

# Deuteronomy 22:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

## Analysis

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Safety regulations: 'When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.' Flat roofs required protective walls (ma'aqeh, מַעֲקֵה, railing/parapet) preventing falls. This applies covenant love to daily safety—'love thy neighbor' includes practical protection. The phrase 'bring not blood upon thine house' indicates legal/moral guilt for preventable deaths. Negligence equals guilt. This establishes principle: responsibility for others' safety extends to property design. Modern building codes, workplace safety, and liability law reflect this principle. Love demands practical care, not just sentiment.

## Historical Context

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Ancient Near Eastern homes had flat roofs used for sleeping, drying food, and socializing. Without parapets, falls caused injury/death. This law required homeowners to prevent foreseeable harm. The principle extends beyond literal application: any foreseeable danger requiring reasonable prevention. James applies this spiritually: 'to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin' (James 4:17)—omitting good is sin. Christian love proactively protects others' welfare, not merely avoiding direct harm.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does the parapet law demonstrate that love requires practical action, not just avoiding harm?
2. What modern 'parapets' (safety measures, preventative actions) does Christian love require?
3. How does responsibility for others' safety reflect the second great commandment (love neighbor)?

## Interlinear Text

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בָּנָה	תְּבֻנָה	בָּבִית	בָּבִית	יְמִינָה	וְעַש	יְמִינָה	מַעֲקָה	הַ
H3588 <b>When thou buildest</b>		house	a new		then thou shalt make		a battlement	
	H1129	H1004	H2319		H6213			H4624
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לְרַנְצֵה	לְרַנְצֵה	מִלְאָה	מִלְאָה	מִתְשָׁמֵעַ	מִתְשָׁמֵעַ	בָּבִית	בָּבִית	לְפָנֶיךָ
for thy roof	H3808	that thou bring	H7760	not blood	H1818	house	H3588	fall
	H1406					H1004	H5307	H5307
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מִתְמַכֵּד:								
	H4480							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 2:4** (Parallel theme): And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

**Isaiah 22:1** (Parallel theme): The burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?

**Acts 10:9** (Parallel theme): On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

**Jeremiah 19:13** (Parallel theme): And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods.

**Matthew 10:27** (Parallel theme): What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

**1 Thessalonians 5:22** (Parallel theme): Abstain from all appearance of evil.

**2 Samuel 11:2** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.