

Leviticus 19:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

Analysis

And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bondmaid, betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

This verse falls within the section on **Various Laws of Holiness**. Wide-ranging ethical and ceremonial laws, including the command to 'love your neighbor as yourself' (19:18).

The New Testament reveals that Christ's sacrifice accomplishes what the Levitical system could only symbolize—complete forgiveness and restoration of relationship with God.

Historical Context

Wide-ranging ethical and ceremonial laws, including the command to 'love your neighbor as yourself' (19:18). Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. Israel

received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. Ancient sacrificial texts from cultures surrounding Israel demonstrate the widespread practice of animal sacrifice, but Israel's system uniquely emphasized moral atonement over magical efficacy.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How can you use this verse to worship God more fully, obey Him more faithfully, or love others more sacrificially?
2. How does this verse point to Christ, and how does that deepen your faith and gratitude?
3. In what ways does this verse challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה	וְרָע	שְׁכִיבָתָהּ	אִשָּׁה	אֶת	יֹשֵׁב בִּי	כִּי	לֹא יֵשׁ
H1931	H7902	H802	H854	H3588	H7901	H376	H176
	carnally		with a woman		lieth	And whosoever	
	H2233						
וְנִפְדָּתָהּ	לֹא	וְנִפְדָּתָהּ	לֹא יֵשׁ	נִחְרָהּ	פָּתָהּ	שִׁפְחָהּ	
H6299	H3808	H6299	H376	H2778	H8198	H8198	
		and not at all	And whosoever	and not at all	betrothed	that is a bondmaid	
תִּהְיֶה	בְּקֶרֶת	לָהּ	נָתַן	לֹא	חֲפָשָׁהּ	אִי	
H1961	H1244	H0	H5414	H3808	H2668	H176	
	her she shall be scourged		given		nor freedom		
חֲפָשָׁהּ:	לֹא	כִּי	יִוָּמָת וְ	לֹא			
H2666	H3808	H3588	H4191	H3808			
because she was not free			they shall not be put to death				