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Christy Coffin

EH-111

Professor England

### An Eye for an Eye

The quote “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” dates to 1750 BC and is known as the Code of the Hammurabi due to its creator, Hammurabi, the sixth King of Babylon. An ‘eye for an eye’, is now commonly known as the Law of Retaliation, which is a principle stating that a person who has injured another person is to be penalized in a similar way. Many people believe this to be a harsh sense of justice based on revenge.

An ‘eye for an eye’ has been used as justification for the use of capital punishment. Capital punishment, also referred to as the death penalty, is the legally authorized killing of someone as punishment for a crime. The death penalty comes in many forms, including injections, electrocution, lethal gas, hanging, nitrogen hypoxia, and firing squad. The argument against ‘eye for an eye’ is that capital punishment does not provide restitution to the victim. In my opinion, the death penalty is not the most suitable way to make a criminal pay for their crimes. Rather, the best punishment for them is to spend the rest of their life in prison. My question to you is, should one life be more valuable than another?

I understand that it might not be considered fair for a criminal to be able to take another breath when the victim cannot. The same criminal has the opportunity to spend time with family even if that time is short, while the victims’ family will never be able do the same. Or, that the concept of the death penalty is to deter others from committing the same crime. That it is reasonable for the family of a victim to seek

revenge as the only way for them to find peace.

My response is regardless of the fact that someone is able to live after taking the life, or causing harm, does not mean living is a privilege. Some criminals would rather be sentenced to death instead of having to serve the rest of their life in prison. Never being able to be a part of life outside of prison is a far worse fate to some than losing their life after a death penalty sentence. I too am family to a victim who's life was taken by the hand of another. Before, I was someone that felt the only way to find justice was for the man who took my grandfather's life to suffer the same fate. I believed that an 'eye for an eye' was the only way to right a wrong. While researching an 'eye for an eye' for my perspective changed, as I've come to the conclusion that revenge is not always the best way for justice to be served.

I share with you a quote from Gandi, who said that "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind". His idea was that if we keep punishing those we deem cruel, then we are no better than those who do wrong. I believe that is a fair assessment, and, does seeking vengeance against someone who has taken something as valuable as a life justify the same fate ? That's for you to decide.

Citations:

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