
LEVITICUS 19:1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Exhortations to holiness, and a repetition of various laws, Lev 19:1, Lev 19:2 Duty to parents, and observance of the Sabbath, Lev 19:3. Against idolatry, Lev 19:4. Concerning peace-offerings, Lev 19:5-8. The gleanings of the harvest and vintage to be left for the poor, Lev 19:9, Lev 19:10. Against stealing and lying, Lev 19:11; false swearing, Lev 19:12; defrauding the hireling, Lev 19:13. Laws in behalf of the deaf and the blind, Lev 19:14. Against respect of persons in judgment, Lev 19:15; tale-bearing, Lev 19:16; hatred and uncharitableness, Lev 19:17; revenge, Lev 19:18; unlawful mixtures in cattle, seed, and garments, Lev 19:19. Laws relative to the bondmaid that is betrothed, Lev 19:20-22. The fruit of the trees of the land not to be eaten for the first three years, Lev 19:23; but this is lawful in the fourth and fifth years, Lev 19:24, Lev 19:25. Against eating of blood, and using incantations, Lev 19:26; superstitious cutting of the hair, Lev 19:27; and cutting of the flesh in the times of mourning, Lev 19:28; prostitution, Lev 19:29. Sabbaths to be revered, Lev 19:30. Against consulting those who are wizards, and have familiar spirits, Lev 19:31. Respect must be shown to the aged, Lev 19:32. The stranger shall not be oppressed, Lev 19:33, Lev 19:34. They shall keep just measures, weights, and balances, Lev 19:35, Lev 19:36. Conclusion, Lev 19:37.

LEVITICUS 19:2 "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and tell them, 'You shall be holy; for I, the LORD your God, am holy.

LEVITICUS 19:3 "Each one of you shall respect his mother and his father. You shall keep my Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God.

Verse 3

Ye shall fear every man his mother, etc. - Ye shall have the profoundest reverence and respect for them. See Clarke's note on Gen 48:12, and see Clarke's note on Exo 20:8, and see Clarke's note on Exo 20:12.

LEVITICUS 19:4 "Don't turn to idols, nor make molten gods for yourselves. I am the LORD your God.

Verse 4

Turn ye not unto idols - אלילים elilim, literally nothings; and to this St. Paul seems to allude 1Cor 8:4, where he says, We know that an idol is Nothing in the world.

LEVITICUS 19:5 "When you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted.

Verse 5

Peace-offerings - See the notes at the conclusion of Leviticus 7 at Lev 7:38 (note).

LEVITICUS 19:6 It shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and on the next day: and if anything remains until the third day, it shall be burned with fire.

LEVITICUS 19:7 If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination. It will not be accepted;

Verse 7

It is be eaten - on the third day - See the note on Lev 7:15.

LEVITICUS 19:8 but everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the holy thing of the LORD, and that soul shall be cut off from his people.

LEVITICUS 19:9 "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, neither shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.

Verse 9

When ye reap the harvest - Liberty for the poor to glean both the corn-fields and vineyards was a Divine institution among the Jews; for the whole of the Mosaic dispensation, like the Christian, breathed love to God and benevolence to man. The poor in Judea were to live by gleanings from the corn-fields and vine yards. To the honor of the public and charitable spirit of the English, this merciful law is in general as much attended to as if it had been incorporated with the Gospel.

LEVITICUS 19:10 You shall not glean your vineyard, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the foreigner. I am the LORD your God.

LEVITICUS 19:11 "You shall not steal. "You shall not lie. "You shall not deceive one another.

Verse 11

Ye shall not steal, etc. - See the notes on Exo 20:15.

LEVITICUS 19:12 "You shall not swear by my name falsely, and profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 19:13 "You shall not oppress your neighbour, nor rob him.

"The wages of a hired servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning.

Verse 13

The wages - shall not abide with thee all night - For this plain reason, it is the support of the man's life and family, and they need to expend it as fast as it is earned.

