

Series: Exploring Exodus: Redemption from the Depths to Glory

Text: Exodus 20:13

Title: No Unlawful Killing!

2 Insights

I. THE ACCURATE INSTRUCTION OF THE COMMANDMENT

A. THE COMMON MISUNDERSTANDING

Premeditated murder. Limited and inadequate. Used far less frequently in OT than words meaning kill, slay or destroy, Gen 4:8, and die, 2:17.

B. THE CORRECT MEANING

Except in Pro 22:13, word always use for man's crime against man. As a strong slant towards unlawful taking of innocent life but not restricted to that context. Same word used for unpremeditated killing or manslaughter, Num 35:6, 11; Dt 19:4-6 (trans. manslayer) in cities of refuge; killing for revenge, vv. 27, 30; assassination, 2 Ki 6:32; capital punishment, that is, legal, governmental execution, Num 35:30.

C. THE COMPLEX MESSAGE

Cannot be used to support arguments for pacifism or arguments against capital punishment. Capital punishment instituted by God in Gen 9:6; Ex 21:12; Num 35:30. It is God's law and no man can commute it, Num 35:31; upheld in NT, Rom 12:17 -13:5. This commandment refers to man taking man's life outside God-defined, lawful parameters. No conflict between Ex 20:13 and Dt 20:16-17; cf. Ex 22:2. **Hence, you shall not kill unlawfully.** Killing not always wrong

D. THE CROWNING MEDITATION

God alone is the author of life, Gen 2:7. He alone has life in himself; life is intrinsic to his being, Ex 3:14; Jn 5:26; 1 Pe 1:3. Likewise, Jesus Christ God's eternal Son has life in and of himself, 1:4; 6:57-58; 11:25-26; 14:6; etc. Ultimate expression of life= eternal life, Jn 17:3. Both Father and Son give life to whomever they will, 5:21, 26; 17:2. Lastly, the Holy Spirit gives life as he wills, Jn 3:3-8; Tit 3:5; etc. Great irony= the sinless One who gives eternal life has to surrender his life to be murdered by illegal, unjust persons and processes that sinners, etc., may have life!! Rom 5:6-10.

II. THE ADVANCED INTENTION OF THE COMMANDMENT

A. IT EXCEEDS PROHIBITION

Of taking one's life. Limiting this commandment to prohibition of murder= a minimalistic approach to its spirit. Applies to hatred, anger, speech, Mt 5:21-22; Lev 19:17-18; 1 Jn 3:15; Pro 12:18. Outward expressions from inward/spiritual realities. Calvin, *Institutes...* 2.8.6, 39

B. IT ENCOURAGES PRESERVATION

Of life. See WLC 135. So also in the case of self-defense, capital punishment when justly administered, etc. Adoption instead of abortion.

C. IT ENTAILS PROMOTION

Of life. Ultimately in loving our brothers by ultimate sacrifice as Christ did; providing their needs; etc., 1 Jn 3: 11-18

D. IT ENSURES PROPAGATION

Of life. Life will not only be preserved and promoted, but also will be proliferated in society. Those made in the image of God will have a healthier, nobler, respectful understanding of the true meaning of life. It would be instilled, inculcated in them. They will be encouraged and inspired to pass on this renewed understanding of life and its meaning to future generations. Greatest attainment of the 6th commandment= propagation of life through the gospel, Jn 3:16.