

## WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

### *The Sixth Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Kill*

**W**E SPRINKLE POISON on a trail of ants going into our kitchen; unknowingly, while walking through the woods, we crush a beetle with our feet. The shadows of war are ever around us. It is not so easy, after all, to obey this simple edict, "thou shalt not kill."

If we look back at the Israelites to whom the Commandment was given, we find perplexing contrasts in regard to it. For instance, Moses, the first to receive the Commandments, caused a number of his own people to be killed. Joshua, his successor, waged wars and killed many people. David killed, and so did Elias.

Once again, then, it behooves us to regard the Commandment from the esoteric point of view. Truth is a diamond, many sided, and facets of this diamond can be directly opposite each other. Just as a diamond has its point of refraction within, illuminating all facets, so, too, does Truth illumine from within. Therefore apparent contradictions, in the light of Truth, resolve into a harmonious whole.

The number of this Commandment—six—stands for materiality and form. Under the number six, God, the Word, and man, were made flesh. The symbol of matter in our three-dimensional world is the cube, which has six sides.

The sixth house of Virgo fixes creation on the human plane. Virgo is the mother sign of the harvest and ripe fruit-bearing seed, the triumph of matter. Virgo gives form to life, but because of its



association with fruit and the harvest, it also imparts continuance and preservation of life. Virgo is the store-house of the fruits of our labors. The storehouse assures the future. The full storehouse of Virgo includes the microscopic and the macroscopic. Also, on the sixth day of creation God saw everything that He had made and, behold, it was very good.

The unalterable fact of God's creation is continuance, maintenance, preservation. The sixth Commandment was given to insure the continuance of creation. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not destroy or disturb that which is created. Thou shalt not take life. On the contrary, thou shalt bestow immortality. This is the new way of reading the sixth Commandment. The lessons of a literal "Thou shalt not kill" should be behind us. The way of life now should be to bestow immortality. But how?

We have been told that "loving, self-forgetting service to others is the shortest, the safest, and the most joyful road to God." We can be literal. Service is a road. Roads connect individual towns

and bring them to life and unification. Service to others is a shining road giving life and purpose to all we thus touch. Only in mutual service do all orders of evolving beings become bound together; lack of service isolates them.

Service plays a very great part in the divine Plan. Service builds an archetype of unity in preparation for the Religion of the Father. Anyone or anything that disturbs or destroys this unity is guilty of killing. Service is the sustaining force of life. It is the ingredient of survival. Service is the servant of eternity.

In Service thou shalt bestow immortality along life's road. This is the sixth Commandment for the New Age. □



## You Never Can Tell

You never can tell when you send a word  
 Like an arrow shot from a bow  
 By an archer blind, be it cruel or kind,  
 Just where it may chance to go.  
 It may pierce the breast of your dearest friend,  
 Tipped with its poison or balm,  
 To a stranger's heart in life's great mart  
 It may carry its pain or its calm.

You never can tell when you do an act  
 Just what the result will be,  
 But with every deed you are sowing a seed,  
 Though the harvest you may not see.  
 Each kindly act is an acorn dropped  
 In God's productive soil;  
 You may not know, but the tree shall grow  
 With shelter for those who toil.

You never can tell what your thoughts will do  
 In bringing you hate or love,  
 For thoughts are things, and their airy wings  
 Are swifter than carrier doves.  
 They follow the law of the universe—  
 Each thing must create its kind,  
 And they speed o'er the track to bring you back  
 Whatever went out from your mind.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

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 The Rosicrucian Fellowship