

Leviticus

Lesson 15

XIII. The Law of the Ways of Life

The LORD turns His attention to delivering His law of the ways of life for the Nation of Israel when she enters the Promised Land.

A. The Ways of the LORD's Holiness

1. You Shall

a) Be a Holy People

First, we come to the ways of the LORD's Holiness in the Promised Land. These are the things He expects of the Jewish people. He begins with the holiness of the people. Chapter 19, verse 1.

"Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "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." (19:1-2).

The Hebrew word for *holy* is *qadosh*. It means *sacred*. As we begin this section, we must remember that the whole world is living according to man's customs, laws, and practices. Just one year before the LORD delivers the text in this book, no Scripture existed on earth from the LORD. Every man did as he pleased in his own heart and mind. Because man acted according to his own desires, sin ran rampant across the world. With the Nation of Israel being the LORD's chosen people, He wanted them to hold to His standards of life, not the worlds. He wanted them to be holy as He is holy. The whole world will consider the ways of Israel odd. They are not odd; they are merely following the instructions of the Creator and how He intends for them to live. That is the reason He instructs them to be a holy people.

b) Be a Respectful People

The LORD also wants the Jews to be a respectful people. Verse 3a. *"Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father..."* (19:3a). The LORD does not require His people to agree with the ways of their fathers and mothers. Instead, He demands His people to be respectful or reverent toward their fathers and mothers. In the Ten Commandments, the LORD says, *honor your father and mother*. *Honor* means to show respect or reverence. But with the Ten Commandments, the LORD desires for His people to bring honor to the parents regardless of their character, nature, or ways. How do you do that? By being an honorable, respectful person of integrity, even if it means your parents were the worst of the worst.

c) Be a Faithful People

The LORD desires you to be a faithful people to Him. Verse 3b. *"... and you shall keep My sabbaths; I am the LORD your God."* (19:3b). The day of rest is important to the LORD. He watches His creation; He cares for His creation. He created the sabbath day for rest and declared it to be so.

d) Be a Loyal People

The LORD wants a loyal people. Verse 4. *"Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves molten gods; I am the LORD your God."* (19:4). No other gods exist. The LORD is the only God. He addresses this in the first commands of the Ten Commandments. It detests the LORD when His people worship man's fabrications rather than the LORD Himself as God.

e) Be a Thankful People

The LORD wants a thankful people. Therefore, He reminded the people of how He provided a way to show thankfulness to Him in the *sacrifice of peace offering*. Verse 5. *"Now when you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. It 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. So if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an offense; it will not be accepted. Everyone 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."* (19:5-8).

Nothing new here. The LORD simply reminds His people how to show thanks to Him for the provisions He provides for their daily needs.

f) Be a Giving People

The LORD gives in order to provide for the needs of His people. He also requires that His people pass on from what He has given to others with needs. Verse 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. 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.”* (19:9-10).

To *glean* means to *scrape the edges*. The main part of the all the crops belong to the owner, whom the LORD blesses. But the LORD wants the owners to bless the poor by leaving the produce at the edges of the fields for the poor to collect. In this way, the poor, needy, and stranger did not have to leave the road to gather a meal. They could just step to the edge of the road without transgressing the whole property of a farmer.

2. You Shall Not

a) Be a Thief Among the People

Now the LORD turns in this section to the things you shall not do among the Promised Land people. You shall not be a thief among the people. Verse 11. *“You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.”* (19:11).

To steal, deal falsely, or lie is all theft in one way or another. It is the theft of property, of misleading, or of untruth. These three are uniquely joined together because they always seem to be present in people's evil actions. When a child tells a lie to a parent, the lie is attached to a false dealing with the parent face to face. It also included the theft of something. Think about these three the next time you watch a Hallmark movie. Although they are rated for all audiences, within the plot, someone deals falsely with another, steals something from that person, and lies about the theft. You may question property theft, but please keep in mind that there are many kinds of property – movable and immovable, tangible and intangible, private and public, personal and real, corporeal and incorporeal.

b) Be a Profaner Among the People

Then comes the profaner among the people. Verse 12. *“You shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the LORD.”* (19:12).

