



# **"You Shall Not Kill" or "You Shall Not Murder"?: The Assault on a Biblical Text**

*Wilma Ann Bailey*

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Nearly all English translations of the Bible during the last third of the twentieth century have changed the wording of the sixth commandment from kill to murder. The Hebrew word that appears in the commandment has a broader semantic range than murder. Wilma Ann Bailey discusses why the Protestant and Jewish traditions changed the wording and why the Roman Catholic tradition did not. She also examines the impact that the wording will have in the future for people who believe that there is no general prohibition against killing in the Hebrew Bible and why questions of killing that are broader than murder 'death penalty and just war 'are no longer part of the discussion of this commandment.

Chapters are You Shall Not Kill, The Sixth Commandment in Evangelical Protestantism, The Sixth Commandment in Mainline Traditions, The Sixth Commandment in Judaism, The Fifth Commandment in Roman Catholicism, When 'You Shall Not Kill ' Became 'You Shall Not Murder. '

*Wilma Ann Bailey, MA, PhD, is associate professor of Hebrew and Aramaic Scripture at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.*

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