

Torah Studies – Statutes #456-458

Statute Summary:

Statute 456: When a son or daughter has committed a sin or crime that is worthy of death, the parents may not be given the death penalty for the sins or crimes of their children (of any age).

Statute 457: When a man or woman has committed a sin or crime that is worthy of death, his or her children may not be given the death penalty for the sins or crimes of their parent(s).

Statute 458: Those deserving to die must be put to death for their own crimes.

Deuteronomy 24:16 “The **fathers** shall not be **put to death** for the **children**, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for **his own sin.**”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
FATHERS	1	'âb	<i>father</i> (literally and figuratively), chief, forefather, patrimony, principal
PUT TO DEATH	4191	mûth	to <i>die</i> (literally or figuratively); (worthy of) death, (cause to, be like to, must) die
CHILDREN	1121	bên	a <i>son</i> (as a <i>builder</i> of the family name), servant born, soldier, son
HIS OWN SIN	2399	chêt'	a <i>crime</i> or its <i>penalty</i> : - fault, trespass, offence, (root) bear the blame

The Generational Soul-tie:

The blessings of Yahweh are passed on down through the generations. For example, the blessing of Abraham was passed to his son Isaac. From Isaac, Abraham's blessings added to Isaac's passed on to his son Jacob – and from there to the 12 sons of Jacob – and from there to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the case of Abraham and his generations, the blessing of Yahweh was extended through the generational soul-tie, which each descending patriarch continued to maintain, through personally choosing Yahweh. Of course, the ultimate generational blessing is the one passed down from Abraham unto all who are “Abraham's Seed” (spiritually).

Torah Studies – Statutes #456-458 (continued)

But generational blessings are passed on to the next generation, even when the children of the godly parent don't deserve it! To see this, consider the case of Solomon. Later in his life, Solomon turned from worshipping Yahweh unto idolatry through the influence of his many pagan wives. As a result, Solomon was not counted as having a "perfect" heart (whole-hearted devotion) towards Yahweh, as his father's heart had been.

- **1 Kings 11:4** "And it came to pass in the time of the old age of **Solomon**, that his **heart was not perfect** with Yahweh his God, as was the heart of David his father."

The consequences for Solomon's idolatry was that God would divide Israel. But, remarkably, Yahweh told Solomon that He would not divide Israel during Solomon's lifetime, for David's sake!

- **1 Kings 11:11-13** "Wherefore Yahweh said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept My Covenant and My Statutes, which I have commanded thee, **I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant**. Notwithstanding **in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son**. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; *but* will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."

The kingdom would be divided during the reign of Solomon's son. In other words, Solomon reaped the blessings from his father, David, and Rehoboam reaped the punishment for his father, Solomon! Yet, Rehoboam also continued to reap the blessings of David, in that "all of Israel" was not taken from him.

Like blessings, generational curses are also passed down from one generation to another. Generational curses are due to Torah-breaking and rebellion against God. If a family line is marked by divorce, incest, poverty, anger or other ungodly patterns, the family is likely under a generational curse. The Bible says that these curses are tied to choices.

- **Deuteronomy 30:15-20** "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love Yahweh thy God, to walk in His Ways, and to keep His Commandments and His Statutes and His Judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and Yahweh thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that* ye shall not prolong *your* days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call Heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: **therefore choose Life, that both thou and thy seed may live**: That thou mayest love Yahweh thy God, *and* that thou mayest obey His Voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He *is* thy Life, and the length of thy days: **that thou mayest dwell in the land which Yahweh sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.**"

Here are a few additional Scriptures which mention generational curses:

- **Deuteronomy 5:9** - "I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, bringing the consequences of the fathers' iniquity on the children to the third and fourth generations..."

Torah Studies – Statutes #456-458 (continued)

- **Exodus 20:5** ^{NIV} “You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, ***punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation*** of those who hate Me...”
- **Numbers 14:33** ^{NIV} “***Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness***, until the last of your bodies lie in the wilderness.”

There are aspects of Torah that have had to be adjusted as sin, curses, and degeneration increased upon fallen man. Had not some adjustments been made, no one would have any possibility of Salvation, so great would be the curses upon them, from how increasingly sinful all past generations have become.

