

## MURDEROUS HATE

### Proverbs 6:16-19

"The LORD hates six things; in fact, seven are detestable to Him: <sup>17</sup> arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup> a heart that plots wicked schemes, feet eager to run to evil, <sup>19</sup> a lying witness who gives false testimony, and one who stirs up trouble among brothers."

### INTRODUCTION

Stories of willful murder sometimes have comical sides. A defense attorney in a murder trial, desperate to cast some doubt about the guilt of his client, subjected the coroner to this line of cross-examination: "Before you signed the death certificate, had you taken the pulse?" "No," replied the coroner. "Did you listen to the heart?" Coroner's response: "No." "Did you check for breathing?" "No," said the coroner. "So," the attorney confidently insisted, "when you signed the death certificate, you weren't sure the man was dead, were you?" "Well," answered the coroner, "let me put it this way. The man's brain was sitting in a jar on my desk. But I guess it's possible he could be out there practicing law somewhere."

Then there's a story about Linda Burnett, 23. While visiting her in-laws, who apparently did not think highly of their son's choice in a bride, she tried to gain their favor by driving them to a nearby supermarket to pick up some groceries. Some time later, several people noticed her sitting in her car with the windows rolled up, her eyes closed, and both hands behind her head. One man noticed Linda still in the same position as when he entered the store. Concerned, he walked over to the car. He noticed Linda's eyes were now open, and she looked very strange. He asked if she was okay. Linda said she thought she'd been shot in the back of the head by her in-laws. The man called the paramedics. They broke into the car because the doors were locked and Linda refused to remove her hands from her head. When they examined her, they found she had a wad of bread dough on the back of her head. A Pillsbury biscuit canister, left on the back seat, had exploded from the heat, making a loud noise that sounded like a gunshot, and the wad of dough hit her in the back of her head. When she reached back and felt the dough, she thought it was her brains. She initially passed out, but quickly recovered and tried to hold in what she thought were her brains for over an hour until someone noticed and came to her aid. Yes; Linda is a blonde.

Stories of murder that are not carried out are often funny; unlike stories of actual murder. On Friday night, April 8, 2011, Jonathan, "Jon-Jon," Federico, a 7-year-old boy with a "cheerful soul and a great smile" was playing at a neighbor's midtown apartment near the Corbett Elementary School he attended near Wilmot and Golf Links. His 13-year-old sister and at least two others were inside the apartment of 20-year-old Tabitha Martinez. Suddenly, around 12:30 A.M., gunshots sounded in the night.

Alvin Valenzuela, age 21, from Sells, AZ, had fired a handgun several times at another man. Both were across the street from the apartments. A man from another apartment stood outside the Martinez apartment and began verbally confronting Valenzuela. Jonathan and his sister thought the gun pops were fireworks. They ran outside to investigate just as Valenzuela fired at least one shot toward the resident confronting him. The shot struck Jon-Jon in the torso. "Ow," he said, "it hurts," as he fell to the ground. Martinez called 911. Police rendered aid till paramedics arrived and took him to a hospital. Jonathan Federico was a good student. He'd helped compose a first-grade opera in Corbett Elementary's Opening Minds through the Arts program, in partnership with the University of Arizona's opera students. He died early in the morning of April 9, 2011, due to what TUSD Assistant Superintendent Maggie Shafer called a "senseless act."

God "hates . . . hands that shed innocent blood," like Jon-Jon Federico's. Such acts are "detestable" to the LORD ("an abomination"—KJV, NASB—"totally offensive and disgusting"). Today we learn *Why Murderous Hate Makes Us Hateful to God*, and *Ways Murderous Hate Makes Us Hateful to God*.

## I. WHY MURDEROUS HATE MAKES US HATEFUL TO GOD

Do you agree that anyone who has such contempt for the value of human life as to cause another's death by deliberate action or the result of reckless endangerment deserves the full condemnation of society and of God? Is such death common in the U. S.? The Uniform Crime Reporting Program defines "murder" (also called "nonnegligent manslaughter") as "the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another" as determined by police investigation. From 2010-2015, the U. S. averaged 14,561 murders per year (1/3<sup>rd</sup> of which were not committed by firearms). Nationwide, about 4.5 murders occur per 100,000 people. Arizona averages nearly 5 murders per 100,000, but Tucson averages 7 and has the dubious distinction of "the most dangerous" town in Arizona with the highest rate of violent crime in our State! How safe is the greater Vail area? Nearby Benson has a third of our population (5,059 vs. 15,883), by comparison, yet Benson's violent crime rate is 2.5 times higher and its property crime rate is 3 times higher than Vail's!

