

“Affirming Human Life” **Exodus 20:13**

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“You shall not murder.” Exodus 20:13 (English Standard Version)

HUMAN LIFE BELONGS TO GOD AND IS SACRED.

“Man who is born of a woman . . . comes out like a flower and withers; he flees like a shadow and continues not . . . Since his days are determined, and the number of his months is with you. . . you have appointed his limits that he cannot pass . . .” Job 14:1-2, 5 (ESV)

“And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. ⁶Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image”
Genesis 9:5-6 (ESV)

You [God] created every part of me; You put me together in my mother’s womb . . . You saw me before I was born. The days allotted to me were all recorded in Your book before any of them ever began. Psalm 139:13-16 (Good News Bible)

Murder = Hebrew = *ratsah* = killing that is unlawful or forbidden: murder and manslaughter

Three other implications flow from this central principle:

TRUST GOD WITH THE ISSUES OF LIFE AND DEATH.

(See Job 1:20-22; 2 Corinthians 5:7.)

TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST THE LOSS OF LIFE.

(See Deuteronomy 19:1-21; Exodus 21.)

“When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it.” Deuteronomy 22:8 (ESV)

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment . . .” Matthew 5:21-22a (ESV)

“You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. Leviticus 19:17-18 (ESV)

DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN KILLING AND MURDER.

- Self-defense

If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him,³ but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. Exodus 22:2-3 (ESV)

- War (See Acts 25:11; Romans 13:1-7; Psalm 144:1; Genesis 14:13-16.)
- Capital Punishment (See Acts 25:11; Romans 13:1-14; Genesis 9:5-6.)