One example of these Torah-adjustments, made necessary by the increasing degeneration of mankind was the prohibition against a person marrying their sibling or even a cousin. Adam and Eve’s children intermarried with each other, which was fine to do at that stage, since the degeneration of the race was not as great as it would become... But the time came when Yahweh prohibited marriage with a family member.

Another adjustment, which increasing sin made necessary, was that of the sons being punished for the sins of the fathers. Originally, curses were visited to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20)... But eventually each generation perpetuated the curses, paying it forward without end. Had not Yahweh interposed and taken our curses upon Himself (Galatians 3) on the Cross, it would not be legally right or possible for Him to do anything but curse us all, unendingly; so great is the magnitude of the ancestral sins visited upon each of us. Because of Yahshua’s Death, taking our legal curses, Yahweh is legally able to bless His people instead of unendingly rendering only curses, generation after generation.

- **Galatians 3:13** “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:”

In Jeremiah God promised that He will stop the generational curse, on the behalf of His people, so that everyone will only die for his own sins:

- **Jeremiah 31:29-30** ^{NIV} “In those days people will no longer say, ‘The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ ***Instead, everyone will die for their own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—their own teeth will be set on edge.***”

In weakening the magnitude of the generational curses, Yahweh makes a distinction between consequences for sin and our responsibility, as follows:

Consequences

In various ways, we all suffer the consequences of other’s sins and mistakes:

- We still inherit sinful tendencies and hereditary weaknesses
 - **Psalm 51:5** “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”
 - **Romans 3:10** “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.”
- We are also impacted by the choices of the prior generation because we learn bad habits from our parents, that get us into trouble, if we follow the same sinful life-patterns.

But the fact that we suffer the consequences of other’s sins, even within a family, does not mean that we are held responsible for another’s behavior.

Torah Studies – Statutes #456-458 (*continued*)

Responsibility

Every person is born with sinful weaknesses and tendencies from our prior generations, so in this way, we all suffer the consequences of the sinful actions of other people. But this does not mean that we bear the *responsibility* for those sinful. Thus, we will be punished or rewarded for our own actions and not others.

This is the important distinction that is being made in both Jer 31:29-30 and all of Eze 18. Responsibility and the consequences of their own actions is what Numbers 14:33 and Josh 7 is also discussing.

Ezekiel 18:20 says this:

- The soul who sins is the one who will die. A son will not bear the iniquity of his father, and a father will not bear the iniquity of his son. The righteousness of the righteous man will fall upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked man will fall upon him.

Breaking the Generation Curse

This set of Statutes and Jeremiah 31:30 contains Yahweh's Promise that the generation curse may be broken if we choose to obey and honor Yahweh. In Messiah, we become Children of Blessing, instead of born under a series of never-ending curses.

- **Romans 8:2** – *“For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Yahweh hath made me free from the Law of sin and death.”*
- **Galatians 3:13-14** – *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Yahshua Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”*
- **Luke 10:18** - *“And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”*

The love and deliverance of Yahweh is so great that it extends to a “thousand generations”, which is literally 40,000 years, but it means that the delivering power of Yahweh extends forever.

Torah Studies – Statutes #459-460

Statute Summary:

Statute 459: We must not be complicit or in any way party to an unjust judgment against anyone.

Statute 460: We are not to be complicit or in any way party to the murder of an innocent and/or righteous person.

Exodus 23:7 “Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
KEEP THEE FAR	7368	râchaq	to <i>widen, recede, remove</i> (keep self), withdraw far, a good way (off)
FALSE MATTER	1697/8267	dâbâr/sheqer	an <i>untruth</i> ; a <i>sham</i> , word or action without a cause, deceitful, wrongfully
INNOCENT	5355	nâqîy	<i>innocent</i> : - blameless, clean, clear, exempted, free, guiltless, quit (equipped)
RIGHTEOUS	6662	tsaddîyq	<i>just</i> : - just, lawful, righteous (man), to make righteous, be cleansed
SLAY	2026	hârag	to <i>smite</i> with deadly intent: - destroy, out of hand, kill, murder
JUSTIFY	6663	tsâdaq	to <i>be</i> (causatively <i>make</i>) <i>right</i> , cleanse, clear self, (be, turn to) righteousness
WICKED	7563	râshâ'	<i>wrong</i> ; <i>bad</i> person: - + condemned, guilty, ungodly, wicked, that did wrong

Torah Studies – Statutes #459-460 (*continued*)

What the Bible Says About Killing the Innocent:

God hates hands that shed innocent blood. There are times when taking a human life is acceptable – even righteous (such as when Jael slew Sisera, and when David slew Goliath). But Yahweh commands us not to take the life of a person unjustly. In fact, we are not to have any part of such murder.

