

Leviticus Chapter 19 Second Continued

Verses 23-25

“Count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised”:

They could not eat from the fruit trees of Canaan for 4 years after entering the Land because the fruit of the first 3 years was to be considered unclean, and the fourth year the fruit was to be offered to the LORD.

Some gardeners say preventing a tree from bearing fruit in the first years, by cutting off the blossoms, makes it more productive.

Leviticus 19:23 "And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of."

The land of Canaan, whither they were now going.

"And shall have planted all manner of trees for food":

Such that brought forth fruit that was eatable, as figs, grapes, olives, etc.

So that all such trees as did not bear fruit fit for man's food came not under the following law.

Nor such as grew up of themselves and were not planted.

Nor such as were planted for any other use than for fruit.

Nor such as were planted by the Canaanites before the Israelites came into their land.

For so say the Jews, what were planted for a hedge or for timber are free from the law.

And add, at the time our fathers came into the land, what they found planted was free.

What they planted, though they had not subdued it (the land), was bound.

"Then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised":

Not fit to be eaten, but to be taken off and cast away as the foreskin of the flesh.

"Three years it shall be as uncircumcised unto you, it shall not be eaten of":

Which was a provision partly for the benefit of fruit trees newly planted.

Whose fruit, when they first bear, gardeners frequently take off immediately, and do not suffer them to grow to any perfection.

By which means a tree will grow stronger, and will bear more and better fruit another year.

And partly for the health of man, which physical reason is given by Aben Ezra.

Who observes that the fruit that comes unto the third year there is no profit by it, but is hurtful.

And chiefly because, as it is proper that the first fruits should be given to the LORD before any is eaten.

So it is right that it should be given seasonably, and when it is brought to its perfection.

Three years were to be reckoned, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom say, from the time the tree was planted.

A fruit tree takes at least three years of growth without fruit to make it strong and healthy.

They probably wouldn't have over 2 or 3 pieces of fruit anyway.

The first crop of fruit, just like the first crop of the field belongs to God.

This is teaching the practice of firstfruits.

Leviticus 19:24 "But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the LORD [withal]."

Separated and devoted to the service of God, to be given to the priest, or to be bought again of him.

Wherefore the Targum of Jonathan adds, at the end of the verse, "redeemed from the priest", a redemption price being given to the priest.

And, as Jarchi observes, as the tithe was not eaten without the walls of Jerusalem, but by redemption, even so likewise this.

"To praise the LORD withal":

For his abundant goodness in blessing and making the trees fruitful, and bringing their fruit unto perfection.

And by devoting the first fruits to God, his name was praised and glorified, as well as by eating them with joy and gladness before the LORD in Jerusalem.

The fruit that is from the tree on the fourth year is to be carried to the sanctuary and offered as a firstfruits offering.

The high priest and his family will eat this fruit.

Leviticus 19:25 "And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I [am] the LORD your God."

And so, in all succeeding years as long as the tree lasted and bore.

"That it may yield unto you the increase thereof":

May be so abundantly blessed, and produce so large an increase as to answer the three years' want of any fruit from it.

And the dedication of the fruit of the fourth year to the LORD.

"I am the LORD your God":

Who has promised this increase, is both able and faithful to make it good.

Of course, 5 means grace.

This fruit is a blessing from God.

In this Scripture, we see that God will bless this crop, if His instructions are followed.

Verses 26-31

Here, pagan religious customs are forbidden, including mourning rites (19:27-28), cultic prostitution (19:29), and necromancy (19:26, 31; Deut. 18:11-12).

"Tattoos have been found in most cultures worldwide and dating as far back as 3200 B.C.

Their use among Mediterranean and Egyptian people is probably what led to their prohibition, along with "cuttings in ... flesh for the dead".

These cuttings were something like present day piercings but with occult associations.

Leviticus 19:26 "Ye shall not eat [any thing] with the blood: neither shall ye use enchantment, nor observe times."

"Enchantment":

Attempting to tell the future with the help of snakes and clouds was a common ancient way of foretelling good or bad future.

These were forbidden forms of witch-craft which involved demonic activity (see note on Deut. 18:9-12).

We have been told over and over that the blood belongs to God.

As I said in a previous lesson, this does not mean that you cannot eat meat after it is cooked.

It does mean that all meat must have the blood drained to make it edible.

Satanic cults in our day are drinking blood.

This is not just sin, but an abomination before God.

Enchantment here means magic, or telling the future.

Things such as all types of mind control fall into this category.

Fortune tellers fall into this category as well.

Even hypnotism falls into this category.

Observers of times are those who study astrology.

Horoscopes fall into this category.

Astronomy is not evil, but astrology is.

We should not depend on any power other than God to direct us.

Palm reading also, falls into this realm.

