

# A RATIONAL RECONSTRUCTIONIST ADAPTATION of the THE 613 *MITZVOT*

by  
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## Introduction

The traditional 613 *mitzvot*, developed in the priestly period of Judaism, are given on pages 763 through 782 of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: The Macmillan Company, 1971). It is a worthwhile exercise for Reconstructionist Jews to adapt these rules to modern times. Here is my version, following the same numbered references as in the original. Reconstructionist congregations are free, of course, to accept this version or to develop their own version. No congregation should impose its code on another. The purpose of the code is the promulgation of rationality and cleanliness, so that the members of the congregation may have the longest, happiest possible lives on Earth and so that they may develop their ethical character to the fullest.

## Mandatory Rules

### The Non-Physical Realm and the Physical Realm.

The Jew is required to <sup>1</sup>believe that Existence exists objectively and independently of human consciousness and to <sup>2</sup>study the laws and properties of both the Non-Physical Realm and the Physical Realm; and to <sup>3</sup>love, <sup>4</sup>appreciate, and <sup>5</sup>respect both. The Jew should <sup>6</sup>associate with rational, ethical individuals and <sup>7</sup>swear only to uphold the Truth. One must <sup>8</sup>learn the procedures of the most rational and ethical of individuals, to <sup>9</sup>study their achievements, and to emulate them.

### Law.

The Jew should <sup>10</sup>meditate each morning and evening and <sup>11</sup>study rational Law and teach it to others. Binding *tefillin* on one's <sup>12</sup>head or <sup>13</sup>arm is optional, not required. One may make <sup>14</sup>*zizit* for some of one's garments and <sup>15</sup>fix a (modernized) *mezuzah* on the door. The people are to be <sup>16</sup>assembled every seventh year (or a year decided by the congregation) to hear this code read aloud, and the <sup>17</sup>Leader must have his own copy of this code. <sup>18</sup>Every Jew should have many books and papers covering the laws and properties of both the Non-Physical Realm and the Physical Realm. One should <sup>19</sup>praise (silently or aloud) Existence, including farmers, food processors, and technology, after eating.

### Synagogue and the Rabbi.

The Jews of a community should <sup>20</sup>build a Synagogue and <sup>21</sup>respect it. It must be <sup>22</sup>guarded (electronically or otherwise) at all times, and the Rabbi's <sup>23</sup>assistants should perform their agreed duties in it. Before entering the Synagogue or participating in its service, a Rabbi <sup>24</sup>must bathe or shower; he must also see to it that <sup>25</sup>the candelabrum is lit (or on) daily. The Rabbi is required to <sup>26</sup>bless Israel and to <sup>27</sup>keep the sanctuary clean. Nothing is to be <sup>28</sup>burned in the Synagogue (other than candles); however, a <sup>29</sup> special light should be kept <sup>30</sup>eternally on, to signify the continuity of the Jewish people. Unclean persons must be <sup>31</sup>kept out of the Synagogue. Israel <sup>32</sup>should honor its Rabbis, who may be <sup>33</sup>dressed in special raiment. In the <sup>34</sup>ark should be the principal books (including the Torah) representing the philosophy of the congregation. During a service, the Rabbi (or a congregant) may read a portion from any of the books, not just the Torah. If an anointing oil is used as part of a service, it <sup>35</sup>must be prepared according to its special formula. Administration of the Synagogue should be <sup>36</sup> elective and rotated among the families of the congregation. In honor of certain dead close relatives the Rabbi may <sup>37</sup>declare himself (ritually) unclean, and temporarily not conduct services. The spouse of a Rabbi should be of good moral <sup>38</sup>character.

### Non-Sacrifices.

Sacrifices are primitive, irrational, and undignified . Therefore, our ancestors' <sup>39</sup>*tamid* sacrifice must not be made, and the Rabbi must not make the twice-daily <sup>40</sup>meal-offering. The additional sacrifice (*musaf*), traditionally offered on the <sup>41</sup>Sabbath, <sup>42</sup>on the first of every month, and <sup>43</sup>on each of the seven days of Passover, must not be performed. The same applies to the sacrifices originally made on the <sup>44</sup>second day of Passover, on <sup>45,46</sup>Shavuot, on <sup>47</sup>Rosh Ha-Shanah, on <sup>48,49</sup>the Day of Atonement, and on <sup>50,51</sup>Sukkot. Instead of making sacrifices, each Jew should *meditate on rational ethics*.