- **Exodus 23:7** – “Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty.”
- **Deuteronomy 27:25** – “Cursed is anyone who accepts a bribe to kill an innocent person.” Then all the people shall say, “Amen!”
- **Proverbs 17:15** – “He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to Yahweh.”
- **Psalm 94:21** – “The wicked band together against the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.”
- **Matthew 5:21-22** - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”
- **Proverbs 6:16-19** – “There are six things that Yahweh hates, seven that are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.”
- **Romans 13:10** – “Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law.”
- **Galatians 5:14** – “For the entire Law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”
- John 13:34 - “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Shedding innocent Blood curses the land in which this abomination is committed:

- **Psalm 106:38** – “They shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was desecrated by their blood.
- **Matthew 27:4** - “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.”

Torah Studies – Statutes #461-463

Statute Summary:

Statute 461: We are not to be scandal-mongers, who spread slander among our people. This is killing a brother's reputation.

Statute 462: Do not stand up against the life of your neighbor. This means that we are not to make accusations against our neighbor, which bring blood-guiltiness upon him or her and thereby endanger his/her life.

Statute 463: Do not fail to care enough to get involved and offer a loving "rebuke" to a brother or sister who is falling in sin. Suffering sin upon someone through failing to lovingly rebuke is apathetic hatred, which is a form of murder.

Leviticus 19:16-17 "Thou shalt not go up and down as a **talebearer** among thy people: neither shalt thou **stand against** the **blood** of thy neighbour: I Am Yahweh. Thou shalt not hate thy brother **in thine heart**: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him."

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
TALEBEARER	7400	râkîyl	a scandal monger (as travelling about): - slander, carry tales, talebearer
STAND AGAINST	5975	ʿâmad	to stand, confirm, leave, make, ordain, be over, place, (be) present (self), raise up
BLOOD	1818	dâm	blood of man or an animal; by analogy the juice of the grape, blood guiltiness
IN THINE HEART	3824	lêbâb	the heart, bethink themselves, breast, courage, mind, understanding

Torah Studies – Statutes #461-463 (*continued*)

Bible Study - Going Deeper:

A “talebearer” is a gossip—one who bears (carries, as in a courier) tales or stories meant to harm someone’s reputation. Personal information, secrets, and even outright fabrications (lies) may be involved. Throughout the Book of Proverbs, Yahweh repeatedly spoke of talebearing or gossiping in a negative light:

- **Proverbs 11:13** - “A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.”
- **Proverbs 18:8** - “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”
- **Proverbs 20:19** - “He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.”
- **Proverbs 26:20** - “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.”
- **Proverbs 26:22** - “The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”

A cross-reference to Leviticus 19:16 is Exodus 20:16, the Ninth Commandment: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (see also Deuteronomy 5:20).

While this can be broadly interpreted as “do not lie,” a more specific application is “do not lie during court proceedings.” One example of this sin is how two false witnesses—whom idolatrous Queen Jezebel conscripted—lied about Naboth for the express purpose of condemning him to death so King Ahab could take possession of Naboth’s coveted vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-29).

The worst case, however, involved two false witnesses fabricating testimony during Yahshua’s trial to justify putting Him to death (Matthew 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; cf. Luke 23:1-5; John 18:28-32).

Let us go back to Leviticus 19:16: *“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I Am Yahweh.”*

The “blood” of the neighbor being shed is certainly literal, but we can also see a figurative aspect too. “Character assassination” is not the actual taking of a physical life, but rather the destruction of one’s reputation. Likewise, false testimony in court may not lead to the death of the defendant, but he or she may lose his societal status because of slander. If someone was guilty, any witnesses to the crime were to come into the courtroom to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. ***Speaking the truth, for the purpose of correction and/or righteous Judgment is godly.***

However, if all the witnesses had to contribute to the case was hearsay, gossip, rumors; they were to keep their mouths shut and their bodies out of the court proceedings! Otherwise, the Law of Moses would be broken—and, in the case of capital punishment, an innocent life lost. Here, guiltless blood would literally be shed. At the very least, someone’s good name would be tarnished.

