

## ~MURDER (528)

[Hebrew, *ra-tsach'*]

- .. Early History
- .. Under The Law
- .. Hatred Equated With Murder

- The original-language words variously rendered, kill, murder, and slay refer to **the taking of a life**, the context or other scriptures determining whether the deliberate and unauthorized or unlawful taking of another person's life is involved. For example, in the command:

- You must not **murder**. (**Exodus 20:13**)

- The Hebrew word for **murder**, *ra-tsach'*, here clearly refers to **deliberate and unlawful killing**. But at;

- And the avenger of blood does find him outside the boundary of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood does slay the manslayer, he has no bloodguilt. (**Numbers 35:27**)

- The same term denotes an act that an avenger of blood was authorized to carry out. Therefore, the command, You must not **murder**, has to be understood within the framework of the entire Mosaic Law, which **authorized the taking of human life under certain circumstances, as in the execution of criminals**.

### .. Early History

- Almost from the beginning of human history, **murder** has been known. Through his disobedience, the first man Adam passed sin and death to his offspring, thus, in effect, proving himself to be a **murderer**.

- That is why, just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned. (**Romans 5:12**)

- For the wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord. (**Romans 6:23**)

- It was the Devil who deliberately contributed to this development by inducing Adam's wife Eve to sin, thus himself

becoming a manslayer, a **murderer**, at the beginning of his course as a slanderer of God.

- With that Yehowah God said to the woman; What is this you have done? To this the woman replied; The serpent, it deceived me and so I ate. (**Genesis 3:13**)
- You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. That one was a **manslayer** when he began, and he did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie. (**John 8:44**)
- Less than 130 years afterward, the first violent **murder**, a **fratricide**, occurred. Cain, Adam's firstborn son, motivated by envious hatred, **murdered** his righteous brother Abel. (**Genesis 4:1-8,25**)
- And Adam lived on for a hundred and thirty years. Then he became father to a son in his likeness, in his image, and called his name Seth. (**Genesis 5:3**)
- For this act Cain was cursed in banishment to become a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth.
- And now you are cursed in banishment from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brothers blood at your hand. (**Genesis 4:11**)
- When you cultivate the ground, it will not give you back its power. A wanderer and a fugitive you will become in the earth. (**Genesis 4:12**)
- Not until after the Flood of Noah's day did God authorize human's to administer capital punishment for **murder**.
- Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man. (**Genesis 9:6**)

·· **Under The Law**

- Centuries later the Mosaic Law was given to the Israelites, and it **included extensive legislation regarding the taking of human life**. It differentiated between deliberate and accidental slaying.
- Factors considered as weighing against a person claiming to be an accidental manslayer were. If he (1) had been a former hater of the slain person.
- But in case there should happen to be a man hating his fellowman, and he has lain in wait for him and has risen up against him and struck his soul fatally and he has died, and the man has fled to one of these cities. (**Deuteronomy 19:11**)
- The older men of his city must then send and take him from there, and they must deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, and he must die. (**Deuteronomy 19:12**)
- And in case the avenger of blood chases after him, then they should not surrender the **manslayer** into his hand, for it was without knowing it that he struck his fellowman fatally, and he was not hating him formerly. (**Joshua 20:5**)
- (2) had lain in wait for the victim.
- And if in hatred he was pushing him or he has thrown at him while lying in wait that he might die. (**Numbers 35:20**)
- Or in enmity he has struck him with his hand that he might die, without fail the striker should be put to death. He is a **murderer**. The avenger of blood will put the murderer to death when he chances upon him. (**Numbers 35:21**)
- Or (3) had used an object or implement capable of inflicting a mortal wound.
- Now if it was with an instrument of iron that he has struck him so that he dies, he is a **murderer**. Without fail the murderer should be put to death. (**Numbers 35:16**)
- And if it was with a small stone by which he could die that he has struck him so that he dies, he is a **murderer**. Without fail the murderer should be put to death. (**Numbers 35:17**)
- And if it was with a small instrument of wood by which he could

die that he has struck him so that he dies, he is a **murderer**. Without fail the **murderer** should be put to death. (**Numbers 35:18**)

