

# New testament and homer

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



Hebrew and Greek attitudes toward killing are similar, but once religion is factored in a remarkable difference is revealed. Early Hebrew citizens were murderous people by nature, much like the Greeks, but had God looking down on them saying to them that killing was wrong. Greek citizens would engage in war and human sacrifices with the gods on their side, and even sometimes the gods would take part in the murdering. The Greek way of life was murderous due to their strong urge to be revengeful, whereas the Hebrews murdered to keep the faith.

In the text of TheOdysseyand the Holy Bible killing is undeniably abundant with citizens killing, God killing, and sometimes the two killing in cahoots. The Holy Bible contains many instances of killing. The one that most everyone is familiar with is, Exodus 20: 13, in the Ten Commandments of God stating, “ You shall not murder. ” Later in the Bible, God states what will happen to you if you disobey him, “ The Lord will send you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me” (Deuteronomy 28: 20).

With these to teachings from God, one would think there would be no killing going on and if you did kill you would be punished severely. This however, is not the case. In Genesis, Cain murders his own brother, Abel, out of jealousy. God sees this and is angry that Cain didn't follow his rules, consequently banishing him and desecrating his body with a mark (The Holy Bible, Genesis 4). In some instances God actually commands killing. In Genesis, God became angry with the people so he kills them all with a flood, sparing only what He put on Noah's Ark (Holy Bible, Genesis 6-8).

God also asks Abraham to sacrifice his own son. Abraham is ready to prove his faith to God and murder, but fortunately God does not make him (Holy Bible, Genesis 22: 8-13). When the people worship a golden calf in Baal, God becomes angry because you are not suppose to worship figures or anything other than God, and took command over the people. God makes the men take their swords and slay over three thousand of their brothers and sons (Holy Bible, Exodus 32: 27-29). God also kills all of Egypt's first born when he establishes Passover.

During the first Passover, all of the people who do not obey God's detailed procedure for Passover are visited and murdered by an angel of death. After God makes the Egyptians hearts hard and then weak, the people are able to leave, but are followed by the Pharaoh's men. God separates the Red Sea for the Hebrews, but once the Egyptian soldiers enter the parting, God fills the waters back up and drowns all the men (Holy Bible, Exodus 12: 29-30). All of the killings are influenced by Gods determination to have the people faithful to his religion.

God leads the people through Moses and performs various acts to win the faith of the people. He does this by putting death on the door of the Hebrews and then saving the Hebrews by not killing them, therefore winning their faith by making them acknowledge his existence. God commands that people obey him or pay the consequence. This is a threat to the people on disobedience for Gods laws. If you murder you have desecrated Gods will, and punishment will come, and it will come in the greatest way possible.

Early Greek society is full of warfare and dedication to the gods. The citizens of their great cities take pride in the glory of their warriors and the proud armies that fight so hard to conquer and plunder their enemies. As they are busy killing in war, they are also dedicated to their gods. Sacrificing humans to the gods is not an uncommon occurrence. The gods also play active roles in the Greeks killing. The gods sit above on Mt. Olympus and watch the many people come in conflict with each other, sometimes taking part in how the divine game is played out.

The way the gods interact reminds me as if they are watching a daytime soap opera, interfering with the actions of the actors. In Homer's *The Odyssey*, Odysseus, a powerful Greek warrior, is glorified in his adventures to Troy. His kills are great and in many numbers. Odysseus is described as a hero and the "raider of cities." On Odysseus's twenty-year quest the gods, mainly Athena, lead him. In the beginning the gods interfere when Poseidon wants to kill Odysseus, but Zeus refrains him from doing so. As Odysseus wanders his way home, he contemplates self-restraint and the value of lives.

On part of his journey, Odysseus travels a dangerous path at one point risking his whole crew, which he has lost numerous times. He must decide between one path that will kill only a few and is difficult, or on a simpler path that can kill all of his crew. He realizes the importance of the lives and chooses the less harmful one. Perhaps the greatest and most glorified of Odysseus's killings is when he returns home to kill all of the suitors pursuing his wife. Greeks killed out of revenge quite often. This created a giant, perpetual cycle of killing that left many angry.

As Odysseus is murdering in great numbers at his home he is proud. He believes he is doing justice when he hangs prostitutes dead by a rope and dismembers a goat herder. The vengeful Odysseus is described as a proud fisherman with all his kills. “ Odysseus scanned his house to see if any man still skulked alive, still hoped to avoid black death. But he found them one and all in blood and dust? great hauls of them down and out like fish that fishermen drag from the churning gray surf in looped and coiling nets and fling ashore on a sweeping hook of beach-some noble catch? orpse covering corpse? ”(Odyssey, lines 406-414).

The pride that Odysseus instills from his murderous ways is apparent. The Gods do not threaten a punishment on Odysseus. The only threat that is to Odysseus is the families of the suitors who are angry. The main motivation for the killings is families and citizens feuding and avenging past killings. Fortunately, at the end of the Odyssey, the Gods cast a fog in the memories of the people so they will forget their anger towards each other. As the Hebrews kill, God and his threat for them to behave forever accompanied them.

However, God's punishment is not always apparent, for the most part it is. As the Greeks kill they are profitable and in almost no threat to the Gods. In Hebrew culture murder was used by God to help keep order and to acquire his people freedom. The Greeks killed to please the Gods and to please their state, neither of these are a value in Hebrew life. Although Hebrews and Greeks killed a lot with little thought towards it, Hebrew culture was plagued with God's guilt over you, while in Greek culture you could profit from killing.