Torah Studies – Statutes #461-463 (continued)

“Thou shalt not raise a false report: put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness” (Exodus 23:1). Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 19:15-21, Yahweh gave the following instructions as to how to deal with any false witnesses: “[15] One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. [16] If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong; [17] Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before Yahweh, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; [18] And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; [19] Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you. [20] And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you. [21] And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

What Gossip is and What it isn't:

According to Scripture, gossip is the sin of speaking lies and evil of God's people, when they are innocent. It is also evil - and a form of gossip - to broadcast a fellow believer's failings, for which they have repented! When a sin has been repented of, in the Eyes of Yahweh, it is over. As Heaven amply demonstrated in the case of David (after Bathsheba), God's anointed people may continue in their Heaven-appointed positions, even after a terrible fall into sin, so long as they truly repent. Yahweh punishes, appropriately. But the gossip and judgmental rebellion of Absalom and Ahithophel (Bathsheba's grandfather), were not righteous, nor sanctioned of Heaven.

When a matter is confessed and repented of, it is to cast away and never thrown up in the believer's face again. Only Satan, the accuser of the brethren, continues to dredge up past failings that are covered under Messiah's Blood. Dredging up someone's repentance-covered past is as much a form of gossip as is an outright slanderous lie.

But, speaking the sins of the unrepentant wicked is not gossip. This is something which is repeatedly done in Scripture... consider the following short video synopsis of some of what the Bible says of the most wicked people in the Bible: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooewnwyplXo>

Telling the Truth for the purpose of warning the Body of Christ, and/or calling the wicked to repentance is not gossip, and is not Torah-breaking. In fact, it is a vital part of resisting evil. For evil prospers when good men are silent, just as this Statute also teaches.

Romans 12:21 tells us clearly: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” We must speak about evil in order to act against it – and also, to protect others in the Body of Messiah against it.

Ephesians 5:11 “Take no part in the worthless pleasures of evil and darkness, but instead, rebuke and expose them.”

Torah Studies – Statutes #464-466

Statute Summary:

Statute 464: Do not take a bribe to release a guilty murderer from justice, even if it's the death penalty.

Statute 465: Do not take a bribe to release a person from justice who has committed accidental manslaughter, if the guilty party has so lightly taken the slaying of a life by removing himself from Yahweh's provided "city of refuge".

Statute 466: Shedding innocent blood in a land defiles the land, nation and country, in which it happens, for Yahweh is holy. He cannot bless nor abide with people whose land is defiled by the shedding of innocent blood. (Demonic entities gain legal rights/access to land by shedding innocent blood in it).

Numbers 35:31-34 “Moreover ye shall take no **satisfaction** for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death. And ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest. So ye shall not **pollute** the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the **land**: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it. Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell: for I Yahweh **dwell** among the children of Israel.”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
SATISFACTION	3724	kôpher	a <i>cover</i> , a <i>redemption</i> price: - bribe, ransom, satisfaction, sum of money
POLLUTE	2610	chânêph	to <i>soil</i> , especially in a moral sense: - corrupt, defile greatly, pollute, profane
LAND	776	'erets	the <i>earth</i> , country, field, ground, land, nations, way, wilderness, world
DWELL	7931	shâkan	to <i>reside</i> ... abide, continue, (cause to, make to) dwell (-er), have habitation, inhabit, (cause to) remain

Torah Studies – Statutes #464-466 (*continued*)

Shedding innocent blood is the Biblical term for the unjustified taking of human life. It is the Biblical term that best describes abortion. On January 22, 1973, two U.S. Supreme Court decisions, *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, legalized abortion in all 50 states during all nine months of pregnancy for virtually any reason. This plunged America into a national tragedy that is unparalleled in American history, as the abortion death toll in America now exceeds 58 million preborn children.

Understanding the creation account is critical to knowing how to respond to the shedding of innocent blood. According to the Biblical record, God created man. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ...” (Genesis 1:26a ESV). “... then Yahweh God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature” (Genesis 2.7 ESV).

