

The Sixth Commandment

 sightedmoon.com/the-sixth-commandment-more-than-meets-the-eye/

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17th day of the 8th month?5848 years after the creation of Adam
The 8th Month in the Third year of the third Sabbatical Cycle
The Third Sabbatical Cycle of the 119th Jubilee Cycle
The Sabbatical Cycle of Earthquakes Famines, and Pestilences

This is also the end of the Thirty-first week of this the Third Tithe Year for the Levite, the alien, the fatherless and the widow - Deuteronomy 26:12

November 3, 2012

Shabbat Shalom Brethren,

In Israel this Sukkot I had a great pleasure of many people from around the world. One of the things that has always floored me and humbles me to know that people are learning and growing and prospering from those things taught here at Sightedmoon.com. It does amaze me.

At Sukkot I had three people, one from Thailand and another from South Africa and another from North America all comment how blessed they were for having read the articles we were doing on the Ten Commandments. My good friend from Thailand, Maria-Louis even had copies of these commandments and used them to teach her children and grandchildren. Truly humbling to know this.

I have a few people who help me in many ways in doing research and hosting discussion groups on Face Book and just helping me by talking some things out. This summer I have concentrated on getting the newest book on the Sabbatical and Jubilee written and edited. It has taken much longer than I had expected. My spelling and grammar do give my editor fits sometimes.

One of the people I have asked to help in writing and researching this series on the Ten Commandments has been Lora Skeahan, who hosted me to speak down in Texas this past January. She has done an excellent job with very little input from me. And whenever I do suggest to her to come from this angle she whole heartedly does so and never argues back. I am deeply grateful to her and Charlie for their help and moral support and ears when I have needed an ear. Lora has also helped in some of the research for the upcoming book.

I have asked Lora to continue to write for me as I re-edit the new book again and get it ready for publishing, and because many considered the things she was bringing to the table about the commandments exceptional.

I have also asked her to stretch her understanding by approaching some of the upcoming commandments from a fresh position. This is going to challenge her. And I hope you the readers as well.

This week we continue to study out the Ten Commandments by looking at the sixth one.

The Sixth Commandment

as it is written, “You do not murder.” Exodus 20:13

For this commandment, we will present many scriptures to help us understand just what Yehovah is instructing us not to engage in. The reason all of these will be presented here, is that most of us do not receive this teaching and instruction by our parents or our churches and assemblies as we grow up and learn the ten commandments.

As we read this commandment not to murder, many of us are left thinking that this commandment means something it doesn't, or doesn't mean something it does and no one bothers to truly explain it to Yehovah's children and sons. To add to the lack of understanding and confusion many of us were led away from the Old Testament and told and taught that the Words of Yehovah have been done away with or no longer apply. Therefore, even a simple one line instruction that is part of the Ten Words is left to us without complete understanding. As we have stated previously in these studies of the Ten Commandments, the “Ten Words” are the “skeleton” or the “summary” of all the Words. Have you ever wondered... “why ten?” Let us take a moment to discuss this because it helps us with our context and audience for the Ten Commandments in relation to all of the Torah – the teaching and instruction of Yehovah.

Ten and tithe in the Hebrew writing consists of the same three letters. When reading the Bible, whether we read “ten” or whether we read “tithe” is the result of someone who came before us and placed different vowels in between those three letter. The ten commandments are the “tithe portion” of the Words of the Torah. They are the best portion... but they are not all the portion. The tithe portion was given to the Nation of Israel. A set apart instruction for a set apart people, a people who are kings and priests. But just as our Messiah spoke to us... “upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” in Matthew 22:40, once these commandments are understood and written upon the hearts of men and women of Faith, all righteousness may follow.

It is important to talk about the context of this commandment also, in other words: to whom are the commandments addressed here. The command to not murder is a “personal” command to individuals, not governments. Yehovah gives instruction on His Government elsewhere in the Torah, but again, the Ten Words are the tithe portion. Individuals make up governments, but Yehovah sets up His government with other instructions located elsewhere in the Torah. We

discuss many times how the first four commandments are given to tell us how to relate to, worship, and love Yehovah. The remaining six instructs us how to love, relate to our fellow man. Can a government commit adultery or does a government have father and mother? The answer to those questions are “no” and so we must look at these commandments as individual commandments from Yehovah to us as individual men and women. To add weight to this point, consider that we are still in the diaspora (as we are scattered to the four winds and living under secular governments everywhere), yet we must still as individuals, keep and observe Yehovah’s commandments wherever we live and in our everyday lives.

