

Torah Studies – Statutes #388-394

Statute Summary:

Note: according to Revelation 5:10 and Exodus 19:6, believers (who are spiritual Israel) are all called to serve **Yahweh** as “priests” and “kings”. Thus, the Statutes for the kings of Israel bear special relevance to us all...

Statute 388: Kings (or leaders) of Israel are to be chosen by Yahweh.

Statute 389: Kings (or leaders) of the people of Yahweh must be selected from among the brethren (the saved people of Yahweh, who are spiritual Israel). A non-Covenant keeper is ineligible for a leadership role over Yahweh’s people.

Statute 390: Kings (or leaders) of Israel are to trust in Yahweh in all things, rather than relying on military might or money.

Statute 391: Kings (or leaders) of Israel must take great care to not allow their hearts/souls to be bonded (in marriage or relationships) in ways that could threaten their commitment to Yahweh and His supremacy.

Statute 392: Kings (or leaders) of Israel must take great care to never influence others to return to Egypt, which spiritually represents the realm of darkness, idolatry, and sin.

Statute 393: Kings (or leaders) of Israel must write out and daily read from their own personal copy of the Torah. This is to ensure that the king knows the Torah well, and can govern all realms of his/her jurisdiction according to the Torah principles.

Statute 394: Kings (or leaders) of Israel must keep their own hearts humble and never allow themselves to become prideful of their position of authority.

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 “When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will **set** a **king** over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me; Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall **choose**: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a **stranger** over thee, which *is* not thy **brother**. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be,

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...when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, *to the right hand, or to the left*: to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
SET	H7760	śûm	to <i>put</i> , appoint, charge, commit, consider, convey, determine, mark, ordain...
KING	H4428	melek	a <i>king</i> : - king, royal. From the root 4427 meaning “to take counsel, begin to reign, make queen, induct into royalty”
CHOOSE	H977	bâchar	to <i>try</i> , that is, (by implication) <i>select</i> : - acceptable, appoint, choose (choice), excellent, join, be rather, require
STRANGER	H5237	nokrîy	<i>strange</i> , in a variety of degrees and applications (<i>foreign, non-relative, adulterous...</i>)
BROTHER	H251	'âch	a <i>brother</i> (used in the widest sense of literal relationship and metaphorical affinity or resemblance (like H1 – of the same Father): kindred, like...

Synthesis:

Deuteronomy 17:15-20 gives us the legal qualifications and expectations of future kings of Israel. It is interesting, when one considers it, that the sin of Israel in requesting Saul was not because they sought a king (Deuteronomy appears to anticipate kingship), it was the reason why they wanted another king – to be like other nations, and not set apart.

Familiarity with this passage is important because this list serves as the basis for God’s and His prophet’s indictment against the sins of their kings, along with the rest of the Mosaic Law.

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Here is the list of important qualifications and expectations of an Israelite King:

1. He must be a man chosen by God. (17:15)
2. He must be a Hebrew, and not a foreigner. (17:15)
3. His is not to multiply his horses for himself, creating a large military for himself. (17:16)
4. He is not to take many wives, for they will pull his heart away from God. (17:17)
5. He is not to create for himself great wealth. (17:17)
6. He must possess a personal copy of the law, study it, and obey it. (17:18-20)
7. He must be a humble man, not seeing himself greater than his countrymen (17:20)

Revelation 1:5-6

*And from Yahshua Messiah, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, and the Ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own Blood, **and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father**, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

Messiah will soon return and take His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords. His Dominion and Kingdom are universal and eternal (Revelation 11:15; 19:16).

Yahweh's people are now working to advance His Kingdom, in preparation for His Return. He has made us "kings and priests" to help in administering the government of the Kingdom of God on earth (Revelation 5:10), now and into eternity.

Yahshua made clear to His disciples that positions of leadership are intended to be positions of service, and that His Government truly has the best interests of the governed in mind (Matthew 20:25-28). Being faithful over our current little "kingdom" (personal sphere of influence and areas of jurisdiction) prepare us for faithfulness in larger responsibilities later (Matthew 25:21).

Torah Studies – Commandment #6

Exodus 20:13 “Thou shalt not kill.”

Key Word Study:

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
THOU SHALT NOT	3808	lô'	never
KILL	7523	râtsach	to <i>dash</i> in pieces a human being, especially to <i>murder</i> : - put to death, kill, murder (-er)

What does it mean, “Thou shalt not kill?” Does **Yahweh** kill? This question goes right to the very Character of God...

In Judges we read a strange story about Jael, who under the unction of the Holy Spirit, slew the wicked Sisera with a nail! One popular Christian viewpoint is the teaching that God can't kill - indeed taking life is against His Character. So, let us take a moment to examine Jael's strange act, which was foretold by the prophetess Deborah and was used of God to deliver Israel. And as we do, we must look at a root issue - the Character of God.

