

You Shall Not Murder.
(Will Well to Your Neighbor.¹)
(Love²)

The Fifth Commandment
- from -
Secrets of Heaven

Emanuel Swedenborg

SH 8901. Verse 13. *You shall not kill*, signifies not to take away spiritual life from any one, also not to extinguish faith and charity, as also not to hold the neighbor in hatred.

SH 8902. *You shall not kill*. That this signifies not to take away spiritual life from any one, also not to extinguish faith and charity, as also not to hold the neighbor in hatred, is evident from the signification of “killing,” as being to deprive of spiritual life. That “killing” means this in the internal sense, is because in this sense spiritual life, or the life of heaven with a person, is treated of; and spiritual life, or the life of heaven with a person, is the life of faith and of charity; therefore by “not to kill” is signified also not to extinguish faith and charity in any one. The reason why “not to kill” is also in the internal sense not to hold the neighbor in hatred, is that he who holds in hatred continually wishes to kill, and also would kill in act unless prevented by the fear of the penalty, of the loss of life, of reputation, and the like. For hatred is of evil, is contrary to charity, and breathes nothing but the murder of him whom it hates: in the world the murder of his body; in the other life the murder of his soul. This is meant by the words of the Lord in Matthew:

You have heard that it was said to them of old time, You shall not kill; and whoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say to you, that whoever is angry with his brother rashly shall be in danger of the judgment; and whoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; and whoever shall say, You fool, shall be in danger of the Gehenna of fire (v. 21, 22);

hatred against the neighbor is meant by being “angry with the brother rashly,” and the degrees of its increase are described by saying to him “Raca,” and by calling him “a fool” (that anger is a turning away from charity, and is from evil, thus that it is hatred, see n. 357, 4164, 5034, 5798, 5887, 5888). [2] That in the internal sense “to kill” denotes to take away spiritual life from any one, consequently to extinguish faith and charity, is

¹ Emanuel Swedenborg, *True Christianity* 330

² Emanuel Swedenborg, *Secrets of Heaven* 8867

evident from almost all the passages in the Word where a “killing,” or “to kill,” is mentioned, as in Isaiah:

Behold the day of Jehovah comes, cruel, and of indignation, and of wrath, and of anger; to make the land a waste, and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. Then the stars of the heavens and the constellations thereof shall not shine with their light, the sun shall be darkened in his rising, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. I will visit the wickedness upon the world, and their iniquity upon the wicked. I will make a man more rare than pure gold, and the son of man than the gold of Ophir. Every one that is found shall be thrust through, and every one that is gathered shall fall by the sword. Their infants shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished. Their bows shall dash the young men in pieces, their eye shall not spare sons (xiii. 9-12, 15, 16, 18);

the subject treated of in this passage is the last time of the church, when there is no longer any faith and charity, which time is “the day of Jehovah cruel, full of indignation, of wrath, and of anger.” Every one can see that something else is here meant than that which the words nakedly declare; but what is meant cannot be known except from the significations of the words in their spiritual sense. In this sense “the land” denotes the church (n. 566, 662, 1067, 1262, 1413, 1607, 1733, 1850, 2117, 2118, 2928, 3355, 4447, 4535, 5577, 8011, 8732); therefore “to make the land a waste, and to destroy the sinners out of it” signifies that the person of the church is then without faith and charity. [3] “Stars” and “constellations” denote the knowledges of truth and good (see n. 2120, 2495, 2849, 4697), and these are said “not to shine with their light,” when they are no longer illuminated by the light of heaven which flows in through the faith of charity. That “the sun” denotes love to the Lord, and “the moon” faith in Him, see n. 2120, 2441, 2494, 3636, 3643, 4060, 4321, 4696, 5097, 5377, 7078, 7083, 7171, 7173, 8644, 8812; therefore “the sun being darkened in his rising,” signifies that love to the Lord cannot arise with a person; and “the moon not causing her light to shine,” signifies that neither can charity and faith arise, thus that the person cannot any longer be regenerated. [4] “To make a man more rare than pure gold, and the son of man than the gold of Ophir,” signifies that good is no longer seen, nor truth; for by “man” is signified the good of the church (n. 4287, 8547), and by “the son of man” truth from good, in the supreme sense the Divine truth proceeding from the Lord (n. 1729, 1733, 2813, 3704). That “everyone found shall be thrust through” signifies that all will perish by reason of the evil of falsity; and that “every one that is gathered shall fall by the sword” signifies that they will perish by reason of falsity (that “to be thrust through” denotes to perish by reason of the evil of falsity, see n. 4503; also that “to fall by the sword” denotes to perish by reason of falsity, D. 2799, 4499, 7102, 8294). [5] The “infants being dashed in pieces” signifies that they will utterly extinguish innocence, for “infants” denote innocence (n. 430, 2126, 3183, 3494, 5608). The “wives being ravished” signifies that the goods of truth will be perverted by the evils of falsity, for “wives” denote the goods of truth (n. 2517, 4510, 4823, 7022), and “to be ravished” denotes to be perverted (see n. 2466, 4865). That “their bows shall dash the young men in pieces” signifies that the truths of good will perish through the doctrines of falsity from evil; for a “bow” denotes the doctrine of truth, and in the opposite sense the doctrine of falsity (n. 2686, 6422, 8800); “young men” denote truths confirmed (n. 7668). “And their eye shall not spare

