

**W**hen you hear the word "violence," what comes to mind? You probably think of the incredible things you hear on the radio or see in the newspapers:

- Do you think of the motorists on Florida and California freeways who are randomly shot by hidden snipers? Perhaps you think of the innocent people in cities who no longer sit by their apartment windows because of drive-by shootings that have no motive. In some small Texas towns, it isn't even safe to drive through!
- Do you think of the 25 million babies slaughtered in their mothers' wombs by abortion fiends? Maybe you think of the daily news reports of murder, rape, sodomy, stabbings, robberies. Yet it all has become so common, we are no longer moved.
- Do you think of the unknown, four-year-old Brooklyn girl who was suffocated and found stuffed into a suitcase in an abandoned building? A local priest had to take up an offering to bury her, because there was no one else to care.
- Do you think of the man on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, who took a five-year-old girl behind a fence and raped her? Several cars stopped on the expressway nearby -- and the drivers cheered the rapist on!
- Do you think of New York City's schools, where children fear going to class because wild, drug-pushing students carry guns and switchblades? Most of the schools now have metal detectors at their entrances, and policemen patrol the

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hallways. Teachers are frequently beaten and stabbed. Worse yet, perverted teachers molest trusting, helpless students.

- Do you think of the twenty-one-year-old Bronx man who was so stoned on crack he killed his six-month-old baby? He couldn't stand her crying any longer. So he carried her into the kitchen, took out a butcher knife and cut her into pieces! Then he fed her body parts to his two hungry rottweiler dogs - - and went back to sleep!
- Do you think of the 500,000 Rwandans who have been brutally murdered by machete-wielding tribesmen? "Life" magazine recently showed pictures of thousands of the dead bodies. Some were stacked in piles six and eight feet high. Others floated by the hundreds down rivers and over waterfalls.
- Do you think of the bloody ethnic wars now raging worldwide? Thousands have been murdered in former Yugoslavia. Bloodshed continues in Ireland. Newspapers and magazines are filled daily with pictures of mutilated bodies, slaughtered children, war casualties strewn across open fields and in city squares.

Everything I have mentioned here is a form of violence. And our senses have become so overloaded with such images, we now try to shut them all out. We hate to even pick up a newspaper anymore!

## What Forms of Violence Were There in Noah's Day, That So Riled the Anger of God He Finally Cried "Enough!"?

Genesis tells us that the more man multiplied on the earth, the more violent he became:

*"Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth"* (GEN 6:11-12, NAS).

So God said,

*"The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth"* (verse 13, KJV).

God determined to destroy the earth because all of mankind had become violent! He instructed His prophet Noah to build an ark, so he could escape the coming wrath.

Think about it: With all the violence I've mentioned -- all the horrible things we've seen -- God still hasn't done to our generation what He did to Noah's! I wonder what

kind of violence went on in Noah's generation that caused God to say, "I can't take any more of this. I'm sorry I created man!"

Did everyone carry a sword? Was it like Sodom, where roving gangs of homosexuals raped strangers? Was it a time of bloody wars and ethnic tensions? There may have been some of these forms of violence. But there had to be others besides murder, bloodshed and perversion. You see, Scripture says that in these same violent days, the people

*"...were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark"* (MATT 24:38, KJV).

It was safe to go into the streets. People were buying and selling in the markets. Couples were getting engaged and having weddings. They were building houses, raising families. There isn't any mention of bloodshed. Yet the Bible says these were violent people!

Contrast that scene with our present day. Can you imagine what would have happened if Noah had tried to build the ark in some abandoned area in New York City? Do you know how long that work would have lasted?

Within an hour there would've been camel races down 42nd Street! The wire fences protecting the ark would've been cut. Noah's tools would've been stolen. Teenage gangs would've drilled holes in the ark's hull. The expensive gopher wood would've been taken apart by sections and hauled off. Pickup trucks would've been backing in and out all night long. And by daybreak all those exotic animals would have been hidden in apartments across the city!

Think about it for a moment: In Noah's day, there was no sign of robbers, thieves or pranksters trying to burn down the ark. No one plundered his livestock or stole his hay. No one painted graffiti on the sides of the ark. Instead, Scripture says, for 120 years he walked to and fro, safely collecting his animals. He could eat, preach and go to weddings and never be in any danger.