These commandments are to the heart of each of us, to speak to our hearts, to be written on our hearts, and to conform us unto righteousness. In discussing this commandment to not murder with one another and our children then, does this commandment have anything to do with capital punishment? The answer is “no.” Yehovah instructs us on capital punishment elsewhere in His Torah. Does this commandment have to do with war? Again, the answer is “no,” He likewise instructs on the aspects of war elsewhere. Both of those topics are covered elsewhere in the Torah and it is important to make that distinction in our teachings. Much of the secular world does not understand this because they do not read and study His Word.

A primary question with this commandment is “is this commandment about killing or murder.” And no, they are not the same thing. For many years, the translators caused this verse to read “thou shalt not kill” and in so doing, opened the door for scoffers and rebellious persons to mocking the ways of Yehovah and the faith of many. In this discussion we will spend some time on this aspect of the commandment because we need to teach our children these things when they are young. We need to be learning these things (what the scripture truly says, not teachings and traditions of men) for ourselves as adults and parents so that we can save the children from being scoffed at by this unbelieving world. There is little more discouraging for a young person to have great faith and great joy, only to go out and then not have all the answers and to have their faith mocked by others. Granted for adults this may not be a huge problem because we have developed confidence and “tough skin” but we owe it to our children to teach them and give them as much “correct” information as we can out of our love for their walk of faith and to not allow them to stumble.

So we are going to dive into this commandment with no fear and attempt to discuss these matters in such a way as to prevent the continued confusion of these concepts for all of you reading this. At least you will have these concepts together here in one place so as to refer to in your own study if more question remain after reading. So here is the Hebrew word in our instruction: “You do not murder (ratsach)”

ratsach {raw-tsakh’} a primitive root; TWOT – 2208; v AV – slayer 16, murderer 14, kill 5, murder 3, slain 3, manslayer 2, killing 1, slayer + 0310 1, slayeth 1, death 1; 47 1) to murder, slay, kill 1a) (Qal) to murder, slay 1a1) premeditated 1a2) accidental 1a3) as avenger 1a4) slayer (intentional) (participle) 1b) (Niphal) to be slain 1c) (Piel) 1c1) to murder, assassinate 1c2) murderer, assassin (participle)(subst) 1d) (Pual) to be killed.

If we could see the word picture produced by the letters we would see: the head of a man, then a form of a man lying down as in waiting or hunting, then a fence. And so it is no surprise that this word is trying to convey to us the idea of “planning, premeditation, and intent” The “thought” to do something first arises in the mind, hence the letter “r” which is the picture of a head of a man. The “ts” is the tsade letter and depicts someone actually lying in wait for another person. The picture of lying in wait for someone is there in the second letter, and then the fence or border letter could represent entrapment or something after that manner. All the letters together paint the picture for us what Yehovah is saying, “Do not set out to take the life of your fellow man.” Do not plan and lie in wait to take the life of another. Obviously... this is wickedness and does not in any way reflect a person in covenant with Yehovah. He tells us plainly that we are created in His Image. Murder is a direct transgression against Yehovah. He is the creator of life and only He may take it.

To further explain His commandment, Yehovah gives us specific conditions and scenarios in His Torah to help us understand “as individuals” and also to help us as a group determine whether or not someone is guilty of murder (ratsach), and requires punishment as a way to keep wickedness out of His Kingdom. We are going to cover some other words that are very often interchanged in translations as associated with death of another by the hand of mankind in many different scenarios. This may not be very fun and can take some work to differentiate and understand... but it is very important to determine, for the sake of more complete understanding and for teaching our children.

Before going on further in this discussion we need to cover another word that turns up many many times separately AND together with this Hebrew word for murder. That is the Hebrew word nakah – which means “to strike”

To Smite nakah {naw-kaw} a primitive root; TWOT – 1364; v AV – smite 348, slay 92, kill 20, beat 9, slaughter 5, stricken 3, given 3, wounded 3, strike 2, stripes 2, misc 13; 500 1) to strike, smite, hit, beat, slay, kill 1a) (Niphal) to be stricken or smitten 1b) (Pual) to be stricken or smitten 1c) (Hiphil) 1c1) to smite, strike, beat, scourge, clap, applaud, give a thrust 1c2) to smite, kill, slay (man or beast) 1c3) to smite, attack, attack and destroy, conquer, subjugate, ravage 1c4) to smite, chastise, send judgment upon, punish, destroy 1d) (Hophal) to be smitten 1d1) to receive a blow 1d2) to be wounded 1d3) to be beaten 1d4) to be (fatally) smitten, be killed, be slain 1d5) to be attacked and captured 1d6) to be smitten (with disease) 1d7) to be blighted (of plants)

Does the sixth commandment read “you do not smite (nakah)”? It does not. Parents spank their children in discipline and even Yehovah smites His own in times of correction and/or divine judgment. Here are a couple of examples of Yehovah “smiting” (nakah) His creation, and then an excerpt from the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament concerning this word nakah, which is NOT murder.

