***Death Penalty*?**

What Do Jews, Christians & Muslims Say?

Read this —
New Haven, Connecticut **-- Death Penalty on 6 Counts of Murder**
The verdict was handed down from the jury along with the sentencing - 6 counts of murder against Steven Hayes - But it took three and a half years and untold amounts of money from the victim's family to hear this verdict rendered.

Although Dr. William Petit Jr. said he felt a sense of justice when a jury sentenced the killer of his wife and two daughters to death Monday, he was also critical of the way the state handles capital crimes.

Petit called that time frame "*absurd*," and noted that Virginia, Florida and some other states routinely take capital cases to trial in half that time in instances where defendants are caught at the scene or shortly after.

His wife, Jennifer Hawke-Petit, and daughters Michaela, 11, and Hayley, 17, were murdered July 23, 2007. Steven Hayes was sentenced to death 40 months later. Both Hayes and co-defendant Joshua Komisarjevsky were caught outside the Petit home, and both confessed.

"Fortunately, in this case, justice delayed was not justice denied," Petit said of Monday's verdict.

State Rep. Michael Lawlor, co-chairman of the legislature's judiciary committee, said that Petit raises a fair point, but doubted that there was a reliable legislative solution.

Lawlor, an opponent of the death penalty, said the state could pass a law mandating that capital cases come to trial within 18 months, "and then you'll find out, on appeal, after the prosecution and conviction, whether that law is constitutional."

Lawlor, a former prosecutor, said that death penalty cases simply take a long time because the stakes are so high and a mistake by the prosecution could result in an appeals court's overturning the sentence.

Petit also said that he would like to see more money channeled into support for the families of homicide victims. He said that *if he didn't have the financial means, he couldn't have devoted the amount of time he did to the case*
.
***A victim's family with fewer financial resources would be shortchanged by the system,* he said.**

Petit's comments were part of his emotional remarks from the courthouse steps after the jury returned the verdict of death on six counts against Hayes.

Petit, with family members and friends pressed in around him, said he wasn't looking for closure.

"I don't think there is ever closure," Petit said as a chilling wind whipped up Church Street. " ***Whoever came up with that is an imbecile."***

Asked if he can start to heal, he said, "It is helpful that justice has been served with the appropriate verdict."

The horrific crime affected the town of Cheshire in a fundamental way. On Monday, residents of that town and others reacted -- most positively -- to Hayes' death sentence.

"I think that it would have been a waste of taxpayers' money to keep [Hayes] alive," said Kim Abate as she wheeled her grocery cart to her car in the Stop & Shop parking lot about a mile from the Petit home.

Abate said of Hayes' sentence, "***It's the greatest thing I've heard in a while, even though I'm usually against the death penalty. But this shook our town to its core."***

But what does Islam say? For that matter, what does the Bible say?
Here is what we find from the "experts"(?) on Islam --

Does Islam support the death penalty?

General Reference (not clearly pro or con)

The Qur'an, in a 1983 translation by M.H. Shakir and hosted online by the University of Michigan (acc
"Whoever slays a soul, ***unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land,*** whoever keeps it al

"...do not kill the soul which Allah forbidden, this is enjoined you with that you may understand

except for the requirements of justice

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) wrote in its fact sheet "Islam and Capital Punishment" da

"Muslim countries vary in the extent to which they practise capital punishment, though all retain it at pres

Islamic countries that practise a very strict Sharia law are associated with the use of capital punishment

At the other end of the spectrum are countries such as Albania and Bosnia, which still retain the death p

June 23, 2005 - British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, PhD, President of the Minaret of Freedom Institute, wrote in his Nov. 6, 2001 a

“The views of American Muslims on the death penalty vary somewhat, but the range is narrow compared

Nov. 6, 2001 - Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, PhD

Does Islam support the death penalty?

PRO (y CON (no)

Understanding Islam, a website dedicated to educating the public about Islam, stated the following in

"According to the Islamic injunctions, death penalty can be administered in two cases only. Firstly, if a pe

Secondly, the death penalty may be administered if the criminal is guilty of 'Hiraabah' or 'Fasaad fil Ardh

[Editor's Note: The above quote states that only "two cases" exist for which the Qur'an allows the death

July 29, 2008 - Understanding Islam

Shahid Athar, MD, President of the Islamic Medical Association of North America, wrote in his article "C

"There are three crimes [see Editor's Note above] for which the death penalty is justified: (a) In lieu of an

The emphasis in Islam is not on punishment itself but the reform of the criminal as well as a reminder to