sons" signifies that he who understands truths will nevertheless extinguish them, for "sons" denote truths (n. 489, 491, 533, 1147, 2803, 2813, 3373, 4257, 5542); and "the eye" denotes the understanding of truth (n. 2701, 4403-4421, 4523-4534). From all this it is now clear what is meant by the above prophetic words, namely, that when the church arrives at its end, all truth and all good will perish. It is also evident from what has been said, that "to be thrust through," "to be dashed in pieces," in a word "to be killed," denotes the extinction of faith and charity. [6] In Jeremiah:

Drag them away like a sheep for the slaughter, and destine them for the day of killing. How long shall the land mourn, and the herb of every field wither? For the wickedness of them that dwell therein, the beasts shall be consumed and the bird (xii. 3, 4);

"the day of killing" here denotes the time of the vastated church, which is its last time, when there is no longer faith because there is no charity; "the land shall mourn" denotes the church; "the herb of every field shall wither" denotes that every truth of the church will do so; "the beasts and the bird shall be consumed" denotes that goods and truths will be so. (That "the land" denotes the church, see just above; that "the herb of the field" denotes the truth of the church, see n. 7571; that "the field" denotes the church, n. 2971, 3310, 3766; that "beasts" denote goods and the affections of good, n. 45, 46, 142, 143, 246, 714, 715, 719, 1823, 2179, 2180, 3218, 3519, 5198; that "birds" denote truths and the affections of truth, n. 5149, 7441.) From all this it can be seen what is the internal sense of these words, and also that what is spiritual and holy of the church and of heaven is in all the particulars; and that without the internal sense it would not in any wise be understood what is meant by "the day of killing," by that "the earth shall mourn," that "every herb of the field shall wither," and that "the beasts and the bird shall then be consumed." [7] In Zechariah:

Thus said Jehovah your God, Feed the sheep of the killing, whose possessors kill them, and do not own themselves guilty (xi. 4, 5);

where "the sheep of the killing" denote those who are in simple good, in whom the truths of faith are extinguished, not by their own fault, but by the fault of those who teach. [8] In Isaiah:

In those that are to come shall Jacob take root; Israel shall blossom and flower; so that the faces of the world shall be filled with produce. Has he smitten him according to the stroke of him that smote? Is he killed according to the slaughter of his killed? (xxvii. 6, 7).

Behold, Jehovah comes forth out of His place to visit the iniquity of the land; then shall the land uncover its bloods, and shall not hide its killed (xxvi. 21).

