

GOODNEWS LETTER

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THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt not kill,"

Exodus 20:13 Deuteronomy 5:17

Since, Cain killed his brother, Abel, killing has been non-stop. In the Old Testament, we read of thousands upon thousands that are killed. Interesting, most of the killings are directed by God.

It's not difficult to see why God commands destruction of people. First, anyone that understands His Sovereignty has no problem with this. Further, no one; that is, **no one**, argues with Him. He is **God** and He, **alone, calls the shots**.

And, because God is Holy and cannot look upon sin, He removes it from His presence. His desire that His people walk in righteousness makes it necessary that all influence of sin is removed from His people.

Then, there's **retribution - *deserved punishment for evil done***. One thing we must learn about God is that He never forgets. Such was the case with the Amalekites in I Samuel 15. They treated His people Israel harshly and it came time for retribution.

"Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass, V 3.

Man's wisdom cannot override God's; even, if good is meant. "But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and oxen ... and, would not utterly destroy them, 15:9.

In Samuel, we get two poignant passages about doing things the way God says to do them. 1) Samuel's statement after hearing Saul's attempted explanation of doing what he was told: "What meaneth then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" (V 14).

And, 2) Samuel's words of retribution to Saul: "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (v22).

Samuel continued, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry," Verse 23. In other words, as Paul explained in Romans 7:7-12, when man breaks one commandment of God, he breaks them all.

And, coming to the New Testament, God directs His people to kill, as well. But, here, the enemy is not the Amalekites; it's the influences of sin of our own -

through our own body. The body loves to sin and we have to kill its appetites, daily. Like Saul, any excuse given won't be accepted.

In Romans 8:13, a Greek word is used (*thanatoo*) and means "to put to death, kill." "... if ye through the Spirit do mortify (*thanatoo*) the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Colossians 3:5 names the deeds of the body. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:"

Galatians 5:19-21 gives the "works of the flesh" - to mention some - as "Adultery, fornication wrath, strife, seditions."

Then, Paul clearly tells us of God's retribution for failing to "kill" sin in the flesh. It is, EXCLUSION OF "INHERITING THE KINGDOM," V 21.

In Samuel, we saw that Saul lost the kingdom and removed as King over God's people by not killing the enemy. Sin has to be removed from the life before God will bless us with continuation and give us the kingdom.

In other words, we have to rule truth in ourselves before we can rule over God's truth. And, it's at the beginning. Before, we can serve the LORD, **sin has to be killed**. No exception.

Before a life of service, it is necessary to get rid of the final enemy; which is death. That's the words of Paul in I Corinthians 15:26, "**The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.**"

Therefore, from an Old Testament thought of killing, to the New Testament of its true meaning, we find that only death removes sin. That's why Jesus died for our sin. He removed it.

Now, the LORD commands us to "kill" every sin in order to live with Him and for Him. Thus, at the cross, we died to sin. Today, we are to defeat the enemy by mortifying the deeds of sin in the flesh. The first act of faith is the mandatory burial of the old man in baptism by church authority.

It's all by grace, of course, through faith. No one should ever think of actually killing another person. The one that must be killed is me; not physically, but spiritually. That happened when my faith aligned with His actual death.

At Calvary, a death occurred (1959, for me). Living for an alive Jesus means that I must walk in the Spirit, where a daily death occurs, as we obey the LORD'S commands given to His body, the church.

Living for Jesus comes by faith. It has never changed, remaining just as Samuel told Saul, "**To obey is better than sacrifices and to hearken than the fat of rams.**"