July 25, 2008 - Shahid Athar, MD

Sheikh Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi, former Professor of Islamic Creed at Al-Azhar University (Cairo, Egypt),

"Death penalty is not a recent legislation, so it should not be subject to different views on whether to imp

All lawmakers legalize self-defense, and they say it is permissible for one to kill a person who attacks hi

July 25, 2008 - Sheik Ahmad Ash-Sharabasi

Tariq Ramadan, PhD, Professor of Islamic Studies at Oxford University, wrote in his Apr. 5, 2005 articl

'[W]e launch today a call for an immediate international moratorium on corporal punishment, stoning and

Apr. 5, 2005 - Tariq Ramadan, PhD

Rabia Terri Harris, Coordinator of the Muslim Peace Fellowship, wrote in her article "Islam and the Dea

"An Islamic opposition to the death penalty must begin by acknowledging that the Qur'an may clearly be

Those who favor the death penalty therefore cannot be considered as beyond the pale: we must accept

[T]he responsibility of a Muslim is justice. Will the killing of a murderer produce justice...

[W]e can measure whether it does or not by examining the state of public trust. In the US, the following f

There is no justice here. No needs are met, no fear is alleviated. This idea does not work. The hallmark

It is a far more serious error of Islamic ethics to demand a human death in circumstances when there ar

Islamic law, and Islamic taqwa, demand that we dissent from such a travesty of justice."

July 25, 2008 - Rabia Terri Harris

Khaled Abou El Fadl, Professor of Islamic Law at the UCLA School of Law, in a Jan. 25, 2002 conferen

"In the Koranic discourse, beyond the story of Cain and Abel, we find that there are various articulations

When it comes to talking about the ultimate punishment, capital punishment, it talks about intentional mu

Because God has decreed this area to be God's own, the area of life and what happens when a life is ta

Jan. 25, 2002 - Khaled Abou El Fadl, PhD

Does Christianity support the death penalty?

General Reference (not clearly pro or con)

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stated in the "Public Issues" section of the Church's c

" *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regards the question of whethe*

July 25, 2008 - Church of Jesus Christ Latter-day Saints

The Assemblies of God (USA), one of the largest Pentecostal denominations in the United States, in a

" *Opinion in the Assemblies of God on capital punishment is mixed. However, mo*

There is room in the church for honest differences of opinion concerning the use of capital punishment.

July 28, 2008 - Assemblies of God (US

Does Christianity support the death penalty?

PRO (y CON (no)

Billy Graham, Evangelical religious leader, in an article titled "The Power of the Cross," published in th

" *God will not tolerate sin. He condemns it and demands payment for it. God coul*

Apr. 2007 - Billy Graham

Southern Baptist Convention, in a June 13-14, 2000 meeting in Orlando, Florida, approved a resolution

" *Therefore, be it RESOLVED, That the messengers to the Southern Baptist Con*

June 13-14, 2000 - Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)

Carl F. H. Henry, ThD, PhD, an Anti-Today evangelicals 1988 bookcolonial and the first editor-in-chief

" *The rejection of capital punishment is not to be dignified as a 'higher Christian w*

1988 - Carl F. H. Henry, ThD, PhD

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), a coordinating agency of evangelical denominations in

" *If no crime is considered serious enough to warrant capital punishment, then the*

We strongly reaffirm our resolution of 1972 concerning capital punishment, and we call upon congress a

We urge that legislation which re-establishes the death penalty also include safeguards to eliminate any

1973 - National Association of Evangelicals

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, the second largest Lutheran church body in North America, durin

" *Whereas, The Lutheran Confessions support capital punishment:*

...God has delegated His authority of punishing evil-doers to civil magistrates in place of parents; in early

Therefore be it Resolved, That The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod declare that capital punishment is

1967 - Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

The Catholic Church, in the June 21, 2001 "Declaration of the Holy See to the First World Congress on

" *The Holy See has consistently sought the abolition of the death penalty...*

Where the death penalty is a sign of desperation, civil society is invited to assert its belief in a justice tha

June 21, 2001 - Catholic Church

The Presbyterian Church (USA), in a statement on its website titled "A General Guide to the Facts abou

" *Presbyterian General Assemblies have been concerned not only for the issue o*

In 1959, the 171st General Assembly, 'believing that capital punishment cannot be condoned by an inte

The most recent statement was made in 1985 by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), reaffirming these po

July 28, 2008 - Presbyterian Church (USA)

The United Methodist Church, in its "Opposition to Capital Punishment," a resolution adopted in 2000, st