Here also in the internal sense the subject treated of is the last time of the church, when a new church shall be resuscitated, the old perishing. "Jacob" denotes those who are in the external of the church; "Israel" those who are in the internal; "the faces of the world" denote the church in general; "the land" denotes the old church; "the killed" those in whom there is no faith because no charity. [9] In the same:

You are cast forth out of your sepulcher like an abominable shoot, a vestment of the killed, thrust through with the sword. You shall not be united with them in the grave, because you have destroyed your land, you have killed your people (Isa. xiv. 19, 20);

“the killed” denote those who have been deprived of spiritual life; “you have killed your people” denotes the destruction of the truths and goods of faith. Babel is here treated of, by which is signified the profanation of good (n. 1182, 1283, 1295, 1306-1308, 1321, 1322, 1326), and also its vastation (n. 1327). [10] In Jeremiah:

I have heard the voice of the daughter of Zion, she sighs, she spreads out her hands, saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied because of killers. Run you to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see I pray, and know, and seek in the avenues thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that does judgment, that seeks truth (iv. 31; v. 1);

“the daughter of Zion” denotes the celestial church; “killers,” those who destroy goods and truths; “a man who does judgment,” denotes those who are in truths from good. [11] In Ezekiel:

You have profaned Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to kill the souls that should not die, and to keep the souls alive that should not live (xiii. 19);

“to kill souls” here plainly denotes to take away spiritual life. As “killing” had also this signification, therefore it was one of the curses upon Mount Ebal, “to slay one’s companion in secret, and to take a gift to kill the soul innocent of blood” (Deut. xxvii. 24, 25). [12] Again:

In the consummation of the age they shall deliver you into tribulation, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated of all the nations for My name’s sake (Matt. xxiv. 9).

Jesus said to His disciples, The hour comes, that whoever kills you shall think that he offers holy worship to God; and these things will they do, because they know not the Father, nor Me (John xvi. 2, 3).

In these passages also by “killing” is signified to deprive of spiritual life, that is, of faith and charity; for by “the disciples” are signified all things of the truth and good of faith and charity (n. 3488, 3858, 6397). That the disciples to whom the Lord spoke are not here meant, is evident from the fact that the subject treated of is the consummation of the age, when the Lord is to come in the clouds of heaven, concerning which the disciples had asked, and by which is meant the last time of the church, when the disciples would not be alive (see n. 3488). [13] In like manner in Mark:

Brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his children; children shall rise up against parents, and shall kill them (xiii. 12);

here also the last times are treated of, and by “killing” here also is signified to deprive of the truths and goods which are of faith and charity, thus of spiritual life. [14] In Luke:

I will send to them prophets and apostles; but some of them they shall kill and persecute; from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah the prophet it shall be required of this generation (xi. 49, 51);

“prophets and apostles” denote in the spiritual sense the truths and goods of the church; “to kill” denotes to extinguish them; “the blood of Abel” denotes the extinction of charity. (That “prophets” denote the truths of doctrine from the Word, see n. 2534, 7269; and that “the blood of Abel” denotes the extinction of charity, n. 374.) [15] In like manner in John:

The blood of saints, and of prophets, and of the killed, was found in Babylon (Rev. xviii. 24);

where also “the blood of saints and of prophets” denotes the extinction of the good and truth of faith and charity, and “the killed” denote those who have perished as to spiritual life. (That “blood” denotes violence done to charity, as well as all evil in general, n. 374, 1005; as also, specifically, the profanation of truth, n. 4735, 6978, 7317, 7326.) [16] As by one “killed,” or “thrust through,” is signified the extinction of good and truth, and as all things which were instituted in the Jewish Church were representative of the spiritual and celestial things in the Lord’s kingdom, and in the supreme sense, of the Divine things in the Lord, therefore when one was found lying in the field thrust through, the following procedure of expiation for the people was commanded, namely:

They were to measure toward the cities from him that was lying in the field thrust through, and the elders of the nearest city were to take a she-calf of an ox, by which no labor had yet been done, and upon which there had not yet been a yoke, and were to bring her down to a rapid stream, and the priests, the sons of Levi, were to behead her there, and then the elders of the city were to wash their hands over the calf, and were to say that their hands had not shed that blood, neither had their eyes seen it, and that thus the blood would be expiated (Deut. xxi. 1-8).