At least once in a lifetime, each Jew should make a <sup>52</sup>pilgrimage to Israel and <sup>53</sup>celebrate the festivals there. One should <sup>54</sup>rejoice on the festivals. On the 14th of Nisan one should <sup>55</sup>purchase (or have prepared) the paschal lamb and <sup>56</sup>eat of its roasted flesh on the night of the 15th. Those who were ritually impure in Nisan should prepare the paschal lamb on <sup>57</sup>the 14th of Iyyar and eat it with <sup>58</sup>*matzah* and bitter herbs. Shofars should be <sup>59</sup>sounded when the festivals begin and also in times of tribulation.

Cattle must not be <sup>60,61,62</sup>ritually sacrificed. Instead of making <sup>63</sup>the burnt offering, <sup>64</sup>the sin offering, <sup>65</sup>the guilt offering, <sup>66</sup>the peace offering, and <sup>67</sup>the meal offering, the Jew should *meditate on how he or she can become more ethical and more productive*.

Should the Legislature err in its decision, it should <sup>68</sup>reverse itself to the extent possible. Individuals should make *restitution* (rather than guilt offerings<sup>69,70,71,72</sup>) for wrongs committed, either intentionally or unintentionally.

One should <sup>73</sup>admit one's sins, repent for them, and make restitution to the victims.

A <sup>74</sup>man or <sup>75</sup>a woman who has a seminal issue should thoroughly clean himself or herself, as should a woman after <sup>76</sup>childbirth. A <sup>77</sup>leper should seek

the latest scientific treatment for his disease. A reasonable <sup>78</sup>percentage of one's wealth should be reserved for expenses related to ethical character development. The <sup>79</sup>first born of cattle must *not* be ritually sacrificed. There is also *no* need for <sup>80</sup>"redemption" of the firstborn of a man or a woman or the <sup>81,82</sup>firstling of an ass.

Animals may *not* be set aside as <sup>83,84,85,86,87,88,89,90,91</sup>offerings. Instead, (domesticated) animals are to be treated *kindly*, and no one may cause them unnecessary pain.

### **Vows.**

Individuals are free to make strict ethical <sup>92,93</sup>vows. A man must <sup>94</sup>honor his vows and his oaths which a judge can <sup>95</sup>annul only in accordance with the Law.

### **Purity.**

Anyone who touches <sup>96</sup>a carcass or <sup>97</sup>one of the species of reptiles becomes unclean; food becomes unclean by <sup>98</sup>coming into contact with an unclean object. Menstruous women<sup>99</sup> and those <sup>100</sup>lying-in after childbirth (or an abortion) are impure. A <sup>101</sup>leper, <sup>102</sup>a leprous garment, and <sup>103</sup>a leprous house are all unclean. A man having <sup>104</sup>a running issue is unclean, as is <sup>105</sup>semen. A woman suffering from <sup>106</sup>running issue is also impure. A <sup>107</sup>human corpse is unclean. The purification water (*mei niddah*) purifies <sup>108</sup>the unclean, but it makes the clean (ritually, and possibly actually) impure. It is a *mitzvah* to become ritually clean <sup>109</sup>by ritual immersion; likewise, it is a *mitzvah* to bathe regularly and to associate only with clean people. To become cleansed of <sup>110,111,112</sup>leprosy, one should follow the latest scientific procedures. The ritual of the <sup>113</sup>red heifer is totally obsolete.

### **Donations to the Synagogue.**

If a person <sup>114</sup>undertakes to give his own value to the Synagogue he must do so. A man may donate an <sup>115</sup>animal, <sup>116</sup>a property, or <sup>117</sup>a parcel of land to a Synagogue, which in turn may sell it for money. If one unwittingly derives benefit from Synagogue property, <sup>118</sup>full restitution plus an interest charge must be made.

The fruit of <sup>119</sup>the fourth year's growth of trees is *not* unusual. When you reap your fields you should leave <sup>120</sup>the corners, <sup>121</sup>the gleanings, <sup>122</sup>the forgotten sheaves, <sup>123</sup>the misformed bunches of grapes and <sup>124</sup>the gleanings of the grapes for the deserving poor. If you are a farmer, you may give a <sup>125,126,127,128,129,130,131,132,133</sup>portion of the harvest (or its monetary value) to the Synagogue; likewise for other trades and professions.

