

Exodus 20:13
September 28, 2014

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Last week we began our study of the Ten Commandments, and not surprisingly, we only got through two commandments this time! Today we will pick up where we left off by continuing our study of the Ten Commandments beginning with the sixth commandment, which is “Do not murder.” Let’s begin with the Scripture text.

BOOK (NIV 1984):

Observations/Process Qs-

[Read Ex 20:13]

V.13:

- “You shall not murder.”
- Q: Beyond the obvious of taking someone else’s life intentionally, how else does “murder” look like in today’s culture?
- Let’s look at some example situations:
 - Is killing during military combat or law enforcement violating this commandment? [Depends - Stances taken on this in a variety of denominations are theologically deduced. Start with Rom 13 – We are called to protect our families/nations from evil aggression. In Acts 23 Paul appealed to the Roman military to protect him from an ambush of more than 40 people who were bent on killing him. That is evil aggression!]
 - When a doctor makes a decision that unintentionally costs a patient’s life, is that murder?
 - When a pet is put down, is that murder?
 - Is hunting wrong?
 - Is involuntary manslaughter murder? [No, Ex 21:12]
- Murder is the unauthorized taking of human life.
- Sermon Theme (Dr. Haney): We are natural-born killers. We practice taking a life on a regular basis.
 - Matt 5 – if we are “angry with our brothers, we will be subject to judgment.” When we marginalize a person, you’re guilty of murder. Q: What does it mean to “marginalize” a person?
 - When we devalue, or dismantle the image of God, we’ve robbed them their value in life. Q: What are examples of ways we can devalue a person?
 - Don’t be an accomplice with those who murder. You may not have committed murder, but if you knew it was going to happen and you didn’t do anything, you can be convicted as if you committed murder yourself.
 - Bottom Line: We are not called to do the minimum requirement of “don’t take an innocent life, but rather to be life-givers. Show the way of grace to others. Proactively love, help, and serve those we might ignore.
- Share Josh McDowell’s Input: He suggests that the reason why we shouldn’t murder is because we are to reflect God’s character. John 14:6 Jesus says, “I am the way, the truth

and the life.” If He is life and the author of life, then it is our obligation to protect others from evil aggression so that the image of God is not marred or destroyed. If God values life and all of His creation, then we should too.

- X-Ref: 1 John 3:15 (If you hate your brother, you are a murder. See NIV footnote)

LOOK:

Let’s ask the Lord to help us see all people in our circles of influence the way He sees them. We agree not to marginalize others, demean others, or devalue them – even in our thoughts. Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to give us success to be grace-givers to all people who cross our paths.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (Ex 19–20)*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

I. Introductory Notes: The Law's Importance

No topic has been more misunderstood among Christians than the Law of Moses and its application to the NT believer today. To confuse the covenants of God is to misinterpret the mind of God and miss the blessings of God, so the believer is wise to examine the Word to determine the place and purpose of the whole Mosaic system.

II. Name

Beginning with Ex. 19 and continuing to the cross of Christ (Col. 2:14), the people were under the Mosaic system. This is called “the Law of Moses,” “the Law,” and sometimes “the Law of God.” For the sake of convenience, we often speak of “the Moral Law” (referring to the Ten Commandments), “the Ceremonial Law” (relating to the types and symbols found in the sacrificial system), and “the Civil Law” (meaning the everyday laws that governed the lives of the people). Actually, the Bible seems to make no distinction between the “moral” and “ceremonial” laws, since the one was definitely a part of the other. For example, the fourth commandment about the Sabbath Day is found in the Moral Law yet is certainly a part of the ceremonial system of Jewish holy days as well.

III. Purposes

To understand the Law, we must remember that God had already made an everlasting covenant with the Jews through their father Abraham (Gen. 15). He promised them His blessing and gave them the ownership of the land of Canaan. The Mosaic Law was “added” to the Abrahamic Covenant later, but it did not disannul it (Gal. 3:13–18). The law “entered in alongside” God’s previous covenant (Rom. 5:20) and was but a temporary measure (Gal. 3:19) on His part. It was given only to Israel to mark them as God’s chosen people and His holy nation (Ex. 19:4–6; Ps. 147:19–20). God did not give the Law to save anybody, because it is impossible to be saved by the keeping of the Law (Gal. 3:11; Rom. 3:20). He gave the Law to Israel for the following reasons:

- A. *To reveal His glory and holiness (Deut. 5:22–28).*
- B. *To reveal man's sinfulness (Rom. 7:7, 13; 1 Tim. 1:9ff; James 1:22–25).*
- C. *To mark Israel as His chosen people, and to separate them from the other nations (Ps. 147:19–20; Eph. 2:11–17; Acts 15).*
- D. *To give Israel a standard for godly living so that they might inherit the land and enjoy its blessings (Deut. 4:1ff; 5:29ff; Judges 2:19–21).*

E. To prepare Israel for the coming of Christ (Gal. 3:24).

The “schoolmaster” was a trained slave whose task it was to prepare the child for adult living. When the child matured and entered adulthood, he received his inheritance and no longer needed the schoolmaster. Israel was in her “spiritual childhood” under the Law, but this prepared her for the coming of Christ (Gal. 3:23–4:7).

F. To illustrate in type and ceremony the Person and work of Christ (Heb. 8–10).

The Law is compared to a mirror, because it reveals our sins (James 1:22–25); a yoke, because it brings bondage (Acts 15:10; Gal. 5:1; Rom. 8:3); a child-trainer, because it prepared Israel for the coming of Christ (Gal. 3:23–4:7); letters written on stones (2 Cor. 3) in contrast to the law of love written on our hearts by the Spirit; and a shadow in contrast to the reality and fulfillment we have in Christ (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:14–17).

