

Leviticus 19

Verses 1 - 4

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

²“Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. ³Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths; I am the Lord your God. ⁴Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves molten gods; I am the Lord your God.

You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy

How many parents have said, as long as you live in our house you will follow our rules.

As parents, we are far from holy like our Lord but we still expect our kids to obey the rules we have set down.

Well.....God created heaven and earth, as long as we live in his house, we should follow his rules. Right.

Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father

This is the 5th commandment

The home is the basic unit of all civilization and when the family unit is strong, so goes the town. As the town goes, so goes the state. As the state goes, so goes the nation.

When the family unit falls apart, so goes the nation.

You shall keep my Sabbaths

This is the 4th commandment.

This should have been an easy commandment for the Jewish people to follow but we know it wasn't.

Even people that have no time for God understand the importance of a day of rest.

Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves molten gods

This is the 2nd Commandment

It took nearly a thousand years (860 to be exact) for the people of Israel to give up their obsession with idols. This only includes the time from when Israel became a nation (1446 BC) until their deportation to Babylon in 586 BC.

It seems mankind is stubborn and slow to learn and yet many people think “the God of the Old Testament” was a mean and judgmental character.

They make two major mistakes in thinking this.

1. God does not change. He has always been the same God.
2. God has always been patient and long suffering with mankind.

To believe otherwise means they either don't know Bible History or they reject it as the word of God and His eye witness account of world history.

Verses 5 - 8

⁵‘Now when you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. ⁶It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and the next day; but what remains until the third day shall be burned with fire. ⁷So if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an offense; it will not be accepted. ⁸Everyone who eats it will bear his iniquity, for he has profaned the holy thing of the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

Now when you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord

This was the only sacrifice that could be eaten by the general population.

When one offered a peace-offering to God it was expected that he would share it with family and friends.

It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and the next day;

Given the lack of refrigeration one might wonder if this was safe, but the Jewish day ended at sunset so any meal prepared that day (let's say between noon to 7pm) could still be eaten after sunset (the next day).

But what remains until the third day shall be burned with fire

This was a practical commandment to prevent anyone from eating spoiled meat.

Verse 9 -10

⁹ ‘Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰ Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the Lord your God.

You shall not reap to the very corners of your field,

Nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard

This was God’s way of helping the poor.

Some people today argue that the government should not be involved in providing a safety net for the poor. What they fail to consider, or it escapes their notice, is that the majority of people are no longer involved in agriculture.

So how does God provide for the poor in the world today?

Does anyone believe that the church could help all the needs of a community if the Government was not doing their part?

How much does the congregation that you attend spend on helping the poor?

Verse 11-12

¹¹ ‘You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.

This is the 8th commandment.

Did you know that the top 5% of income earners cheat on their taxes more than any other group of people?

How about the corporate raider that takes over a company and then steals the money in the employees’ pension plan leaving them with no retirement. And according to congress there is nothing they can do to stop it. Really!

¹² You shall not swear falsely by my name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the Lord.

This is the 3rd commandment

This can mean several things:

1. Using the Lords name in vain when swearing.
2. Using God's name to convince others that you are telling the truth when in fact you are telling a lie.

Verse 13-14

¹³ 'You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning. ¹⁴ You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the Lord.

You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob *him*

Oppressing and robing your neighbor goes well beyond the 10th commandment which tells us not to envy or desire the things that our neighbor may have or own.

This includes dominating someone by unjust authority or power and taking things of value from him.

The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning

The exploitation of the working man was not allowed.

Many workers depended on the income of that day in order to pay for their shelter and meal that night. If that money was held back till the morning they had to go without.

You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind

See John 9:24 - 34

The religious leaders of Israel in the 1st century had lost their way.

Verse 15-16

¹⁵ ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly. ¹⁶ You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people, and you are not to act against the life of your neighbor; I am the Lord.

¹⁵ ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor nor defer to the great, but you are to judge your neighbor fairly.

The courts should be impartial, treating everyone fairly and justly.

You shall not go about as a slanderer among your people

Anyone who attacks the reputation of another can be held libel to the courts.

When Fox News allowed the Lawyers of Donald Trump to come on their network and lie about the Dominion voting machines it ended up costing them 787 million dollars.

