

Twisting the Bible's Teachings

International Bible Lesson

Leviticus 19:9-18, 33-37

Sunday, June 10, 2012

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

"And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD" (Leviticus 19:12—KJV).

"Do not make a promise in my name if you do not intend to keep it; that brings disgrace on my name. I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus 19:12—GNB).

"And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the LORD" (Leviticus 19:12—NRSV).

God wants everyone to live according to His moral standards; therefore, He inspired Moses to record His moral laws. God gave good and sufficient reasons to obey His laws; declaring first, "I am the LORD;" and second, His laws were "for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive" (Deuteronomy 6:24). To be clear and specific, God contrasted the ways He wanted people to live with the ways the Egyptians lived when they enslaved the Hebrews and the ways the Amorites lived when the Hebrews entered into their land to possess it. The Amorites behavior had become so evil that for God to remain impartial and just, He needed to enforce His moral laws, punish them, and give the Promised Land to the Hebrews (see Genesis 15:16). To uphold His laws among the Hebrews, God gave judges and kings to rule them and prophets to warn them when they disobeyed. If they continued to disobey God, He punished them.

Unfortunately, throughout history, some leaders in business, church, and government have encouraged people to ignore or live contrary to the moral laws of God, leading people to live as immorally as the ancient Amorites and Egyptians. People swear falsely by God's name and profane God's name when they claim to believe in and follow the God of the Bible while at the same time twisting the Bible's teachings and trying to explain why people can live contrary to God's moral laws. Because God remains impartial and just, He will punish the godless and immoral, and He will give many good things to those who love, obey, and remain loyal to Him. — L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Read Leviticus 19:9-10. Where you live, how might you and/or your church or family apply the intention of these commands to the Israelites?

2. Why do you think God requires everyone to obey His moral law and not just some people?

3. Read Leviticus 19:12. How would you interpret the meaning of this verse for today?

4. In this lesson, what reason does God give to people as the main reason to obey Him? Can you think of other good reasons to obey God?

5. Today, how difficult is it to reprove your neighbor? What is different about the Israelite and his neighbor, and someone today and their neighbor that makes reproofing a neighbor difficult? Compare this command to the command of Jesus, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).