

Word 18: רָצַח (*Ratsach*) Kill

Do not *ratsach* (Exo.20:13) but Hebrew has a number of terms to describe various types of killing

Meaning in use

Ratsach occurs 47 times

- Do not kill is too broad and do not murder is too specific
- Used 14 times when talking of the cities of refuge (Num.35) where the *ratsacher* could flee
- The independent jury of the city would sit in judgement over the case with two outcomes:
A) Guilty of intentional murder = death penalty.
B) Guilty of accidental killing (manslaughter) = face life imprisonment
- *Ratsach* would appear to cover either eventuality (accidental *ratsach* covered in 35:11, 22-23)
- However, there was also the more deliberate *ratsach* resulting in the death penalty (*heimit*) as in 35:19.
- Used for the killing of Naboth (1Ki.21:19); murderer of innocents (Job.24:14; Psalms 62:3; 94:6).

Word 19: חָמַד (*Chamad*) Covet

Meaning in use

- The Hebrew people did not have a term for covet which itself is usually understood to mean desire, want, crave, or lust.

Chamad occurs 30 times with a positive and a negative rendering.

- Positive: To describe something beautiful or of good quality (Gen.2:9; 27:15; Ezr.8:27; Psalms 19:10; 39:11; 68:16; Dan.9:23; 10:3, 19; 11:38).
- Negative: Something wanted and used (Gen.3:6; Jos.7:21; 2Ch.20:25; Pro.6:25; Mic.2:2)
- The opposite of giving (Pro.12:12)
- Best seen in descriptions of possible squatters (Exo.34:24)
- David with Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11 = the epitome of the term.

Class 4: Law matters

Word 15: תּוֹרָה (*Torah*) 'Law' vs. God made flesh

- Law vs. *Torah*,
- Law demands obedience
- *Torah* refers to the first five books of the bible
 - o The majority of the text is not legal;
 - o The stories are as important as the legal material.
 - o Statutes reveals what God thought important, narratives show God doing what was important.
 - o Calling it 'The Law' obscures the other material
 - o Jews called the *Torah* God made flesh
 - o *Torah* is embodied in Christ (Mat.5:17)

Meaning in use

Torah occurs 219 times

- The legal material was not optional, the people of God would enact the laws (Ezr.7:10), observe the feasts, and perform the sacrifices (1Ch.16:40).
- Law changes things, and not for the better.
- 'Law' before Moses in Genesis 26:5 and Job 22:22

Psalms

Ideal for looking at how the 'Law' was viewed (especially the *Torah* Psalms). It is presented as:

- Delight: (Psalms 1:2; 40:8; 119:70, 72, 77, 92, 97, 174 cf. Jos.22:5; 2Ki.23:25; Isa 51:7)
- Resides in the *Levav* (Psalms 37:31) and the *Mayaw* (literally the bowels as 40:8)
- A thing to 'ahab', (Psalms 119:113, 163, 165).
- Wisdom: (Psalms 78 cf. Pro. 1:8; 3:1; 6:20; 7:2)
- Psalm 19 shows the revelation of the *Torah* (esp. vs.7)
- The means of 'knowing' God (Jer.31:33)

Each line is applicable today.

Word 16: חֻק (Choque) 'Statute' vs. Custom

Custom = 'That's how we do things in my house'.

Meaning in use

Choque occurs 127 times

- Usually a good practice rather than a more widely applicable law (Gen.47:22, 26; Exo.15:25)
- Best seen as subordinate to a law (Job 23:12 cf. Exo.30:21; Lev.6:18)
- *Choque* can also be used to describe a boundary (Job 26:10)
- *Choque* = a good idea for behaviour, but not with the power of a law.

Word 17: דְּבַר (Dabar) 'Commandment' vs. Word/ thing

Commandment would be better rendered by מִצְוָה (*mitsvah*)

- Often mentioned alongside *choque* (Lev.26:3; Deu.6:1; Psa.89:31)
- *Mitsvah* is grounded in the heart. In Deu.10:12-13 the people are to:
 - 1) Fear God (acknowledge him in his rightful place, the one on the throne)
 - 2) Love God
 - 3) Serve him with all of the *levav* and *nephesh*
 - 4) Guard the commandments
 - 5) Guard the customs of YHWH
- The Ten Commandments are in fact *dabar* (in this instance the plural *devarim*). This makes a big difference in how they are numbered and how they are understood.

Meaning in use

Dabar occurs 1438 times and in every instance is better understood as word(s) or thing(s).

- Words spoken by God or by man (e.g. Gen.15:1; 24:33; 27:34, 42; 30:34; Deu.18:20, 21; 1Sa.9:27; Eze.14:9).
- Can refer to a 'thing', such as a birth (Gen.18:14), plagues (Exo.9:5-6), wages (Gen.30:31), good deeds (Gen.22:6; 39:7) or bad (Gen.18:25; 19:8; 21:11). Can refer to anything (Jer.32:27)

The Nine Commandments (or the Ten Things) (Exo.20:2-17 and Deu.5:6-21)

- There must be Ten of them (Exo.34:28) but they are not 'commandments'

	Jewish	Protestant	Catholic
1	I am YHWH	Other gods	I am the LORD + other gods
2	Other gods	Graven images	Lord's name
3	Lord's name	Lord's name	Sabbath
4	Sabbath	Sabbath	Parents
5	Parents	Parents	Killing
6	Killing	Killing	Adultery
7	Adultery	Adultery	Stealing
8	Stealing	Stealing	Testifying
9	Testifying	Testifying	Neighbours wife
10	Neighbours wife/ stuff	Neighbours wife/ stuff	Neighbours stuff

No.	Exodus ref.	Jewish
1	(Exo.20:2)	I am YHWH
2	(Exo.20:3-6)	Other gods/ images
3	(Exo.20:7)	Lord's name
4	(Exo.20:8-11)	Sabbath
5	(Exo.20:12)	Parents
6	(Exo.20:13)	Killing
7	(Exo.20:14)	Adultery
8	(Exo.20:15)	Stealing
9	(Exo.20:16)	Testifying
10	(Exo.20:17)	Neighbours wife/ stuff