The consistent declaration of Scripture is that God created man in His image and likeness. The Apostle Paul identified the premise of the two competing worldviews when he wrote, “... they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen” (Romans 1:25 ESV).

In other words, there are ultimately only two worldviews. One denies there is a Creator and worships the creation. The other acknowledges the Creator and worships the Creator. The Biblical creation account is the foundation of a Biblical worldview.

Those who deny a Creator postulate that man was the product of a meaningless, random evolutionary process over billions of years, the result of a cosmic accident. Man therefore becomes just another animal who has risen to the top of the evolutionary chain having succeeded in the survival of the fittest, having no intrinsic value by virtue of his origin. By denying the Creator, man becomes his own god, accountable to no one but himself. This is the prevailing worldview of 21st-century Western civilization. It is the worldview that makes room for the shedding of innocent blood.

This is illustrated by Mary Elizabeth Williams in her article entitled, “**So what if abortion ends a life?**”, with the subtitle, “I believe that life starts at conception. And it’s never stopped me from being pro-choice.” She writes:

“All life is not equal. ... a fetus can be a human life without having the same rights as the woman in whose body it resides. She’s the boss. Her life and what is right for her circumstances and her health should automatically trump the rights of the non-autonomous entity inside of her. Always.”

Williams defends the right to kill preborn children simply because the mother has the power to do so, a classic example of the survival of the fittest, the basic tenant of atheistic Darwinian evolutionary theory. When you deny the existence of a Creator, man is longer accountable to transcendent moral truth.

The Biblical evidence is clear. Man is created by God and for God. Man is created in His Image and likeness. God recognizes the preborn to be distinct and unique persons from the moment of conception (e.g., Jeremiah 1:5). This truth is critical in forming a Biblical worldview that informs and shapes our response to the shedding of innocent blood. The Biblical Creation account provides us with the foundation for cherishing and protecting human life from the moment of conception.

Torah Studies – Statutes #464-466 (continued)

The doctrine of “blood guilt” emerges very early in history. Genesis 4 records the first crime in human history, the murder of Abel by his brother, Cain. “Cain spoke to his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Then Yahweh said, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I don’t know, am I my brother’s keeper?’” (Genesis 4:8-9 ESV).

The story continues in verse 10, “And Yahweh said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground’” (emphasis mine). The shed blood of Abel had a voice that cried out to God! This passage established the doctrine of blood guilt. The German commentator Franz Delitzsch writes, “Innocent blood has no voice, it may be, that is discernible by human ears, but it has one that reaches God, as the cry of a wicked deed demanding vengeance.”

Bible commentator H. C. Luepold writes:

“That a voice should be attributed to blood is not strange inasmuch as the soul is regarded as lodged in the blood of the man (Leviticus. 17:11) and the death of God’s saints is precious in His sight (Psalms 116:15). ... God requires blood, that is, seeks out and avenges all instances of unjust shedding of blood. ... Men may esteem souls or blood lightly. Not so God” (Genesis, pg. 205).

Similarly, John Ensor writes, “Blood guilt’ is a blunt, almost vulgar term. It hits rudely, like a slap in the face. It is God’s chosen term to arouse godly fear and compel decisive action. It is a word awakening, forcing us to recognize an unbreakable linkage: God’s Image is debased and His Wrath justly incited every time a person made in God’s Image is unjustly destroyed. There is no debasing of God’s Image without consequences. Blood guilt requires God’s Vengeance and Vindication. It stands as an indictment against the sin of shedding innocent blood, but it is also a promise, of sorts, to victims” (Innocent Blood, pg. 39-40).

After the flood, God gave Noah these instructions, “And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of a man. **Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image**” (Genesis 9:5-6, ESV).

We have a problem in America at this point. Our government has failed to protect the innocent from being murdered in the womb. Government has betrayed our trust. Civil authorities, mayors, judges, congressmen, senators, and presidents, have denied preborn children their right to life. Similarly, the psalmist describes our leaders when he asked a rhetorical question of God. “Can wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute? They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death” (Psalm 94:20-21, ESV). Those words could have been written of our day. They describe what the Supreme Court has done in legalizing the killing of preborn children.

