

Doctrine of Violence

- 1) Preliminary considerations.
 - a) Violence is an exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse; an act of aggression.
 - b) It may also be exhibited in vehement feeling or expression which is often independent of any physical force.
 - c) In certain cases, violence suggests moral corruption, unrighteousness, or sin (Micah 6:12).
 - d) An understanding of violence from the biblical view is necessary to our study in the book of Judges.
 - e) Apart from Judges, the study of violence is particularly germane to our time in history, the last days of the Church Age.
 - f) Every level of our society is marred by violence to some degree.
 - g) Paul prophesied that violence and brutality would be prominent features of mankind in the last days (2 Tim. 3:1-3).
 - h) Accordingly the believer ought to be able to cope with its many manifestations.
 - i) Prior to being able to cope with violence the believer must first examine it from the biblical perspective.
 - j) We must bear in mind that the diligent acquisition and understanding of divine viewpoint builds the foundation for future application in the CWL (Prov 4:5, 7, 18:15, James 1:22).
- 2) Vocabulary:
 - a) Hebrew terms.
 - i) חָמָס, chamas: violence or wrong. Predominantly used in connection with sinful violence.
 - (1) Physical, lawlessness perpetrated by force (Judges 9:24, 2 Sam. 22:3, Jonah 3:8).
 - (2) Expressed in malice, hatred (Ex. 23:1, Deut 19:16, Psa. 25:19, 35:11).
 - (3) General wickedness, unrighteousness, sin (Job 16:17, Jonah 3:8).
 - (4) Internal violence of Satan (Ezek. 28:16)
 - ii) חָמָס, chamas: to treat violently, to wrong. The verb like the noun is predominantly used in connection with sinful violence
 - iii) עָרִיץ, arits: awe-inspiring, ruthless, terrible, violent.
 - (1) Applied to individuals (i.e. substantive, Psa. 54:5, Isa. 13:11, 29:20).
 - (2) Applied to nations (Isa. 25:3, Ezek 28:7, 32:12).
 - (3) Applied to God (Jer. 20:11).
 - iv) פָּרִיץ, parits: violent, rapacious.
 - (1) Descriptive term for behavior or manner of life (Ezek. 18:10).
 - (2) The term is of robbers (Jer. 7:11, Ezek. 7:22).
 - v) פָּרַץ, parats: to break down, break through, tear down.

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- (1) Applied to God in reference to punitive activity (1 Chron. 15:13, 106:29 cf. 2 Sam. 5:20).
 - (2) Applied to man where the term connotes malicious or destructive activity (2 Chron. 25:23, 26:6).
- vi) שָׁטַף, ratash: to smash, to dash to pieces, slaughter (2 Kings 8:12, Nah. 3:10).
- vii) שָׁדַד, shod: violent action, oppression, devastation.
- (1) Violent acts of the wicked (Prov. 21:7).
 - (2) Violent designs, “mental” violence (Prov. 24:2).
 - (3) Physical destruction (by God, Isa. 13:6; 60:18- used w/ חָמָס, chamas).
- viii) שָׁדַד, shadad: to devastate, despoil, ravage, deal violently with.
- (1) Physical assault, mistreatment (Prov. 19:26).
 - (2) Physical devastation (Nahum 3:7).
- ix) Despoil via robbery (Obad. 1:5).
- b) Greek terms.
- i) ἀνήμερος, anemeros: lit. untamed; savage, brutal, fierce or vicious (2 Tim. 3:3).
 - ii) ἄρπαξ, harpax: vicious, rapacious, (sub.) robber, swindler (Matt. 7:15, Luke 18:11).
 - iii) βαρύς, barus: heavy, severe, fierce, cruel (Acts 20:29).
 - iv) βιάζω, biadzo: to inflict violence on, to employ violence doing harm to someone or something, to suffer violent attacks (Matt. 11:12).
 - v) βία, bia: bodily strength, force, violence (Acts 5:26).
 - vi) βίαιος, biaiios: violent, strong. Used of natural force (i.e. wind, Acts 2:2).
 - vii) ὄρμη, hormē: an attack or assault, a violent onset (Acts 14:5).
 - viii) ὄρμημα, hormema: the result of a sudden and violent assault violence, onrush, onset (Rev. 18:21).
 - ix) ὑβρίζω, hubridzo: to treat in an insolent or spiteful manner, to mistreat through abusive actions (Acts 14:5).
 - x) ὑβριστής, hubristes: a violent, insolent man (Rom. 1:30, 1 Tim. 1:13).
 - xi) χालεπός, chalepos: violent, perilous, hard to bear (Matt. 8:28, 2 Tim. 3:1).
- c) What is the origin of sinful violence?
- i) Prior to the fall of Satan violence was nonexistent.
 - ii) At some point, Satan became “internally filled with violence” (Ezek. 28:16).
- (1) The verse indicates that this “violence” (חָמָס, chamas) was not manifested in the use of physical force or assault.
 - (2) Rather, the Satan’s violence was internal and permeated his thinking.
 - (3) “Violence” connotes unrighteousness or sinfulness.