To *swear* means to *take an oath*. In this verse, the LORD does not allow for someone to take an oath using His name with the intent of being dishonest, deceitful, or deceptive. It profanes the name of the LORD when He is included in such evil.

c) Be an Oppressor Among the People

Jews were not to be an oppressor among the people. Verse 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.”* (19:13).

An oppressor exercises *undue severity in the use of power or authority*. Two kinds of oppressors are listed here – the oppressor of the neighbor, the oppressor of the employee. First is the oppressor who is unreasonable to neighbors, demanding this and that with something new every day. Or the oppressor who treats his neighbor's property as his own. taking what he wants without asking, never returning what does not belong to him. A robber he is. Second, we come to the employer who holds the wages of the employee. The Bible teaches to pay hired men at the end of each day.

d) Be a Stumbling Block Among the People

The Jews were not to be a stumbling block among the people. Verse 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.”* (19:14).

Moses begins by saying, “*You shall not curse a deaf man.*” The Hebrew word for *curse* is *qalal*, and it does not carry the same meaning we use today for the word *curse*. *Qala* means *to treat lightly*. As such, in the context here, it means to cause trouble for a deaf person by making life difficult. That falls right in line with the second part of the sentence, “*nor place a stumbling block before the blind.*” Both make the way difficult for the deaf and the blind. Then the LORD ends with “*you shall revere your God.*” The word *revere* means *to have a reverence* for the LORD. He would not want the way of the deaf and blind to be hindered by anyone, and neither should His people.

e) Be a Partisan Among the People

The Israelites must not be a partisan among the people. Verse 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.*” (19:15).

Most injustices in life come from partisanship. To be partial means to be one-sided, biased, inclined to favor one party in a cause or one side of a question more than the other. All people should be treated with fairness, the rich and the poor alike.

f) Be a Defamer Among the People

As a Jew, no one should be a defamer among the people. Verse 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.*” (19:16).

Simply, in the Promised Land, the people are not to disgrace, dishonor, or impair others' reputation in the nation.

g) Be a Hater Among the People

The Israelites are not to be a hater among the people. Verse 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.*” (19:17).

Hate is an interesting thing. Those who hate others let the hate consume their lives, hearts, and souls. It is a constant ill-will toward others. The problem and the sin are with the person who hates instead of the one being hated. In opposition, some people need to be reproved. Part of the word *reprove* is the word *prove*. When it was first used in the original English translation, it meant to *present the proof, or to prove* the truth. It is the same in this passage. Some people, especially those who have hate for someone, need to have the facts presented to them to prove the wrongness of their ways. The last part of the verse says, “*but shall not incur sin because of him.*” Proving wrong does not mean you are doing wrong.

h) Be a Revenger Among the People

Finally, the people of Israel are not to be a revenger among the people. Verse 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.*” (19:18).

Vengeance involves a passionate, often unrestrained desire to punish. *Grudge* involves ongoing envy, jealousy, or contempt for another person. The people of the Nation of Israel should never participate in either. They are to *love* their neighbors as they want to be loved, in the same way, the normal person loves themselves.

B. The Ways of the LORD's Statutes

1. Concerning the Different Kinds of Things

From the ways of the LORD's Holiness, we come to the ways of the LORD's statutes. We begin with the statutes concerning the different kinds of things. Verse 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.*” (19:19).