### **The Sabbatical Year.**

In the seventh year (*shemittah*), one or more <sup>135</sup>fields should lie fallow and you may not till the ground; scientific agricultural practice should be followed. You should celebrate the <sup>136</sup>Jubilee year (50th) and on the Day of Atonement in that year <sup>137</sup>you must sound the shofar and work to set individuals living under totalitarian regimes (anywhere in the world) free. <sup>138,139</sup>Property rights must be respected, and any wrongfully held property must be returned to its lawful owners.

Starting from entry into the land of Israel, the years of the Jubilee must be<sup>140</sup> counted and announced yearly and septennially. In the seventh year<sup>141</sup> all *disputed* debts are annulled but<sup>142</sup> one may exact a debt owed by a foreigner.

### **Concerning Animals for Consumption.**

Owners of<sup>143,144</sup> slaughter houses may give a portion of their output (or its money equivalent) as a donation to the Synagogue. A man must honor any<sup>145</sup> commitment made to the Synagogue or to the Rabbi. To be fit for consumption, beast and fowl must be<sup>146</sup> slaughtered according to the law and the dictates of science, and if they are not of a domesticated species<sup>147</sup> their blood must be covered with earth after slaughter (to prevent infections). Set the parent bird<sup>148</sup> free when taking the nest. Examine<sup>149</sup> beast, <sup>150</sup>fowl, <sup>151</sup>locusts and <sup>152</sup>fish to determine whether they are permitted for consumption. The Legislature should scientifically<sup>153</sup> reckon the months, years, and seasons.

### **Festivals.**

You should<sup>154</sup> rest on the Sabbath day and<sup>155</sup> declare it "family and study day." On the 14th of Nisan<sup>156</sup> remove all leaven from your ownership and on the night of the 15th<sup>157</sup> relate the story of the exodus from Egypt (and other Jewish exoduses); on that night<sup>158</sup> you must also eat *matzah*. On the<sup>159</sup> first and <sup>160</sup>seventh days of Passover you should rest. Starting from the day of the first sheaf (16th of Nisan) you shall<sup>161</sup> count 49 days. You should rest on<sup>162</sup> Shavuot, and on<sup>163</sup> Rosh Ha-Shanah; on the Day of Atonement you should<sup>164</sup> fast and <sup>165</sup>rest. You should also rest on<sup>166</sup> the first and <sup>167</sup>the eighth day of Sukkot during which festival you shall<sup>168</sup> dwell in booths and <sup>169</sup>take the four species. On Rosh Ha-Shanah<sup>170</sup> you are to hear the sound of the *shofar*. Note: certain professionals may be exempted from taking time off from work. By rest is meant "no servile labor."

### **Community.**

Every Jew should<sup>171</sup> contribute to the Synagogue annually, the amount to be set by the congregation. You must accept<sup>172</sup> the results of *valid* scientific observations and experiments. You must<sup>173</sup> vote to elect the political leaders of the community. You must<sup>174</sup> obey the laws passed by the Legislature, unless you think they conflict with the Constitution of the land. The Legislature must follow<sup>175</sup> correct parliamentary or congressional procedure in its deliberations. Judges and officials shall be<sup>176</sup> appointed (or elected) in every town and they shall judge the people<sup>177</sup> impartially.

Whoever is aware of evidence<sup>178</sup> must come to court to testify. Witnesses shall be<sup>179</sup> examined thoroughly and, if found to be false, <sup>180</sup>shall be punished accordingly.

When a person is found murdered and the murderer is unknown, a thorough<sup>181</sup> investigation must be begun. <sup>182</sup>Prisons must be built as needed.

<sup>183</sup>Assistants to the Synagogue may be given apartments in which to live. Your house (including the roof) must be built for<sup>184</sup> safety, and you must remove potential hazards from your home.

### **Idolatry.**

Idolatry and its appurtenances <sup>185</sup>must be destroyed, and a city which has become perverted must be <sup>186</sup>treated according to the law. Resolve never to forget the atrocities committed by the <sup>187</sup>Canaanite nations and <sup>188</sup>Amalek and <sup>189</sup>others against Israel.

### **War.**

The <sup>190</sup>regulations for wars are to be observed; a Rabbi may be appointed for special duties in times of war. The military camp must be <sup>192</sup>kept in a sanitary condition. To this end, every soldier must be <sup>193</sup>equipped with the necessary implements.