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- iii) The violent attitudes and behaviors prevalent in mankind are an aftereffect of Adam's fall.
- (1) Adam acquired an OSN which he subsequently passed on to his descendants via procreation thereby contaminating the entire human race (Of course the one notable exception was Christ, Rom. 5:12, 16-17).
 - (2) Since the fall, every member of the human race has an OSN and therefore a predilection for evil (Eph. 2:1-3 cf. Col. 1:13, 21).
 - (3) Mankind wasted little time in indulging their predilection for violence (Gen 4:8, 6:11-13).
 - (4) It is evident that sinful violence is a common OSN trait (Gal. 5:19-20 cf. 2 Cor. 12:20).
 - (5) To engage in sin, particularly violence, is to emulate the progenitor of violence, Satan (cf. John 8:44, 1 John 3:8).
- iv) Until Christ establishes His rule on earth during the Millennium, sinful violence will be a prominent characteristic of our world (**Isaiah 2:4** And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. **Isaiah 11:4-9** But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵ Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist. ⁶ And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the kid, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. ⁷ Also the cow and the bear will graze; Their young will lie down together; And the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. ⁹ They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea **Isaiah 60:18** "Violence will not be heard again in your land, Nor devastation or destruction within your borders; But you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise.).
- 3) How does God relate to violence and violent persons?
- a) God does not engage in sinful violence or unrighteousness of any type due to His perfect essence (cf. Psa. 89:14).
 - b) However, God manifests "righteous" violence towards those who participate in evil (i.e. punitive activity for sin, Psa. 106:29, Isa. 13:16 cf. Jer. 20:11, Nahum 1-3).
 - c) He is opposed to those who employ sinful violence (Psa. 5:6, 11:5, Jer. 22:3-5).

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- d) He will punish those who are violent (Psa. 7:16, Prov. 1:11-19).
 - e) Yet, as in the case of Nineveh in the book of Jonah, He may graciously spare those who repent of violence (Jonah 3:4-10).
 - f) Those who are violent shorten their lifespan (Psa. 55:23, Prov. 21:7).
- 4) The believer and violence.
- a) We are not to resort to sinful violence or any OSN activity to resolve various circumstances we encounter in the cosmos (Rom. 12:1-2, 18-19).
 - b) Believers must avoid sinful violence on every level: mental, verbal, and physical.
 - c) Do not admire violent people. Rather the adjusted believer must separate from violent individuals (Prov. 3:31, 24:1-2 cf. **2 Timothy 3:1-5** But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. ² For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; ⁵ holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and **avoid such men as these**).
 - d) Although violent types may prosper for a time under God's permissive will, ultimately He will judge them (cf. Psa. 37:35-36, 94:6ff, Isa. 29:20).
 - e) Instead of being overcome by fear or despair, the believer ought to pray for deliverance from violent people in these last days (Psa. 59:2-4, 140:1, 4).
 - f) Within Scripture, it is important to observe that not all violence is deemed sinful or unrighteous. The use of aggressive physical force is necessary in certain situations. Examples:
 - i) Violence in the form of capital punishment for certain crimes was commanded (e.g. murder: Gen 9:6, Deut. 19:11-13, child sacrifice: Lev. 20:2 cf. Rom. 13:4).
 - ii) Violence in war (Deut. 20:10ff, 1 Sam. 15:3).
 - iii) Self-defense (Ex. 22:2, Est. 9:16 cf. Luke 22:36).
- 5) Sinful violence is associated with the following:
- a) Anger (Gen. 49:5-7 cf. James 4:1-2).
 - b) Demon possession (Matt. 8:28, Acts 19:13-16).
 - c) Kidnapping (Deut 24:7).
 - d) Lying, deceit, or fraud (Hosea 12:1, Zeph. 1:9).
 - e) Mob activity (Acts 17:5-6, 21:35).
 - f) Moral corruption or depravity (Gen. 6:11-12, Ezek. 22:3-30, Hosea 4:2, Jonah 3:8).
 - g) Pride or arrogance (Psa. 73:6, 86:14).
 - h) Robbery or illicit gain (Prov. 1:10-19).
 - i) Treachery or betrayal (Prov.13:2).
 - j) Strife (Psa. 55:9).
- 6) Additional observations.

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- a) Those who are violent frequently try to lead others astray into evil (Prov. 16:29).
 - b) Violent types typically hate those who do participate in their ways (e.g. the adjusted believer, Prov 29:10 cf. John 15:18-19).
 - c) Under God's permissive will, violent types may temporarily be successful and prosper (Psa. 10:3-11, Prov. 11:16).
 - d) Consequently such individuals may become confident in their violent ways (cf. Psa. 62:10).
 - e) Again their prosperity is only ephemeral. God will deal with them for their evil (Psa. 37:35-38, also Prov. 10:7).
- 7) Concluding remarks.
- a) Given the fact that our world full of violence, the believer should well-grounded in a biblical perspective of its many facets.
 - b) Based on clear biblical documentation, the believer should not engage in sinful violence.
 - c) To participate in sinful violence manifests that one is being influenced by the OSN.
 - d) The believer who falls in this category nullifies a proper witness of the Christian life (cf. Matt. 5:16, Col. 4:5, 1 Peter 2:12).
 - e) As the believer surveys the depravity of the last days, he ought to take comfort that God will overthrow those who are violent.

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