Who would ever know why such a procedure was instituted on account of one lying in the field thrust through, unless it were known from the internal sense what is signified by “one in a field thrust through,” by “the nearest city,” by “a calf,” by “a rapid stream,” by “the washing of hands,” and by the other things there mentioned? By “one in the field thrust through” is signified truth and good extinguished (n. 4503); by “field,” the church (n. 2971, 3310, 3766); by “city,” the doctrine of truth (n. 402, 2449, 2943, 3216, 4492, 4493); by “the elders of the city,” truths agreeing with good (n. 6524, 6525, 8578, 8585); by “a calf upon which there had not yet been a yoke,” truth not as yet confirmed (what “a calf” signifies, see n. 1824, 1825); by “washing the hands over the calf at a rapid stream” is signified purification from that evil, because done from the immoderate zeal of one ignorant of what truth is. [17] From the above, as from the other passages, it can be seen what and how great secrets are contained in the particulars of the Word, which will not appear even as secrets if it is believed that the sense of the

letter is the whole of the Word; and thus it will not be believed that anything more holy and heavenly lies inwardly hidden therein; when yet the sense of the letter is for people in the world, that is, for the natural person; while the internal sense is for people in heaven, that is, for the spiritual person. Hence it is plain what is involved in the commandment “not to kill,” namely, that not only is a person not to be killed as to the body, but also that he is not to be killed as to the soul; thus that he is not only not to be deprived of life in the world, but especially that he is not to be deprived of life in heaven. If this commandment had not involved within it at the same time this meaning, it would not have been pronounced by Jehovah Himself, that is, the Lord, in a living voice upon Mount Sinai with so great a miracle; for all peoples and nations know without immediate revelation, and moreover their laws decree, that a person is not to be killed, as also that adultery, theft, and false witness are not to be committed. Neither is it to be believed that the Israelite nation was so stupid as alone to be ignorant of what all other nations on the globe know. But the revealed Word, being from the Divine Itself, over and above this stores up in its bosom higher and more universal things, namely, such things as are of heaven, thus which not only concern the life of the body, but which also concern the life of the soul, or eternal life. Herein the Word differs from, is separated from, and is pre-eminent over, all other writing.

You Shall Not Murder.
(Wish Well to Your Neighbor.³)
(Love⁴)

The Fifth Commandment
- from -
The Apocalypse Explained

Emanuel Swedenborg

AE 1012:3, 4. In what now follows something shall be said about the seventh commandment, which is, "You shall not kill."⁵ In all the commandments of the Decalogue, as in all things of the Word, two internal senses are involved (besides the highest which is a third), one that is next to the letter and is called the spiritual moral sense, another that is more remote and is called the celestial spiritual sense. The nearest sense of this commandment, "You shall not kill," which is the spiritual moral sense, is that one must not hate his brother or neighbor, and thus not defame or slander him; for thus he would injure or kill his reputation and honor, which is the source of his life among his brethren, which is called his civil life, and afterwards he would live in society as one dead, for he would be numbered among the vile and wicked, with whom no one would associate. When this is done from enmity, from hatred, or from revenge, it is murder. Moreover, by many in the world this life is counted and esteemed in equal measure with the life of the body. And before the angels in the heavens he that destroys this life is held to be as guilty as if he had destroyed the bodily life of his brother. For enmity, hatred, and revenge, breathe murder and will it; but they are restrained and curbed by fear of the law, of resistance, and of loss of reputation. And yet these three are endeavors towards murder; and every endeavor is like an act, for it goes forth into act when fear is removed. This is what the Lord teaches in Matthew:

You have heard that it was said to them of old, you shall not kill; and whoever shall kill shall be liable to the judgment. But I say to you, that whoever is angry with his brother rashly shall be liable to the judgment; whoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be liable to the council; but whoever shall say, you fool, shall be liable to the Gehenna of fire (v. 21-26).

