

murder upon his soul. What is murder but a violation of the Sixth Commandment? And what is a violation of the Sixth Commandment but taking the life of a man without Divine authority? If that commandment had not been given, there had been no such thing as murder. The killing of a murderer is wrong, not because it agrees or disagrees with the wishes and opinions of men, but because God has said "Thou shalt not kill."

This sacredness with which God holds every human life and teaches men so to do may be seen still further and even more pointedly in the fact that no man is justified under any circumstances whatever in taking his own life. God permits it neither by direct teaching nor example. There is not an instance given in Scripture of self-murder except in men of the most infamous character, such as Saul, Ahithophel, Judas, and others of like stamp. Jonah dared not lay hands upon himself, although he was disappointed and tired of life. Even Job, in extreme poverty, bereavement, and suffering, just the kind of a case to commit suicide, was not permitted for a moment to meditate the taking away of his own life. But he says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change comes." If God has given to no man the permission to end even his own life under any consideration, how much less excusable is man for taking the life of another except he has the clearest Divine authority for so doing?

For still further proof of the sacredness with which God regards every human life, let me point you to a most significant and striking fact. Turn in your Bibles to the 9th chapter of Genesis. Noah and his family have just come out of the ark. From the murder of Abel, indeed from the fall in Eden, wickedness became so prevalent that all the race is destroyed by God save one family. In this 9th chapter the world is beginning anew. Almost the very first direction that God gives to the new beginning race is concerning

His jealous regard for human life. Now read the 5th verse: "Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." At the close of the following verse we are told the special reason for God's great jealousy for human life: "For in the image of God made He man." How dare any one unauthorized presume to destroy the tabernacle of flesh and blood in which God has enshrined the image of Himself? In consideration of these things, how can a man lay violent hands upon himself, much less another, and be free from the stain of blood?

2. Here, the question arises, How, then are those guilty of manslaughter to be punished, since God forbids man to take the life of another even though he deserves to die? This leads me to call your attention to a second consideration, viz., the civil law. In this we find the solution of the matter. Such things must be committed to the civil law. To that end was it instituted. Here some rash one may say, Is not the law executed by men—men, too, who often fail to do their duty? Why has one man, even though he be an officer, better right to put to death a criminal than another, if the popular voice says the man is guilty? I would reply to such questions in this way: How do you know what the popular voice is? You have taken no ballot of the people. You have listened to only a few voices. Moreover, the popular voice is generally uttered without any definite knowledge in the matter. On the other hand, the people have chosen certain officers whose business it is to make a thorough and impartial investigation of such things and deal with them according to a fixed code of laws with which the people are not generally conversant, even were they all equally capable. If those officers do not do their duty, that is another consideration altogether. That is what it is your duty to look after. The officers are the custodians