

**BIBLE**

**PARALLEL**

**LINES**

### **Parallel Lines Pt.5: You have heard**

Exodus 20:13 *“Thou shalt not kill!”*

In other translations it says not to murder. Sometimes our understanding of scripture is based on our use of a word. Has the word *kill* changed? How about *kill* compared to *murder*? A soldier kills but a killer, murders. We have been talking for five weeks about Leviticus 19 and its parallel lines that intersect with the New Testament and more. Last week I took a departure from talking about just one theme. Instead, we talked about the relationship between two types of creators: parents and God. This week I want to take this to a whole new level by commenting on the other side of the Ten Commandments. What we shall not do to others. To add to this will be Jesus giving His own interpretation of those commands.

Matthew 5:21 *““You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’”* This begins an interesting segment called “you have heard”. Verse 21 begins with a series of statements by Jesus that pulls the rug out from under the Commandments. They could have been just commands but Jesus gives them teeth. He says in Matthew 5:17 *““Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”* To me the word *fulfill* is meant to say “He gave the law depth.”

The first parallel line is found one verse later from Matthew 5:21. Verse 22 says “*But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment.*” Jesus takes anger and exposes its intent. I think these fit so well with why God is angry towards personal sins (against people) in the Old Testament. God had given the Israelites places of refuge if they had inadvertently killed someone. There was grace for mistakes. There seems to be a lot less grace for those who intentionally like to hurt people. Jesus pegs it down by exposing the root of murder and many other sins: it’s intentional anger.

Why is murder not on the list in Leviticus 19? It’s hard to say. Leviticus 24 covers murder. Leviticus 24 17-20 “*Anyone who takes the life of a human being is to be put to death. 18 Anyone who takes the life of someone’s animal must make restitution—life for life. 19 Anyone who injures their neighbor is to be injured in the same manner: 20 fractures for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury.*” It’s pretty clear from God’s point of view. Somehow, I get the feeling that God is more annoyed with how we treat the living than murder. Yes, murder is serious. God’s word on it is really harsh. Yet, people love to torture and hurt the living. It’s as if people are just things to be toyed with. God hates that!

Jesus then goes on to say another “you have heard” in regards to adultery. The fabric of God’s plan is the family. We are to honor the mother and father. We should not sleep with brothers or sisters. The church is a family. Adultery is taking the family trust and killing it. I have seen the damage that stretches generations because of one act of adultery. What is adultery? Leviticus 19:11 sums it up “*do not steal; do not lie; and do not deceive one another.*” How many innocent partners have endured hardship from a cheating spouse? An adulteress person will lie,

cheat, and steal to have their way. Again, it's intentional deception to gain something at the cost of a loved one. An adulteress is a family killer.

Matthew 5:33 “*“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’* A great parallel line is formed back to Leviticus 19. Do not hold back wages from a worker in verse 13. Verse 19 says to keep the Lord’s decrees. Do you promise to be faithful in marriage? Do you declare that you are devoted to God? Matthew 18:35 is a great parable of the unforgiving servant. I think verse 35 sums it up “*this is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.*” All of these “you have heard” statements were meant to challenge our oaths towards others. An oath to a marriage, family, and friend. What about an oath to God?

Finally, I’d like to take a last look at a parallel line that runs between the statement “an eye for an eye” and our character. Basically, all of Leviticus 19 is a rundown of good character traits. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Leviticus 24:20 “*fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The one who has inflicted the injury must suffer the same injury.*” The line then travels to Matthew 5:38-42. Jesus goes even deeper by saying we should go out of our way to bless our enemies. This wraps back around to Matthew 18 and the unforgiving servant. God is consistent through time. You have heard that we should treat people well in both Testaments. The parallel lines don’t lie. Treat people with the honor you expect from them to you.