This may be seen explained above (n. 693, 746f). [4] But the more remote sense of this commandment, "You shall not kill," which is called the celestial spiritual sense, is that

³ Emanuel Swedenborg, *True Christianity* 330

⁴ Emanuel Swedenborg, *Secrets of Heaven* 8867

⁵ In *The Apocalypse Explained*, the Commandment, "You shall not murder" is referred to as the seventh Commandment rather than as the fifth.

one shall not take away from a person the faith and love of God, and thus his spiritual life. This is murder itself, because from this life a person is a person, the life of the body serving this life as the instrumental cause serves its principal cause. Moreover, from this spiritual murder moral murder is derived; consequently one who is in the one is also in the other; for he who wills to take away a person's spiritual life is in hatred against him if he cannot take it away, for he hates the faith and love with him, and thus the person himself. These three, namely, spiritual murder, which pertains to faith and love, moral murder, which pertains to reputation and honor, and natural murder, which pertains to the body, follow in a series one from the other, like cause and effect.

AE 1013:2-4. As all who are in hell are in hatred against the Lord, and thus in hatred against heaven, for they are against goods and truths, so hell is the essential murderer or the source of essential murder. It is the source of essential murder because a person is a person from the Lord through the reception of good and truth; consequently to destroy good and truth is to destroy the human itself, thus to kill the person. [3] That those who are in hell are such has not yet been known in the world, because with those who belong to hell and therefore after death come into hell, there does not appear any hatred against good and truth, nor against heaven, nor still less against the Lord. For every one while he lives in the world is in externals; and these externals are taught and trained from infancy to counterfeit such things as are honest and decorous, just and equitable, and good and true. Nevertheless, hatred lies concealed in their spirit, and this in equal degree with the evil of their life. And as hatred is in the spirit it breaks forth when the externals are laid aside, as is the case after death. [4] This infernal hatred against all who are in good is deadly hatred because it is hatred against the Lord. This can be seen particularly from their delight in doing evil, which is such as to exceed in degree every other delight, for it is a fire that burns with the lust for destroying souls. Moreover, it has been ascertained that this delight is not from hatred against those whom they attempt to destroy, but from hatred against the Lord Himself. Now since a person is a person from the Lord, and the human which is from the Lord is good and truth, and since those who are in hell are, from a hatred against the Lord, eager to kill the human, which is good and truth, it follows that hell is the source of murder itself.

AE 1014:2, 3. From what has been said above it can be seen that all who are in evils as to life, and in the falsities therefrom, are murderers; for they are enemies and haters of good and truth, since evil hates good and falsity hates truth. The evil person does not know that he is in such hatred until he becomes a spirit; then hatred is the very delight of his life. Consequently from hell, where all the evil are, there constantly breathes forth the delight in doing evil from hatred; but from heaven, where all the good are, there constantly breathes forth the delight in doing good from love. Therefore two opposite spheres meet each other in the middle region between heaven and hell, and engage in reciprocal combat. While person lives in the world he is in this middle region. If he is then in evil and in falsities therefrom he passes over to the side of hell, and thus comes into the delight of doing evil from hatred. But if he is in good and in truths therefrom, he passes over to the side of heaven, and thus comes into the delight of doing good from love. [3] The delight of doing evil from hatred, which breathes forth from hell, is the delight in killing. But as they cannot kill the body they wish to kill the spirit; and to kill the spirit is to take away spiritual life, which is the life of heaven. This makes clear that the commandment, "You shall not kill," involves also "you shall not hate your neighbor, also you shall not hate the good of the church and its truth;" for if one hates

good and truth he hates the neighbor; and to hate is to wish to kill. This is why the devil, by whom hell in the whole complex is meant, is called by the Lord, "A murderer from the beginning" (John viii. 44).

AE 1015:2, 3. Since hatred, which is to will to kill, is the opposite of love to the Lord and also of love towards the neighbor, and since these loves are what make heaven with a person, it is evident that hatred, being thus opposite, is what makes hell with him. Nor is infernal fire anything else than hatred; and in consequence the hells appear to be in a fire with a dusky glow according to the quality and quantity of the hatred, and in a fire with a dusky flame according to the quantity and quality of the revenge from hatred. [3] Since hatred and love are direct opposites, and since hatred in consequence constitutes hell with a person, just as love constitutes heaven with him, therefore the Lord thus teaches:

If you shall offer your gift upon the altar, and shall there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave there your gift before the altar, and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then coming, offer your gift. Be well disposed towards your adversary while you are in the way with him; lest haply the adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. Truly I say to you, You shall not come out from there till you have paid the last farthing (Matt. v. 23-26).