The breeding of two kinds of animals is strictly forbidden. We understand why. Left alone, the natural attraction of animals will be with like-kind. However, in other nations worldwide, breeding experiments had begun, and the LORD disapproved of such practices. As for the sowing of seed and mixing of materials as garments, we struggle. We find similar statements in Moses' summary in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 22:9 *"You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, or all the produce of the seed which you have sown and the increase of the vineyard will become defiled."*

Deuteronomy 22:9 changes the planting of the seed from the word "field" in Leviticus to the word "vineyard." The end of verse 9 says concerning the mixing of the seeds, *"the increase of the vineyard will become defiled."* This verse explains the reason. The fruits of different seeds mature at different times. The harvest of two different crops from the same field becomes almost impossible. Damage to the crop which grows last will occur with the gathering of the first. Thus, the increase becomes defiled.

Concerning the mixed materials, we see a similar statement in Moses' summary in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 22:11 *"You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together."*

Deuteronomy indicates that the two materials which should not be worn together are *wool and linen*. Much speculation about this law in Leviticus and Deuteronomy can be found in most commentaries; however, little modern-day reasoning can be associated between the two. We must leave this verse as a law to be followed without modern-day understanding. Be that as it may, the Jews would have understood the law and the reason.

2. Concerning the Carnal Kinds of Things

Next, we come to the LORD's statutes concerning the carnal kinds of things. Verse 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. He shall bring his guilt offering to the LORD to the doorway of the tent of meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. 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."* (19:20-22).

Two issues need explanation in this passage. First, the sexual intercourse with a woman to whom he is not married. The second is the woman's position as an acquired slave who has not been freed or redeemed.

In the first place, the sexual sin of the man requires the offer of the ram for a guilt offering.

In the second place, the purchase of a slave is not illegal in the LORD's laws; selling a slave is unlawful. Once a Jew purchases a slave, the slave falls under a whole new set of restrictions. She cannot be sold. She must be released at the end of six years, or with the turn of the year of Jubilee, or redeemed by the owner and given freedom. Without these restrictions being met, she is still under the complete control of the one who purchased her. After the woman's purchase, one way or another, at the end of six years, or the year of Jubilee, she will be free. However, this sin does not require the death penalty. It requires the guilt offering. At the point of freedom, she can choose to stay with the owner and become a bondslave. If she makes that choice, a hole will be drilled in her ear to indicate her permanent decision. She does not belong to the man who defiled her.

3. Concerning the Planting Kinds of Things

When entering the Promised Land, the LORD issues a statute concerning the planting kinds of things. Verse 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. But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be*

holy, an offering of praise to the LORD. In the fifth year you are to eat of its fruit, that its yield may increase for you; I am the LORD your God.” (19:23-25).

Once the plant sprouts, the fruit of the tree must not be taken for food; most likely, the fruit will be discarded as soon as it appears to allow all the energy in the plant to go toward the tree's development rather than the development of the fruit. But in the fourth year, all the fruit belongs to the LORD. In the fifth year, the fruit belongs to the owner.

4. Concerning the Cultic Kinds of Things

Concerning the cultic kinds of things, the LORD brings us to verse 26. “*You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying.” (19:26).*

Much has been said to this point in Leviticus concerning the LORD’s prohibition against blood eating. Here it is tied to cultic practices used by the Canaanites and other nations in divination and soothsaying. The three go together. The three are forbidden.

5. Concerning the Grooming Kinds of Things

Concerning the grooming kinds of things, we look at verse 27. “*You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard.” (19:27).*

The LORD gave a statute concerning the appearance of the men in the Nation of Israel. In the rest of the world’s religious practices, men shaved the sides of their heads, forming different styles of mohawks. They also shaved the sides of their beards, forming go-tees. The LORD strictly forbids this for the men of Israel.

6. Concerning the Body Marking Kinds of Things

Concerning the body marking kinds of things, we see in verse 28. “*You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.” (19:28).*

The LORD forbids body cuttings and tattoos. Concerning “*cuts in your body for the dead*” and “*tattoo marks*,” both are common practices in cult worship. Both cause the unnatural disfiguration of the body. Both are forbidden.