### **Social.**

Stolen property must be <sup>194</sup>restored to its owner. Give <sup>195</sup>charity to the deserving poor. No human being should be made a <sup>196</sup>slave. Lend to <sup>197</sup>the poor without interest; to the foreigner you may <sup>198</sup>lend at interest. Restore <sup>199a</sup>a pledge to its owner if he needs it. Pay the worker his wages <sup>200</sup>on time; permit him to eat of the produce with which he is working. You must <sup>202</sup>help unload an animal or vehicle when necessary, and also <sup>203</sup>help load man, beast, or vehicle. Lost property <sup>204</sup>must be restored to its owner. You are required <sup>205</sup>to reprove the sinner, and do not do unto others <sup>206</sup>what you would not have them do unto you. You are required <sup>207</sup>to love the convert. Your weights and measures <sup>208</sup>must be accurate.

### **Family.**

Respect the <sup>209</sup>wise, <sup>210</sup>honor and <sup>211</sup>respect your parents. You should <sup>212</sup>perpetuate the human race by marrying <sup>213</sup>according to the law. A bridegroom is to <sup>214</sup>rejoice with his bride for one year. Male children must <sup>215</sup>be circumcised (to prevent infections in later years and to be part of the Covenant). Should a man die childless, his wife may choose to marry his <sup>216</sup>brother (if unmarried) or <sup>217</sup>not. He who has intercourse with a <sup>218</sup>woman without her consent must be charged with rape and is liable for any damage suffered by the woman. If a man unjustly accuses his wife of premarital promiscuity, <sup>219</sup>he shall have to make restitution to her (or vice versa). The seducer <sup>220</sup>must be punished according to the law. The female captive must be <sup>221</sup>treated in accordance with her special regulations. Divorce can be executed <sup>222</sup>only by means of a written document. A man or woman suspected of adultery <sup>223</sup>has to submit to a scientific test (if the spouse requests it).

### **Judicial.**

When required by the law <sup>224</sup>you must administer punishment or restitution fitting the crime. An <sup>225</sup>unwitting homicide is to be punished less severely than a premeditated homicide. The <sup>226,227,228</sup>method of capital punishment is to be chosen by the community. The body of the executed must be <sup>230,231</sup>brought to burial the same day.

### **Slaves and Servants.**

Jews may not hold <sup>232,233,234,235</sup>slaves. Servants and other household help must be treated with dignity.

### **Torts.**

The applicable law must be administered in the case of injury caused by <sup>236a</sup>person, <sup>237</sup>an animal, or <sup>238a</sup>pit. Thieves <sup>239</sup>must be punished. You must render judgment in cases of <sup>240</sup>trespass by cattle or other animals or people, <sup>241</sup>arson, <sup>242</sup>embezzlement by an unpaid guardian and in claims against <sup>243a</sup>paid guardian, a hirer, or <sup>244a</sup>borrower. Judgment must also be rendered in disputes arising out of <sup>245</sup>sales, <sup>246</sup>inheritance and <sup>247</sup>other matters generally. You are required to <sup>248</sup>rescue the persecuted even if it means killing the oppressor.

### **Prohibitions**

#### **Idolatry and Ancient Related Practices.**

It is <sup>1</sup>forbidden to believe in the existence of unproven, unknown entities. You may not make images <sup>2</sup>for yourself or <sup>3</sup>for others to worship or for <sup>4</sup>any other purpose.

You must not <sup>5,6</sup>appease or bow down or prostrate yourself to anything; rather you are to study all the phenomena around you and use reason, observation, experiment, and intuition to advance knowledge.

Do not <sup>7</sup>sacrifice children to Molech; do not sacrifice yourself to others or others to yourself.

You may not <sup>8</sup>practice necromancy or <sup>9</sup>resort to "familiar spirits"; neither should you take idolatry or its mythology <sup>10</sup>seriously. It is forbidden to construct a <sup>11</sup>pillar or <sup>12</sup>dais for worship or to <sup>13</sup>plant trees in the Synagogue.

You may not <sup>14</sup>swear by idols or instigate an idolater to do so, nor may you encourage or persuade any <sup>15</sup>non-Jew or <sup>16</sup>Jew to worship idols.

You must not <sup>17</sup>listen to or love anyone who disseminates idolatry nor <sup>18</sup>should you withhold yourself from hating him. Do not <sup>19</sup>pity such a person. If somebody tries to convert you to idolatry <sup>20</sup>do not defend him or <sup>21</sup>conceal the fact.

It is forbidden to <sup>22</sup>derive any benefit from the ornaments of idols. You may not <sup>23</sup>rebuild that which has been destroyed as a punishment for idolatry nor may you <sup>24</sup>have any benefit from its wealth. Do not <sup>25</sup>use anything connected with idols or idolatry.