Isaiah gave this warning: “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter” (Isaiah 5:20 ESV).

Back to Genesis 9:6. Notice the reason God demands justice for the shedding of innocent blood. “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in His Own Image.”

Torah Studies – Statutes #464-466 (continued)

The preservation and protection of innocent human life is necessary because human life bears the image of its Creator. The shedding of innocent blood is a personal affront to a Holy and Righteous God.

Blood Atonement is the central principle of God's Plan of Redemption. "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life" (Leviticus 17:11, ESV). This truth is central to the Biblical doctrines of both incarnation and atonement. Yahshua's incarnation was the prerequisite to His work of Atonement. The writer to the Hebrews understood this, writing, "without the shedding of Blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22 ESV).

Theologically you cannot separate Salvation through Atonement from the sanctity of human life because the life, the soul of man, is in the blood. John Ensor writes, "Is there anything more valuable than human life and the redemption of human life? By virtue of our Salvation, Christians have inherited from God a profound commitment to the sanctity of life and a devotion to make Christ known. Both come from holding blood (life) precious" (Innocent Blood, pg. 32).

The God who created human life in His Own Image becomes a Man so that through an act of love He could bear our sin on the cross so we could live in fellowship with Him for eternity. That is the Gospel of Life. That is the greatest reason there is to be pro-life.

In Deuteronomy 21: 1-9, instruction is given to Israel regarding what to do when innocent blood is shed in the land. The body of a murdered man was found in a field, and no one knew who murdered him. The elders and judges were instructed to determine by measurement what town was located nearest the body. Then the leaders of that town were to lead the community in a process of atonement for the shedding of the innocent blood. Since the unknown murderer could not be punished, a heifer or young cow was killed to atone for the blood guiltiness in the land. The elders of the town washed their hands over the heifer declaring that "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it shed. Accept atonement, O Yahweh, for your people Israel, whom you have redeemed, and do not set the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of your people Israel, so that their blood guilt be atoned for" (Deuteronomy 21:7-8, ESV).

Notice the result in verse 9, "So you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood, from your midst, when you do what is right in the sight of Yahweh." How should we respond to the shedding of innocent blood? Can we say, as the elders of Deuteronomy, "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it shed"?

There is a role leadership must play in the effort to end the killing of the preborn. John Ensor writes, "Whenever the innocent are killed, no matter who they are, known or unknown, big or small, the Deuteronomic law instructs the spiritual leaders of the community to rearticulate the pro-life ethic. The people are to hear that the taking of innocent life or the passive acceptance of the death of the innocent is horrifyingly unacceptable" (*Answering the Call*, pg. 75).

A recent survey of women who have had an abortion found that "More than 1 in 3 (36 percent) women were attending a Christian church once or more times a month at the time of their first abortion". In 2005 it was reported that "... one in six women who have had abortions are evangelical Christians. ...This means 250,000 evangelical Christian women could choose to abort a child this year". What are Christians being taught about the shedding of innocent blood that has allowed these statistics?

Torah Studies – Statutes #464-466 (*continued*)

How could an issue that is so important to Yahweh have come to be so unimportant among believers as to be so often unaddressed? John Ensor writes, “Loving my neighbor will occasionally arrest me, and maybe even require me to help prevent someone from being murdered.”

The writer of Proverbs said something very similar. It’s as though he wrote these words for our day, which of course he did. “Save those who are being led to their death; rescue those who are about to be killed. If you say, ‘We don’t know anything about this,’ God, Who knows what’s in your mind, will notice. He is watching you, and He will know. He will reward each person for what He has done” (Proverbs 24:10-12, NCV).

Prayerfully, we each need to do what we can to keep these Statute principles. It is between us and God to determine whether we are now doing all we can, or if we need to repent for past apathy and become more actively involved against the ongoing shedding of innocent blood...

Torah Studies – Statutes #467-468

Statute Summary:

Statute 467: The penalty for failing to discern between what is holy and what is profane is death. If priests of Yahweh are drunken when they enter the Presence of Yahweh, instant death will result. For this reason, the priests of Yahweh must not drink or take any mind-altering substances (any intoxicant), which could cause them to enter Worship mentally impaired or become inhibited in their ability to discern between good and evil - the sacred and the profane.