And Yehovah smelled a soothing fragrance, and Yehovah said in His heart, “Never again shall I curse the ground because of man, although the inclination of man’s heart is evil from his youth, and never again smite all living, as I have done...” Genesis 8:21

“And I shall stretch out My hand and smite Egypt with all My wonders which I shall do in its midst. And after that he shall let you go.” Exodus 3:20

The verb naka is often used for “hitting” or “smiting” an object with one, non-fatal strike. A man may “smite” an animal such as an ass (Numbers 22:23, 25, 27). He may “hit” a person on the cheek (Psalm 3:7; Lam 3:30) or in the eye (Exodus 21:26). Exodus records that Moses’ rod “struck” the river (Ex 7:17), the dust (Ex 8:16), and a rock (Ex 17:6). One may be the target of a flying object such as a stone from a sling, an arrow, or a spear. The root naka may also refer to being “smitten in conscience” as David was when he cut off Saul’s skirt in 1 Sam 24:5, and to the “clapping” of hands before a king in 2 Kings 11:12.

Naka is also found in passages which describe the beating of some object. A man may receive a “beating” by another in a fight (Ex 2:11, 13; Deut 25:11). Nehemiah “beat” some of the Jewish people for marrying foreign women (Neh 13:25). In Song of Solomon, the bride, searching for her lover through the streets of the city, is beaten by the watchmen (Song 5:7). The Tanak instructions allowed scourging for certain offenses (Deut 25:2-3). Jeremiah the prophet, however, was beaten by authorities although he was innocent. So also was the Suffering Servant who gave his “back to the smiter” (Isa 50:6, Mt 26:67). Proverbs notes the importance of beating for the sake of acquiring wisdom and discipline.

“Beat a scoffer, and the simple is made wise; and reprove one who has understanding, and he discerns knowledge.” Proverbs 19:25

“Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you beat him with a rod, he does not die. Beat him with a rod and deliver his being from the grave.” Proverbs 23:13-14

Ex 21:18-19 “And when men strive together, and one smites the other with a stone or with his fist, and he does not die but is confined to his bed, if he rises again and walks about outside with his staff, then he who smote him shall be innocent. He only pays for lost time and sees to it that he is completely healed.” So we see here, that the sin is not in the smiting (nakah), but in the actual causing of the death of another is where the sixth commandment comes in.

BUT certainly... if we lie in wait or plan to smite (nakah) someone else such that they die – then we have engaged in murder (ratsach) and have broken the commandment. Now we can move on to some of the other verses in Torah to help us understand the commandment.

“He who strikes (nakah) a man so that he dies shall certainly be put to death (muwth)” Exodus 21:12

“BUT if he did not lie in wait (tsadah), but Elohim delivered him into his hand, then I shall appoint for you a place where he is to flee.” Ex 21:13

So plainly we see, smiting is not murdering, although smiting may result in someone’s death. What must be determined at that point, is whether the death was intentional or accidental and there are instructions and details for us on these matters as well in Yehovah’s instructions.

tsadah {tsaw-daw'} a primitive root; TWOT – 1877,1878; v AV – wait 1, hunt 1, destroyed 1; 3 1) (Qal) to lie in wait 2) to lay waste 2a) (Niphal) to be laid waste

“BUT when a man acts presumptuously against his neighbour, to kill him (harag) by treachery, you are to take him even from My altar to die (muwth).” Ex 21:14

Let us move on to some of the other terms associated with murder (ratsah): harag and muwth.

Harag – to slay. This word is very interesting and to understand this word is so very helpful when teaching about the sixth commandment. Let us do the hard part first and look at the Hebrew word and Strong's definition.

harag {haw-rag'} a primitive root; TWOT – 514; v AV – slay 100, kill 24, kill... 3, murderer 2, destroyed 1, murder 1, out of hand 1, made 1, put 1, slain 31, slayer 1, surely 1; 167 1) to kill, slay, murder, destroy, murderer, slayer, out of hand 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to kill, slay 1a2) to destroy, ruin 1b) (Niphal) to be killed 1c) (Pual) to be killed, be slain

On the surface, one would say, “how is this any different from murder in our commandment?” and certainly they look much alike. However, this word is used when a death is related to JUDICIAL matters. Completely different from murder – which is a one on one personal matter of someone planning to take the life of his brother. Most believers are aware of the instructions we are given, that if broken, are to result in stoning or death. So here is where this word “harag” comes into play. Yes, a person is purposefully “put to death” but it is a result of justice being handed out.