We can easily see the mistakes that many people around us are making, practicing these things.

Our newspapers and magazines are filled with horoscopes telling your future, nearly every town has palm readers.

Even transcendental meditation falls into the realm of enchantment.

How long will God tolerate this type of sin?

Some churches have jumped over the line of faith and are actually practicing mind control.

Deuteronomy 18:10 "There shall not be found among you [any one] that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, [or] that useth divination, [or] an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,"

Verses 27-28

These pagan practices were most likely associated with Egyptian idolatry and were therefore to be avoided.

The practice of making deep gashes on the face and arms or legs, in times of grief, was universal among pagans.

It was seen as a mark of respect for the dead, as well as a sort of propitiatory offering to the gods who preside over death.

The Jews learned this custom in Egypt and though weaned from it, relapsed into the old superstition (compare Isa. 22:12; Jer. 16:6; 47:5).

Tattoos also were connected to names of idols, and were permanent signs of apostasy.

Leviticus 19:27 "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard."

The extremities of the hairs of the head, round about, on the forehead, temples, and behind the ears.

This is done, as Jarchi says, when any one makes his temples, behind his ears, and his forehead alike, so that the circumference of his head is found to be round all about, as if they had been cut as with a bowl.

And so the Arabians cut their hair, as Herodotus reports (see notes on Jer. 9:26).

"Neither shall thou mar the corners of thy beard":

By shaving them entirely.

Jarchi and other Jewish writers say, there are five of them, two on the right, as Gersom reckons them, one on the upper jaw, the other on the nether, and two over against them on the left, and one in the place where the nether jaw joins the right to the left, the chin.

The same observes, that it was the manner of idolaters to do the above things.

And Maimonides is of opinion that the reason of the prohibition is, because the idolatrous priests used this custom.

But this law does not respect priests only, but the people of Israel in general.

Wherefore rather it was occasioned by the Gentiles in common cutting their hair, in honor of their gods.

As the Arabians did, as Herodotus in the above place relates, in imitation of Bacchus, and to the honor of him.

And so with others, it was usual for young men to consecrate their hair to idols.

But inasmuch as such practices were used on account of the dead, as Aben Ezra observes, it seems probable enough that these things are forbidden to be done on their account, since it follows.

It appears that this was practiced by Arabians as a form of worshipping a false god.

This is not found in the Bible, but in a history book of that time.

The Hebrews sometimes cut their hair and beard as a form of mourning.

Leviticus 19:28 "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I [am] the LORD."

Either with their nails, tearing their cheeks and other parts.

Or with any instrument, knife, razor, etc. Jarchi says, it was the custom of the Amorites, when anyone died, to cut their flesh.

As it was of the Scythians, as Herodotus relates, even those of the royal family.

For a king they cut off a part of the ear, shaved the hair round about, cut the arms about, wounded the forehead and nose, and transfixed the left hand with arrows.

And so the Carthaginians, who might receive it from the Phoenicians, being a colony of theirs.

They used to tear their hair and mouths in mourning, and beat their breasts.

And with the Romans the women used to tear their cheeks in such a manner that it was forbidden by the law of the twelve tables, which some have thought was taken from hence.

And all this was done to appease the infernal deities, and to give them satisfaction for the deceased.

And here it is said to be made "for the soul", for the soul of the departed, to the honor of it, and for its good.

Though the word is often used for a dead body.

"Nor print any marks upon you":

Aben Ezra observes, there are some that say this is in connection with the preceding clause.

For there were some who marked their bodies with a known figure, by burning, for the dead.

And he adds, and there are to this day such, who are marked in their youth in their faces, that they may be known.

These prints or marks were made with ink or black lead, or, however, the incisions in the flesh were filled up therewith.

But this was usually done as an idolatrous practice.

So says Ben Gersom, this was the custom of the Gentiles in ancient times, to imprint upon themselves the mark of an idol, to show that they were his servants.

And the law cautions from doing this, as he adds, to the exalted name (the name of God).

In the Mishnah it is said, a man is not guilty unless he writes the name, as it is said (Lev. 19:28). Which the Talmudists and the commentators interpret of the name of an idol, and not of God.

"I am the LORD":

Who only is to be acknowledged as such, obeyed and served, and not any strange god, whose mark should be imprinted on them.

The prophets of Baal cut themselves trying to get their gods to answer them, when Elijah challenged them.

It did no good to cut themselves, because it did not bring an answer from their false god.

Deuteronomy 14:1 "Ye [are] the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead."

In Jeremiah chapter 48 and in lamentation, all of these things are done, but it is done by heathen people.

We see that people have taken this Scripture above very lightly.

Men and women are having tattoos done all over their bodies.

The Scripture says, don't print anything on your body.

Our body is not our own to do with as we wish.