LEVITICUS 19:14 "You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind; but you shall fear your God. I am the LORD.

Verse 14

Thou shalt not curse the deaf - Or speak evil of him, because he cannot hear, and so cannot vindicate his own character.

Nor put a stumbling - block before the blind - He who is capable of doing this, must have a heart cased with cruelty. The spirit and design of these precepts are, that no man shall in any case take advantage of the ignorance, simplicity, or inexperience of his neighbor, but in all things do to his neighbor as he would, on a change of circumstances, that his neighbor should do to him.

LEVITICUS 19:15 "You shall do no injustice in judgement. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor show favouritism to the great; but you shall judge your neighbour in righteousness.

LEVITICUS 19:16 "You shall not go up and down as a slanderer among your people.

"You shall not endanger the life of your neighbour. I am the LORD.

Verse 16

Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer - רכיל rachil signifies a trader, a peddler, and is here applied to the person who travels about dealing in scandal and calumny, getting the secrets of every person and family, and retailing them wherever he goes. A more despicable character exists not: such a person is a pest to society, and should be exiled from the habitations of men.

Neither shalt thou stand against the blood, etc. - Thou shalt not be as a false witness, because by such testimony the blood - the life of an innocent man may be endangered.

LEVITICUS 19:17 "You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbour, and not bear sin because of him.

Verse 17

Thou shalt not hate thy brother - Thou shalt not only not do him any kind of evil, but thou shalt harbor no hatred in thy heart towards him. On the contrary, thou shalt love him as thyself, Lev 19:18. Many persons suppose, from misunderstanding our Lord's words, Joh 13:34, A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another, etc., that loving our neighbor as ourselves was first instituted under the Gospel. This verse shows the opinion to be unfounded: but to love

another as Christ has loved us, i. e., to lay down our lives for each other, is certainly a new commandment; we have it simply on the authority of Jesus Christ alone.

And not suffer sin upon him - If thou see him sin, or know him to be addicted to any thing by which the safety of his soul is endangered, thou shalt mildly and affectionately reprove him, and by no means permit him to go on without counsel and advice in a way that is leading him to perdition. In a multitude of cases timely reproof has been the means of saving the soul. Speak to him privately if possible; if not, write to him in such a way that himself alone shall see it.

LEVITICUS 19:18 "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people; but you shall love your neighbour as yourself. I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 19:19 "You shall keep my statutes. "You shall not cross-breed different kinds of animals. "You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed; "neither shall there come upon you a garment made of two kinds of material.

Verse 19

Gender with a diverse kind - These precepts taken literally seem to imply that they should not permit the horse and the she-ass, nor the he-ass and the cow, (as they do in the East), to couple together; nor sow different kinds of seeds in the same field or garden; nor have garments of silk and woolen, cotton and silk, linen and wool, etc. And if all these were forbidden, there must have been some moral reason for the prohibitions, because domestic economy required several of these mixtures, especially those which relate to seeds and clothing. With respect to heterogeneous mixtures among cattle, there is something very unnatural in it, and it was probably forbidden to prevent excitements to such unnatural lusts as those condemned in the preceding chapter, Lev 18:22, Lev 18:23. As to seeds, in many cases it would be very improper to sow different kinds in the same plot of ground. It would be improvident to sow oats and wheat together: the latter would be injured, the former ruined. The turnip and carrot would not succeed conjointly, where either of them separately would prosper and yield a good crop; so we may say of many other kinds of seeds; and if this be all that is intended, the counsels are prudential agricultural maxims. As to different kinds of garments, such as the linsey woolsey, the prohibition here might be intended as much against pride and vanity as any thing else; for it is certain that both these articles may be so manufactured in conjunction as to minister to pride, though in general the linsey woolsey or druggut is the clothing of the poor. But we really do not know what the original word שַׂטְנֵץ shaatnez, which we translate linen and woolen, means: it is true that in Deu 22:11, where it is again used, it seems to be explained by the words immediately following, Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of linen and woolen together; but this may as well refer to a garment made up of a sort of patchwork differently colored and arranged for pride and for show. A folly of this kind prevailed anciently in this very land, and I shall give a proof of it, taken from a sermon against luxury in dress, composed in the fourteenth century. "As to the first sinne in superfluitie of clothing, soche that maketh it so dere, to the harme of the peple, nat only the cost of enbrauderIng, the disguised endenting, or barring, ounding paling, winding or bending and semblable wast of clothe in vanite. But there is also the costlewe furring in their gounes, so moche pounsing of chesel, to make holes; so moche dagging with sheres foorth; with the superfluitie in length of the forsaid gounes, - to grete dammage of pore folke - And more ouer - they shewe throughe disguising, in departing of ther hosen in white and red, semeth that halfe ther members were slain - They departe ther hosen into

