

## In God's Image

**(Genesis 9:5, 6)** Besides that, I will demand an accounting for your lifeblood. I will demand an accounting from every living creature; and from each man I will demand an accounting for the life of his brother. <sup>6</sup> Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image He made man.

Let's carefully examine those scriptures. (Acts 17:11)

**(Genesis 9:5)** Besides that, I will demand an accounting for your lifeblood.

When Jehovah said "*your*", who was He referring to? Looking at Genesis 9:1 we see that Jehovah is giving instructions to Noah and his sons. They were the only men on earth at the time, so these instructions were for all mankind and not just Noah and his sons.

When Jehovah said "*your*", He was referring to mankind in general. In other words:

**(Genesis 9:5)** Besides that, I will demand an accounting for (man's) lifeblood.

Continuing on:

**(Genesis 9:5)** I will demand an accounting from every living creature;

This is connected to the previous verse:

**(Genesis 9:4, 5)** Only **flesh** with its life—its blood—you must not eat. <sup>5</sup> Besides that, I will demand an accounting for **your** lifeblood. I will demand an accounting from **every living creature**; and from each man I will demand an accounting for the life of **his brother**.

So both the blood of **animals** and the blood of **men** are precious.

Also, if an **animal** kills a man, or if a **man** murders another man, they are to be put to death. (Ex 21:28; Nu 35:30)

Continuing on:

**(Genesis 9:6)** Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed,

That statement is straight forward. If you murder a man, you are to be killed by a man. According to Hebrew law it was the nearest male relative to the one who was murdered that must carry out the execution. (Nu 35:19-21) Why is that? The last part of the verse explains:

**(Genesis 9:6)** for in God's image He made man.

So why is it another man who must carry out the judgment? "*For*" or 'because' we are made in God's image.

**(Genesis 1:26, 27)** Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and the domestic animals and all the earth and every creeping animal that is moving on the earth." <sup>27</sup> And God went on to create the man in his image, in God's image he created him; male and female he created them.

**(1 Corinthians 11:7)** For a man should not have his head covered, as he is God's image and glory,

**(James 3:9)** With it we praise Jehovah, the Father, and yet with it we curse men who have come into existence "in the likeness of God."

What does it mean to be made in God's image? Men have obligations, and Jehovah expects them to be fulfilled. Why? Because we are made in His image, and Jehovah always keeps His obligations.

Jehovah is also a God of justice. (Isa 30:18) And since we are made in His image Jehovah requires that we also carry out justice. (Le 19:2)

Consider this verse:

**(Deuteronomy 22:8)** "If you build a new house, you must also make a parapet for your roof, so that you may not bring bloodguilt on your house because of someone falling from it.

Those in his house are the homeowner's responsibility. And since man is made in God's image, and God does not ignore His responsibilities, man "*must*" also take his responsibilities seriously, or become bloodguilty.

**(1 Timothy 5:8)** Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith.

Let's back up and examine Genesis 9:5b a little more:

**(Genesis 9:5b NWT)** and from each man I will demand an accounting for the life of his brother.

Notice the difference in the 1984 Reference Bible:

**(Genesis 9:5b Rbi8)** and from the hand of man, from the hand of each one who is his brother, shall I ask back the soul of man.

The original Hebrew word (mî·yaḡ) translated in the 2013 NWT as "*from*" has the meaning of "*from the hand of*".

Here is the original Hebrew for Genesis 9:5b, the order it is in, and its English translation:

ū·mî·yaḡ	and <u>from the hand of</u>
hā·'ā·ḡām	man
mî·yaḡ	<u>from the hand of</u>
'îš	each man's
'ā·ḡîw	brother
'eḡ·rōš	I demand
'êṭ	—
ne·ḡeš	the life of
hā·'ā·ḡām	man

If we didn't know what the original Hebrew said we might get the idea from the wording in the 2013 NWT that Jehovah is demanding an accounting from a murderer who murdered his brother.

But that is **not** what the original Hebrew says at all. It says: *"and from the hand of man, from the hand of each man's brother, I demand the life of man."*

First Jehovah speaks generally:

**(Genesis 9:5 - original text)** and from the hand of man, (ā-ḡām - meaning mankind)

Then He speaks in specifics:

**(Genesis 9:5 - original text)** from the hand of each man's brother, I demand the life of man.

Jehovah does this for a reason: for clarification and emphasis. It is like making the general statement that children should clean their rooms. And then being specific in saying that each child should clean up the mess that he himself makes.

