

Killing Is Commanded

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Killing commanded
(*Exodus 32:27*)

Killing Forbidden
(*Exodus 20:13*)

In the book of Ecclesiastes it is written that there is a time to kill, just as there is a time and occasion for many things in life that appear to be in opposition to each other.

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up (Eccl. 3:3; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

Before addressing the supposed contradictory scriptures on the subject of killing, it is important to note that mankind is not living and operating under God's system of government. Mankind as a whole has rejected Almighty God and His law and commandments. Therefore, in the absence of God's rule over this planet, mankind is under the influence and value system of Satan, the Adversary (Rev. 12:9). Consequently, there are many sorrows and injustices that are a direct result of living in accordance with Satan's will,

And you (members of the early church of God) He (Almighty God) made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins (cf. 1Jn. 3:4; Rom. 6:23),²in which you once walked according to the course (Gr. aion; aeon) of this world, **according to the prince of the power of the air** (Satan), **the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience**,³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others (Eph. 2:1-3; cf. 2Cor. 4:4; Rom. 8:7-8; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Killing, murdering, lying, coveting, and many other evils will end progressively as Jesus Christ takes over rulership of this planet (see study: Satan's removal and the Sabbath Rest). This scenario is described in many prophecies.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb. The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them (Isa. 11:6).

And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things (under Satan's system) have passed away (Rev. 21:3-4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Until the events described in these prophecies are fulfilled, mankind is going to continue to experience conflict, killings, murders, injustices, etc.,

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death (Prov. 14:12; cf. 16:25).

Many times during man's history, God has intervened to prevent utter destruction of this planet. Had He not acted during the time of Noah's flood, mankind would have destroyed himself (cf. Gen. 6:5). God also acted numerous times to correct the course that the nation of Israel was pursuing and sometimes His punishment involved casualties. Again, these traumatic events will not occur once this planet is willingly subject to every word of Almighty God (Mt. 4:4). Until this happens, mankind will continue to experience the fruit of his evil ways.

The scriptures used to accuse God of contradicting Himself will now be examined. First, it is important to differentiate between murder and killing. The manner, in which the two supposed contradictory scriptures are presented, is deceptive and misleading. By inferring that both scriptures are dealing with killing is false. Exodus 20:13 is dealing with premeditated murder, which should not be confused with manslaughter, nor is it connected to some other reasons for killing that will be discussed later in this study.

You shall not **murder** (Ex. 20:13; emphasis added).

Murdering someone is not accidental. It is planned in some manner before any action is taken.

But if anyone hates his neighbor, lies in wait for him, rises against him and strikes him mortally, so that he dies, and he flees to one of these cities (i.e. cities of refuge for those guilty of manslaughter; cf. Nu. 35:9-12; Dt. 19:1-10), ¹²then the elders of his city shall send and bring him from there, and deliver him over to the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. ¹³Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with you (Dt. 19:11- 13; cf. Ex. 21:12, 14; emphasis added; Ed. notes in parenthesis).

If someone accidentally kills another person, the guilty party would not have to die. Today, the term manslaughter would be applied in this situation.

But if he (the killer) did not lie in wait, but God delivered him into his hand (did not intervene), then I will appoint for you a place where he may flee (i.e. city of refuge; cf. Dt. 19:1-10) (Ex. 21:13; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Anyone found guilty of murder on the testimony of two or three witnesses would be executed for his sin (Dt. 17:6; 19:15; Heb. 10:28). Whoever killed the guilty party would not be considered a murderer. So killing another person in this circumstance is not considered murder. Along these same lines, if God judges that an individual or even a nation is guilty of sin, He can direct others to administer the death penalty. Those who carry out this killing are not guilty of murder. Therefore the final scripture, that is misused to accuse God of contradicting Himself, actually reinforces that killing under specific instructions, as evidenced in God's word, is not considered murder. When the nation of Israel sinned against God by participating in idol worship, He instructed the Levites to go and execute those who were responsible for encouraging this sin and rebellion.



YOU SHALL NOT MURDER.

Exodus 20:13; emphasis added

Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them to their shame among their enemies), ²⁶then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said.

'Whoever is on the Lord's side, let him come to me.' And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.' ²⁸So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day (Ex. 32:25-28).

The killing of about three thousand guilty people was not considered murder because these individuals were being executed for their sins,

under God's direct order, and there were many witnesses to their evil deeds.



WHOEVER SHEDS MAN'S BLOOD, BY
MAN HIS BLOOD SHALL BE SHED, FOR IN
THE IMAGE OF GOD HE MADE MAN.

Genesis 9:6; NASB; cf. Exodus 12:12

Killing can be carried out in a number of ways and for different reasons including killing someone accidentally. However, pre-meditated killing is murder and as murder is a sin, the guilty party forfeit's the right to live their physical life according to God's word (Eze. 18:4b, 20a). So contrary to any false accusations, God does not forbid killing in His system of governing unless it is associated with pre-meditated murder.

Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man (Gen. 9:6; NASB; cf. Ex. 12:12).

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