You are not to act against the life of your neighbor

False testimony in court could cost an innocent person his life.

Verse 17-18

¹⁷ ‘You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.

¹⁷ ‘You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him.

It’s ok to be angry with someone and reprove them, but don’t let it turn into hate.

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.

Jesus said this was the 2nd greatest commandment.

See Mark 12:28-31

It's interesting that the 2nd greatest commandment is not one of the 10 commandments.

The next question that comes to mind is who is your neighbor?

Neighbor, as used here, means your fellow-man

See Leviticus 19:34

Did the law include the love of enemies?

See Exodus 23:4-5

Verse 19

¹⁹ You are to keep my statutes. You shall not breed together two kinds of your cattle; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together.

Each of the three commands is about two different kinds:

1. The two different animals were not to be bred together
2. The two different seeds were not to be planted together
3. The two different yarns were not to be interwoven.

Some commentators have suggested that there may be a spiritual lesson here.

That the Jews were not to intermarry with the pagan peoples of Canaan.

However, God had already taught that lesson in a much more direct way and there was no reason to make arbitrary restrictions in order to teach a spiritual lesson.

You shall not breed together two kinds of your cattle

This would make Mules and Hinnies unlawful in Israel

1. Mules -- The offspring of a male donkey and a female horse
2. Hinny -- The offspring of a female donkey and a male horse

The Mule has 63 chromosomes. One less than a Horse and one more than the Donkey

See pic 1905

Mules

- Mules have 63 chromosomes; horses have 64 and donkeys have 62
- A hinny is the offspring of a male horse and a female donkey (jennet)
- A female mule is called a mare or molly mules



Mules and hinnies are so similar, the terms 'mule' and 'hinny' are used interchangeably, with hinnies often being referred to as mules.

See pic 1910 The Hinny



Horses have 32 pairs of chromosomes while a donkey has only 31. As a result, their offspring will inherit 32 horse chromosomes and 31 donkey chromosomes, which leaves one chromosome that can't match with anything.

Therefore mules and hinnies only rarely can produce the cells critical for reproduction — eggs and sperm. So the chance of mules and hinnies reproducing without some outside help is infinitesimally small.

According to most reports, hinnies are sterile and are not capable of reproduction. Mules are 99.9% sterile, although in rare cases, female mules have been known to give birth to foals.

God may have prohibited this because He wanted the people of Israel to be productive.

You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed.

There is a lot of speculation among different commentators concerning this matter but none of it can be verified with additional information from other scriptures.

If an answer cannot be found after a reasonable amount of research, it seems best to set it aside for a period of time and move on to something more productive.

However, no one should believe that God has established arbitrary commands, because it is not in His nature to do so. He always remains true to His character.

Nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together.

The same comment can be made here that was just made about the seeds. But let's look at one example that is given to demonstrate how well-meaning commentators have bent the rules of logic to find an answer.

Some commentators have argued that the high priest wore a garment of mixed wool and linen (Ex. 28:6-8, 39:4-5). They say the clothing of mixed wool and linen was exclusively for the high priest and therefore was unlawful for the common person to wear.

However, they are making the assumption that "the dyed thread would have been made of wool". Do they have a verse to support that assumption? No they don't.

Another objection to this idea is that they compare the above regulation (not wearing two kinds of material mixed together) to the prohibition regarding the anointing oil. God gave a special recipe for the anointing oil, and it was strictly forbidden to duplicate the recipe for common use. They conclude from this that it was wrong to make a garment that was made from the same two materials. However, this conclusion is flawed because it was not wrong to use the same ingredients that were used for the anointing oil if it was in different proportions.

See Exodus 30:32

³² **It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make *any* like it in the same proportions; it is holy, *and* it shall be holy to you.**

In cases like this, saying, I don't know, is a better reply to the question than presenting an answer that doesn't pass the smell test.

Verses 20 - 22

²⁰ **‘Now if a man lies carnally with a woman who is a slave acquired for *another* man, but who has in no way been redeemed nor given her freedom, there shall be punishment; they shall not, *however*, be put to death, because she was not free.**

²¹ **He shall bring his guilt offering to the Lord to the doorway of the tent of meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. ²² The priest shall also make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the Lord for his sin which he has committed, and the sin which he has committed will be forgiven him.**

Now if a man lies carnally with a woman who is a slave acquired for *another* man there shall be punishment; but they shall not be put to death

If the woman was not a slave, the death penalty would have applied to both of them.

