

The Doctrine of Self-Defense

This doctrine is illustrated in the precautions taken by Jehoiada to protect the life of the young king Jehoash. The principle here is seen because biblically there is no difference between the life of the king and the life of any human being.

1. The life of every human being has value because every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. Gen. 1:
2. However, there is not an absolute, unequivocal right to life in the Bible. There are circumstances when a person loses the privilege of life. This occurs when that person has committed certain crimes which reveal a level of soul depravity and perversion that is so great that the perverted person's life is forfeited. One of these cases is in the case of what we would classify as 1st degree murder or homicide.

NB: This is laid down in a universal covenant with all mankind that has not been cancelled, replaced, or terminated.

Gen 9:5-6

Gen. 9:5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

Gen. 9:6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

The basis for capital punishment is that it is ultimately an act against God, the imagebearer is the divine representative and has value simply because of who he is not what is contributes to society.

Ex 20:13 Thou shalt not murder

ךָ חָרַף *rtzch* qal imperf 2 masc sing **to murder**

Under the ML other crimes also called for the forfeiture of life: idolatry, rape, blaspheming the name of the Lord (Lev 24:16-17), claiming to be a prophet of God when one was not.

Ex. 21:28 ¶ "If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* acquitted.

Ex. 21:29 But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.

Application to Tilikum: We value the life of this whale killing mammal more than we do the life of Dawn Brancheau , any human or any victim. It's just another example of the distorted and twisted values of our pagan culture.

3. Thus the foundation for self-defense is a recognition that all human life is valuable and must be protected, even though that may cost the life of someone who intends to take the life of another or who threatens to take the life of another. Therefore there is an obligation on man to protect life.

Psa. 82:4 Deliver the poor and needy; Free *them* from the hand of the wicked

Prov. 24:11 Deliver *those who* are drawn toward death, And hold back *those* stumbling to the slaughter.

Ezek. 33:6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes *any* person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.'

4. An extension of this principle is that when a person's private property is threatened, because this is necessary to support the individual's life, then deadly force is acceptable.

Ex. 22:2 If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, *there shall be no guilt for his bloodshed.*

5. The case law of the Mosaic Law shows on the basis of such laws that this extends to the protection of the life of the nation as well as the property of a nation and becomes the foundation for the doctrine of just war.

6. Two key Old Testament passages demonstrate the right of self-defense.

Neh 4:17-23

Context: Nehemiah has returned to Jerusalem with the authorization from Artaxerxes the Persian King, to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and fortify the city. He is met with opposition by the anti Jewish mixed races that have taken up residence in Israel during the time of the exile. This foreshadows the current conflict with the so-called Palestinians who are trying to prevent the Jews from continuing in the land.

The leader of the Samaritan bad guys was Sanballat supported by Tobiah the Ammonite. These are the ancient counterparts to Hamas and Hezbollah, Arafat and the PLO.

Neh. 4:7 ¶ Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry,

Neh. 4:8 and all of them conspired together to come *and* attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

In light of the threat of violence

Neh. 4:13 ¶ Therefore I positioned *men* behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

Neh. 4:14 And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, “Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.”

Neh. 4:15 ¶ And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and *that* God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work.

Neh. 4:16 So it was, from that time on, *that* half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and *wore* armor; and the leaders *were* behind all the house of Judah.

Neh. 4:17 Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon.

Neh. 4:18 Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet *was* beside me.

*If you live in a context where you think your life or property may be attacked then you have the right to protect yourself and to have with you the means to protect yourself.

Esth. 8:11 ¶ By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to gather together and protect their lives—to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions,

Esth. 8:12 on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of Adar.

In the New Testament Jesus reaffirmed the same thing.

Luke 22:35 ¶ And He said to them, “When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?” ¶ So they said, “Nothing.”

Luke 22:36 ¶ Then He said to them, “But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Luke 22:37 For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: ‘*And He was numbered with the transgressors.*’ For the things concerning Me have an end.”

Luke 22:38 ¶ So they said, “Lord, look, here *are* two swords.” ¶ And He said to them, “It is enough.”

Whatever your interpretation of this passage, there are a few broad-stroke observations we can make about this passage.

1. Jesus expected them to have swords and anticipated a time when those without swords would need to acquire them.

2. Among eleven disciples, they *did* have two swords--in almost a 1:5 ratio.
3. Jesus expected them to carry the swords on their person as they traveled from the city to the garden prayer meeting.

It is difficult to make absolute claims beyond these observations, but the observations themselves have significance. Namely, among those closest to Jesus, some carried personal weapons in His presence *with His consent* and had them with on their person at the Passover meal we call the Last supper..

We cannot make absolute claims as to the reasons, right or, wrong, for the carriage of these weapons. Perhaps it was in anticipation of trouble from the Jewish leadership. Perhaps it was protection against mere robbers. Paul in 2 Cor. 11:26 cites the "perils of robbers". Though there are questions we can't answer, we do know they possessed these weapons, that they carried these weapons, and that Jesus knew and consented. Furthermore, Jesus spoke of some time, present or future, when disciples would need to acquire personal weapons, even more urgently than garments.

But the use of weapons for self-defense must be governed by wisdom and a respect for human life.

Luke 22:49 ¶ When those around Him saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”

Luke 22:50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

Luke 22:51 ¶ But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this.” And He touched his ear and healed him.

Luke 22:52 ¶ Then Jesus said to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and the elders who had come to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs?”

Objections

Matt. 26:52 ¶ But Jesus said to him, “Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

Matthew inserted this statement of Jesus' after Peter cut off Malthus' ear. The point isn't against the use of violence, but the use of violence as first resort or the indiscrete use of violence.

Turn the other cheek

Matt. 5:39 But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

1. **To allow a murder or theft when it could be prevented is morally wrong.**

2. **To put the life of a criminal over the life of a victim is morally wrong.**
3. **Every person has the right to defend the life and property to the point of taking the life of those who immediately threaten their life and property.**
4. **However, violence is not to be the first line of defense. Although in certain circumstances that action must be thought through and taken immediately if necessary. The time to think it through is the priority.**
5. **N resisting evil is an evil of omission, and an evil of omission can be just as evil as an evil of commission. Any man who refuses to protect his wife and children against a violent intruder fails them morally."**
6. **The act of even giving your life in the protection of another is considered one of the highest acts of love.**

John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Gospel presentation.