IV. Weakness

It is important to note what the Law cannot do. It cannot accomplish these things: (1) make anything perfect, Heb. 7:11–19, 10:1–2; (2) justify from sin, Acts 13:38–39 and Rom. 3:20–28; (3) give righteousness, Gal. 2:21; (4) give peace to the heart, Heb. 9:9; and (5) give life, Gal. 3:21.

V. Christ and the Law

“The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). There is obviously a contrast between the legalistic system of Moses for Israel and the gracious position the Christian has in the body of Christ. Christ was made under the Law (Gal. 4:4–6) and fulfilled the Law in every respect (Matt. 5:17). His Person and work are seen in the Law (Luke 24:44–47). He is the end of the Law for righteousness to the believer (Rom. 10:1–13). He paid the penalty of the Law and bore the curse of the Law on the cross (Gal. 3:10–14, Col. 2:13–14). The Law no longer separates Jew and Gentile, for in Christ we are one in the church (Eph. 2:11–14).

VI. The Christian and the Law

The NT makes it very clear that the Christian is not under the Law (Rom. 6:14 and Gal. 5:18) but lives in the sphere of grace. In Christ, we died to the Law (Rom. 7:1–4) and have been delivered from the Law (Rom. 7:5–6). We must not become entangled again in the bondage of the Law (Gal. 5:1–4), which means falling out of the sphere of grace and living like a servant, not a son.

Does this mean that the Christian is supposed to be lawless and ignore the holy demands of God? Of course not! This is the accusation Paul’s enemies threw at him because he emphasized the believer’s glorious position in Christ (Rom. 6:1). Second Corinthians 3 makes it clear that the glory of the Gospel of God’s grace far surpasses the temporary glory of the OT Law, and that we Christians go “from glory to glory” (3:18) as we grow in grace. Actually, the NT Christian is under a more demanding way of life than was the OT believer; for the OT Law dealt with outward acts, while the NT law of love deals with inward attitudes. Being free from the Law does not mean being free to sin—liberty is not license. We have been called to liberty, and we must use that liberty for the good of others and the glory of God (read Gal. 5:13–26). We are

under the higher law of love, the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). We do not try to obey God in the energy of the flesh because this is impossible (Rom. 7:14); the flesh is sinful and weak and cannot submit to the law. But as we reckon ourselves dead to sin (Rom. 6) and yield to the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8), the Spirit fulfills the law in us and through us (Rom. 8:1–4).

To go back to the Law is to exchange reality for shadows and liberty for bondage. It is to forfeit the high calling we have in grace. Law means that we must do something to please God; grace means that God works in us to fulfill His perfect will.

VII. The Ten Commandments Today

All of the OT Law is but an amplification and application of the Ten Commandments. Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the NT for believers today:

A. *Have no other gods before Me (Acts 14:15; John 4:21–23;*

1 Tim. 2:5; James 2:19; 1 Cor. 8:6).

B. *Make no idols or images (Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:22–23; 1 John 5:21; 1 Cor. 10:7, 14).*

C. *Do not take His name in vain (James 5:12; Matt. 5:33–37 and 6:5–9).*

D. *Remember the Sabbath Day.*

This is not repeated anywhere in the NT for the church to obey today. Keeping the Sabbath is mentioned in Matt. 12, Mark 2, Luke 6, and John 5; but these all refer to the people of Israel and not to the church. Colossians 2 and Rom. 14–15 teach that believers should not judge one another with reference to holy days or Sabbaths. To say that a person is lost or unspiritual for not keeping the Sabbath is to go beyond the bounds of Scripture.

E. *Honor father and mother (Eph. 6:1–4).*

F. *Do not murder (1 John 3:15; Matt. 5:21–22).*

Toussaint, S. D. (1985). Acts. (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Eds.) The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures. (Vol. 2, pp. 139–141). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

g. *The sixth commandment (20:13)*

20:13. To help preserve society and because people are made in God's image (Gen. 9:6), the Israelites were commanded **not** to take another person's life by **murder** (*rāṣaḥ*, "to slay").

Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith (pp. 92 – 94). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

20:13 Should we never kill people, or simply not commit murder? According to the Bible, death was not part of God’s original plan for humanity, but became part of the human experience as a result of humanity’s sin (Gn 2:17; 3:19; Rm 5:12; Heb 9:27). All human beings are made in God’s image (Gn 1:26–27) and therefore all human life is sacred and to be treated with special respect. At the same time, the law of Moses sanctions the taking of human life as a penalty for certain serious crimes committed against persons or God (Gn 9:6; Ex 21:12–17; 31:14–15; 35:2; Lv 20:2, 9–16, 27; 24:16–17, 21; 27:29; Nm 35:33; Dt 13:5–9; 21:21; 22:21). The NT implicitly affirms the right of governmental authorities to impose the death penalty (Rm 13:4). The Bible’s prescription of the death penalty in certain circumstances is aimed at preventing greater evils from occurring, and thus preserves the principle of the sacredness of human life. Murder, the unauthorized taking of human life, is clearly what this command prohibits.

Dr. Dave Haney – Sermon on the Ten Commandments:

**http://www.riverbend.com/media#!/swx/pp/media_archives/130876/episode/35238?play=1
(Sermon on “Do Not Murder” by Dr. Haney)**

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