Again, from the TWOT:

The root of the word harag includes the ideas of murder and judicial execution, as well as the killing of animals. The first use of the word (Gen 4:8) reports Cain's crime, shedding Abel's blood which “cried to God,” i.e. for vengeance. David ordered the execution of the murderers of Isbosheth (II Sam 4:11-12). The same word is used for both murder and judicial execution in agreement with the command of Genesis 9:6 where we read: “Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood is shed, for in the image of Elohim has He made man.”

The murderer is to be executed on the grounds that failure to do so signifies consent to the crime and breaks the covenant with God. Furthermore it denies God's image in man.

Certainly, this word would be used in an instance when we need to “take someone's life” in an act of self-defense if we are being attacked. Very often, this word is used in scripture when we are reading of violent killing of men by other men as in war.

Certainly a person can slay another person without the intent to cause their death. We could receive a report that “so and so had been slain.” What does this mean? Only that someone is dead. We know nothing about what “caused” the death or by what means. A child diving into a pool and hits their head is slain, but it was an accident. Likewise two children could be playing catch and the baseball hits one of them just right in the nose such that he is slain, but it was an accident or unintentional.

To “be put to death” is muwth. This is an act of just punishment for an action of transgression of moral law. This is not the word for kill. Remember our word in our commandment is ratsach. Therefore when a secular society talks about putting manslaughterers to death, this is not murder and is not breaking a moral commandment. In fact if we are not holding others accountable for murder against the image of God, we are breaking His Covenant as we read earlier.

To smite is not to kill and to kill is not to murder. We may smite someone in violence or in self-defense and not cause their death. We see a difference in the instruction concerning smiting one’s father or mother. In the following instruction we see that we are not allowed to even smite father or mother or we shall be put to death if we do.

“And he who smites his father or his mother shall certainly be put to death.” Ex 21:15. Did you see that? No one died here, but the one who simply smites the parent is to be put to death as punishment. And following in verse 17 we see the teachings of Yeshua from the spirit of the Torah right here in the letter of the Torah: “And he who curses his father or his mother shall certainly be put to death.” Ex 21:17

The punishment is the very same for cursing parents or for smiting them. Isn’t this exactly what Yeshua spoke of when He was teaching? He explained the instructions that they were to be in the heart and in the intention.

Numbers 35

The entire chapter 35 of Numbers give great instruction and guidance on how we are to handle incidents of when a life is taken by one of our community or society members. These guidelines were instituted by Yehovah for a Nation under His government given by divine order. Today, all Israel is scattered to the four corners of the earth and are all living in and under secular man-instituted governments but the instructions are still divine and expand our understanding of how Yehovah views things that happen as we live in this vessel.

Yehovah set up by divine order sanctuary cities, or cities of refuge. They were located in the cities in which the Levites were to live, and were there to make available a place for persons to go to if they became involved in the taking of a life.

“These six cities are for refuge for the children of Israel, and for the sojourner, and for the settler in their midst, for anyone who accidentally kills (nakah) someone to flee there.

But if he has smitten (nakah) him with an instrument of iron, so that he dies, he is a murderer. The murderer shall certainly be put to death.

Now we should ask why Yehovah would say this. One could surmise that if you are striking someone with iron, plainly because the instrument is of such hardness as to destroy whatever it does strike, there is little defense to say you did not intend harm on purpose to that person. Further support is given in the next verse...

“And if he has smitten him with a stone in the hand, by which one could die, and he does die, he is a murderer. The murderer shall certainly be put to death.

Or if he has smitten him with a wooden instrument that could kill, and he does die, he is a murderer. The murderer shall certainly be put to death.

The revenger of blood himself puts the murderer to death. When he meets him, he puts him to death. A revenger of blood is referring to a kinsmen redeemer, kinfolk, brother, uncle, father, cousin, next of kin of the victim. And if he thrusts him through in hatred, or throws an object at him while lying in wait, so that he dies, or in enmity he smites him with his hand so that he dies, the one who smote him shall certainly be put to death, for he is a murderer.

Are we talking about the avenger of blood here? No, we are still talking about the person who has committed the act of violence.

V 20 cont'd "The revenger of blood puts the murderer to death when he meets him."