Let's begin with the commonly held assertion about God:

Assertion: God does not kill

Arguments to support this assertion:

“How can a “killing” God tell humans “Thou shalt not kill” and yet to pattern their character after His own? Wouldn't killing be going against His own Character?”

- If we don't obey God, He will kill us. How would that lead to a loving relationship? If God kills the lost in the end, isn't He essentially saying: If you disobey me, I will kill you?”



At first glance, these assertions get one's attention. It certainly appears that God cannot kill, nor command someone to kill, lest He break His own Law. But here's where this conclusion starts to get a bit dicey, as we will soon see more clearly: If God cannot take life under any circumstances, what does He do with the wicked at the end? Indeed, what does he do with the devil himself?

Those who believe the teaching that God cannot kill under any circumstance often answer these questions by stating that God merely turns His back and the devil actually does the killing, while God looks the other way. This idea is increasingly popular. But is it Scriptural?

Commandment 6 (continued)

It certainly makes the story of Jael all the more difficult to explain. Let's start at the beginning and carefully address this subject. Since the very Character of God is demonstrated in this doctrine, it is vitally important that we get it right, according to the Word.

In Deuteronomy, God plainly states that because He is God, He not only makes all life, but He has the right to take it also:

Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, Am He, and there is no god with Me. I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My Hand."

But what about the Sixth Commandment? Yahweh plainly says, "Thou shalt not kill". How can He be a just God if He makes Laws that He doesn't keep?



To answer this, we need to look at the original Hebrew word for "kill" from Exodus 20:13. We are looking to find the deeper meaning. Does "thou shalt not kill" mean that taking any life for any reason is unLawful? Actually, no! The word "kill" means to commit "unlawful murder", or to take life "with malice":

Kill = 7523 *ratsach* – "to kill a human being, murder"

LEXICON – "This verb occurs in one of the Ten Commandments, referring to an unlawful killing of a human being with

malice..."

Notably, in Scripture we can quickly discern that God did not mean that taking human life is always against His Law. In fact, there were times when God told His people to take life - and He blessed them in doing it! God never blesses for breaking His Law (Deuteronomy 7:11-14, Psalm 119:1, James 1:25).

Deuteronomy 30:16-20 - "...I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His Ways, and to keep His Commandments and His Statutes and His Judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the Lord thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away... I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call Heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey His Voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."

Commandment 6 (continued)



Clearly, Scripture states that when we obey God's Commandments, we are blessed. And when we break the Law of God, we are not blessed. Considering this, it is compelling to note that the Bible says Jael was blessed for driving a nail through Sisera's skull! Not only was Jael blessed for this slaying, but she was blessed so greatly that her blessing exceeded that of all other women around her! Wow!

Judges 5:24-26 "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish. She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she

smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples."

Since the Bible tells us that we can never be blessed in disobeying God's Law, we can only conclude that Jael's slaying of Sisera didn't break the Sixth Commandment! She had not committed unjust murder by taking his life. In fact, she was acting under the unction and direction of God, according to the account in Judges.

And Jael wasn't the only child of God who was divinely empowered to dispatch a wicked person - David honored God by slaying the giant Goliath. In the slaying of Goliath, David was blessed. He is even eulogized in the faith chapter of Hebrews 11:

Hebrews 11:32-34 "And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in

fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."



But there was a clear distinction between David's "valiant" act in slaying Goliath and in David's unjust and unrighteous slaying of Uriah, the Hittite. Taking Uriah's life was shedding "innocent blood", which is one of the highest crimes, bringing the Judgments of the Almighty upon David's life and family. Scripturally,

we can clearly see a distinction between taking a wicked life, under the direction of God Himself, and committing unjust murder.

Another Scriptural example of God commanding His faithful people to take life was the story of Israel and the golden calf. In this account, all the tribes except Levi participated in this idolatrous worship. Because Levi remained faithful to God, they were commanded to slay the worst of the idolaters. In so doing, God blessed them:

Commandment 6 (*continued*)

Exodus 32:26 "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that He may bestow upon you a blessing this day."

Another example of a time when God commanded His people to take life was in the story of Elijah. After the dynamic showdown on Mount Carmel, this prophet of God led in the slaying of some 850 prophets of Baal.

- Yahweh commanded Israel to slay the men and women of Midian - Numbers 31:7-17
- Samson slew a thousand men, with only a jawbone, after the Spirit of God came upon him, empowering him to do so - Judges 15:14-15

The bottom line is this: *Yahweh* never commands His people to break His Law.

Malachi 3:6 "For I Am the LORD, I change not..."

Psalm 89:34 "My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My Lips."

It is sin to break the Law of God (1 John 3:4). And God does not ever tell anyone to sin, nor tempt anyone!