Our body belongs to our Creator.

He just let us borrow it for our stay here on the earth.

Leviticus 19:29 "Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness."

“Prostitute thy daughter”:

Even the pagans of ancient Assyria at this time forbade such horrendous means of monetary gain.

In Thailand today, we hear that parents of little girls are selling them for a few hundred dollars into prostitution.

This is to me, one of the most horrible abuses of children that there could be.

The excuse that these people give for selling their little girls into prostitution is the poverty they live in.

I am saying little girls, but our society has become so sin sick that this now includes young boys as well.

This is not just in Thailand, it really is everywhere, even here in the United States perhaps but only on a smaller scale.

The whole world is full of wickedness.

Television and movies promote a lot of this.

Now movies are parental guidance or X-rated or R-rated.

Very few movies are being made that are classed as family movies.

We must stop this degradation of our land.

God will not look the other way forever.

Verses 30-37

Four new injunctions are added in this section: The children are cautioned:

(1) to avoid consulting mediums and spiritists (verse 31);

- (2) To have respect for the aged (verse 32);
- (3) Never to oppress the stranger (verses 33-34); and
- (4) To always use honest scales and weights (verses 35-36).

All four have the refrain "I am the LORD".

Verse 37 summarizes the whole chapter.

Leviticus 19:30 "Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I [am] the LORD."

By attending to the worship and service of God on Sabbath days.

They and their children would be preserved from the idolatry of the Gentiles, and all the filthy practices attending it.

"And reverence my sanctuary":

And not defile it by such impurities as were committed in the temples of idols.

The sanctuary being a holy place, sacred to him whose name is holy and reverend.

And where was the seat of his glorious Majesty, and therefore not to be defiled by fornication or idolatry.

Or by doing anything in it unseemly and unbecoming (see notes on Mark 11:16).

"I am the LORD":

Who had appointed the observance of the Sabbath day, and dwelt in the sanctuary, and therefore expected that the one would be kept and the other revered, and neither of them polluted.

God has set aside one day in 7 to worship Him.

So many people find a thousand and one other things to do to keep them away from God's house on this earth.

Every time you hear someone say, I could not come to church, because.

You hear one of these excuses. I do not read exceptions in the Scripture above.

Reverence in the sanctuary is almost a thing of the past.

I hear people say that some of the things they are doing in the church is art.

Art has its place, but its place is not in church.

We should enter the sanctuary in a Spirit of worship.

We should not eat or drink in the sanctuary.

It should be quiet in the sanctuary.

God is a holy God.

We must conduct His services His way, not our way to entertain the people.

The time in the sanctuary should be a time to fellowship with God.

It should not be a time when we are entertained to please our flesh.

Leviticus 19:31 "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I [am] the LORD your God."

“Familiar spirits”:

Mediums are humans who act as “go-betweens” to supposedly contact/communicate with the spirits of the dead, who are actually impersonated by demons (compare 20:6, 27).

There are 9 different Scriptures in the Bible where God came against those with familiar spirits and wizards.

In many cases, they were driven out of the land.

Nearly all of these Scriptures speak of these as being part of Satanic worship.

These familiar spirits are like demons.

They communicate evil.

Wizards include people who get information and power from the devil, instead of from God.

Leviticus 19:32 "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I [am] the LORD."

“Rise ... honor”:

Showing respect for the older man acknowledges God’s blessing of long life and the wisdom that comes with it (compare Isa. 3:5).

The word hoary has to do with grey hair caused by old age.

This is just saying that a person should have respect for those of old age.

Knowledge through experience comes with old age.

Many young people would do well to listen to the voice of experience.

Fear thy God, has to do with showing great reverence for God.

Leviticus 19:33 "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him."

Ben Gersom, and others, understand this of a proselyte of righteousness, who was circumcised, and in all things conformed to the Jewish religion.

But it may be interpreted of a proselyte of the gate, who was not an idolater, since he is described as one sojourning with them.

And indeed, of any stranger, who for a time was providentially cast among them.

"Ye shall not vex him":

With hard and grievous words, upbraiding him with his former ignorance and idolatry.

And saying unto him, as Jarchi observes, yesterday thou was a worshipper of idols, and now thou comest to learn the law.

Nor distress him by any means in business, or with law suits (see notes on Exodus 22:21).

Leviticus 19:34 "[But] the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I [am] the LORD your God."

Especially if a proselyte of righteousness.

For then he enjoyed the same privileges, civil and religious, the Israelites did.

For there was one law for them both (Exodus 12:49).

"And thou shalt love him as thyself":

And show it by doing all the good things for him they would have done for themselves in like circumstances.

"For ye were strangers in the land of Egypt":

And therefore, knew what hardships such were exposed to.

