

decreed its forfeiture. It was not murder but the execution of a sentence.

Was is in a similar cast. The taking of life to save life is justified in the light of Israel's warfare. In fact, the Word of the Lord is that, in His warfare, "Cursed be he that keepeth bakk his sword from blood." (Jeremiah 48:10) We are in a greater area of potential confusion in this issue but war is a long step removed from the concept of personal malice. The enpity in war is directed against a mass and (particularly in a defensive strife) the concept of individual vendetta is minimal. We should be very careful in avoiding all unnecessary conflict but the command does not suggest passivity in the face of carnage.

On the other hand, the Lord is protective of those who accidentally take the life of others. Under the law a series of refuge cities was established (Numbers 35) so that the individual who accidentally brought about another's death would not be placed in a life-forfeiture position. The text shows that the willful murderer is under condemnation but the accidental man-slayer was to have the benefit of protection of law until the issues were known better.

Furthermore there were a few other cases in which life was forfeited by wickedness. Blasphemers, kinds of witches, kidnappers, etc., were all subject to penalty of death. The punishment paid back their acts of defiance towards God. The law was firm, equally applicable to all, and emphatic in its demands. Seern, no doubt, but the plainness of expression made it available for the knowledge of the people and they were accountable for the manner in which they obeyed it and administered it.

With these things in mind we may note that the law is a great protector. of life! It not only forbade the wanton taking of life but agreed with the laws of forfeiture for those who did not respect life. Thus we may summarize