

# Deuteronomy 21:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

## Analysis

**So shalt thou put away the guilt of innocent blood from among you** (אַתָּה תַּעֲמִיד תְּמִימָה נָקִי)  
—The verb ba'ar (put away/purge) is intensive, meaning to burn away or completely remove. The phrase dam naki (innocent blood) carries covenant weight—shedding innocent blood pollutes the land itself (Numbers 35:33) and brings corporate guilt requiring atonement.

**When thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD**—The unsolved murder ritual (vv. 1-8) wasn't magic but covenant obedience. Right standing before God requires dealing seriously with bloodguilt, even when the perpetrator is unknown. Corporate responsibility for justice means communities cannot ignore evil in their midst.

## Historical Context

This concludes the unsolved murder law (21:1-9), where elders of the nearest city must perform a heifer-breaking ritual to atone for blood pollution. In an agrarian society where everyone knew everyone, an unsolved murder was rare and serious—requiring communal response to maintain covenant standing before God.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. What "innocent blood" issues in your community or nation require corporate repentance and action, not just individual piety?
2. How does this passage challenge modern individualism that says "I'm not responsible for evils I didn't personally commit"?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאֶת הַ	תַּבְּעֵר	בְּשָׂמֵחַ	בְּגַעַת	מִלְּרָב בָּ
H859	So shalt thou put away	blood	the guilt of innocent	from among
	H1197	H1818	H5355	H7130
תַּעֲשֵׂה הַ	תַּבְּעֵר	בְּשָׂמֵחַ	בְּעֵינֵי	יְהֹוָה:
you when thou shalt do	that which is right	in the sight	of the LORD	
H6213	H3477	H5869	H3068	

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