

## Conflict Resolution



## Law and Punishment

It is inevitable that Conflicts arise, Jesus said, “unto his disciples, It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come; but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble. Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (Luke 17:1–4), and the prophet James said, “For in many things we all stumble” (James 3:2). Nevertheless, the propensity for such does not justify the commission of lawless deeds. In a 1931 court case, *White vs. Williams*, Justice Griffith affirmed, saying, “So long as there is wickedness in the land, the law must wage continual and uncompromising warfare against the forces of iniquity,” otherwise, “The peace and safety of civilized society would soon be destroyed if those who violate the criminal laws were not visited with proper retribution therefor,”

Sanders vs. Commonwealth of KY. Therefore, as Moses affirmed, “But the soul that doeth aught with a high hand, whether he be home-born or a sojourner, the same blasphemeth Jehovah; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people” (Numbers 15:30): “And the man that doeth presumptuously, in not hearkening unto the priest that standeth to minister there before Jehovah thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel. And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (Deuteronomy 17:12–13). Violation of law must be punished, to serve as a deterrent, to the wise, and to eliminate the evil doer from society. The Psalmist, king David, said, “I will sing of lovingkindness and justice: Unto thee, O Jehovah, will I sing praises. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way: Oh when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no base thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; It shall not cleave unto me. A perverse heart shall depart from me: I will know no evil thing. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I destroy: Him that hath a high look and a proud heart will I not suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall minister unto me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: He that speaketh falsehood shall not be established before mine eyes. Morning by morning will I destroy all the wicked of the land; To cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of Jehovah” (Psalms 101:1–8).

Therefore, in some cases, the only Resolution to a Conflict, against God or man, is the removal of the offender from society, either by expulsion, incarceration or death. In other cases, a peaceful Resolution is within the reach of the offender, as Jehovah said unto Cain, “Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be its desire, but do thou rule over it” (Genesis 4:6–7): coucheth is “A primitive root; to crouch (on all four legs folded, like a recumbent animal); by implication to recline, repose, brood, lurk, imbed.” Cain had the option to secure a proper response, and a peaceful Resolution.

However, Cain did not heed the admonition, but rather, “Cain told Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (Genesis 4:8), and as a result “And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto Jehovah, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me. And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him. And Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden” (Genesis 4:11–16).

What man needs to understand is that retribution must be administered, for the salvation of society. Neither God, nor man finds pleasure in adverse Resolutions. As it was, when Ezekiel wrote, saying “Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11).

Nevertheless, Jehovah, giving laws to the nation of Israel did so for their good always that they might be preserved, and laws without their corresponding consequences are useless, as Solomon affirmed, saying, “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

King David said, “Depart from evil, and do good; Seek peace, and pursue it” (Psalms 34:14). Jehovah gave laws to Israel for their benefit, and the benefit of the world, yet, Jehovah said, “if they do that which is evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them” (Jeremiah 18:10).

A sure Resolution to any Conflict is to turn away from the source of the Conflict:  
“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good” (Romans 12:9).