It is forbidden <sup>26</sup>to prophesy in the name of idols or prophesy <sup>27</sup>falsely in the name of science. Do not <sup>28</sup>listen to the one who prophesies for idols and do not <sup>29</sup>fear the false prophet or hinder his prosecution.

You must not <sup>30</sup>imitate the ways of idolaters or practice their customs; <sup>31</sup>divination, <sup>32</sup>soothsaying, <sup>33</sup>enchancing, <sup>34</sup>sorcery, <sup>35</sup>charming, <sup>36</sup>consulting ghosts or <sup>37</sup>familiar spirits and <sup>38</sup>necromancy are forbidden, as is astrology or any other unscientific method. Women must not <sup>39</sup>wear male clothing or men <sup>40</sup>that of women. Do not <sup>41</sup>tattoo yourself.

You *may* wear <sup>42</sup>garments made of both wool and linen (unless a scientific reason is found not to) or of any clean material of your choice. You *may* shave

the sides of <sup>43</sup>your head or <sup>44</sup>your beard, if you wish. Do not <sup>45</sup>lacerate yourself over your dead.

### **Prohibitions Resulting from Historical Events.**

It is forbidden to return to Egypt to <sup>45</sup> dwell there permanently or to <sup>47</sup> indulge in impure thoughts or sights. You may not <sup>48</sup> make a pact with the seven Canaanite nations or <sup>49</sup> save the life of any member of them. Do not <sup>50</sup> show mercy to idolaters, <sup>51</sup> permit them to dwell in the land of Israel or <sup>52</sup> intermarry with them. A Jewess may not <sup>53</sup> marry an Ammonite or Moabite even if he converts to Judaism but should not refuse (for reasons of genealogy alone) <sup>54a</sup> descendant of Esau or <sup>55</sup> an Egyptian who are proselytes. It is prohibited to <sup>56</sup> make peace with the Ammonite or Moabite nations.

The <sup>57</sup> destruction of fruit trees even in times of war is forbidden as is wanton waste at any time. Do not <sup>58</sup> fear the enemy and do not <sup>59</sup> forget the evil done by Amalek and Hitler and others.

### **Blasphemy.**

You must not <sup>60</sup> blaspheme the name of science or the names of distinguished philosophers, mathematicians, scientists, engineers, physicians, or business executives, <sup>61</sup> break an oath made according to rational principles, <sup>62</sup> take science or technology or medicine in vain or for granted, or <sup>63</sup> profane them; however, constructive criticism is always permitted. Do not attempt to <sup>64</sup> violate the Laws of the Physical Realm and the Non-Physical Realm. You may <sup>65</sup> not substitute feelings or whims for reason; you must remain factual at all times. Do not <sup>66</sup> allow the body of one hanged to remain so overnight.

### **Synagogue.**

Do not be <sup>67</sup> lax in guarding the Synagogue.

The Rabbi must not enter the Synagogue <sup>68</sup> indiscriminately; a Rabbi with a physical blemish or serious health problem may not <sup>69</sup> enter there at all or <sup>70</sup> serve in the sanctuary, and even if the blemish or health problem is of a temporary nature he may not <sup>71</sup> participate in the service there until it has passed.

The Synagogue assistants and the Rabbi must not <sup>72</sup> interchange in their functions. Intoxicated or drugged persons may not <sup>73</sup> enter the sanctuary or teach the Law. It is forbidden for <sup>74</sup> non-rabbis or <sup>75,76</sup> unclean rabbis to serve in the Synagogue. No unclean person may enter <sup>77</sup> the Synagogue or the <sup>78</sup> surrounding property.

As there will be no sacrifices made, there is no need for an <sup>79,80</sup> altar. There should, however, be an <sup>81,82,83,84,85,86</sup> eternal light. Other <sup>87,88</sup> customs are obsolete.

### **Non-Sacrifices.**

<sup>89,90,91,92,93,94,95,96,97,98,99,100</sup> Rules for sacrifice are obsolete.

Do not <sup>101</sup> kill an animal and its young on the same day. Other <sup>102,103,104,105,106,107,108,109,110,110,111,112,113,114,115,116,117,118,119,120,121,122,123,124,125,126,127,128,129,130,131,132,133,134,135,136,137,138,139,140,141,142,143,144,145,146,147,148,149,150,151,152,153,154,155,</sup>

<sup>156</sup>rules are obsolete and the actions prescribed must never be revived. Do not <sup>157</sup>break your word.

