

## LEVITICUS 19: VARIOUS LAWS.

### 1. (1-2) The general call to holiness.

The idea behind the word **holy** is "separate." He is separate in terms of His sinlessness and perfection in His Person and character. "Be holy" mentioned 20 times.

**Romans 7:12** - *Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.*

### 3. (3) The law to respect parents.

Honor for parents is an essential building block for the stability and health of all society. If the younger generations are constantly at war with older generations, and vice versa, the foundations of society will be destroyed.

**Ephesians 6:1-3** - *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.*

### 4. (4) The law against idolatry.

The word for **idols** literally means *nothings*. Idols represent gods that are not real and do not really exist.

Israel had significant trouble with the worship of idols until the Babylonian captivity (some 800 years from the time of Leviticus). The attraction was not so much to the **molded gods** themselves, than as to what they represented - financial success, pleasure, and self-worship.

### 5. (5-8) Laws regarding offerings.

A **peace offering** (signifying the enjoyment of peace with God and fellowship) was always to be made by one's **own free will**. God did not want coerced fellowship from the people of Israel. Nor did God want *stale* fellowship with the people of Israel. The meat of a peace offering was considered no good after two days.

### 6. (9-10) Providing for the poor by leaving fields incompletely harvested.

Farmers were not to completely harvest their fields, so the poor and needy could come and glean the remains for themselves.

This is exactly what Ruth was doing when Boaz noticed her in **Ruth 2:2**- *So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor."* And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

This was a wonderful way to help the poor. It commanded the farmers to have a generous heart, and the poor to be active in gathering their food.

7. (11-13) Honest dealing.

8. (Lev 19:14) Basic human compassion commanded.

God commanded Israel to not mistreat the handicapped; insulting the deaf is cruel because they can't hear your curse, though others can. To **put a stumbling block before the blind** is just despicable.

9. (15-16) Laws regarding justice and truthfulness.

These were primarily instructions to judges and magistrates, giving them principles for making legal decisions. However, they also are relevant to everyday relations with those around us.

10. (17-18) The command to love one's neighbor.

Love for one's brother is commanded, not only in action but also in **heart**. Rebuke, not revenge and no carrying grudges.

Paul warned that in the last days, *men will be lovers of themselves* (2 Timothy 3:2) –

**1John 4:7-11** - *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

11. (19) Laws of purity in response to pagan practices.

The mixing of these things - different species of livestock, seeds, and fabrics - was usually seen by pagans to be a source of magical power. God wanted Israel to have no association with these pagan customs.

12. (20-22) The penalty for unlawful intercourse with a concubine.

This deals with a woman who was a **concubine** in the sense she was a slave girl, who was eligible to be married.

This is the situation described: A slave girl is engaged to marry a free man, and then a different man has sex with her. Normally, the penalty was death; but because the woman was a slave, and was presumed to be not free to resist (or guarded by a father), the penalty was not death. Yet, she was not marriable to her fiancée, so he must be reimbursed (the punishment mentioned). Then the moral guilt would be settled by sacrifice, and presumably, the man who had sex with her would be obliged to marry her.

13. (23-25) Regarding the fruit in the land of Canaan.

God reminded Israel of their ultimate goal - the Promised Land, the land of Canaan - and told them not to eat of the fruit of the trees they plant there for three years. Then the fruit of the fourth year belonged to the LORD, and the fruit of the fifth year could be eaten.

14. (26-31) Laws to insure separation from pagan practices.

Eating blood was a practice in many pagan cultic ceremonies.

These were also pagan practices God wanted Israel to separate from. The trimming of the hair, the beard, cutting, and tattoos were all connected with pagan rites of mourning.

To **prostitute your daughter** in this context probably means to give her as a ritual prostitute at a pagan temple; this was of course forbidden, though in the eyes of the pagan culture, it was a religious thing to do.

These were ways the pagans sought to contact the dead or other spirits; this was a doorway into the occult, and strictly forbidden - those who **seek after** these things are **defiled** - "made dirty" by them.

15. (32-37) Further laws of kindness and justice.

The senior citizens were to be respected; strangers given hospitality and they were to deal with honesty.

**Zechariah 8:16** – *These are the things you shall do, speak each man the truth to his neighbor, give judgment in your gates for truth, justice and peace.*