other colors, as is white and blewe, or white and blacke, or blacke and red, and so forth; than semeth it as by variaunce of color, that the halfe part of ther members ben corrupt by the fire of Saint Anthony, or by canker, or other suche mischaunce."

The Parson's Tale, in Chaucer, p. 198. Urry's edit.

The reader will pardon the antiquated spelling. "What could exhibit," says Dr. Henry, "a more fantastical appearance than an English beau of the 14th century? He wore long pointed shoes, fastened to his knees by gold or silver chains; hose of one color on the one leg, and of another color on the other; short breeches which did reach to the middle of his thighs; a coat the one half white, the other half black or blue; a long beard; a silk hood buttoned under his chin, embroidered with grotesque figures of animals, dancing men, etc., and sometimes ornamented with gold and precious stones." This dress was the height of the mode in the reign of King Edward III. Something of the same kind seems to have existed in the patriarchal times; witness the coat of many colors made by Jacob for his son Joseph. See the note on Gen 37:3. Concerning these different mixtures much may be seen in the Mishna, Tract, Kilaim, and in Ainsworth, and Calmet on this place.

LEVITICUS 19:20 "If a man lies carnally with a woman who is a slave girl, pledged to be married to another man, and not ransomed, or given her freedom; they shall be punished. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

Verse 20

A woman that is a bondmaid - Had she been free, the law required that she should be put to death; (see Deu 22:24); but as she was a slave, she is supposed to have less self-command, and therefore less guilt: but as it is taken for granted she did not make resistance, or did consent, she is to be scourged, and the man is to bring a ram for a trespass-offering.

LEVITICUS 19:21 He shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the Tent of Meeting, even a ram for a trespass offering.

LEVITICUS 19:22 The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed: and the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him.

LEVITICUS 19:23 "When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as forbidden. Three years shall they be forbidden to you. It shall not be eaten.

Verse 23

Three years shall it be as uncircumcised - I see no great reason to seek for mystical meanings in this prohibition. The fruit of a young tree cannot be good; for not having arrived at a state of maturity, the juices cannot be sufficiently elaborated to produce fruit excellent in its kind. The Israelites are commanded not to eat of the fruit of a tree till the fifth year after its planting: in the three first years the fruit is unwholesome; in the fourth year the fruit is holy, it belongs to God, and should be

consecrated to him, Lev 19:24; and in the fifth year and afterward the fruit may be employed for common use, Lev 19:25.

LEVITICUS 19:24 But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, for giving praise to the LORD.

LEVITICUS 19:25 In the fifth year you shall eat its fruit, that it may yield its increase to you. I am the LORD your God.

LEVITICUS 19:26 “You shall not eat any meat with the blood still in it; neither shall you use enchantments, nor practice sorcery.

Verse 26

Neither shall ye use enchantment - ולא תנחשו lo thenachashu. Conjecture itself can do little towards a proper explanation of the terms used in this verse. נחש nachash; See note at Gen 3:1 (note), we translate serpent, and with very little propriety; but though the word may not signify a serpent in that place, it has that signification in others. Possibly, therefore, the superstition here prohibited may be what the Greeks called Ophiomanteia, or divination by serpents.