So if a man is murdered, Jehovah demanded the life of the murderer, **from the hand of** the murdered man's brother. Some other translations use the phrase "**at the hand of**". Either way, Jehovah is very clearly saying who the accounting will be demanded of, that is to say, who is to be the avenger. The "*brother*" of the one murdered is to be the avenger since justice is to come from his hand. You don't get justice from a murderer's hand.

See my article "2017-07 QFR (firearms) - with scriptures and comments" for the difference between murdering an innocent, and a justified killing. Geneses 9:5 is referring to both of these: A murderer must be killed.

Let's examine Genesis 9:6 a little more:

**(Genesis 9:6)** Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image He made man.

Genesis 9:6 is not saying that a murderer must be put to death because he killed another human who was made in God's image, otherwise the avenging executioner would also be guilty of killing a human who was made in God's image. No, but Genesis 9:6 is about mankind fulfilling their responsibilities and obligations in order to emulate God's qualities, including the quality of justice.

*"By man will his own blood be shed."* Why? Because we are made *"in God's image"* therefore He requires us to act as He would. A very basic way to translate Genesis 9:6 could be:

Man. You are made in My image. If anyone murders someone else, you are to kill them, just like I would.

Yes, murder is wrong, but a murderer is not condemned for murdering someone who was made in God's image. That is not the meaning of the verse. No, but it is the brother of a murdered man who is commanded to avenge that murder because he (the surviving brother) is made in God's image and must therefore emulate God's quality of justice.

I know i am repeating myself but it is the main point of this article and i want to make it clear. *"For in God's image He made man"* is not being applied to the one who was murdered, but to the one who will carry out the execution of the murderer. He must carry out that just act of execution because he is made in the image of a just God. (Isa 30:18)

**(Numbers 35:19)** *"The avenger of blood is the one who will put the murderer to death. When he encounters him, he himself will put him to death."*

If God wanted someone dead He could easily kill them Himself with just a thought. (Ge 38:7, 10) Similarly, a parent could much more quickly and easily clean up a child's room, but that would be bad parenting. The child needs to learn responsibility by cleaning his own room. Likewise, Jehovah wanted man to be responsible for his own justice (1Jo 3:1), and not just any man, but a specific man, so that every man understood he was required to be just and couldn't push his responsibility off on someone else. Not everyone had a brother, so according to Hebrew law it was the nearest male relative to the one who was murdered that carried out the task. (Nu 35:19-21)

Why must that specific man do it and not a law enforcer, or some other government person? It is similar to the laying on of the hands, or getting baptized. (He 5:2) Men have and commit to obligations, and Jehovah expects them to be fulfilled. And since man is made in God's image, and God does not ignore His responsibilities and obligations, neither should man ignore his own responsibilities and obligations. (1Ti 5:8)

**"Listen!"** Can you hear it? It's screaming. It's crying out loudly,... for justice. (Ge 4:10; Job 19:7)

Yes, Genesis 9:6 is about a man fulfilling his responsibilities and obligations to mete out justice in order to emulate the qualities of God in who's image he was created.

That was how it was under the Mosaic law. But we are not under the Mosaic law. (See my article "Replacement Theology")

**(Romans 12:19)** Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says Jehovah."

With the ransom paid, there is now *"a better way."* And we must listen to the voice of that blood instead. (Ge 4:10)

**(Hebrews 12:24)** and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood, which speaks in a better way than Abel's blood.

Though we are not personally under the mandate of Genesis 9:6 today, we are still made in God's image and should strive to emulate all of God's qualities, including justice, with the one exception of justice through vengeance.

**(Galatians 5:22, 23)** On the other hand, the fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup> mildness, self-control.

And we should also emulate Jehovah by rejecting the bad qualities that He rejects.

**(Galatians 5:25, 26)** If we are living by spirit, let us also go on walking orderly by spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another. (see also Ga 5:19-21)

What do *you* think?

:^)

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**(Colossians 1:9, 10)** That is also why from the day we heard of it, we have never stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk worthily of Jehovah in order to please him fully as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God.—Eph 4:1; Ph 1:27; 1Th 2:12; 2Th 1:11