James 1:13 "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man."

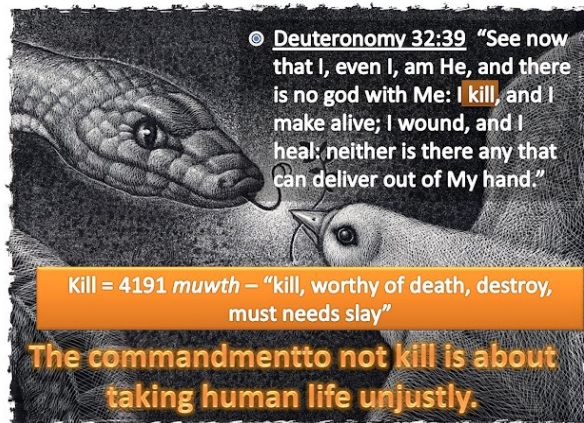
Already we can see that God told many people to take life. Since He never commands evil, we can be certain that it was not breaking God's Law for these people to take life in these cases. Clearly, these slayings were not "unjust murder". But it goes yet another step, according to Scripture. There are cases where God Himself slew someone.

- The Bible tells us the Uzzah was slain by the direct Hand of God - 2 Samuel 6:6-7
- In the destruction of Jericho, God fought with Israel, commanding them to slay every citizen (except Rahab and her house). God brought down the city walls and fought with Israel in this battle - Joshua 6:2-21
- Nadab and Abihu, two priests who were the sons of Aaron, disobediently brought "strange fire" into God's House. As a consequence, He slew them for it, in the Tabernacle - Leviticus 10:1-2

Commandment 6 (continued)

- To believe that God merely turned His back on the firstborn of Egypt, and Satan moved in like God's mafia hitman, is to believe something which is counter to Scripture. The Bible plainly states that God Himself slew the firstborn of Egypt - Exodus 12:29
- Finally, Yahweh Personally rained Fire from Heaven down upon Sodom and Gomorrah. He is the one who slew the people of these cities of the plains - Genesis 19:24-25

The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is a shadow-picture of God's Final Judgment upon the wicked and planet earth. It is the Work of Yahweh, Himself, to destroy the wicked. He, Who is not willing that any should perish, but has done all that Heaven could do to save everyone, will ultimately destroy those who continue in rebellion against Him (Revelation 11:17-19, Ezekiel 33:11, Isaiah 28:21).



How can a loving God take life? How can a righteous God slay people without breaking His Own Law?

"Unjust Murder" is against God's Law. God does take life, but He never commits murder. The word "kill" found in Deuteronomy 32:39 means to justly slay someone who is "worthy of death". Therefore, according to Scripture, it is not against God's Character, nor breaking His Law to take the life of someone who *God* has deemed to be wicked and worthy of death.

How can we reconcile the ultimate destruction of the wicked with the loving Character of God? First, I must point out that the Love of God is irrevocably established, having been portrayed and played out at Calvary to such a degree that it is forever beyond question! God desires the Salvation of every man, woman, and child. It does not give Him pleasure to need to destroy anyone (Ezekiel 33:11, Isaiah 55:6-7, Ezekiel 18:31-32). In fact, so great is the provision and price which has been paid for our Salvation, that God has made it unnecessary for anyone to be destroyed.

Whether we accept Yahshua's Sacrifice and partake of Salvation, or rebel against God and bring down Eternal Death upon ourselves - the choice is now ours to make. But, in the end, for those who choose rebellion, God Himself will take their lives, purging the world of wickedness and evil - once and for all:

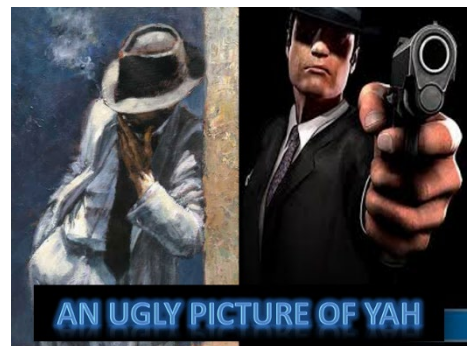
Commandment 6 (continued)

Isaiah 62:8-9 "The LORD hath sworn by His right Hand, and by the Arm of His Strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of My Holiness."

Nahum 1:3-9 "The LORD is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath His Way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before His Indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by Him. The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time."

In fact, God's ability to Judge and purge the world of wickedness, restoring it to its Edenic purity is one of the greatest demonstrations of His Great Strength (Revelation 18:8). The idea that God cannot bring this about, nor deal with the unrepentant wicked on His Own is a terrible misrepresentation of His Character and Strength. God does not need the devil! The pagan idea that *yin* balances *yang* and that white is counter-balanced by black is borne out in this teaching that God merely turns His back on the wicked and the devil is the hit man who actually slays them.