**Proverbs 6:17** does not condemn all murder equally. Biblical and civil law treat willful murder differently than manslaughter. "Manslaughter" is defined as "the unlawful killing of one human being by another without malice aforethought." Juries often excuse involuntary manslaughter as "justifiable homicide" due to mitigating circumstances. A prospective juror in a Dallas, TX, District Court was surprised by the definition given to potential jurors of involuntary manslaughter: "A killing that occurs while the defendant is under the immediate influence of sudden passion arising from an adequate cause, such as when a spouse's mate is found in a 'compromising position.'" One jury candidate responded, "I have a problem with that passion business. During my first marriage, I came in and found my husband in a compromising position with my neighbor. All I did was divorce him. I had no idea that I could have shot him!" She was not selected for the jury. God's law in **Deuteronomy 19:4-6** provided cities of refuge to which one could flee after killing someone accidentally, as if an axe head slipped off a handle while one person chopped wood and struck and killed another. God's law in the Old and New Testaments prescribes the death penalty for willful murder but proscribes it for accidental murder. Have you ever asked yourself why God commands the utmost penalty for willful murder? We will highlight two reasons: God's image and God's initiative.

**A. God's Image.** After the Flood, the human race was given another chance to build society upon God's principles of justice and love for our neighbor as ourselves. At this strategic moment in our history, God commanded the death penalty for murder to uphold the priceless value of human beings made "in the image of God," as **Genesis 9:5-6** (NLT) explains: "I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person's life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. <sup>6</sup>If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in His own image." Of all earthly creatures, humans alone speak, plan, create, contemplate, and judge, which are the same abilities attributed to God in **Genesis 1**. Furthermore, though other creatures may experience right and wrong as a result of our actions, only humans have any clear concept of accountability to God whether our actions are morally right or wrong. It's because God places such a premium upon the life of His "image-bearers" that **Numbers 35:33** reminds us how severely He views the crime of murder: "Do not defile the land where you are, for bloodshed defiles the land, and there can be no atonement for the land because of the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of the person who shed it."

**B. God's Initiative.** God alone has the power to begin our lives; *He* wants to be the one who decides when our lives should end. **Deuteronomy 32:39** (NASB), "See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me; it is I who put to death and give life." This is why God declares in the Sixth Commandment, "You shall not murder" (**Exodus 20:13**; as most Bible versions now translate this verse, including the NKJV). Some death penalty opponents construe the KJV's "Thou shall not kill" to mean no one, including government, has the right to end a person's life. But God commands governing officers—not private individuals—to execute willful murderers, as in **Exodus 21:12-14** (NLT): "Anyone who assaults and kills another person must be put to death. <sup>13</sup>But if it was simply an accident permitted by God, I will appoint a place of refuge where the slayer can run for safety. <sup>14</sup>However, if someone deliberately kills another

person, then the slayer must be dragged even from My altar and be put to death." God sought to prohibit the willful or negligent killing of the innocent, by the Commandment, "You shall not murder." He did not seek to prohibit the rightful execution of those guilty of murder.

The violence done to God's Image and to God's Initiative concerning the time of one's death makes us hateful to God if we have the guilt of innocent shed blood on our hands. Yet, **Jesus** taught us plainly we greatly displease our Creator if we even give way to murderous thoughts toward His "image-bearers," not just by murderous actions. "You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy" (**Matthew 5:43**). "But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you,<sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (**Luke 6:27-28**).

## II. WAYS MURDEROUS HATE MAKES US HATEFUL TO GOD

**Jesus** interpreted the Sixth Commandment by faulting the religious leaders of His day for doing what they often did. They legalistically and painstakingly sought to avoid any outward *appearance* of violating God's command. But they ignored their guilt before God from disgusting inward *attitudes*. In **Matthew 5:27-28**, for example, **Jesus** reveals lustful, adulterous desires within our hearts make us guilty of the sin of adultery; not just adulterous actions. In **Matthew 5:21-22** (Phillips), **Jesus** makes this same point about murder: "You have heard that it was said to the people in the old days, "You shall not murder," and anyone who does must stand his trial. But I say to you that anyone who is angry with his brother must stand his trial; anyone who contemptuously calls his brother a fool must face the supreme court; and anyone who looks on his brother as a lost soul is himself heading straight for the fire of destruction."