- Even slaves, if killed while being beaten by their masters, were to be avenged.
- And in case a man strikes his slave man or his slave girl with a stick and that one actually dies under his hand, that one is to be avenged without fail. (**Exodus 21:20**)
- Whereas the death penalty was prescribed for deliberate **murderers** and a ransom was ruled out in their case, unintentional manslaughter could preserve their lives by availing themselves of the safety accorded them in the cities of refuge.
- One who strikes a man so that he actually dies is to be put to death without fail. (**Exodus 21:12**)
- But where one does not lie in wait and the true God lets it occur at his hand, then I must fix for you a place where he can flee. (**Exodus 21:13**)
- Every fatal striker of a soul should be slain as a **murderer** at the mouth of witnesses, and one witness may not testify against a soul for him to die. (**Numbers 35:30**)
- And you must take no ransom for the soul of a **murderer** who is deserving to die, for without fail he should be put to death. (**Numbers 35:31**)
- Speak to the sons of Israel, saying; Give for yourselves the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by means of Moses. (**Joshua 20:2**)
- For the manslayer who fatally strikes a soul unintentionally without knowing it to flee there, and they must serve you as a refuge from the avenger of blood. (**Joshua 20:3**)

### **See Also CITIES OF REFUGE**

- Certain deliberate acts that indirectly caused or could have resulted in the death of another person were considered tantamount to deliberate **murder**. For example, the owner of a goring bull who

**disregarded previous warnings to keep the animal under guard could be put to death if his bull killed someone.**

- **In some cases, however, a ransom could be accepted in place of the life of the owner. Undoubtedly the judges would take circumstances into consideration in such a case.**
- **But if a bull was formerly in the habit of goring and warning was served on its owner but he would not keep it under guard, and it did put a man or a woman to death, the bull is to be stoned and also its owner is to be put to death. ([Exodus 21:29](#))**
- **If a ransom should be imposed upon him, then he must give the redemption price for his soul according to all that may be imposed upon him. ([Exodus 21:30](#))**
- **Also, an individual scheming to have another person killed by presenting false testimony was himself to be put to death.**
- **And the judges must search thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness and has brought a false charge against his brother. ([Deuteronomy 19:18](#))**
- **You must also do to him just as he had schemed to do to his brother, and you must clear away what is bad from your midst. ([Deuteronomy 19:19](#))**
- **So those who remain will hear and be afraid, and they will never again do anything bad like this in your midst. ([Deuteronomy 19:20](#))**
- **And your eye should not feel sorry. Soul will be for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. ([Deuteronomy 19:21](#))**
- **The Law permitted self-defense but restricted an individual's right to fight for his property. Bloodguilt came upon a person who, though catching a thief in the act of breaking into his home, killed the lawbreaker in the daytime.**
- **This was evidently because thievery did not carry the death penalty, and the thief could be identified and brought to justice. At night, however, it would be difficult to see what one was doing and to**

ascertain the intentions of an intruder. Therefore, the person killing an intruder in the dark was considered guiltless.

- If a thief should be found in the act of breaking in and he does get struck and die, there is no bloodguilt for him. (**Exodus 22:2**)
- If the sun has shone forth upon him, there is bloodguilt for him. He is to make compensation without fail. If he has nothing, then he must be sold for the things he stole. (**Exodus 22:3**)
- In the **First Century C.E.** those seeking to kill Jesus were identified as children of the Devil, the first **manslayer**.
- You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. That one was a **manslayer** when he began, and he did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie. (**John 8:44**)
- The scribes and Pharisees decorated the tombs of righteous ones, claiming that they would not have been sharers in putting the prophets to death. Yet they manifested the same **murderous** spirit toward the Son of God.
- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the graves of the prophets and decorate the memorial tombs of the righteous ones. (**Matthew 23:29**)
- And you say; If we were in the days of our forefathers, we would not be sharers with them in the blood of the prophets. (**Matthew 23:30**)
- Therefore you are bearing witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who **murdered** the prophets. (**Matthew 23:31**)
- Well, then, fill up the measure of your forefathers. (**Matthew 23:32**)
- Hear another illustration. There was a man, a householder, who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and erected a tower, and let it out to cultivators, and traveled abroad. (**Matthew 21:33**)