Nor observe times - ולא תעוננו velo teonenu, ye shall not divine by clouds, which was also a superstition much in practice among the heathens, as well as divination by the flight of birds. What these prohibitions may particularly refer to, we know not. See Clarke's note on Gen 41:8.

LEVITICUS 19:27 “You shall not cut the hair on the sides of your heads, neither shall you clip off the edge of your beard.

Verse 27

Ye shall not round the corners your heads - This and the following verse evidently refer to customs which must have existed among the Egyptians when the Israelites sojourned in Egypt; and what they were it is now difficult, even with any probability, to conjecture. Herodotus observes that the Arabs shave or cut their hair round, in honor of Bacchus, who, they say, had his hair cut in this way, lib. iii., cap. 8. He says also that the Macians, a people of Libya, cut their hair round, so as to leave a tuft on the top of the head, lib. iv., cap. 175. In this manner the Chinese cut their hair to the present day. This might have been in honor of some idol, and therefore forbidden to the Israelites.

The hair was much used in divination among the ancients, and for purposes of religious superstition among the Greeks; and particularly about the time of the giving of this law, as this is supposed to have been the era of the Trojan war. We learn from Homer that it was customary for parents to dedicate the hair of their children to some god; which, when they came to manhood, they cut off and consecrated to the deity. Achilles, at the funeral of Patroclus, cut off his golden locks which his father had dedicated to the river god Sperchius, and threw them into the flood: - Στας απανευθε πυρης ξονθην απεκειρατο χαιτην, Την ρα Σπερχειω ποταμω τρεφε τηλεθωσαν· Οχθησας δ' αρα ειπεν, ιδων επι οινωπα ποντον· Σπερχει', αλλως σοι γε πατηρ ηρησατο Πηλεως. κ. τ. λ.

Iliad, 1. xxiii., ver. 142, etc.

But great Achilles stands apart in prayer,
 And from his head divides the yellow hair,
 Those curling locks which from his youth he vowed,
 And sacred threw to Sperchius' honored flood.
 Then sighing, to the deep his looks he cast,
 And rolled his eyes around the watery waste.
 Sperchius! whose waves, in mazy errors lost,
 Delightful roll along my native coast!
 To whom we vainly vowed, at our return,
 These locks to fall, and hecatombs to burn
 So vowed my father, but he vowed in vain,
 No more Achilles sees his native plain;
 In that vain hope these hairs no longer grow;
 Patrocius bears them to the shades below.
 Pope.

From Virgil we learn that the topmost lock of hair was dedicated to the infernal gods; see his account of the death of Dido: - "Nondum illi flavum Proserpina vertice crinem

Abstulerat, Stygioque caput damnaverat orco - Hunc ego Diti Sacrum jussa fero; teque isto corpore solvo.

Sic ait, et dextra crinem secat."

Aeneid, lib. iv., ver. 698.

The sisters had not cut the topmost hair,
 Which Proserpine and they can only know.
 Nor made her sacred to the shades below -
 This offering to the infernal gods I bear;
 Thus while she spoke, she cut the fatal hair.
 Dryden.

If the hair was rounded, and dedicated for purposes of this kind, it will at once account for the prohibition in this verse. The corners of thy beard - Probably meaning the hair of the cheek that connects the hair of the head with the beard. This was no doubt cut in some peculiar manner, for the superstitious purposes mentioned above. Several of our own countrymen wear this said hair in a curious form; for what purposes they know best: we cannot say precisely that it is the ancient Egyptian custom revived. From the images and paintings which remain of the ancient Egyptians, we find that they were accustomed to shave the whole hair off their face, except merely that upon the chin, which last they cut off only in times of mourning.

LEVITICUS 19:28 "You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you. I am the LORD.

Verse 28

Any cuttings in your flesh for the dead - That the ancients were very violent in their grief, tearing the hair and face, beating the breast, etc., is well known. Virgil represents the sister of Dido "tearing her

face with her nails, and beating her breast with her fists." "Unguibus ora soror foedans, et pectora pugnis."