7. Concerning the Trafficking Kinds of Things

Then we come to the LORD’s statute concerning the trafficking kind of things in verse 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.” (19:29).*

The Scripture uses the word harlot. In a modern translation for today, the better word that matches the context is a *prostitute*. Parents in Israel are not to traffic their daughters into prostitution for income, bargaining, bartering, or favors of any kind.

8. Concerning the Worship Kinds of Things

Then comes the statute concerning the worship kinds of things. “*You shall keep My sabbaths and revere My sanctuary; I am the LORD.” (19:30).*

The sabbaths and the sanctuary are two of the most important things to the LORD. Both are involved in the worship of the LORD every seven days.

9. Concerning the Defiling Kinds of Things

From the worship kinds of things, we come to the defining kinds of things. Verse 31. “*Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God.” (19:31).*

What is the difference between the two? A *medium* delivers spiritual messages; a *spiritists* claims to communicate with the dead. Both are fake. Both are idolatry. The LORD forbids both.

10. Concerning the Elderly Kinds of Things

Concerning the elderly kind of things, the LORD says in verse 32, “*You shall rise up before the gray-headed and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the LORD.*” (19:32).

Older people are to be honored by the people of the Nation of Israel.

11. Concerning the Foreigner Kind of Things

Concerning the foreigner kind of things, the passage says in verse 33, “*When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. 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.*” (19:33-34).

Foreigners are to be treated with the same love and respect as you have your native tribal friends.

12. Concerning the Commerce Kinds of Things

Then the LORD states the statutes concerning the commerce kinds of things. Verse 35. “*You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity. 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.*” (19:35-36).

All commerce between Jew and Jew, or Jew and foreigner, must be fair in every transaction.

13. Concerning the LORD’s Kind of Things

Finally, concerning the LORD’s kind of things, we hear in verse 37, “*You shall thus observe all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them; I am the LORD.*” (19:37).

The Nation of Israel must follow the LORD’s statutes precisely.

XIV. The Law of the Sin Penalty

A. The Idolatry Sins

1. By Playing the Harlot with Molech

a) Those Who Act in the Worship of Molech

Leaving the law of the ways of life in the Promised Land, we come to the law of the sin penalty. These or idolatry sins. The first is a sin by playing the harlot with Molech. Playing the harlot with a false god addresses those who participate in the worship of Molech. Chapter 20, verse 1. “*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “You shall also say to the sons of Israel: ‘Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones. I will also set My face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given some of his offspring to Molech, so as to defile My sanctuary and to profane My holy name.’*” (20:1-3).

In this passage, the LORD speaks again about Molech. We spoke in detail about this sin in chapter 18:21. Here, the penalty is clear. Anyone caught worshiping and making child offerings to Molech was to be put to death by stoning. The worship of false gods is in direct contradiction to the LORD’s law found first in the Ten Commandments.

b) Those Who Disregard the Worship of Molech

But the LORD does not merely address the worshiper of Molech; He also addresses those who disregard the worshiper of Molech. Verse 4. “*If the people of the land, however, should ever disregard that man when he gives any of his offspring to Molech, so as not to put him to death, then I Myself will set My face against that man and against his family, and I will cut off from among their people both him and all those who play the harlot after him, by playing the harlot after Molech.*” (20:4-5).

Sin is sin. Right is right. Wrong is wrong. Those who see the sin must address the sin. The worship of Molech must not be tolerated or ignored in Israel. Why is the LORD giving this law? He knows His creation. He knows His people, Israel. He knows some of them will turn their heads and disregard the sinful worship of Molech, thinking nothing is wrong with the practice. The LORD will punish them also by cutting them off from the Nation of Israel.

2. By Playing the Harlot with Mediums

Playing the harlot with Molech is not the only concern of the LORD. He also calls out playing the harlot with mediums. Verse 6. *“As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. You shall consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy, for I am the LORD your God. You shall keep My statutes and practice them; I am the LORD who sanctifies you.”* (20:6-8).