### **Rabbis.**

A male rabbi may not marry a <sup>158</sup>harlot, <sup>159</sup>a woman who has been profaned from the rabbinate, or <sup>160</sup>a divorcee; similarly, for a female rabbi. The Chief Rabbi of a region should not <sup>161</sup>marry a widow (or widower) or <sup>162</sup>take one as a concubine. Rabbis may not enter the sanctuary with <sup>163</sup>overgrown (or unkempt) hair of the head or <sup>164</sup>with torn clothing; they must not <sup>165</sup>leave the building during the service. An ordinary rabbi may not render himself <sup>166</sup>ritually impure except for those relatives specified, and the Chief Rabbi should not become impure <sup>167</sup>for anybody in <sup>168</sup>any way.

Synagogue assistants should not, in general, be given a <sup>169,170</sup>property stake in the Synagogue.

It is forbidden <sup>171</sup>to make oneself bald as a sign of mourning for one's dead.

### **Dietary Laws.**

A Jew may not eat <sup>172</sup>unclean cattle, <sup>173</sup>unclean fish, <sup>174</sup>unclean fowl, <sup>175</sup>creeping things that fly, <sup>176</sup>creatures that creep on the ground, <sup>177</sup>reptiles, <sup>178</sup>worms found in fruit or produce or <sup>179</sup>any detestable creature.

An animal that has died naturally <sup>180</sup>is forbidden for consumption as is <sup>181</sup>a torn or mauled animal. One must not eat <sup>182</sup>any limb taken from a living animal.

Also prohibited is <sup>183</sup>the sinew of the thigh (*gid ha-hasheh*) as is <sup>184</sup>blood (because it can contain toxic organisms) and <sup>185</sup>certain types of fat (*helev*); one should minimize the consumption of fat and eat mostly complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, whole grains) together with a moderate amount of protein (*lean* beef, veal, lamb, fish, chicken, turkey, beans). One *may*<sup>186</sup> eat meat together with milk <sup>187</sup>unless the meat comes exactly from the same animal or its offspring as the milk. It is also forbidden to eat <sup>188</sup>an animal that has caused harm to humans (as it may be diseased).

One *may* eat <sup>189,190,191</sup>bread made of new wheat or corn *when* it's truly ready.

One *may* eat the growth of <sup>192,193</sup>genetically mixed plantings *only* if scientists have ascertained it is safe to do so. Any use of <sup>194</sup>wine libations to idols is prohibited, as is <sup>195</sup>gluttony, drunkenness, smoking, and the use of illicit drugs.

One may not eat anything on <sup>196</sup>the Day of Atonement. During Passover it is forbidden to eat <sup>197</sup>leaven (*hamez*) or <sup>198,199</sup>anything containing an admixture of such. During Passover no leaven may be <sup>200</sup>seen or <sup>201</sup>found in your possession.

### **Recovering Alcoholics and Teetotalers.**

A recovering alcoholic (and a teetotaler who has made a vow) may not drink <sup>202</sup>wine or any beverage made from grapes; he may not eat <sup>203</sup>fresh grapes, <sup>204</sup>dried grapes, <sup>205</sup>grape seeds or <sup>206</sup>grape peel. He may not render himself <sup>207</sup>ritually impure for his dead nor may he <sup>208</sup>enter a building in which there is a corpse (this might cause him to resume drinking). He *may*, if he likes, <sup>209</sup>shave his hair. The same applies, analogously, to recovering drug addicts.



### **Agriculture.**

It is forbidden <sup>210</sup>to reap the whole of a field without leaving the corners for the deserving poor (a farmer may substitute money charity, if more convenient); it is also forbidden to <sup>211</sup>gather up the ears of corn that fall during reaping or to harvest <sup>212</sup>the misformed clusters of grapes, or <sup>213</sup>the grapes that fall (because they may become contaminated); but one *may* <sup>214</sup>return to take a forgotten sheaf.

You must not <sup>215</sup>sow different species of seed together or <sup>216</sup>corn in a vineyard; it is forbidden, without scientific supervision, to <sup>217</sup>crossbreed different species of animals or plants or <sup>218</sup>work with two different species yoked together. You must not <sup>219</sup>muzzle an animal working in a field to prevent it from eating.