No, there was something else going on in Noah's day. This society was so orderly, people

could go on with their ordinary lives without any trouble. There had to be a different form of violence -- a kind engaged in by ordinary people who went about their daily affairs!

### **The Form of Violence in Noah's Day That Enraged God Was Mental Violence!**

*"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (GEN 6:5).

There it is -- mental violence! Every imagination of the people's minds was corrupted! As any drug addict can tell you, the habit is in the mind. And there was something going on in the minds of the whole corrupted society of Noah's day!

The Hebrew word for "violence" means "vicious dealings, mistreatment, wrongful imaginings, cruelty." All the bloodshed, murders, rapes, etc. that took place in that day were the fruit of a root of violence in the people's hearts and minds! The whole society -- every man, woman and accountable person -- was gripped by mental forms of violence!

God blames all violence on the thoughts and intents of the heart: *"Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth"* (PSA 58:2). And what God saw going on in the people's minds of Noah's day was so grievous to Him,

*"...it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart"* (GEN 6:6).

In the framework of God's definition of violence -- the kind that possesses and rules the heart -- many reading this message right now could be violent people! That's right -- **many Christians are guilty of the kind of violence for which God destroyed the world!**

You may answer, "But I've never hurt anybody! I've never even entertained a thought of harming anyone. I'm a gentle, peace-loving person. I may have problems, but violence isn't one of them!"

That all may be true of you. But you still may be a mentally violent person! I want to show you in

God's Word what mental violence is all about. And I hope you'll understand why God so hates this kind of violence:

### **1. First, There Is the Mental Violence of "Bearing a Grudge!"**

**It is absolute hatred in the sight of God for you to hold a grudge against anyone.** This includes thinking ill, voicing it or in any way causing anguish to the one you despise.

In Psalm 55:9, David says, *"Confuse, O Lord, divide their tongues, for I have seen violence and strife in the city"* (NAS). David then describes the violence he was victimized by: *"...the voice of the enemy... the pressure of the wicked... they bring down trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me"* (verse 3). The King James translates this last phrase, *"...in wrath they hate me."*

A grudge is any envy or ill-will toward another. Now, David was blessed on all sides -- financially, physically and spiritually. And that caused envy all around! The envy was so strong, in fact, that the grudging became extreme.

David said,

*"My heart is sore pained within me: and terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me"* (verses 4-5, KJV).

Please note: There was no knife piercing David's back. No gang of thugs was trying to rob him, kill him or cut him down. Yet he trembled, shuddered with horror, shook from head to toe. Why? Because his brother bore a hateful grudge against him!

To make matters worse, this wasn't an enemy of David's -- it was a friend! *"...a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend"* (verse 13, NAS). David said, "This is someone who knows me, who has seen the hand of God on me. And yet he holds a grudge against me!"

**The kind of murder David describes here is "mental murder." It's the kind that occurs between a husband and a wife, between you and your coworkers.** It is a terrible cause of family strife -- children holding

grudges against parents, parents not forgiving children. This kind of ill-will builds up inside and eats away at you, until finally it takes over your life completely.

Beloved, if this describes you, then you are a murderer!

*"Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1.JN 3:15).*

When you stand before the Judgment Seat, God will judge you equally with every killer and murderer on earth. According to His Word, murder is murder!

We all get angry at the murderers who roam our streets and kill randomly. We think, "God cannot put up with this much longer!" But the Lord focuses more on what is going on in the hearts of multiplied millions -- including many Christians who carry murder in their hearts every day!

The Bible is clear on this matter: You can attend church faithfully, pay tithes and be nice to everyone. You can abstain from drugs, alcohol and promiscuous sex. But do you have a mother or father you can't forgive? Is there someone who has done a terrible wrong to you -- but you have never forgiven that person? **If you bear a hateful grudge against anyone, you are a murderer in God's eyes! And you have no chance whatsoever of heaven!**

## 2. There Is a Form of Violence the Bible Calls "Enticement"!

*"A man of violence entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good" (PROV 16:29).*

The word "entice" here means "to induce or seduce another into an act of evil." God says you are a violent person if you entice or allure someone to do evil!

I wonder how many husbands believed Noah's message of coming judgment? Perhaps there was one who recognized the truth. His heart was warmed -- and he was almost persuaded by Noah's preaching. But then he went home to a Jezebel wife -- and she mocked him and dragged him into sin to shake off his conviction!

