

Thou Shalt not Kill Question

From: <tony@tc___.com>
To: "Neil Mammen" <neilswebpage@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 10:09 AM
Subject: things that make you go HMMMMMMMMMMMMMM....

Preface:

Tony D, a mild mannered little worker bee (NOT!!!) at S__S__, has been trying to be a witness for all he comes in contact. Among several people at work, there is an individual named "Bob" who is definitely not a Christ follower but none-the-less, we are called to just "throw seed".

So the story goes...

On my way to work this morning I saw "Bob" at the bus stop so I stopped and picked him up. During the commute we talked about several inconsistent things people do until we hit the subject of the Bible (DING! DING! DING!).

He mentioned it had several inconsistencies. So I asked which ones. He brought up the fact about the commandment "Thou shall not kill" but to take the promised land and other times through out the Old Testament He allowed killing.

So my question to you is, how is that so?

Tony

From: "Neil Mammen" <neilswebpage@hotmail.com >
To: <tony@td___.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 3:36 PM
Subject: Re: things that make you go HMMMMMMMMMMMMMM....

Oh come on, give me something hard. ☺

The problem is our friend Bob assumes that he remembers his Bible well and that he knows how to translate the original Hebrew. (I have a terrible memory too and I never learned Hebrew. Arabic yes, Hebrew no, so I always have to rely on actually looking things up and reading literal translations and dictionaries).

Let's take a look at the NIV Exodus Chapter 20:
The commandment he refers to is quite simply:
You shall not MURDER.

Far different from "You shall not kill."

Of course most of us remember it, as “You shall not kill.”

And indeed some translations write it as kill (e.g. KJV and the RSV, but that was an the vernacular at the time it was written).

In the days of King James, when the KJV was translated, it was assumed that we understood the word “Kill” for “Murder” or “unlawful killing,” but as the times changed the meanings changed, so the New KJV (NKJV) corrects this with the more modern and accurate “Murder”.

It isn't and never was meant to be “kill”.

In fact this is corrected in the NKJV.

Secondly killing for us is wrong. However killing for God is not only NOT wrong, but in all cases it is right. After all, God is the creator and thus being the creator he is allowed to be the destroyer if he wants. Moreover if the reality is that the Spiritual dimension is an eternal dimension, and the physical dimension is just a short temporal one, then all God is doing is ‘waking’ someone up from a dreamlike state (no- I am not a Gnostic....).

So while we see death as this terrible thing, it’s not really that bad to God.

You may not like a God that can and does destroy, but you cannot argue with the logic of it.

Here's an example. It is not legal to run a red light. But if a cop were to come to you and say, "I want you to take this person to the hospital as fast as you can by running that red light." Is it OK for you to run the red light? Absolutely. Not only is it OK, it is now legal. Not only is it legal, it is now required of you. Not only is it required of you but now it is a GOOD thing. What’s worse, if you don’t run that red light and dilly dally, your passenger could die and that would be a BAD thing. In fact if you did that on purpose you could find yourself being charged with a crime. What was wrong became not only right but required when authorized by the governing authority.

Thus if God were to say, thou shalt not Murder. What he's really saying is: “You are not allowed to kill anyone without my permission. You don't decide who to kill and who not to kill, but I do and I can grant you that permission. You can only kill someone that I tell you to kill. Otherwise it is wrong for you to kill, because it becomes Murder.”

So the Ten Commandments tell us that we can’t kill anyone of our own accord because killing is a right reserved and authorized only by God.

Oh I should add:

Murder means unlawful killing without permission.

This excludes:

Execution for Justice (e.g. hanging murderers)
Killing in wars.
Killing in self-defense....

Because God has given us permission for those latter things.

Keep them coming.

Neil