- When the season of the fruits came around, he dispatched his slaves to the cultivators to get his fruits. ([Matthew 21:34](#))
- However, the cultivators took his slaves, and one they beat up, another they killed, another they stoned. ([Matthew 21:35](#))
- Again he dispatched other slaves, more than the first, but they did the same to these. ([Matthew 21:36](#))
- Lastly he dispatched his son to them, saying; They will respect my son. ([Matthew 21:37](#))
- On seeing the son the cultivators said among themselves; This is the heir. Come, let us **kill** him and get his inheritance! ([Matthew 21:38](#))
- So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. ([Matthew 21:39](#))
- Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those cultivators? ([Matthew 21:40](#))
- They said to him; Because they are evil, he will bring an evil destruction upon them and will let out the vineyard to other cultivators, who will render him the fruits when they become due. ([Matthew 21:41](#))
- Jesus said to them; Did you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected is the one that has become the chief cornerstone. From Yehowah this has come to be, and it is marvelous in our eyes? ([Matthew 21:42](#))
- This is why I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits. ([Matthew 21:43](#))
- Also, the person falling upon this stone will be shattered. As for anyone upon whom it falls, it will pulverize him. ([Matthew 21:44](#))
- Now when the chief priests and the Pharisees had heard his illustrations, they took note that he was speaking about them. ([Matthew 21:45](#))
- The kingdom of the heavens has become like a man, a king, that

made a marriage feast for his son. ([Matthew 22:2](#))

- And he sent forth his slaves to call those invited to the marriage feast, but they were unwilling to come. ([Matthew 22:3](#))
- Again he sent forth other slaves, saying; Tell those invited; Look! I have prepared my dinner, my bulls and fattened animals are slaughtered, and all things are ready. Come to the marriage feast. ([Matthew 22:4](#))
- But unconcerned they went off, one to his own field, another to his commercial business. ([Matthew 22:5](#))
- But the rest, laying hold of his slaves, treated them insolently and killed them. ([Matthew 22:6](#))
- But the king grew wrathful, and sent his armies and destroyed those **murderers** and burned their city. ([Matthew 22:7](#))
- Yes, you disowned that holy and righteous one, and you asked for a man, a **murderer**, to be freely granted to you. ([Acts of Apostles 3:14](#))
- Whereas you **killed** the Chief Agent of life. But God raised him up from the dead, of which fact we are witnesses. ([Acts of Apostles 3:15](#))
- Obstinate men and uncircumcised in hearts and ears, you are always resisting the Holy Spirit, as your forefathers did, so you do. ([Acts of Apostles 7:51](#))
- Which one of the prophets did your forefathers not persecute? Yes, they killed those who made announcement in advance concerning the coming of the righteous One, whose betrayers and **murderers** you have now become. ([Acts of Apostles 7:52](#))

## •• Hatred Equated With Murder

- **Murders** issue forth from the heart of an individual.
- For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings, **murders**, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies. ([Matthew 15:19](#))



- For from inside, out of the heart of men, injurious reasonings issue forth, fornications, thieveries, **murders**. (**Mark 7:21**)
- And just as they did not approve of holding God in accurate knowledge, God gave them up to a disapproved mental state, to do the things not fitting. (**Romans 1:28**)
- Filled as they were with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, badness, being full of envy, **murder**, strife, deceit, malicious disposition, being whisperers. (**Romans 1:29**)
- Backbiters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, self-assuming, inventors of injurious things, disobedient to parents. (**Romans 1:30**)
- Without understanding, false to agreements, having no natural affection, merciless. (**Romans 1:31**)
- Although these know full well the righteous decree of God, that those practicing such things are deserving of death, they not only keep on doing them but also consent with those practicing them. (**Romans 1:32**)
- Therefore, anyone hating his brother would be a manslayer, a **murderer**.
- Everyone who hates his brother is a **manslayer**, and you know that no **manslayer** has everlasting life remaining in him. (**1 John 3:15**)
- Christ Jesus also associated **murder** with wrong attitudes such as an individual's continuing wrathful with his brother, speaking abusively to him, or wrongly judging and condemning him as a despicable fool.
- You heard that it was said to those of ancient times, You must not **murder**, but whoever commits a murder will be accountable to the court of justice. (**Matthew 5:21**)
- However, I say to you that everyone who continues wrathful with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice, but whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt will be accountable to the Supreme Court, whereas whoever says; You despicable fool! Will be liable to the fiery Gehenna. (**Matthew 5:22**)

