

## **THOU SHALT NOT SEETHE A KID IN ITS MOTHER'S MILK**

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This commandment of God is repeated three times in the Old Testament. The first time is in Ex 23:19. The context of this begins in Ex 20 when God spoke the ten commandments from Mt Sinai for all Israel to hear. Then he spoke to Moses alone and gave him additional judgments beginning in Ex 21:1. These judgments continue to the end of chapter 23. The prohibition against seething a kid in mother's milk is one of God's judgments that he gave in addition to the ten commandments.

The second time it is repeated is in Ex 34:26. The context of this begins in verse 1 where Moses hewed two tables of stone after he had broken the first two and went again up to Mt Sinai for a period of 40 days and nights. At this time God showed Moses his glory and then repeated many of the words of the covenant including this commandment. When Moses came down from the mount, he had to put a veil on his face as he told the people God's commandments because his face shone.

The third time it is repeated is in Deut 14:21. Here it is placed in the context of not eating unclean meat. The larger context is that the book of Deuteronomy is the speech of Moses to Israel just before they were going to cross Jordan and enter the promised land, exhorting them to keep the covenant they had made with God.

We see from these verses and their contexts that this commandment is one of God's judgments and part of the original covenant God gave to Israel from Mt Sinai in addition to the ten commandments.

The threefold repetition of the commandment prohibiting the seething of a kid in its mother's milk is explained by the Rabbis as referring to three distinct prohibitions: cooking meat and milk together; eating such a mixture; and deriving any benefit from such a mixture.

Because the third repetition of this commandment is placed in context of not eating unclean meat, the Rabbis would seem to have a right interpretation. On the other hand this would not seem to be a right interpretation because the commandment does not say, Thou shalt eat no milk and flesh together. Instead, it is very specific in saying that a young animal must not be seethed in its OWN MOTHER'S milk.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF THIS COMMANDMENT**

There is another dimension that could help us understand the meaning of this commandment. In the New Testament there is explained the difference between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law. And there is given a good example of applying the spirit of the law.

Scriptures having to do with the letter vs the spirit of the law:

- \* Rom 2:27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the LETTER and circumcision dost transgress the law?
- \* Rom 2:29 But he [is] a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision [is that] of the heart, in the spirit, [and] not in the LETTER; whose praise [is] not of men, but of God.
- \* Rom 7:6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not [in] the oldness of the LETTER.
- \* 2Cor 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the LETTER killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

As we see here, the physical commandment to be circumcised represents the letter of the law. But the circumcision of the heart whereby one is converted and loves God from the heart, not only outwardly in his flesh, represents the spirit of the law.

Here is another good example.

Deu 25:4 says, “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out [the corn]” This is another physical law, the letter of the law.

In the New Testament Paul explains a deeper meaning of this law.

1Cor 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

1Cor 9:10 Or saith he [it] altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, [this] is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

1Cor 9:11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, [is it] a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

1Cor 9:12 If others be partakers of [this] power over you, [are] not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

1Cor 9:13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live [of the things] of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?

1Cor 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

You see, in the spirit of the law the minister preaching the gospel represents the ox treading out the corn. And by the spirit of this law the minister is entitled to be supported by his work of preaching the gospel just as the ox is entitled to eat some of the grain he is working so hard to tread out.

So how could we apply the spirit of the law to the commandment: Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother’s milk? The principle of 1Cor 9:9-10 could also apply to the seethed kid. “Doth God take care for kids? Or saith he [this commandment] altogether for our sakes?”

Let’s take the words of the commandment and find them used as symbols in the New Testament:

Christians are described as being members of God’s FLOCK.

1Pe 5:2 Feed the FLOCK of God which is among you, taking the oversight [thereof], not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind

Christians are also described as being the YOUNG in the flock just as the KID in the commandment.

Luk 10:3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as LAMBS among wolves.

Jhn 21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, [son] of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my LAMBS.

MILK is symbolic of the word of God that Christians are being fed regularly by the ministry.

Hbr 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which [be] the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of MILK, and not of strong meat.

Hbr 5:13 For every one that useth MILK [is] unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

1Pe 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere MILK of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

The MOTHER of the baby Christian is the church.

Mat 12:48-50 But he (Jesus) answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward HIS DISCIPLES, AND SAID, BEHOLD MY MOTHER and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Gal 4:26 But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the MOTHER OF US ALL.

Hbr 12:22-23 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect

## CONCLUSION

So if we put together these scriptures, seething a kid in its mother's milk is a graphic way of saying 'child abuse'. Eph 6:4 tells us how to treat children. "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." In the spirit of the law, not seething a kid in its mother's milk is a commandment for ministers to not use God's word to spiritually abuse baby Christians who are not yet skillful in God's word.

An example of spiritual abuse in the time of ancient Israel is how the two sons of Eli in 1Sa 2:12-17 took by force what they wanted of the sacrifices brought by the people. This behavior of the priests' sons caused men to abhor the offerings of the Lord.

An example of spiritual abuse in Jesus' time by the Pharisees is that they were persecuting and casting out of the synagogue anyone who believed in Jesus.

Jhn 9:22 These [words] spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

Jhn 12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [him], lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

And here is recorded even greater spiritual abuse by the Pharisees. In Mat 21:33-43, Mar 12:1-9 and Luk 20:9-16 Jesus gave the parable of the householder who planted a vineyard and put husbandmen in charge of it. He sent servants to receive the fruits of the vineyard. Here are scriptures showing what the husbandmen did to the servants.

Mat 21:35-36 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

Mar 12:3-5 And they caught [him], and beat him, and sent [him] away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded [him] in the head, and sent [him] away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

Luk 20:10-12 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent [him] away empty. And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated [him] shamefully, and sent [him] away empty. And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast [him] out.

This parable is so important it is repeated in three of the gospels. Jesus spoke it against the Pharisees, but it can also be applied to church leaders today who spiritually abuse God's people. God' judgment against these husbandmen was that the administration of the Kingdom of God would be taken away from them and given to others who would provide people with the fruits of it.

Here is another example of spiritual abuse of brethren going on in the early church.

3Jo 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

3Jo 1:10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth [them] out of the church.

The Lord gave this warning to those in the church who would treat their brethren harshly:

Mat 24:44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Mat 24:45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Mat 24:46 Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Mat 24:47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

Mat 24:48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

Mat 24:49 And shall begin to smite [his] fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

Mat 24:50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for [him], and in an hour that he is not aware of,

Mat 24:51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint [him] his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And again this warning to those who offend the little children of God:

Mat 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 18:5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

Mat 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and [that] he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

This, I believe is the spiritual meaning of the commandment to not seethe a kid in its mother's milk.