Statute 468: Priests are also to govern their households in righteousness, not allowing their children to partake of mind-altering and intoxicating substances.

Leviticus 10:9-10 “Do not **drink wine** nor **strong drink**, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the **tabernacle** of the **congregation**, lest ye die: *it shall be a statute* for ever **throughout your generations**: And that ye may **put difference** between **holy** and **unholy**, and between **unclean** and **clean**.”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
DRINK	H8354	shâthâh	to <i>imbibe</i> banquet, drink (-er, -ing), drunk (X -ard)
WINE	H3196	yayin	to <i>effervesce</i> ; <i>wine</i> (as fermented); by implication <i>intoxication</i> : - banqueting, wine, wine [-bibber]
STRONG DRINK	H7941	shêkâr	an <i>intoxicant</i> , that is, intensely alcoholic <i>liquor</i> : - strong drink, + drunkard, strong wine.
TABERNACLE	H168	'ôhel	a <i>tent</i> (as <i>clearly</i> conspicuous from a distance): - covering, (dwelling) (place), home, tabernacle, tent.
CONGREGATION	H4150	mô'êd	an <i>appointment</i> , a fixed <i>time</i> or season; a <i>festival</i> ; a <i>year</i> ; an <i>assembly</i> ; technically the <i>congregation</i> ; the <i>place of meeting</i> ; also a <i>signal</i> (as appointed beforehand): (sign, time)
STATUTE	H2708	chûqqâh	appointed, custom, manner, ordinance, site, statute

Torah Studies – Statutes #467-468 (continued)

Biblical Perspectives on Drinking (and Mind-altering Substances)

Scripture's overwhelming testimony is that drinking alcohol can be spiritually dangerous.

Christians (since we are all called to be priests and kings) are forbidden to get drunk. "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18; also see Proverbs 20:1, 23:20, Isaiah 5:22). To get drunk is a sin. To be drunk, by Biblical definition, is to be mentally in a state of intoxication. Of course, alcohol is not the only intoxicating substance. Thus, we must apply the "no drunkenness" laws to include more substances than alcohol alone.

Christians may raise a question here. "What does it mean to be drunk?" It's a fair question. In most states, the blood alcohol content (BAC) limit for driving a vehicle is .08 (at this point, you are considered legally impaired). Even though .08 is the legal standard for intoxication, that doesn't necessarily meet the Bible's definition of drunkenness. The positive command Paul gives to believers in contrast to drunkenness is that we should be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). The issue, then, is about allowing ourselves to become dulled to the leading of the Holy Spirit. We must be controlled by the Spirit and not alcohol (or any other substance). And since the leading of the Spirit is lost when we are intoxicated, we find the connection between intoxication and losing the ability to distinguish between good and evil, mentioned in this set of Statutes.

The command is easy: do not get drunk. Defining drunkenness, on the other hand, is not as simple. Considering death is the judgment for intoxication, wise counsel would be to err on the side of caution. Use discretion and be wise. If we define drunkenness according to the dictionary, it means "having the faculties impaired by alcohol" and reaching "a level of alcohol in the blood that exceeds a maximum prescribed by law."

Paul's counsel here is helpful. "'All things are lawful for me,' but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be enslaved by anything." (1 Cor. 6:12).

Scripture warns against the dangers of drunkenness. Several categories must be established here.

- **Drunkenness ruins lives.** "Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat, for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty, and slumber will clothe them with rags." (Proverbs 23:20-21).
- **God's judgment is on the drunkard.** "Woe (a pronouncement of judgment) to those who rise early in the morning, that they may run after strong drink, who tarry late into the evening as wine inflames them!" (Isaiah 5:11, 22)
- **Drunkards cannot serve in church leadership.** Elders must be "sober minded...and not a drunkard." Likewise, deacons cannot be "addicted to much wine" (1 Tim. 3:2-3, 8, also see Prov. 31:4-5).
- **Drunkards are considered unbelievers in the Bible.** "For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry" (1 Peter 4:3; also see Romans 13:13, Luke 21:34, Isaiah 28:1).
- **Godliness is characterized by sober-mindedness.** "Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine." (Titus 2:3).
- **Drunkards will not inherit the Kingdom of God.** Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral... nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6:9-10, also see Gal. 5:19-21).