**Death Penalty in the Bible**

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There are questions, controversies, and debates about the death penalty issue in the Bible. Some Christians claim that the death penalty is mentioned in the Bible and portrayed as capital punishment, while others claim that it's not mentioned in the Bible (Kyambalesa, 2019). Most faiths also hold contradictions and controversies about the relationship between capital punishment, the death penalty, and religion (Bones & Sabriseilabi, 2018). However, the death penalty is encouraged in the Bible in the old and new Testaments. The biblical view about the death penalty and its leading causes to humans has great dominance in underpinning its significance.

**Death Penalty in the Old Testament**

The death penalty in the Bible was due to sins such as murder, adultery, magic, bestiality, incest, idolatry, witchcraft, and cursing of parents. The death penalty issue is first mentioned in the Old Testament in the book of Genesis (9:6), which states that 'whoever sheds the blood of man, his blood will also be shed because man is created in the image and likeness of God.' Exodus (21:12) says that 'whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.' In this case, the death penalty results from murdering another person. If one curses his parents, the Bible commands that such a person should be put to death (*Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Exodus 21:17). The Bible also commands capital punishment and the death penalty for a man who commits adultery with their neighbor's wife, whereby the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death (*Holy Bible: New International Version,* 1978/2011, Leviticus 20;10). According to Bar (2021), stoning is another form of the death penalty for sinners. If a man or woman is a medium or spiritist, they shall be stoned, and their blood shall be upon them (*Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Leviticus 20:27).

**Death Penalty in the New Testament**

The New Testament focuses on Jesus' teachings on the death penalty and the concept of the government's authority to command the death penalty or punishment of evil-doers. For instance, in *Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Romans (13:4), the government is portrayed as an avenger that holds God's wrath on the wrongdoers in society but does not carry the sword in vain. Therefore, it means the government has the right to promote the death penalty to the wrongdoers. In addition, God will institute second death to the cowards, faithless, liars, idolaters, sexually immoral, sorcerers, and murderers who will be put in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur (*Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Revelation 21:8). *In Holy Bible: New International Version,* 1978/2011, Matthew (15:4), Jesus also says that if one speaks ill of his mother or father, they should die.

However, in the same New Testament, Jesus encourages forgiveness of sinners instead of the death penalty. For instance, in *Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, John (8:3-11), when a crowd brings him an adulterous woman for judgment, he tells them that if anyone has never sinned, let them be the first to throw a stone at her. In *Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Matthew (5:43-44) says that people love their neighbors and hate their enemies, but he also said they should love them and pray for those who persecute them. In *Holy Bible: New International Version*, 1978/2011, Romans (12:19) the Lord encourages people not to punish themselves or one another since God is responsible for the punishment. Based on these examples, even though the Bible promotes the death penalty, Jesus still advocates for forgiving sinners and punishment only by God.

**Conclusion**

The death penalty is in the Bible and befalls sinners such as murderers, sorcerers, sexually immoral, idolaters, and those who curse their parents. God grants the government the authority to support the death penalty and punish evil-doers. However, Jesus advocates for the forgiveness of sinners by praying for them and waiting for God's punishment. Therefore, Christians should be aware of the death penalties in the Bible to evade sin and live righteous lives.

**References**

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