When Israel takes the Promised Land, the seeking out of mediums and spiritists is strictly forbidden in 19:31 of this lesson. Thirty-nine years after this law is given, with the Nation of Israel stationed in the Plains of Moab, ready to cross over to take the Promised Land, the LORD adds to this law.

“When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.¹⁰ There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,¹¹ or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.¹² For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you.¹³ You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.¹⁴ For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.” (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

If the mediums or spiritists are of Canaanite blood, the nation was to destroy them totally. We know from the story of King Saul found in 1st Samuel that he visited the witch of Endor the night before his death. She knew she was not supposed to be practicing in the land. She also was deathly afraid when she realized her client was King Saul. She knew she should not have been in the land. Saul knew she was in the land. Saul knew she should not have been in the land. Both had defied the LORD’s law.

B. The Relationship Sins

1. The Profanity in Family Relationships

From the idolatry sins, we come to the relationship sins with the LORD addressing the profanity in family relationships. Verses 9. *“If there is anyone who curses his father or his mother, he shall surely be put to death; he has cursed his father or his mother, his bloodguiltiness is upon him.”* (20:9).

In the retelling of this law in Deuteronomy, Moses will say, *“If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them,¹⁹ then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown.²⁰ They shall say to the elders of his city, This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.” “Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear.”* (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).

Failing to honor parents is directly against the Ten Commandments.

2. The Penalty in Sexual Relationships

a) In Adultery

Now we come to the penalty in sexual relationships. Verse 10. *“If there is a man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, one who commits adultery with his friend’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”* (20:10).

Often people use adultery as a reason for divorce; however, in the Nation of Israel, adultery was never a reason for divorce. The penalty for adultery is death.

b) In Incest

(1) With a Father’s Wife

Until the giving of the laws in Leviticus, the whole world practiced incest. Looking into the book of Genesis and the 2352 years recorded in the book, you will not find one restriction from the LORD concerning incest relationships. They are new for one nation – Israel. Here they are. Verse 11. *“If there is a man who lies with his father’s wife, he has uncovered his father’s nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death, their bloodguiltiness is upon them.”* (20:11).

You have the same blood as your father. Your father is one flesh with his wife. Therefore, there is a blood relationship with your father’s wife, and she is legally off-limits. The penalty is death.

(2) With a Son’s Wife

Then comes a relationship with a son’s wife. Verse 12. *“If there is a man who lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have committed incest, their bloodguiltiness is upon them.”* (20:12).

You are of the same blood as your son. Your son is one flesh with his wife. Therefore, there is a blood relationship with your son’s wife. She is off-limits. The penalty is death.

c) In Homosexuality

Next, the LORD addresses homosexuality. Verse 13. *“If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them.”* (20:13).

This unnatural union is detestable to the LORD. It is against His natural order in creation. The penalty is death.

d) In Marriage

In marriage, a man cannot marry a woman and his mother-in-law. Verse 14. *“If there is a man who marries a woman and her mother, it is immorality; both he and they shall be burned with fire, so that there will be no immorality in your midst.”* (20:14).

If you marry a woman, she becomes one flesh with you. Therefore, her mother is off-limits to you because your wife and her mother are blood kin. The penalty is death.

e) In Bestiality

Humans cannot mate with animals in bestiality. Verse 15. *“If there is a man who lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death; you shall also kill the animal. If there is a woman who approaches any animal to mate with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them.”* (20:15).

The mating of humans and animals is against the natural order of the LORD’s creation. The penalty is death.

f) In Families

(1) With Sisters

In families, we come to incest with sisters. Verse 17. *"If there is a man who takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, so that he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace; and they shall be cut off in the sight of the sons of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness; he bears his guilt."* (20:17).

Brothers and sisters are of the same blood from at least one parent. They are off-limits to each other. The death penalty is not included here; instead, excommunication from the Nation of Israel is given.

