

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

(#137) The Proverbs of Solomon 18:19- Can You Forgive Your Brother?

Since God Created humans, only God can provide specific understanding of human behavior. God gave Solomon Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**) to explain what and why behavior is as it is, and **Proverbs 10:1 - 24:34** are randomly written, as if they were Judgments Solomon made about individual cases brought to him for Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**), or simply God-given explanations about life. New Testament passages may help see the continuation of Wisdom offered through Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 18:19:

A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.

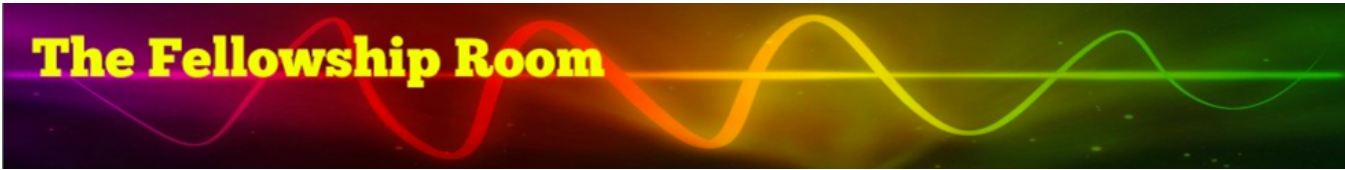
Contentious statements that divide brethren are "like the bars of a castle," that is, they defensively fortify brothers from each other. Enemies can be converted and changed more easily than a relative, and it seems the nearer the relationship, the more difficult it is to effect that change! The first brothers, Cain and Abel, were separated by Cain's anger that his brother obeyed what was right (**Genesis 4:1-12; Hebrews 11:4**) but Cain was evil (**1 John 3:11-12**). Jacob and Esau were separated by Esau's profaning his birthright (inheritance, **Genesis 25:29-34**), Jacob's deception to receive that birthright (**Genesis 27:1-46**), and Esau's bitterness and hatred for his brother.

They were separated for years before they could reconcile (**Genesis 33:1-15**), but reconcile they did! Since the Jews come from Jacob, and the so-called "Palestinians" come from Esau, the modern-day Middle East should read the Bible and reconcile their differences as their progenitors did! Brethren in the flesh can be meaner, more violent, and destructive to each other than their enemies who are not related!

Spiritual members in a church of Christ can become as bitter as Cain, and hateful as Esau, toward their brethren. The reason is the same; they have developed "an evil heart of unbelief" and departed from the living God (**Hebrews 3:12**). Their contentious words become "bars" to keep them inside their castle of ugliness.

Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. (**1 John 3:13-15**)

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



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This brings eternal damnation upon the contentious brother. No amount of attendances, giving, singing, or prayers can disguise the real intent of wrong brethren.

We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. (1 John 4:19-21)

The message of Jesus Christ, to His churches of Christ, is that of "reconciliation."

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

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