And it became them to put on bowels of compassion, and show pity to those in the same condition.

And particularly consider, as Jarchi suggests, that they were idolaters there also.

And therefore, ought not to upbraid strangers with their former idolatry.

"I am the LORD your God":

Who showed kindness to them when strangers in Egypt, and had brought them out of that land.

And therefore, ought to obey his commands, and particularly in this instance.

They should remember that just a short time before they were strangers in a foreign land.

They should be nice to strangers.

I can sympathize with you better if I have walked the same path as you.

Leviticus 19:35 "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure."

This is repeated from (Lev.19:15); in order to lead on to some other laws and instructions.

Though Aben Ezra thinks this is said in connection with the preceding words, and in reference to the stranger, agreeably to (Deut. 1:16).

But Jarchi refers it to what follows concerning weights and measures, and observes, that a measurer is a judge.

And if he acts deceitfully, he perverts judgment, and does that which is detestable and abominable.

And is the cause of the five following things said of a judge.

He defiles the land, and profanes the name of God, and causes the Shekinah or divine Majesty to remove.

Or causes Israel to fall by the sword, or carries them captive out of their land.

"In meteyard, in weight, or in measure":

The first of these, according to Jarchi, signifies the measure of land, of fields, etc.

And so likewise of anything that is measured.

Not only by the rod or line, but by the yard or ell, as cloth and other things.

Whether broad or narrow, that are measured in their length.

And the second may respect the weight of all sorts of things that are weighed in scales, as money in former times, as well as various sorts of goods.

And the last has respect to the measure of both dry and liquid things, by the bushel, peck, quart, pint, etc.

Meteyard means measurement.

In other words, be honest when you measure, when you weigh anything, and fill the measuring cup to overflowing.

The following is what Jesus said about this very thing.

Matthew 7:2 "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Leviticus 19:36 "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have: I [am] the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt."

“ephah ... hin”:

These dry and liquid measures respectively were equal approximately to 4 to 6 gallons and 6 to 8 pints.

The term rendered honest in Hebrew is the principal term for “righteousness”.

The laws concerning “just balances” and “weights” are important both for fairness in commerce and for understanding an important biblical concept.

Scales and weights that were “righteous” conformed to a standard that satisfied the LORD’s demands.

For many people the only way they know God is by Christians they do business with.

Christians should not be like the rest of the world, cheating to get ahead.

Everything we do should show that we are trying to be like Jesus our Savior.

The best sermon any of us can give is the life we live in front of others.

Remember, Egypt is a type of the world.

He says here, I have brought you out of the world, live like my followers.

Leviticus 19:37 "Therefore shall ye observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I [am] the LORD."

Delivered in this and the preceding chapters, and elsewhere.

Whether ceremonial or judicial, or moral, as there were of each, which had been delivered to them.

And which are all comprehended in these two words, "statutes", or ordinances.

Which were the determinations of his sovereign will, and of mere positive institution.

And "judgments", which were such laws as respected their civil or religious conduct, formed according to the rules of justice and equity.

"All" and every one of which were to be "observed", taken notice of, and regarded, in order to be put in practice, as follows.

"And do them":

Act according to them, in civil, moral, and religious life.

"I am the LORD":

Who enjoined all these things, and had a right to do so.

And expected obedience to them, which it was right that they should give.

We notice from this that, God wants us to have a totally different life style than the world.

A short way to say this, that He said in another Scripture, is (Be ye holy for I am holy).

Leviticus Chapter 19 Second Continued Questions

1. The fruit of trees is counted as uncircumcised for how many years after planting?
2. What is the fruit of the tree used for in the fourth year?
3. What type offering is this?
4. Who will eat the fruit the fourth year?
5. What does the number 5 mean symbolically?

6. Ye shall not eat anything with the _____.
7. What falls into the category of enchantment?
8. Who is an observer of times?
9. Name some of the things that we should not do that are classified as observing times.
10. Ye shall not round the corners of your _____.
11. Ye shall not make any cuttings in your _____ for the _____.
12. What is meant by not printing any marks upon you?
13. What false prophets, in the Old Testament, cut themselves trying to get their false god to answer them?
14. Who does our body belong to?
15. Do not prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a _____.
16. What is even sicker in our society today, than verse 29 here?
17. What does the author think is the cause of some of the moral failure in our country?
18. Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and _____ my sanctuary.
19. Does art have a place in the church?
20. What are familiar spirits and wizards usually associated with?
21. Where do wizards and familiar spirits get their power?
22. What does the hoary head mean?
23. If a stranger lives in the land with you, you should not _____ him.
24. Why should they be good to strangers?
25. What does meteyard mean?
26. Why is it important for Christians to have just weights, measures, and to give full portions in their dealings with others?
27. What is the best sermon any of us can give?