

Brazil News



No. 64
September 1996

Editorial

A Perfect Hatred

Our parents taught us to love everyone. The principle of returning good for evil was applied in all circumstances. No injury suffered was considered unworthy of pardon. In a word, we were taught that we should never, never hate anyone.

Anyone raised in such a setting will have difficulty in understanding what life was like under the Law. The words of David, a man after God's own heart, sound strange: "Do not I hate them, o Lord, that hate thee . . . ? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies." He goes on to say, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Apparently his conscience didn't trouble him.

Later Jesus said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies." This was the end of the perfect hatred that David felt for his enemies.

Or was it?

Let's notice what David said: "Do not I hate them, o Lord, that hate thee? The hate which this man of God felt for his enemies should not be compared with the hate men today feel for the burglar who has carried away their prize possessions, or for the felon who has injured or killed a family member.

That is a personal hate, exactly the hate that Jesus categorically condemns. That is the hate that the early Christians and the martyr brethren could not harbor in their hearts. Nor can we.

The hate which the true Israelite felt under the law was not a personal hate. The hate which David felt was—may we say?—a righteous hatred. Or as he himself says, with a clear conscience, a perfect hatred.

A perfect hatred is to hate that which God hates. Run that through again. A perfect hatred is to hate that which God hates.