

Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World
(Lesson 30)

Introduction:

1. According to James 1:27, "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world" is an important part of "pure and undefiled religion before God."
2. In His Word God has addressed many issues that will help us in this regard.
3. To keep ourselves unspotted from the world we must overcome and avoid the problem mentioned in Genesis 6:11-13 -- "violence."

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST DETERMINE HOW "VIOLENCE" BEGAN
 - A. Cain committed the first act of "violence" when he killed Abel (Genesis 4:3-8).
 - B. Let us make 3 observations about "violence" from these verses.
 1. First, God is not responsible for the existence of "violence."
 - a. God did not include "violence" in Creation (Genesis 1:31).
 - b. Man introduced "violence," and man is responsible for it.
 2. Second, Abel was not responsible for Cain's actions.
 3. Third, Cain was responsible for his own actions.
 - C. Unfortunately, innocent people often suffer because of violent deeds.
 - D. After Cain introduced it, "violence" escalated (Genesis 6:11-13).
 1. By the time Noah came onto the scene, man had become very corrupt (Genesis 6:5).
 2. Man's wickedness became so great that it deeply grieved God at his heart (vs.6-7).
 3. Note especially that "the earth was filled with violence" (vs.11, 13).
 - E. We learn from the book of Genesis how "violence" began and how it escalated.
- II. TO OVERCOME AND AVOID "VIOLENCE" WE MUST UNDERSTAND HOW GOD FEELS ABOUT IT
 - A. God's punishment of Cain shows that He does not approve of it (Genesis 4:10-12).
 - B. From the flood we conclude that God does not approve of it.
 - C. David stated in Psalm 11:5 that God hates those who love "violence."
- III. TO OVERCOME AND AVOID "VIOLENCE," WE MUST UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS
 - A. Let us first consider God's instructions to the Israelites because these things "were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4).
 1. (Exodus 21:12) Those who committed murder were to be put to death.
 2. (Leviticus 6:2-7) Those who took things by violence were to pay restitution and offer sacrifice to God for their sin.
 3. (Proverbs 4:14-17) The Israelites were instructed to avoid those who were violent.
 4. (Proverbs 16:29) God knew that violent people would have an evil influence upon the Israelites.
 - B. Let us also consider God's instructions to Christians in the New Testament.
 1. The teachings of the New Testament are designed to prevent and eliminate violence (Matthew 7:12; Romans 12:17-21).
 2. The New Testament also makes provision for dealing with violent people.
 - a. (Romans 13:1-4) The state has authority from God to punish evil doers, including those who commit violent acts.
 - b. (vs.4) The state even has the authority to take the lives of those who are guilty of capital crimes (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Conclusion:

1. Let us practice God's will ourselves so we can avoid committing acts of violence.
2. Let us beware of the influence of those who have violent tendencies.