

# Leviticus 19:33-37

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/lev/lev-19/leviticus-1933-37/>

*In societies with multiple ethnic groups living together it is easy for those societies to become fractured into tribes that hate each other, and with the majority treating the minority with disdain. God, however, wants His people to treat non-Israelites with fairness and love just as they would treat a fellow Israelite.*

God calls His people be set apart (holy) because He is set apart. Most would think loving your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18) would be enough. However, God says here in Leviticus 19:33-34 regarding the *stranger* that *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.*

Referencing Leviticus 19:18, Jesus said,

“You have heard that it was said, ‘*you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.*’ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”  
(Matthew 5:43-48)

Honesty and equality of value among neighbors provide a good foundation for a thriving society. God tells the Israelites, "*You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity*". This refers to the common medium of exchange in commercial transactions. For instance, wheat might be measured and sold in exchange for something else, based on an agreed upon standard. Having an honest measure meant not cheating someone by shorting them through dishonest measurement.

God commanded that *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.* The words *ephah* and *hin* are both ancient units of measurement. This Old Testament concept carries over into our modern society. For example, in the United States, gasoline pumps are certified by a government agency to have been tested to properly measure a gallon.

It is common for archaeologists to find lots (dice) and measures (weights) that have been altered for the purpose of deceiving people during the transaction. When an economic system is built on

honesty the people are motivated to participate. Commerce thrives, and families and communities prosper. Even a little corruption can cause distrust and convince the people it is better to deal corruptly than fairly.

God ends Leviticus 19 with the instruction to *observe all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them; I am the LORD*. God made a covenant with Israel. God proposed the covenant, and the people agreed to follow (Exodus 19:8). The basic tenant of the covenant is that God, as the Suzerain ruler, will care for and bless His people if they faithfully follow His ways, as they agreed to do.

God's ways are generally and simply telling us what behaviors cause society to prosper and humans to flourish (Deuteronomy 30:19). Only Yahweh, the LORD, has sufficient knowledge to tell humans how best to act in order for themselves and their communities to flourish. God created humans in His image, which includes the ability to make moral choices. But God does not leave humanity dangling without guidance. Rather, the LORD gives us specific statutes and ordinances that show us the path that leads to our greatest flourishing—the path that leads to life.

### **Biblical Text**

**<sup>33</sup> ‘When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. <sup>34</sup> 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. <sup>35</sup> ‘You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measurement of weight, or capacity. <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> You shall thus observe all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them; I am the LORD.’”**