**Jesus** did not teach three degrees of guilt and punishment in this passage (some of the terms are so close in meaning they are interchangeable). **Jesus** revealed God condemns the evil disposition of our hearts that is the root cause of all sinful behavior, to warn us God hates ungodly attitudes nearly as much as He hates ungodly actions. Because Cain ignored God's warning about his anger toward his brother Abel, Cain's anger escalated into hatred that drove him to kill Abel (**Genesis 4:1-10**). Was Cain guilty of murderous hatred even before murdering Abel? Yes. If we harbor murderous hatred in our hearts toward anyone, God tells us we have no right to claim we know Him, according to **I John 3:14-15** (GNT): "We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love others. Those who do not love are still under the power of death.<sup>15</sup> Those who hate others are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life in them." These words are dramatically reinforced by **I John 4:19-20** (GNT): "We love because God first loved us. If we say we love God, but hate others, we are liars. For we cannot love God, whom we have not seen, if we do not love others, whom we have seen."

## CONCLUSION

On April 18, 1942, 29-year-old Jacob DeShazer flew as a bombardier on one of 16 B-25s led by Jimmy Doolittle. They were the first planes to bomb Japan's supposedly untouchable mainland, after Japan's attack upon Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. A thick fog prevented DeShazer's plane from reaching a safe Chinese airfield before it ran out of fuel and had to be ditched over Japanese occupied China.

The Japanese who captured Jacob and 7 others took savage revenge upon them because of Doolittle's raid. Never before had Jake encountered such sadistic brutality. Jake soon began to hate the Japanese with a consuming, corrosive rage that gnawed at his mind day and night until he feared he might go crazy. His rage deepened when 3 Americans were shot by firing squad and the rest placed in solitary confinement. The 5'-wide stone cells were bitterly cold in winter. The Americans responded with such viciousness of their own that the prison director circulated a Bible among them hoping this might improve their conduct.

Jake had attended Sunday School as a boy but had not paid much attention. Nor had he ever made much effort to live as a Christian. But in the dim light of his cell, some Bible passages seemed to glow

with mysterious power. He grew excited after turning to the New Testament and discovering how **Jesus** perfectly fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. On June 4, 1944, he read **Romans 10:9**, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Jake then prayed for God's forgiveness in **Jesus'** name. Immediately such an immense joy surged through his soul that the misery and starvation he was enduring lost their horror.

After arising from his knees a committed Christian, Jake soon realized the Lord's first assignment was to abandon his hatred for his brutal Japanese captors. A few days later, when a guard hurried him back into his cell after a brief exercise period, the guard slammed the door on Jake's bare foot and then kicked his foot with hobnailed boots. While wrestling with agonizing pain and raging hatred, Christ spoke **Luke 6:27-28** to his soul, "Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." The kindness Jake began showing toward the guard who smashed his foot soon won him over as a friend. This made Jake realize one reason the Japanese acted with such cruel brutality was that none had shown them **Jesus** as "the way, the truth, and the life" (**John 14:6**).

Jake committed himself to undertake this task. When he returned to the States at the War's end, he enrolled in a missionary training course at Methodist college, met a woman who wanted to share his mission to Japan as his wife, and arrived in Yokohama harbor aboard ship on December 28, 1952. The Methodist Church had distributed over a million copies of Jake's testimony, and thousands of Japanese crowded the dock to get a glimpse of the "Doolittle raider."

For the next 30 years, Jake and his wife had the joy of leading thousands of Japanese to **Jesus**. One of the most remarkable converts was the pilot who'd led the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He was contemplating suicide over Japan's defeat, until he came across a copy of Jake's testimony, bought a Bible, and soon had his heart transformed by the power of **Jesus'** message of forgiveness and love. **I John 3:14-16** (GNT): "We know that we have left death and come over into life; we know it because we love others. <sup>15</sup> Those who do not love are still under the power of death. Those who hate others are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life in them. <sup>16</sup> This is how we know what love is: Christ gave His life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for others!"