How many wives heard Noah preach righteousness and were almost convinced? Perhaps Noah prayed with one. But a pleasure-mad husband made the woman's life miserable, threatening to kick her out! "Next time you go to hear that crank preacher, it's out the door for you!"

I once knew a burned-out junkie named Roberto. He was one of the worst drug addicts in Brooklyn. He would rob, steal, even kill for drugs. He had a wife and a beautiful baby daughter, but he abused them terribly.

Roberto's wife begged me to take him to our center for help. I did -- and God transformed him! Roberto became a new man: gentle, sweet and full of love for Jesus. He left our Teen Challenge farm longing to put his family back together.

But Roberto's wife was not a Christian. And she didn't like her new-born husband! She loved to party, but Roberto wouldn't go with her anymore. Instead, he prayed and read his Bible. He was sweet and tender toward her -- but she couldn't stand that!

Finally, she went out one day, bought two bags of heroin and flung them down on the kitchen table. She told Roberto, "Get high, or get lost!" She seduced her husband back to the needle. And not long after that, Roberto died of an overdose. That wife was a violent woman -- as violent as any killer loose on the streets today!

**According to Proverbs, a violent person is one who "leads others astray, into a way that is not good."**

I tell you, the next time you see a woman walking down the street half-dressed -- showing off her body, strutting before men -- call it what God calls it: violence! She is leading men to hell, even if they never touch her!

Jesus says:

*"...everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart" (MATT 5:28).*

And the apostle Paul adds:

*"...Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers...shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1.COR 6:9-10).*

Here is a warning to all Christian women: When you dress to go out, don't let it be an act of violence! Instead, pray: "I know I walk among angels, Lord. And I don't want anything to draw attention to my bare flesh. I only want to bring glory to You!" God help any Christian woman who walks out the door dressed seductively. She must answer for every man whom she causes to commit adultery with his eyes!

The worst violence ever to come against Israel happened without a single drop of blood being shed. Not one arrow was shot; not one Israelite was murdered or robbed. Instead, the Midianites used their women to seduce Israel's men! They put all their pretty women outside the camp to attract the Israelites!

Sure enough, curious Israelite men slipped out to watch these scantily clad, idol-worshiping dancers. And fornication broke out everywhere! Seducing women led those men astray -- and Israel was brought to shame at the hands of the Midianites. The Bible says God saw this as such violence, He destroyed many of those Midianite women with a plague!

Of course, not all seducers are women. There are just as many violent men running about, leading women astray! These lying men will say anything to work their way into a lonely woman's good graces. And after they have made their "conquest," they boast about it!

Such men are like Amnon, David's son. Amnon was "lovesick" for his half-sister Tamar. He couldn't eat or sleep because of his lust over her. Finally, he persuaded a friend to tell her he was sick, so she would come and care for him. When Tamar came to his room, Amnon forced himself on her. And when he had made his conquest, his devilish heart was exposed:

*"Then Amnon hated her exceedingly; so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her. And Amnon said unto her, Arise, be gone" (2.SAM 13:15, KJV).*

He had Tamar physically thrown out of his house!

There are men today who tell Christian women, "You're the only one! We really have something

spiritual together. We are soul mates. This is of God!" But they also say this to a dozen others! They want to be known as the most spiritual men in the church -- all because they want a woman's body!

Could this be what God saw in Noah's time? Were the people playing roles in seductive games, with no commitment to marriage vows? Were neighbors defiling one another, spreading diseases, justifying their own lust at the expense of others? It is all violence!

*"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"* (GEN 6:5).

If you are a Christian woman asking God to give you a mate, you'd better spend a lot of time on your knees, seeking Him! Don't judge a man by his outward appearance; ask God to show you what kind of heart he has. The Lord will expose any devil!

### 3. The Very Worst Kind of Violence -- the Kind That Offends God Most Deeply -- Is Found in Matthew 18:6!

*"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea"* (MATT 18:6, NAS).

You've heard that the Mafia rubs out an enemy by tying bundles of concrete to his feet and throwing him into a river. Beloved, Jesus is saying this is exactly what is deserved by those who rob children of their faith in Christ!