To be delivered to the judge, and by the judge to the officer, and by him to be cast into prison, describes the state of the person who is in hatred after death from his having been in hatred against his brother in the world, "prison" meaning hell, and "to pay the last farthing" signifies the punishment that is called everlasting fire.

AE 1016:2, 3. Since hatred is infernal fire it is clear that it must be removed before love, which is heavenly fire, can flow in, and by light from itself give life to a person; and this infernal fire can in no wise be removed unless the person knows whence hatred is and what it is, and afterwards turns away from it and shuns it. There is in every person by inheritance hatred against the neighbor; for every person is born into the love of self and of the world, and in consequence conceives hatred, and from it is inflamed against all who do not make one with him and favor his love, especially against those who oppose his lusts. For no one can love himself above all things and love the Lord at the same time; neither can any one love the world above all things and love the neighbor at the same time; since no one can serve two masters at the same time without despising and hating the one while he honors and loves the other. Hatred is especially with those who are in the love of ruling over all; with others it is enmity. [3] It shall be told what hatred is. Hatred has in itself a fire which is an endeavor to kill mankind. That fire is manifested by anger. There is a seeming hatred and consequent anger with the good against evil; but this is not hatred, but an aversion to evil; neither is it anger, but a zeal for good in which heavenly fire inwardly lies concealed. For the good turn away from evil, and are seemingly angry at the neighbor, in order that they may remove the evil; and thus they have regard to the neighbor's good.

AE 1017. When a person abstains from hatred and turns away from it and shuns it as diabolical, then love, charity, mercy and clemency flow in through heaven from the

Lord, and then first the works which he does are works of love and charity. The works he had done before, however good might be their appearance in the external form, were all works of the love of self and of the world, in which hatred lurked whenever they were not rewarded. So long as hatred is not put away so long a person is merely natural; and the merely natural person remains in all his inherited evil, nor can he become spiritual before hatred, with its root, which is the love of ruling over all, is removed; for the fire of heaven, which is spiritual love, cannot flow in so long as the fire of hell, which is hatred, stands in the way and shuts it out.

You Shall Not Murder.
(Wish Well to Your Neighbor.⁶)
(Love⁷)

The Fifth Commandment

- from -

*The Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem
from the Ten Commandments*

Emanuel Swedenborg

*In proportion as any one shuns murders of every kind
as sins, in the same proportion he has
love toward the neighbor.*

Life 67. "Murders of every kind" include enmity, hatred, and revenge of every kind, which breathe murder, for murder lies hidden in them, like fire in wood underneath the ashes. Infernal fire is nothing else, and this is the origin of the expressions to "kindle with hatred," and to "burn with revenge." All these are "murders" in the natural sense. But in the spiritual sense "murders" mean all methods of killing and destroying the souls of people, which methods are varied and many. And in the highest sense "murder" means to hate the Lord. These three kinds of "murder" form a one, and cleave together, for he who wills the murder of a person's body in this world, after death wills the murder of his soul, and wills the murder of the Lord, for he burns with anger against Him, and desires to blot out His name.

Life 68. These kinds of murder lie inwardly hidden in a person from his birth, but from early childhood he learns to veil them over with the civic and moral behavior that he is bound to show toward people in the world, and in proportion as he loves honors or gains he guards against their appearance. This forms his external, while his internal is these kinds of murder. Such is a person in himself. Now as when he dies he lays aside that external together with his body, and retains the internal, it is evident what a devil he would be unless he were reformed.