(2) With Menstruous Woman

Every month, the body of a woman cleans itself. The LORD's law forbids a sexual relationship with a menstruous woman. Verse 18. *"If there is a man who lies with a menstruous woman and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow, and she has exposed the flow of her blood; thus both of them shall be cut off from among their people."* (20:18).

The death penalty is not included here; instead, ex-communication from the Nation of Israel is given.

(3) With Aunts

Incestuous relationships with aunts come next. Verse 19. *"You shall also not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for such a one has made naked his blood relative; they will bear their guilt. (20:20) 'If there is a man who lies with his uncle's wife he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they will bear their sin. They will die childless."* (20:19).

Neither the death penalty nor ex-communication from the nation of Israel is indicated here. The penalty is childlessness.

(4) With Sister-in-law

Finally, the LORD forbids sexual relationships with a sister-in-law. Verse 21. *"If there is a man who takes his brother's wife, it is abhorrent; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They will be childless."* (20:21).

Two brothers are blood kin through their parents. Therefore, the wife of a brother is off-limits. The penalty here is childlessness.

When we study the book of Deuteronomy, the LORD will address these laws again.

3. The Purpose in Godly Relationships

a) To Secure Israel in the Land

(1) By Following the LORD's Ways

From the profanity in family relationships and the penalty in sexual relationships, we come to the purpose of Godly relationships. It is to secure Israel in the land first by following the LORD's way. Verse 22. *"You are therefore to keep all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them, so that the land to which I am bringing you to live will not spew you out."* (20:22).

In chapter 18, we discovered that the Canaanite land was being given to the Nation of Israel because the Canaanites were guilty of doing everything the LORD forbids the Jews to do when they enter the Promised Land. The Canaanites are being spewed out of the land, and if the Israelites break the LORD's law, they will also be spewed out of the land. Here we see that again in the next verse.

(2) By Rejecting the Canaanite's Ways

The LORD will secure Israel in the land by rejecting the Canaanite's way. Verse 23. *"Moreover, you shall not follow the customs of the nation which I will drive out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I have abhorred them."* (20:23).

To fulfill this requirement, the Canaanites must be destroyed. Israel will fail to do so. Long before, the LORD abhorred the Canaanites. He patiently waited until the Nation of Israel was ready to take the land.

b) To Separate Israel in the Land

(1) By Differentiating Between Israel and Others

Having a Godly relationship with the LORD would secure Israel in the land, but it will also separate Israel in the land by differentiating between Israel and others. Verse 24. *"Hence I have said to you, "You are to possess their land, and I Myself will give it to you to possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey." I am the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples."* (20:24).

No other nation has these restrictions. Israel is to be a holy nation, separated and different from all the nations.

(2) By Distinguishing Between Clean and Unclean

As a unique nation, Israel will do something no other nation will do by distinguishing between the clean and unclean. Verse 25. *"You are therefore to make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; and you shall not make yourselves detestable by animal or by bird or by anything that creeps on the ground, which I have separated for you as unclean."* (20:25).

All the people of the world did not distinguish between clean and unclean animals for food. Every animal was food. The LORD had declared that to be so when Noah departed with his family from the Ark. But for this new nation, there would be a difference between the clean and unclean foods.

c) To Sanctify Israel in the Land

First, we saw the purpose of a Godly relationship with the LORD to secure Israel in the land, then to separate Israel in the land, and now to sanctify Israel in the Land. Verse 26. *"Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine."* (20:26).

The Nation of Israel belongs to the LORD. It is His holy nation. It is His royal priesthood. It is the nation Peter will write two letters to in the New Testament who have trusted in the LORD. But by then, the nation will be in total rebellion against the LORD.

C. The Mediums Sin

We looked at the idolatry sins, then the relationship sins, and finally, we come to the medium sins in this section. Verse 27. *"Now a man or a woman who is a medium or a spiritist shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones, their bloodguiltiness is upon them."* (20:27).

The penalty for this occultic activity is death.

As we turn to chapter 21, the LORD will specifically address the law for the life of a priest.