

**News and Current Events :: News and Not-So-Current Event****News and Not-So-Current Event - posted by savannah, on: 2013/9/27 7:42**

Laws of New England in 1641

Of Crimes such as deserve capital punishment, or cutting off from a man's people, whether by death or banishment.

1. FIRST, blasphemy, which is a cursing of God by atheism, or the like, to be punished with death.
2. Idolatry to be punished with death.
3. Witchcraft, which is fellowship by covenant with a familiar spirit, to be punished with death.
4. Consulters with witches not to be tolerated, but either to be cut off by death or banishment.
5. Heresy, which is the maintenance of some wicked errors, overthrowing the foundation of the christian religion; which obstinacy, if it be joined with endeavour to seduce others thereunto, to be punished with death; because such an heretick, no less than an idolater, seeketh to thrust the souls of men from the Lord their God.
6. To worship God in a molten or graven image, to be punished with death.
7. Such members of the church, as do wilfully reject to walk, after due admonition and conviction, in the churches' establishment, and their christian admonition and censures, shall be cut off by banishment.
8. Whosoever shall revile the religion and worship of God, and the government of the church, as it is now established, to be cut off by banishment. Cor. 5:5.
9. Wilful perjury, whether before the judgment seat or in private conference, to be punished with death.
10. Rash perjury, whether in public or in private, to be punished with banishment. Just is it, that such a man's name should be cut off from his people who profanes so grosly the name of God before his people.
11. Profaning of the Lord's day, in a careless and scornful neglect or contempt thereof, to be punished with death.
12. To put in practice the betraying of the country, or any principal fort therein, to the hand of any foreign state, Spanish, French, Dutch, or the like, contrary to the allegiance we owe and profess to our dread sovereign, lord king Charles, his heirs and successors, whilst he is pleased to protect us as his loyal subjects, to be punished with death. Num. 12:14, 15.
13. Unreverend and dishonorable carriage to magistrates, to be punished with banishment for a time, till they acknowledge their fault and profess reformation.
14. Reviling of the magistrates in highest rank amongst us, to wit, of the governors and council, to be punished with death. I Kings 2:8, 9, & 46.
15. Rebellion, sedition, or insurrection, by taking up arms against the present government established in the country, to be punished with death.
16. Rebellious children, whether they continue in riot or drunkenness, after due correction from their parents, or whether they curse or smite their parents, to be put to death. Ex. 21:15, 17. Lev. 20:9.
17. Murder, which is a wilful man-slaughter, not in a man's just defence, nor casually committed, but out of hatred or cruelty, to be punished with death. Ex. 21:12, 13. Num. 35:16, 17, 18, to 33. Gen. 9:6.

18. Adultery, which is the defiling of the marriage-bed, to be punished with death. Defiling of a woman espoused, is a kind of adultery, and punishable, by death, of both parties; but if a woman be forced, then by the death of the man only. Lev . 20:10. Deut. 22:22 to 27.
19. Incest, which is the defiling of any near of kin, within the degrees prohibited in Leviticus, to be punished with death.
20. Unnatural filthiness to be punished with death, whether sodomy, which is a carnal fellowship of man with man, or woman with woman, or buggery, which is a carnal fellowship of man or woman with beasts or fowls.
21. Pollution of a woman known to be in her flowers, to be put to death. Lev. 20:18,19.
22. Whoredom of a maiden in her father's house, kept secret till after her marriage with another, to be punished with death. Deut. 22:20, 21.
23. Man-stealing to be punished with death. Ex. 21:16.
24. False-witness bearing to be punished with death.

It has been contended that the laws of the Bible are harsh and unreasonable . Indeed, some have engaged in ridicule of them. What are we to make of this argument? Marcion, the early church heretic, argued the same way, maintaining that the God of the Older Testament was harsh and cruel, but that the God of the New Testament is kind and loving. This is an ancient heresy. Christianity has always maintained that when men accuse God of being "harsh," it is only because they want an excuse for sin. Is God's law really harsh, however? The law states, for instance, that homosexual acts should be punished by death, on the testimony of two or three eyewitnesses. What is the effect of this law? It can be seen right away that few if any homosexuals would ever be executed under this law, since it would be very difficult to procure two eyewitnesses to such an act. The effect of this law would be to drive homosexuality far, far underground. It would help to protect young persons from homosexual solicitation. It would be an incentive to those of homosexual tendencies to prevent them from turning to a life of depravity. It would help to protect society at large from the judgment God visited on Sodom and Gomorrah. It would help to protect society from the rampant moral decay seen in the history of the Roman Empire. Is this "harsh"?

Re: News and Not-So-Current Event, on: 2013/9/27 9:30

Savannah I find law #5 to be interesting. The punishing of heretics. If memory serves this law was the basis for the punishing and perhaps death of Baptist in the colonial period. Before that the Reformers in Europe and England used this law to punish the Anabaptist who were believers in Jesus Christ.

Before the Reformation, Catholicism and state were one punishing the Reformers who were deemed heretics. After the Reformation, Reformed church and state were one punishing the Catholics and Anabaptist who were deemed as heretics. And if you were an Anabaptist you got it from both the Catholics and the Reformers who deemed you a heretic. In some cases the Reformers despised the Anabaptist more than the Catholics.

Personally I do not see a society governed by the laws you quoted as being advantageous. As I am one influenced by Anabaptist teachings derived from the New Testament I surely would have been imprisoned or burned at the stake as a heretic.

But then as a follower of the Lamb I expect to be martyred on the guillotine for the Lord Jesus Christ. That being done by the 501c evangelical church. May God count me to be as worthy as those Anabaptist who suffered for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Bearmaster.