if the sun has risen on him, there will be bloodguiltiness on his account. He shall surely make restitution; if he owns nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. Exodus 22:2-3

This passage suggests that a thief has entered someone’s house at night. The death that the homeowner inflicts upon the thief, in this case, does not bring “bloodguiltiness” upon him. A life was taken, but in this case it does not violate the commandment not to murder.

Why is this teaching important to discuss as families? How does our respect of our brothers and sisters, parents, and fellow man change if we do not see that they are made in the image of God? In matters of life and death there is a due process; a judgment must be made if someone’s life is actually taken. Our everyday actions may not directly take the life of another, but they need our attention as well. How we live makes a difference.

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. James 4:1-3