

Day 140 - SATURDAY: April 29th

Leviticus 19:

Leviticus 19:1–37 NKJV

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. 'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. 'Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I am the LORD your God. 'And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will. It shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination. It shall not be accepted. Therefore everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed offering of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people. 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every

grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God. 'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the LORD. 'You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD. 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD. 'You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you. 'Whoever lies carnally with a woman who is betrothed to a man as a

concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; but they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering. 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. 'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. It shall not be eaten. But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I am the LORD your God. 'You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD. 'Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness. 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and

reverence My sanctuary: I am the LORD. 'Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God. 'You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the LORD. 'And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. 'You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume. You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. 'Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I am the LORD.' "

Daily Deep Dive:

As we end our study week, let's begin by reading the UCG plan: "Parts of this chapter sound like they came from the New Testament. Indeed, in it we find the Old Testament statement of the second great commandment, as defined by Jesus Christ (verse 18; compare Matthew 22:37–40). The

chapter opens with an explicit statement of the purpose for what has gone before and of what is to follow: Because God is holy, so must His people be also. This chapter will continue with sundry laws designed to maintain holy relationships with God and men.

The first two laws hew straight to a fundamental necessity for right relationships: reverence. Reverence is the high respect paid by one individual to another, with special attention to submissive behavior. God commands reverence for parents, the teachers of their children, and the observation of all of His Sabbaths, which are teaching occasions between Him, our spiritual Parent, and us, His children. He further enjoins reverence for Himself by again prohibiting idolatry. When children revere their parents and God—heeding their instruction—right relationships based on mutual respect and honor are produced, and a whole multitude of blessings follow.

The regulation concerning peace (or fellowship) offerings again addresses the relationship between God and Israel. God has produced peace and fellowship between Himself and Israel, and that fellowship, symbolized by the peace offerings, must be respected. Thus, peace offerings are not to be treated in a common manner just because they were

widely shared among family members. It was very important to remember that, as the family feasted on the offering, God also had His part in it and dined *with* the family. With such an honored guest in fellowship, care needed to be taken to ensure decorum and respect. The laws concerning gleanings may not seem like a holiness issue, but they do constitute one, for, as already mentioned, the fundamental idea behind holiness is separation. Here God sets apart a certain portion of a harvest for the poor. In effect, a certain portion was holy to the poor and reserved for their use. Notice, however, that those who received this set-aside portion were still required to work for it. Unlike too many modern welfare systems, the recipients of God's generosity toward them still had to gather their food from the fields and vineyards themselves. This was consistent with the biblical principle Paul later expressed so succinctly: "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:10). The law was just to all concerned. It was generous toward the poor, but also fair to the property owners—since God was the one who promised to bless their crops if they would obey Him. By enacting this law, God ensured that He provided for the

destitute among His people—and made all Israel participants in that provision.

Attention to truth and justice is prominently addressed. When a people separate themselves to truth and justice, they are unified and blessed with peace. God's priestly nation Israel needed to be just such a people if they were to serve as examples to the rest of the world. A major part of doing justice is to never allow your brother to continue in sin. Such "tolerance" will destroy your brother and, eventually, your community and nation. It is not "broadminded" or "big-hearted" to allow sin to continue (compare 1 Corinthians 5:1–2, 6)—it is foolishness and dangerous to all around! Remember, *sin affects everything*. When a brother is sinning, we must make an effort to restore him spiritually (Galatians 6:1–2)—in humility, but with open rebuke if necessary (Proverbs 27:5). Toward the close of the chapter, God addresses blood, divination and soothsaying, hair, beards, body piercing, tattoos, prostitution and Sabbaths. Why? What do all these have in common? Much. All these prohibitions concern pagan practices. Blood consumption was a part of Canaanite worship, as were divination and soothsaying (that is, prognostication based on pagan practices). Shaving

around the sides of the head refers to certain tonsures or hairstyles laden with pagan sun symbolism (this practice of tonsure was widely practiced by the Roman Catholic clergy during the Dark and Middle Ages, and still is to some degree today). Trimming of the beard in a certain style was also part of pagan worship. Body piercing and tattoos served to mark a person as the worshiper of a particular god, but God desires that we honor and glorify Him through the clean presentation of our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:20). And, as noted earlier, ritual prostitution was a ubiquitous feature of Canaanite religion.” [END]

If you’ve already read the reading for today, did you notice how many of the 10 commandments are scattered in this chapter?

Verse 16 – This verse contains a prohibition against gossip and slander. Do we place gossip in the same category as the rest of these commands? Also, this verse tells us that we must do all we can to preserve the life of our neighbor. This can take many forms, but we aren’t to stand idly by while we see a neighbor’s life in danger.

Verse 17 – We tend to think about Jesus Christ adding additional depth to the command to “not murder”, but here we see the intent of God was always the same, that we shouldn’t even hate our brother in our heart.

Verse 18 – We aren’t to avenge or take revenge against another, and additionally, this verse tells us we aren’t to hold onto to wrongs done to us. The Hebrew here means “to keep, to guard, to reserve or to maintain”. This can be so difficult to do. When someone hurts us, we tend to hold onto that hurt, to maintain it in our hearts. The clear instructions are, if we are to become like God, we aren’t to hold on to past hurts or grudges.

Verse 19 – Even animals weren’t to interbreed. This verse contains a principle that still applies to Christians today and that is that God wants His people to live lives of purity and quality and to avoid “mixing” anything pure with impure. The command here is specific to wool and linen as is also found in Deuteronomy 22:11. Here is an excerpt from the UCG reading plan on Deuteronomy 22: “Wool is an animal product, while linen is a plant product. Such should not be combined, as they produce clothes of lesser quality.”

Further, the Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary (JFB) notes that research has determined that wool blended with linen may sometimes increase static electricity to the point of causing heat rashes in hot climates (note on Leviticus 19:19). Thus, with the prohibition being so specific, synthetic fabric does not even appear to be an issue here, or fabric that is part synthetic and part wool or that is part synthetic and part linen. It should also be noted that the prohibition is against a particular fabric being an improper blend. It apparently does not prohibit wearing wool and linen at the same time or even as different parts of the same garment.” [END]

Verse 20 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “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.” [END]

Verse 21 – This sinful action required a trespass offering.

Verse 23 – JFB commentary states: “The wisdom of this law is very striking. Every gardener will teach us not to let fruit trees bear in their earliest years, but to pluck off the blossoms: and for this reason, that they will thus thrive the better, and bear more abundantly afterwards. The very expression, ‘to regard them as uncircumcised,’ suggests the propriety of pinching them off; I do not say *cutting* them off, because it is generally the hand, and not a knife, that is employed in this operation” [END]

As we end this week. May we all consider how we are called to be different from the world around us? We are to live by a higher standard so that our way of living brings glory to God. In trying to make decisions in life, we may not always have a clear “thou shall not” command from God, but as we apply the principles of this chapter, we should consider our actions and decisions through the lens of whether that action/decision will help us represent God in a pure and unmixed way. Do we conform to the practices of the world around us, or do we strive to give ourselves wholly to God in the purest way possible? These are high standards and worth our time in meditation.