But if he pushes him suddenly without enmity, or throws an object at him without lying in wait, or uses a stone, by which a man could die, throwing it at him without seeing him, so that he dies, while he was not his enemy or seeking his harm,

Then the congregation shall judge between him who killed someone and the revenger of blood, according to these right-rulings.

And the congregation shall rescue the one who killed someone from the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where had fled, and he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the set-apart oil.

But if the one who killed someone at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, and the revenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the revenger of blood kills him who killed someone, he is not guilty of blood, because he should have remained in his city of refuge until the death of the high priest.

But after the death of the high priest he who killed someone is to return to the land of his possession.

And these shall be for a law of right-ruling to you throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

Whoever kills someone has to be put to death as a murderer by the mouth of witnesses, but only one witness does not bear witness against someone to die.

And take no ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death, but he shall certainly be put to death.

And take no ransom for him who has fled to his city of refuge to return to dwell in the land before the death of the priest.

And do not profane the land where you are, for blood profanes the land, and the land is not pardoned for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

And do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell, for I, YHWH, am dwelling in the midst of the children of Israel."

Deuteronomy 19:3-6

“Prepare a way for yourself, and divide into three parts the border of your land which YHWH your Elohim is giving you to inherit, that anyone who killed someone shall flee there.

And this is the matter of the one who killed someone who flees there and live: He who smites his neighbour unintentionally, not having hated him in time past, even he who goes to the forest with his neighbour to cut timber, and his hand swings a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbour so that he dies – let him flee to one of these cities and live, lest the revenger of blood, while his displeasure is hot, pursue the one who killed someone and overtake him, because the way is long, and shall smite him, though he was not worthy of death, since he had not hated him before.”

In matters of home defense, scripture is clear:

“If the thief is found breaking in, and he is smitten so the he dies, there is no guilt for his bloodshed.” Exodus 22:2

Killing or slaying is not always murder. Murder is always killing or slaying. Murder is an action that results in the taking of a life with causing a death being the intent of the action. As covenant keepers, we are commanded not to murder.

In moving toward the teachings of our Master Yeshua in the Apostolic writings, there is a link provided to visit on the web that has done an excellent job in breaking down His teaching on the Spirit of this instruction also. In other words, how Yeshua relates murder to the heart of a man, and how a man is to prevent all matters of the soul that may result in wickedness or breaking of the commandments. Rather than retyping an additional teaching, please click on the link and be blessed.

<https://sites.google.com/site/christadelphianinfo/articles/christianliving/murder>

1 John 3:15 Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

What is John speaking of here?

We read in Leviticus that if you see your brother sinning and do not correct him then it is the same as if you hated him.

Leviticus 19:17 “Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt.

This Brethren is what I was doing concerning eating out on the Sabbath. I was standing up and telling you it was wrong. If I did not do that I would be the same as hating you and also of murdering you.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart,.... Although no hatred may be expressed either by words or deeds, yet being in the heart is a breach of the sixth command, see Matthew 5:21; and of this a man may be guilty, when he does not attempt to save the life of his neighbour, either by bearing a testimony for him, or by delivering from danger, as preserving him from

drowning, from wild beasts and thieves, as in Leviticus 19:16; or when he does not reprove him for sin, as in the next clause, but suffers him to go on in it to his ruin, either of which by interpretation is an hatred of him:

thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, for any sin committed by him, though secretly, yet known; which rebuke should be private, and repeated as may be found necessary, and given gently in meekness and tenderness:

and not suffer sin upon him; unconvinced of, unrepented of and persisted in, which may prove of fatal consequence to him; and therefore to let him alone, and go on in it without telling him of it, and reprovng him for it, would be so far from acting the kind and friendly part, and showing him love and respect, that it would be an evidence of hating him at heart, at least it might be strongly suspected: or, "and not bear sin for him" (a); become a partner with him in his sin, and so become liable to bear punishment for it; which is a strong reason for reprovng sin, in a proper manner, lest we should be partakers of other men's sins; see 1 Timothy 5:20.

Matthew 18:15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.

Luke 17:3 So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

1 John 2:9 Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.

1 John 2:11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

If you see your brother sinning, you have an obligation to tell him of his sin privately. If he repents then forgive him and move on. But if you choose to do nothing then it is the same as if you have murdered him; which is what John is telling us.

Again the commandment in You shall not murder. If you let your brother continue in his sin He will die for it and you will be guilty of letting him continue and as such will be guilty of murder.

Evil thrives when good people do nothing.

So stop doing nothing and saying as long as it does not harm me then I am fine with it. Again get off your butt and tell people. You are commanded not only to keep the commandments, but also to guard them, which means you defend them when others break them. This means you must take action. Evil thrives when good people do nothing.