" *The United Methodist Church declares its opposition to the retention and use of*

Studies conducted over more than sixty years have overwhelmingly failed to support the thesis that capi

The death penalty falls unfairly and unequally upon marginalized persons including the poor, the unedu

2000 - United Methodist Churc

The United Church of Christ, in its July 1999 Twenty-Second General Synod resolution "Call for Abolitio

" *WHEREAS, Jesus challenged the death penalty of his culture, calling on those*

July 1999 - United Church of Christ (UCC)

The Evangelical Lutheran Church, in an Aug. 28-Sep. 4, 1991 Churchwide Assembly meeting in Orlando

"Executions harm society by mirroring and reinforcing existing injustice. The death penalty distracts us fr

Since human beings are fallible, the innocent have been executed in the past and will inevitably be exec

It is because of this church's concern regarding the actual use of the death penalty that we oppose its im

Aug. 28-Sep. 4, 1991 - Evangelical Lutheran Church

Does Judaism support the death penalty?

General Reference (not clearly pro or con)

The BBC, in a July 20, 2006 article titled "Judaism and Capital Punishment" in its Religion and Ethics
"Someone who reads the Old Testament list of 36 capital crimes might think that Judaism is in favour of

To really understand Jewish law one must not only read the Torah but consult the Talmud, an elaboratio

The rabbis who wrote the Talmud created such a forest of barriers to actually using the death penalty th

The result of this is that there are very few examples of people being executed by Jewish law in rabbinic

In 1954, Israel abolished capital punishment except for those who committed Nazi war crimes.

In the 54 years that Israel has existed as an independent state, only one person has been executed. Thi
July 20, 2006 - British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

Does Judaism support the death penalty?

PRO (yes) CON (no)

Steven Plaut, PhD, Associate Professor of Finance and Business at Haifa University, in an Apr. 23, 20
" ... [T] he preservation of human dignit

Moreover, capital punishment is regarded in Judaism as a favor for the capital sinner, a form of atoneme
Apr. 23, 2004 - Steven Plaut , PhD

Shraga Simmons, Rabbi and Editor of Aish.com, in a response to "What are the Jewish views on the dea
"Judaism supports the death penalty, but only when there are at least two eyewitnesses who fully corrob
July 25, 2008 - Shraga Simmons

The *Tanakh*, the five books of Moses or the *Torah*, explai
"...At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; bu

The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the

And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among

And your eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foo
- Tanakh (50KB)

Nathan Diament, JD, Director of the Institute for Public Affairs of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congreg
"...[I] f you look through the Bible, there are scores of instances in which the death pe

[M] urder, is actually singled out in rabbinic teaching from all those other scores of tr

[B] ecause murder is a grievous offense, both against God and against society. And

[W] e're not about to take the position that [of the death penalty], because the teaching that, aga
June 5, 2001 - Nathan Diament, JD

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, a center for social justice and legislative activity mand
" Biblical law mandates the death penalty for 36 offenses...

The Reform Movement, however, has followed rabbinic interpretations that effectively abolished the dea

P] revailing Jewish thought"in every movement has followed the previous opinions,
July 28, 2008 - Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

The Rabbinical Assembly of America, an international association of Conservative rabbis, in their May 1
"Whereas, the Torah teaches that all human beings are created in God's image;

Whereas, Jewish tradition upholds the sanctity of life;

Whereas; both in concept and practice Rabbinic leaders in many different historical periods have found

Whereas, no evidence has been marshaled to indicate with any persuasiveness that capital punishment

Whereas, legal studies have shown that as many as 300 people in this century have been wrongfully co

Therefore, be it resolved that The Rabbinical Assembly oppose the adoption of death penalty laws and u
May 1996 - Rabbinical Assembly of America

The Progressive Jewish Alliance (PJA), an organization promoting a progressive Jewish presence in ca
"The Progressive Jewish Alliance (PJA) opposes the death penalty, and supports the call for a moratoriu

The capital punishment apparatus of our criminal justice system is deeply flawed. Capital defendants are
July 25, 2008 - Progressive Jewish Alliance

The Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, a professional association of Reconstructionist rabbis, in
"Whereas both in concept and in practice, Jewish leaders throughout over the past 2000 plus years hav

And whereas current evidence and technological advances have shown that as many as three hundred

Therefore, we resolve that the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association go on record opposing the deat
Apr. 2003 - Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association

But What Do You Say?
REMEMBER - READ - RATE - COMMENT & SHARE