Life 69. As the kinds of murder mentioned above lie inwardly hidden in a person from his birth, as has been said, and at the same time thefts of every kind, and false witness of every kind, together with the concupiscences for them (of which we shall speak farther on), it is evident that unless the Lord provided means of reformation, a person must perish everlastingly. The means of reformation provided by the Lord are as follows: That a person is born into total ignorance; that when newly born he is kept in a

⁶ Emanuel Swedenborg, *True Christianity* 330

⁷ Emanuel Swedenborg, *Secrets of Heaven* 8867

state of external innocence; a little after in a state of external charity; and later in a state of external friendship; but in proportion as he comes into the exercise of thought from his own understanding, he is kept in a certain freedom of acting according to reason. This is the state that has been described above (n. 19), and the description shall be here repeated for the sake of what is to follow:

So long as a person is in this world he is midway between hell and heaven; hell is below him, and heaven is above him and he is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to hell he turns away from heaven; if he turns to heaven he turns away from hell. Or what is the same, so long as a person is in this world he stands midway between the Lord and the devil, and is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to the devil he turns away from the Lord; if he turns to the Lord he turns away from the devil. Or what is again the same, so long as a person is in this world he is midway between evil and good, and is kept in freedom to turn himself to either the one or the other; if he turns to evil he turns away from good; if he turns to good he turns away from evil. (See also what follows this, n. 20-22.)

Life 70. Now as evil and good are two opposite things, precisely as are hell and heaven, or as are the devil and the Lord, it follows that if a person shuns evil as sin, he comes into the good that is opposite to the evil. The good opposite to the evil that is meant by "murder," is the good of love toward the neighbor.

Life 71. As this good and that evil are opposites, it follows that the latter is removed by means of the former. Two opposites cannot be together, even as heaven and hell cannot; if they were together there would be lukewarmness, of which it is said in the Revelation:

I know that you are neither cold nor hot; I would you were cold or hot; but because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth (iii. 15, 16).

Life 72. When a person is no longer in the evil of murder, but in the good of love toward the neighbor, whatever he does is a good of this love, and therefore it is a good work. A *priest* who is in this good does a good work whenever he teaches and leads, because he acts from the love of saving souls. A *magistrate* who is in this good does a good work whenever he delivers a decision or a judgment, because he acts from the love of taking care of his country, of the community, and of his fellow-citizen. The same with a *trader*: if he is in this good, everything of his trading is a good work; there is in him the love of the neighbor; and his country, the community, his fellow-citizen, and also the members of his household, are the neighbor whose welfare he has care for in providing for his own. A *workman* also who is in this good, works faithfully from it, for others as for himself, fearing his neighbor's loss as he would his own. The reason why the doings of these people are good works, is that in proportion as any one shuns evil, in the same proportion he does good, according to the general law stated above (n. 21), and he who shuns evil as sin, does good not from himself but from the Lord (n. 18-31). The contrary is the case with him who does not regard as sins the various kinds of murder, which are enmities, hatred, revenge, and many more. Whether he be priest,

magistrate, trader, or workman, whatever he does is not a good work, because every work of his partakes of the evil that is within him; for his internal is what gives it birth. The external may be good, but only as regards others, not as regards himself.

Life 73. The Lord teaches the good of love is many places in the Word. He teaches it in Matthew by what He says about reconciliation with the neighbor:

If you are offering your gift upon the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Be well-minded to your adversary quickly, while you are in the way with him lest the adversary deliver you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and you be cast into prison. Truly I say to you, you shall not come out from there, till you have paid the last farthing (v. 23-26).

To be “reconciled to one’s brother,” is to shun enmity, hatred, and revenge; that it is to shun them as sin is evident. The Lord also teaches in Matthew:

All things whatever you would that men should do to you, do you even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets (vii. 12);

thus that we should not do evil. He teaches the same in many other places. The Lord also teaches that to be angry with one’s brother or the neighbor rashly, and to hold him as an enemy, is also to commit murder (Matt. v. 21, 22).

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You Shall Not Murder.
(Wish Well to Your Neighbor.⁸)
(Love⁹)

The Fifth Commandment
- from -
True Christianity

Emanuel Swedenborg

You are not to murder.

TC 309. This commandment, “You are not to kill,” in its earthly *meaning* means not killing people, inflicting on them any fatal wound, or mutilating their bodies. It also means not bringing any deadly evil against their names and reputations, since for many people their reputation and their life go hand in hand.