It is forbidden to <sup>220</sup>till the earth, <sup>221</sup>to prune trees, <sup>222</sup>to reap (in the usual manner) produce or <sup>223</sup>fruit which has grown without cultivation in the seventh year (on a fallow field). Optionally one may choose not <sup>224</sup>till the earth or prune trees in the Jubilee year, when it is also forbidden to harvest (in the usual manner) <sup>225</sup>produce or <sup>226</sup>fruit that has grown without cultivation. Scientific principles of agriculture must be followed, including crop rotation and control of pests.

One may keep or <sup>227</sup>sell one's landed inheritance. Synagogue <sup>228,229</sup>assistants must not be left without support.

### **Loans, Business and the Treatment of Servants.**

Disputed bad debts are to be erased from one's credit record after the <sup>230,231</sup>seventh year. Do not <sup>232</sup>deny charity to the deserving poor or <sup>233</sup>send a Jewish servant away empty-handed when he finishes his period of service. Do not <sup>234</sup>dun your debtor when you know that he cannot pay. It is wrong to <sup>235</sup>lend to or <sup>236</sup>borrow from a Jewish *relative* at interest or <sup>237</sup>participate in an agreement with relatives involving interest either as a guarantor, witness, or writer of the contract. Do not <sup>238</sup>delay payment of wages.

You may not <sup>239</sup>take a pledge from a debtor by violence, <sup>240</sup>keep a poor man's pledge when he needs it, <sup>241</sup>take any pledge from a widow or <sup>242</sup>from any debtor if he earns his living with it.

Kidnapping <sup>243</sup>is forbidden.

Do not <sup>244</sup>steal or <sup>245</sup>rob. Do not initiate force or commit violence. Do not <sup>246</sup>remove a landmarker or <sup>247</sup>defraud.

It is forbidden <sup>248</sup>to deny receipt of a loan or a deposit or <sup>249</sup>to swear falsely regarding another man's property.

You must not <sup>250</sup>deceive anybody in business. You may not <sup>251</sup>mislead a man even verbally. It is forbidden to harm the stranger among you <sup>252</sup>verbally or <sup>253</sup>do him injury in trade.

You may not <sup>254</sup>return or <sup>255</sup>otherwise take advantage of a slave who has fled his master. You must work to abolish slavery and totalitarianism anywhere in the world.

Do not <sup>256</sup>afflict the widow or the orphan. Treat your servants with <sup>257,258,259,260,261,262</sup>dignity. You must not <sup>263</sup>sell a female captive or <sup>264</sup>treat her as a slave.

Do not <sup>265</sup>covet another man's possessions even if you are willing to pay for them. Even <sup>266</sup>the desire is forbidden.

A worker must not <sup>267</sup>cut down standing corn during his work or <sup>268</sup>take more fruit than he can eat. A worker must not steal from his employer. One must not <sup>269</sup>turn away from a lost article which is to be returned to its owner nor may you <sup>270</sup>refuse to help a man or an animal which is collapsing under its burden. It is forbidden to <sup>271</sup>defraud with weights and measures or <sup>272</sup>to possess inaccurate weights.

### **Justice.**

A judge must not <sup>273</sup>perpetuate injustice, <sup>274</sup>accept bribes or be <sup>275</sup>partial or <sup>276</sup>afraid. He may <sup>277</sup>not favor the poor or <sup>278</sup>discriminate against the wicked; he should not <sup>279</sup>pity the condemned or <sup>280</sup>pervert the judgment of strangers or orphans.

It is forbidden to <sup>281</sup>hear one litigant without the other being present. A capital case cannot be decided by <sup>282</sup>a majority of one.

A judge should not <sup>283</sup>accept a colleague's opinion unless he is convinced of its correctness; it is forbidden to <sup>284</sup>appoint as a judge someone who is ignorant of the law.

Do not <sup>285</sup>give false testimony or accept <sup>286</sup>testimony from a wicked person or from <sup>287</sup>relatives of a person involved in the case. It is forbidden to pronounce judgment <sup>288</sup>on the basis of the testimony of one witness.

Do not <sup>289</sup>murder.

You must not convict on <sup>290</sup>circumstantial evidence alone.

A witness <sup>291</sup>must not sit as a judge in capital cases.

You must not <sup>292</sup>execute anybody without due proper trial and conviction.

Do not <sup>293</sup>pity or spare the stalker.

Punishment is not to be inflicted for <sup>294</sup>an act committed under duress.

Do not accept ransom <sup>295</sup>for a murderer or <sup>296</sup>a manslayer.