Aen., l. iv., ver. 672.

Nor print any marks upon you - It was a very ancient and a very general custom to carry marks on the body in honor of the object of their worship. All the castes of the Hindoos bear on their foreheads or elsewhere what are called the sectarian marks, which distinguish them, not only in a civil but also in a religious point of view, from each other. Most of the barbarous nations lately discovered have their faces, arms, breasts, etc., curiously carved or tattooed, probably for superstitious purposes. Ancient writers abound with accounts of marks made on the face, arms, etc., in honor of different idols; and to this the inspired penman alludes, Rev 13:16, Rev 13:17; Rev 14:9, Rev 14:11; Rev 15:2; Rev 16:2; Rev 19:20; Rev 20:4, where false worshippers are represented as receiving in their hands and in their forehead the marks of the beast. These were called *στίγματα* *stigmata* among the Greeks, and to these St. Paul refers when he says, I bear about in my body the Marks (*stigmata*) of the Lord Jesus; Gal 6:17. I have seen several cases where persons have got the figure of the cross, the Virgin Mary, etc., made on their arms, breasts, etc., the skin being first punctured, and then a blue colouring matter rubbed in, which is never afterward effaced. All these were done for superstitious purposes, and to such things probably the prohibition in this verse refers. Calmet, on this verse, gives several examples. See also Mariner's Tonga Islands, vol. i. p. 311-313.

LEVITICUS 19:29 "Don't profane your daughter, to make her a prostitute; lest the land fall to prostitution, and the land become full of wickedness.

Verse 29

Do not prostitute thy daughter - This was a very frequent custom, and with examples of it writers of antiquity abound. The Cyprian women, according to Justin, gained that portion which their husbands received with them at marriage by previous public prostitution. And the Phoenicians, according to Augustine, made a gift to Venus of the gain acquired by the public prostitution of their daughters, previously to their marriage. "Veneri donum dabant, et prostitutiones filiarum, antequam jungerent eas viris." - De Civit. Del, lib. xviii., c. 5; and see Calmet.

LEVITICUS 19:30 "You shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the LORD.

LEVITICUS 19:31 "Don't turn to those who are mediums, nor to the wizards. Don't seek them out, to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God.

Verse 31

Regard not them that have familiar spirits - The Hebrew word *אֲבוֹת* *oboth* probably signifies a kind of engastromuthoi or ventriloquists, or such as the Pythoness mentioned Act 16:16, Act 16:18; persons who, while under the influence of their demon, became greatly inflated, as the Hebrew word implies, and gave answers in a sort of frenzy. See a case of this kind in Virgil, Aeneid, l. vi., ver. 46, etc.: -

" - Deus ecce, Deus! cui talla fanti

Ante fores, subito non vultus, non color unus,
Non comptae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum,
Et rabie fera corda tument; majorque videri,

Nec mortale sonans, afflata est numine quando

Jam propiore Dei." - Invoke the skies, I feel the god, the rushing god, she cries.

While yet she spoke, enlarged her features grew,

Her color changed, her locks dishevelled flew.

The heavenly tumult reigns in every part,

Pants in her breast, and swells her rising heart:

Still swelling to the sight, the priestess glowed,

And heaved impatient of the incumbent god.

Pitt.

Neither seek after wizards - ידענים yiddeonim, the wise or knowing ones, from ידע yada, to know or understand; called wizard in Scotland, wise or cunning man in England; and hence also the wise woman, the white witch. Not only all real dealers with familiar spirits, or necromantic or magical superstitions, are here forbidden, but also all pretenders to the knowledge of futurity, fortune-tellers, astrologers, etc., etc. To attempt to know what God has not thought proper to reveal, is a sin against his wisdom, providence, and goodness. In mercy, great mercy, God has hidden the knowledge of futurity from man, and given him hope - the expectation of future good, in its place. See Clarke's note on Exo 22:18.

LEVITICUS 19:32 "You shall rise up before the gray head, and honour the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God. I am the LORD.