- Such hatred may lead to actual **murder**. It appears that the words of
- You have condemned, you have **murdered** the righteous one. Is he not opposing you? (**James 5:6**)
- May be understood in this light. Wicked rich persons who showed hatred for genuine disciples of God's Son and took oppressive action against them did in some instances actually **murder** these Christians.
- As treatment accorded to his brothers is considered by Christ Jesus to be meted out to him, these persons had also figuratively **murdered** him, and James evidently had that in mind.
- My brothers, you are not holding the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, our glory, with acts of favoritism, are you? (**James 2:1**)
- For, if a man with gold rings on his fingers and in splendid clothing enters into a gathering of you, but a poor man in filthy clothing also enters. (**James 2:2**)
- Yet you look with favor upon the one wearing the splendid clothing and say; You take this seat here in a fine place, and you say to the poor one; You keep standing. Or; Take that seat there under my footstool. (**James 2:3**)
- You have class distinctions among yourselves and you have become judges rendering wicked decisions, is that not so? (**James 2:4**)
- Listen, my beloved brothers. God chose the ones who are poor respecting the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he promised to those who love him, did he not? (**James 2:5**)
- You, though, have dishonored the poor man. The rich oppress you, and they drag you before Law courts, do they not? (**James 2:6**)
- They blaspheme the fine name by which you were called, do they not? (**James 2:7**)

- If, now, you practice carrying out the kingly Law according to the scripture; You must love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing quite well. (James 2:8)
- But if you continue showing favoritism, you are working a sin, for you are reprov'd by the Law as transgressors. (James 2:9)
- For whoever observes all the Law but makes a false step in one point, he has become an offender against them all. (James 2:10)
- For he who said; You must not commit adultery, said also; **You must not murder**. If, now, you do not commit adultery but you do **murder**, you have become a transgressor of law. (James 2:11)
- And in reply the king will say to them; Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. (Matthew 25:40)
- Then he will answer them with the words, Truly I say to you, To the extent that you did not do it to one of these least ones, you did not do it to me. (Matthew 25:45)
- Yes, you disowned that holy and righteous one, and you asked for a man, a **murderer**, to be freely granted to you. (Acts of Apostles 3:14)
- Whereas you killed the Chief Agent of life. But God raised him up from the dead, of which fact we are witnesses. (Acts of Apostles 3:15)
- Although followers of Christ might be persecuted and even **murdered** for righteousness sake, they were not to be found suffering for having committed murder or other crimes.
- Look! I am sending you forth as sheep amidst wolves, therefore prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves. (Matthew 10:16)
- Be on your guard against men, for they will deliver you up to local courts, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. (Matthew 10:17)
- And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul, but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both

soul and body in Gehenna. (**Matthew 10:28**)

- Beloved ones, do not be puzzled at the burning among you, which is happening to you for a trial, as though a strange thing were befalling you. (**1 Peter 4:12**)
- On the contrary, go on rejoicing forasmuch as you are sharers in the sufferings of the Christ, that you may rejoice and be overjoyed also during the revelation of his glory. (**1 Peter 4:13**)
- If you are being reproached for the name of Christ, you are happy, because the spirit of glory, even the spirit of God, is resting upon you. (**1 Peter 4:14**)
- However, let none of you suffer as a **murderer** or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other peoples matters. (**1 Peter 4:15**)
- But if he suffers as a Christian, let him not feel shame, but let him keep on glorifying God in this name. (**1 Peter 4:16**)
- But as for the cowards and those without faith and those who are disgusting in their filth and **murderers** and fornicators and those practicing spiritism and idolaters and all the liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death. (**Revelation 21:8**)
- Outside are the dogs and those who practice spiritism and the fornicators and the **murderers** and the idolaters and everyone liking and carrying on a lie. (**Revelation 22:15**)