Do not <sup>297</sup>hesitate to save another person from danger and do not <sup>298</sup>leave a stumbling block in the way or <sup>299</sup>mislead another person by giving wrong advice.

It is forbidden <sup>300</sup>to punish the guilty more than is required by the law.

Do not <sup>301</sup>tell tales or <sup>302</sup>bear hatred in your heart. It is forbidden to <sup>303</sup>shame a Jew, <sup>304</sup>to bear a grudge or <sup>305</sup>to take revenge.

Do not <sup>306</sup>take the dam (female parent) when you take the young birds.

<sup>307,308</sup>Lepers are required to seek the latest medical treatment. It is forbidden <sup>309</sup>to cultivate a valley in which a slain body was found, until all evidence pertaining to the crime has been collected.

<sup>310</sup>Witches must be placed under psychiatric care.

Do not <sup>311</sup>force a bridegroom to perform military service during the first year of his marriage. It is forbidden to <sup>312</sup>rebel against science—i.e., reason, observation, experiment. The statutes in this code may be <sup>313,314</sup>changed only if an error in reasoning is discovered, or if a new observation or experiment requires it.

Do not curse <sup>315</sup>a judge, <sup>316</sup>a legitimate ruler, or <sup>317</sup>any Jew.

Do not <sup>318</sup>curse or <sup>319</sup>strike a parent.

One should not <sup>320</sup>work on the Sabbath or <sup>321</sup>walk (or drive) further than reasonable limits. One may not <sup>322</sup>inflict punishment on the Sabbath.

One should not work on <sup>323</sup>the first or <sup>324</sup>the seventh day of Passover, on <sup>325</sup>Shavuot, on <sup>326</sup>Rosh Ha-Shanah, on the <sup>327</sup>first and <sup>328</sup>eighth (*Shemini Azeret*) days of Sukkot and <sup>329</sup>on the Day of Atonement. Of course, certain professionals may be granted exemptions.

### **Incest and Other Forbidden Relationships.**

It is forbidden to enter into an incestuous relationship with one's <sup>330</sup>mother, <sup>331</sup>step-mother, <sup>332</sup>sister, <sup>333</sup>step-sister, <sup>334</sup>son's daughter, <sup>335</sup>daughter's daughter, <sup>336</sup>daughter, <sup>337</sup>any woman and her daughter, <sup>338</sup>any woman and her son's daughter, <sup>339</sup>any woman and her daughter's daughter, <sup>340</sup>father's sister, <sup>341</sup>mother's sister, <sup>342</sup>paternal uncle's wife, <sup>343</sup>daughter-in-law, <sup>344</sup>brother's wife and <sup>345</sup>wife's sister.

It is also forbidden to <sup>346</sup>have sexual relations with a menstruous woman.

Do not <sup>347</sup>commit adultery.

It is forbidden for <sup>348</sup>a man or <sup>349</sup>a woman to have sexual intercourse with an animal.

Homosexuality <sup>350</sup>is forbidden, particularly with <sup>351</sup>one's father or <sup>352</sup>uncle; it is unclean, unsafe, and irrational.

It is forbidden to have <sup>353</sup>intimate physical contact (even without actual intercourse) with any of the women with whom intercourse is forbidden. The analogous rules apply to women. All sexual relations between a man and a woman must be *consensual* and must not result in any tissue damage. Abortion is forbidden past the 20th week, when human brain waves begin, unless the life of the mother is at stake; prior to that time, it is the woman's choice whether or not to carry the pregnancy to term.

A *mamzer* (a child born of forbidden intercourse) may not <sup>354</sup>marry a Jew or a Jewess.

Harlotry <sup>355</sup>is forbidden.

A divorcee may not be <sup>356</sup>remarried to her first husband if, in the meanwhile, she had married another.

A childless widow *may* <sup>357</sup>marry the man of her choice (not necessarily her late husband's brother).

A man may not <sup>358</sup>divorce a wife whom he married after having raped her or <sup>359</sup>after having slandered her.

A eunuch may not <sup>360</sup>marry a Jewess.

Castration <sup>361</sup>is forbidden.

### **The Government.**

You may not <sup>362</sup>elect as President (or Prime Minister) someone not native to the land. As the steward of the public's wealth, the Leader must be <sup>363,364,365</sup>fiscally responsible; he must cut spending, cut taxes to the fullest extent possible, and balance the budget at the lowest possible levels. The proper function of the government is to protect the citizens' rights to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. Each citizen should be free to pursue his or her own goals, without governmental interference, provided he or she respects the equal rights of others.