It makes God out to be a weak "mafia boss" type, who is - in effect - in collusion with the devil. Worse yet, God is portrayed as being ineffective and unable to do what needs to be done. But this isn't God's Character at all. God, Who works to save everyone, can and does take life, when it is warranted. And He is an all-powerful, complete "package" kind of God, Who needs no one, outside of Himself, to accomplish the destruction of the wicked:



Deuteronomy 32:39 "See now that I, even I, Am He, and there is no god with Me. I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My Hand."

Thus, we see that the story of Jael perfectly fits the Character of God. He isn't a trickster, Who foretells the destruction of the evil Sisera through the hand of Jael, inspires Jael to take Sisera's life, and blesses Jael for doing this work, having instructed her to break His Law.

Commandment 6 *(continued)*

It isn't out of God's Character to justly bring an end to a rebellious life. It is out of God's Character to commit unjust murder. And this is something He will never do, nor will He ever command His people to do it. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

This is the loving, powerful, and wonderful Character of God.

Torah Studies – Statutes #395-396

Statute Summary:

Statute 395: God's people are not to hate, loathe, or allow strong negative emotions towards the Edomites or Egyptians, or people like them who are in spiritual darkness, but are not antagonistic against Yahweh or the Truth.

Statute 396: We are to be understanding and gentle with such folk, because we ourselves were once caught in the bondage of spiritual Egypt.

Deuteronomy 23:7 "Thou shalt not **abhor** an Edomite; for he is thy **brother**: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a **stranger** in his land."

Key Word	Strong's Number	Hebrew Word	Meaning
ABHOR	8581	tâ'ab	to loathe, that is, (morally) detest, utterly abominable
BROTHER	251	'âch	a brother (used in literal relationship and metaphorical affinity or resemblance) like
STRANGER	1616	gêr	a guest; by implication a foreigner: - alien, sojourner, stranger

Further Study

What are Statutes regarding loathing/hate doing under the Commandment heading of Thou shalt not kill?

Scripture classes hate as a form of murder:

- 1 John 3:15 - "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has Eternal Life abiding in him".
- Matthew 5:22 - "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgement".

What does Matthew 5:22 mean about being angry with a brother without a cause. The phrase 'without a cause' is omitted in some versions, but it actually belongs. Anger, when it is righteous, is not forbidden. See Ephesians 4:26, Psalm 4:4, and was practiced by Yahshua (Who is our Example in all things), Mark 3:5. But 'anger without a cause' (defined by Scripture) is forbidden.

Torah Studies – Statutes #395-396 (continued)

So, what is a Biblical “cause” for anger? What is Righteous Indignation vs. ungodly wrath, bitterness or loathing? Messiah demonstrated the following, when He famously cleansed the Temple:

1. **Righteous anger reacts against actual sin.** This means that what provokes godly anger is sin as defined or described in the Bible. Merely having our desires or preferences crossed does *not* qualify as sin. We do not get to use our personal wishes and predispositions as the standards for what is right and wrong.
2. **Righteous anger is Yahweh-oriented, not me-oriented.** “He must increase, but I must decrease,” (John 3:30). Anger that is godly hones in on how Yahweh’s reputation and purposes have been offended, not ultimately how my reputation and purposes have been offended.
3. **Righteous anger expresses itself in godly ways.** Anger that is directed at actual sin and is Yahweh-oriented must also manifest the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23) if it is to be called righteous.

When Yahshua cleared the Temple of the moneychangers and animal-sellers, He showed righteous indignation (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; John 2:13-22) which is described as “zeal” for Yahweh’s House (John 2:17). His anger was pure and completely justified because at its root was concern for God’s holiness and worship.

[Ephesians 4:26](#) instructs us “in your anger do not sin” and not to let the sun go down on our anger. The command is not to “avoid anger” but to manifest it only in righteousness, through the power of Messiah:

- 1) His anger had the proper motivation. In other words, He was angry for the right reasons. Yahshua’s anger did not arise from petty arguments or personal slights against Him. There was no selfishness involved.
- 2) His anger had the proper focus. He was not angry at God or at the “weaknesses” of others. His anger targeted sinful behavior and true injustice.
- 3) His anger had the proper supplement. Mark 3:5 says that His anger was attended by grief over the Pharisees’ lack of faith. Yahshua’s anger stemmed from love for the Pharisees and concern for their spiritual condition. It had nothing to do with hatred or ill will.
- 4) His anger had the proper control. Yahshua was never out of control, even in His wrath. He controlled His emotions; His emotions did not control Him.

The wrath of man is not righteous. It manifests without love or self-control. “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires” (James 1:19-20). Yahshua did not exhibit man’s anger, but the righteous indignation of Yah.