Verse 32

Before the hoary head - See Clarke's note on Gen 48:12.

LEVITICUS 19:33 "If a stranger lives as a foreigner with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.

Verse 33

If a stranger sojourn - This law to protect and comfort the stranger was at once humane and politic. None is so desolate as the stranger, and none needs the offices of benevolence and charity more: and we may add that he who is not affected by the desolate state of the stranger has neither benevolence nor charity. It was politic to encourage strangers, as in consequence many came, not only to sojourn, but to settle among the Jews, and thus their political strength became increased; and many of these settlers became at least proselytes of the gate if not proselytes of the covenant, and thus got their souls saved. Hence humanity, sound policy, and religion said, Vex not the stranger; thou shalt love him as thyself. The apostle makes use of a strong argument to induce men to hospitality towards strangers: Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares, Heb 13:2. Moses also uses a powerful motive: Ye were strangers in the

land of Egypt. The spirit of the precept here laid down, may be well expressed in our Lord's words: Do unto all men as ye would they should do unto you.

LEVITICUS 19:34 The stranger who lives as a foreigner with you shall be to you as the native-born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you lived as foreigners in the land of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

LEVITICUS 19:35 "You shall do no unrighteousness in judgement, in measures of length, of weight, or of quantity.

Verse 35

Ye shall do no unrighteousness - Ye shall not act contrary to the strictest justice in any case, and especially in the four following, which properly understood, comprise all that can occur between a man and his fellow.

1. Judgment in all cases that come before the civil magistrate; he is to judge and decide according to the law.
 2. Mete-Yard, במדה bammiddah, in measures of length and surface, such as the reed, cubit, foot, span, hand's breadth, among the Jews; or ell, yard, foot, and inch, among us.
 3. Weight, במשקל bammishkal, in any thing that is weighed, the weights being all according to the standards kept for the purpose of trying the rest in the sanctuary, as appears from Exo 30:13; 1Chr 23:29; these weights were the talent, shekel, barleycorn, etc.
 4. Measure, במשורה bammesurah, from which we derive our term. This refers to all measures of capacity, such as the homer, ephah, seah, hin, omer, kab, and log. See all these explained at Exo 16:16 (note).
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LEVITICUS 19:36 You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

Verse 36

Just balances - Scales, steel-yard, etc. Weights, אבנים abanim, stones, as the weights appear to have been originally formed out of stones. Ephah, hin, etc., see before.

LEVITICUS 19:37 "You shall observe all my statutes, and all my ordinances, and do them. I am the LORD."

Verse 37

Shall ye observe all my statutes - חקתי chukkothi, from חק chak, to describe, mark, or trace out; the righteousness which I have described, and the path of duty which I have traced out. Judgments,

מִשְׁפָּטֵי mishpatai, from שֹׁפֵט shaphat, to discern, determine, direct, etc.; that which Divine Wisdom has discerned to be best for man, has determined shall promote his best interest, and has directed him conscientiously to use. See the note on Lev 26:15.

1. Many difficulties occur in this very important chapter, but they are such only to us; for there can be no doubt of their having been perfectly well known to the Israelites, to whom the precepts contained in this chapter were given. Considerable pains however have been taken to make them plain, and no serious mind can read them without profit.

2. The precepts against injustice, fraud, slander, enmity, etc., etc., are well worth the notice of every Christian; and those against superstitious usages are not less so; and by these last we learn, that having recourse to astrologers, fortune-tellers, etc., to get intelligence of lost or stolen goods, or to know the future events of our own lives, or those of others, is highly criminal in the sight of God. Those who have recourse to such persons renounce their baptism, and in effect renounce the providence as well as the word of God.

3. The precepts of humanity and mercy relative to the poor, the hireling, and the stranger, are worthy of our most serious regard. Nor are those which concern weights and measures, traffic, and the whole system of commutative justice, less necessary to be observed for the benefit and comfort of the individual, and the safety and prosperity of the state.