But because she was a slave there was a lessor penalty for both.

It is quite possible that the innocent party had a say in the penalty for the man who slept with her since she (the slave woman) was his property.

He shall bring his guilt offering to the Lord, a ram for a guilt offering.

A ram was the second most expensive offering.

So the man was punished and it cost him a good bit of income.

Verses 23 – 25

²³ **‘When you enter the land and plant all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as forbidden. Three years it shall be forbidden to you; *it* shall not be eaten. ²⁴ But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, an offering of praise to the Lord. ²⁵ In the fifth year you are to eat of its fruit, that its yield may increase for you; I am the Lord your God.**

When you enter the land and plant all kinds of trees for food

This law was practical since most new fruit trees take 3 to 5 years to produce fruit.

So the first fruit went to the Lord and then future crops could be eaten.

Verses 26-28

²⁶ **You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying.** ²⁷ **You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard.** ²⁸ **You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the Lord.**

You shall not eat *anything* with the blood

Animals had to be killed in a special way to make them Kosher

Nor practice divination or soothsaying

Divination is attempting to foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge by occult or supernatural means

Soothsaying is predicting the future by magical incantations

You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard

See Pics 1915 Tonsure



What if someone did it unknowingly? See Pics 1920 & 1925

1920



1925



Thanks to the Home Alone movie crew for their special insight into this verse. 😊

You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead

The priests of Baal on Mount Carmel in the contest with Elijah did this.

See 1 Kings 18:28

Nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves

Tattooing was also a device of paganism. Some followers had the logo of their god inscribed on their body.

Verse 29-30

²⁹ ‘Do not profane your daughter by making her a harlot, so that the land will not fall to harlotry and the land become full of lewdness. ³⁰ You shall keep my Sabbaths and revere my sanctuary; I am the Lord.

Do not profane your daughter by making her a harlot

Pagan religions of that time had sacred prostitutes that were a source of income for pagan temples.

A poor man could be tempted, by the money, to devote his daughter to such a life

You shall keep my Sabbaths and revere my sanctuary

Some laws are more important than others. Jesus said the two greatest commandments were to love God and your neighbor.

Keeping the Sabbath was number 4 of the 10 commandments and the sanctuary was the centerpiece of the Jewish religion.

Verse 31

³¹ ‘Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.

Do not turn to mediums or spiritists

A medium or spiritist serves as a link between the living and the dead

See 1 Samuel 28:3-7

Verse 32

³² 'You shall rise up before the gray headed and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the Lord.

You shall rise up before the gray headed and honor the aged

Respect your elders.

When Rehoboam rejected the counsel of the older advisors the kingdom was divided.

See 1Kings 12

And you shall revere your God; I am the Lord.

This is the creator of the universe, the first and the last, the one that brought Israel out of Egypt with great signs and wonders.

Verse 33-34

³³ 'When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.

³⁴ The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.

The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself

As foreigners in Egypt the Jews had been enslaved and mistreated. The lesson God wanted them to take from that experience was to treat the foreigner as they wanted to be treated.

In verse 18 above it says, **you shall love your neighbor as yourself**

In this verse (34) it says, **you shall love the foreigner as yourself**

In Exodus 23:4-5 it says, **you shall be helpful to your enemy** (my paraphrase)

This command to love the foreigner did not apply to the initial takeover of Canaan because God was judging the people of that land for their sinful culture.

However, people who came to Israel after the initial capture were to be treated fairly. Israel was to love the foreigner as they loved themselves.

Verse 35-36

³⁵ ‘You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity.

³⁶ You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin; I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt.

You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin

Israel was told to love their neighbor and the alien among them.

It seems obvious that one would not cheat those, whom they love, right.

God then reminds them that He has taken them out of slavery. The correct response to that should be thanksgiving and loyalty to Him.

Verse 37

³⁷ You shall thus observe all my statutes and all my ordinances and do them; I am the Lord.’”

This would have required some serious dedication.

There are 613 laws, commands and ordinances in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.