In a broader earthly meaning, murdering includes hostility, hatred, and revenge, which involve longing for someone’s death. Murder lies hidden inside these feelings like an area that is still burning inside a piece of wood under the ashes. Hellfire is nothing else. This is why we say someone blazes with hatred or burns for revenge. These feelings are murders at the level of intent even if not in act. If fear of the law, retribution, or revenge were taken away, these feelings would burst into action, especially if the intent involved deception or savagery.

The following words of the Lord make it clear that hatred is murder:

You have heard that it was said by ancient people, “You are not to kill; and whoever kills will be exposed to judgment.” But I say to you that any who are angry with their brother or sister for no good reason will be exposed to hellfire. (Matthew 5:21, 22)

The reason is that everything we intend is something we want and something we inwardly do.

TC 310. In the *spiritual meaning*, murders stand for all methods of killing and destroying people’s souls. There are many different methods, such as turning people away from God, religion, and divine worship; setting up roadblocks against such things; and persuading people to turn away from and even feel aversion to such things. All the devils and satans in hell practice these methods. People in our world who violate and prostitute the holy things of the church are connected to these devils and satans.

⁸ Emanuel Swedenborg, *True Christianity* 330

⁹ Emanuel Swedenborg, *Secrets of Heaven* 8867

The king of the abyss, who is called Abaddon or Apollyon (meaning the Destroyer, Revelation 9:11), stands for people who use falsities to destroy souls. The “killed” in the prophetic Word have the same meaning, as for example in the following passages:

Jehovah God said, “Feed the sheep for slaughter whom their owners have killed.” (Zechariah 11:4, 5, 7)

We have been killed all day long; we are considered a flock for slaughter. (Psalms 44:22)

He will cause those who are yet to come to take root in Jacob. Was he killed in the way that his henchmen would kill? (Isaiah 27:6, 7)

A stranger comes only in order to steal and slaughter the sheep. I have come so that they may have life and abundance. (John 10:10; other such passages are Isaiah 14:21; 26:21; Ezekiel 37:9; Jeremiah 4:31; 12:3; Revelation 9:5; 11:7)

This is why the Devil is called “a murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44).

TC 311. In the *heavenly meaning*, killing refers to being angry with the Lord for no good reason, hating him, and wanting to get rid of his name. People with such feelings are said to crucify the Lord; if he were to come back into the world again, they would do much the same thing the Jews did. This is the meaning of “the Lamb in a state as if killed” (Revelation 5:6; 13:8), and the meaning of “crucified” in Revelation 11:8; Hebrews 6:6; and Galatians 3:1.

TC 312. Devils and satans in hell have made clear to me the inner quality of people who have not been reformed by the Lord. Devils and satans constantly have it in mind to kill the Lord. Because they cannot achieve this, they try to kill people who are devoted to the Lord. Since they cannot accomplish this the way people in the world could, they attack people with every effort to destroy their souls, that is, to demolish the faith and goodwill they have. The actual hatred and desire for revenge inside these devils look like fires that are dark and fires that are bright. Their hatreds look like dark fires and their desires for revenge look like bright fires. These feelings are not in fact fires, but they look like fires.

One can sometimes glimpse the savagery of the devils’ hearts in visual form in the air above those devils. It looks as if they are battling, slaughtering, and massacring angels. Their feelings of anger and hatred against heaven are the source of these dreadful daydreams.

For another thing, these devils and satans look at a distance like wild animals of every kind—tigers, leopards, wolves, foxes, dogs, crocodiles, and snakes of all kinds. When devils and satans see tame animals in symbolic forms, they imagine themselves attacking the animals and trying to slaughter them.

I have seen devils that looked like dragons and were standing next to women with babies whom the dragons were trying to devour, like the situation we find in Revelation 12. These portrayals represent the devils’ hatred against the Lord and his new church.

People in the world who want to destroy the Lord's church are similar to these devils and satans, although it does not seem that way to others who know these people, because their bodies—the instruments with which they practice moral actions—absorb their desires and keep them hidden. To the angels, however, who look at their spirits, not their bodies, these people look like the devils just mentioned. Who could ever realize things like this if the Lord had not opened someone's sight with the gift of looking into the spiritual world? Otherwise these points, along with many other things eminently worth knowing, would have remained forever hidden from the human race.