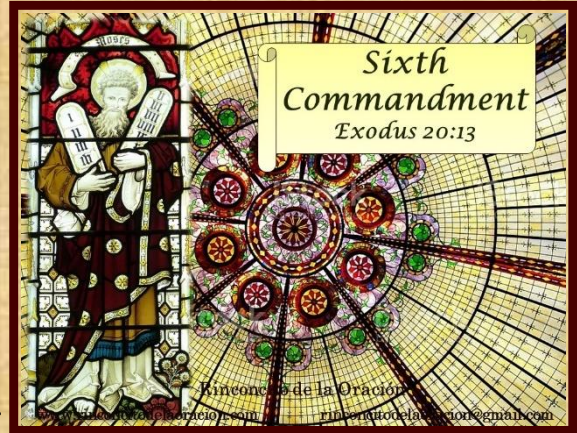


**A**ccording to Exodus 20:13, the Sixth Commandment says: *"Thou shalt not kill"*.



### What does the Sixth Commandment order?

The Sixth Commandment commands that we make every lawful effort to preserve our life, and that of others.

Psalm 82:3-4

### What does the Sixth Commandment forbid?

The Sixth Commandment forbids the destruction of our own life, or taking away unjustly that of our neighbor, as well as everything that tends to this consequence.

Acts 16:28 - Genesis 9:6 - Proverbs 24:11

Conclusion: the purpose of this commandment is that God having created humanity as one unit it makes necessary for each one of us to be concerned with the welfare and preservation of the life of the other.

This commandment forbids all kinds of violence, any insult, and any harm that one may inflict on another, such as that of one's own body (suicide). And, therefore, we are commanded to take care of our own life as that of our neighbor, finding for him convenient things, avoiding those that may harm him; as well as helping and assisting him whenever he is in danger or in need.

But we should understand this commandment on a broader context. Not only do we kill when life is taken away, but we also kill when we harm another person morally, materially, or commercially, as well as spiritually. Jesus Himself in 1 John 3:15 made it clear as follows: *"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer..."*

Anyone who harms another human being in any sense is already considered a murderer before God, since God created man *"... in our image, after our likeness..."* (Genesis 1:26). Only God owns life, since He is the one who gave it: *"Then Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being."* (Genesis 2:7) Hence the need to respect this commandment.

According to what has been seen, this commandment has several implications, apart from physical killing. For example, depriving a person of "liberty", as in the case of human trafficking, where women are deprived of their liberty for prostitution, against their will.



Another is the case of bullying, where the victim feels belittled, humiliated, unloved, mocked, discriminated against, persecuted, separated from the group, which can have serious emotional and psychological consequences. Not long ago, two 12-year-old Argentine twins jumped off from the balcony of a third floor of the dwelling where they lived in Barcelona. A letter left by one of them said the following: "I'm tired of being bullied at school, I can't stand it. I want to be happy, but obviously I'm going to suffer this for the rest of my life and I made the decision not to continue." Obviously, the insults, the mockery, the derogatory comments, the isolation, ended up undermining these girls, who could not deal with it, and forced them to make that tremendous and drastic decision.

As for the family environment, when there are signs of apathy, contempt, lack of assertive communication, between parents and their children or between spouses, they can be causes of a slow but certain death. When an individual does not feel heard and taken into consideration, or is hurt verbally, this will cause a feeling of frustration, loneliness and emotional disconnection, which will often lead to a deterioration of emotional and psychological health affecting interpersonal relationships negatively.

In this regard, the apostle James summarized it in the following way: *"... the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell."* (James 3:5-6)

As we have seen, there are many different ways in which one can transgress this commandment, and it would be impossible to list all of them here.

Therefore, it is critical to understand the scope of this commandment in order not to break it, and to pay close attention to Jesus' words in Matthew 22:39, *"...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*

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