What did Jesus see taking place in Noah's day? He saw hundreds of innocent children who loved the bearded old preacher! They loved playing with his animals -- and they loved what he preached. These kids must have asked their parents why no one obeyed what Noah said. But their parents mocked Noah! They said, "Don't go near that old man again!"

How many children in Noah's day were robbed of any chance of being saved? Their parents chipped away at their faith with

ridicule, shame, snide remarks. Eventually, those children's hearts were hardened as well -- until they stood by as teenagers and laughed at the old man and his ark!

Those young people were drowned along with the rest of the world. And if you do violence to the faith of children, God is prepared to drown you in the deepest sea! That is His way of expressing His anger against all who cast stumbling blocks to destroy the faith of the young.

When we talk about the violence in schools, we think of guns, knives, fights, gangs. But a much greater violence is taking place in our classrooms: **Teachers are now one of the most violent, destructive forces in the world! They rob children of their faith in God** -- of the Creation story, of the gospel, of morals, of absolutes. This is violence in the sight of God!

It is no wonder kids now kill without remorse. They kill for sneakers; they kill their parents. Why? They have been violated -- robbed of everything meant to guide them! Their moral compass has been smashed in the classroom!

Too often, a child's worst danger of violence is in the home -- perpetrated by his own parents! There is a tidal wave of incest, child abuse, broken homes. Children are being neglected, abandoned, wounded, emasculated.

But God is concerned with an even more insidious form of violence toward children. **The real violence -- the real stumbling block -- is a father who has neglected the call of God!** He swears, curses, takes God's name in vain. He mistreats his wife, drinks, carouses -- and leads a devil's example for his children! This is not only abuse of his children -- it is violence against them!

You may say, "I don't hit women! I've never lifted my hand against my kids. I'm not violent!" **But your total neglect of God -- your neglect of His church, your lack of spiritual help to your family -- constitutes vicious violence!**

I see mothers who sit around smoking, drinking, telling dirty stories -- and then try to lecture

their teenage kids about drugs! Mothers ought to raise their children in the fear and love of God. But too many women today are strangers to God. They are spiritually dead -- nothing more than caretakers for hell-bound children! God says of such parents, "It's best for these kind to be drowned in the sea!"

### What Was It Like for Noah to Preach for 120 Years and Not Have a Single Convert?

Nobody came to Noah's church. But at least God knew where the people stood: They were as hard as stones! Yet the Lord is saying to us today,

*"So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth"* (REV 3:16, KJV).

Consider our day: Millions are confessing Jesus as Lord, in the United States and all over the world. It has almost become popular to say, "I'm a born-again believer!" Yet, what did Jesus say about this last generation?

*"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"* (MATT 7:23).

Noah's entire generation refused his preaching. And God said of them, "Their hearts are hard, their minds corrupted." But look at our generation: Millions are saying, "Lord, Lord!" and have a form of godliness -- yet they have no power in their lives! They possess no moral force, no power for the gospel. And they are going to be shocked at the Judgment when Jesus says to them, "I never knew you!"

Beloved, this message is not about the increase of crime in the city. It is not about whether you drink, smoke, use drugs or fight with your neighbor. It is not about murder, rape, incest or any other kind of outward depravity. Rather, it is about **violence against the truth! It is about the violence in people's hearts against Jesus Christ and His Cross!**

### Violent Faith!

Yet there is another, different kind of violence taking place in this last day. Indeed, I see **a godly people being raised up who have a violent faith!** These are a holy remnant -- full of Jesus, loving Him with all their hearts. And these believers see a mad devil coming at them with everything in his power. They know they have more of hell to face than any other generation!

Jesus said:

*"...until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (MATT 11:12).*

This remnant is going to rise up with a holy violence and say, "I'm not going to let the devil steal my joy and peace! I won't let him plant seeds of grudges, murder, hatred or violence in me. No -- I'm going to rise up in Jesus' power and live victoriously above this demonic filth!"

Dear saint, God wants to put a fight in you! If you have been guilty of any of these forms of violence, quickly repent before the Lord and obey His Word. That's all He asks. And may God put a holy zeal and faith in you beyond anything you've ever known. He wants you to be

able to stand against satan's wicked devices!

The only spirit of violence we are going to have is a violent faith. **It will be a strong, holy violence that comes full force against the gates of hell and the strongholds of the enemy. And, by the power of God, we will bring them all down in Jesus' name!**

Hallelujah!

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