

# Genesis – Seven Laws of Noah

From Ariel's Bible Commentary

- Rabbinic Judaism teaches that while Jews are under the Law of Moses and can receive righteousness through the Law of Moses, Gentiles do not have to obey the Law of Moses for righteousness, but can receive it through the Seven Noachide Laws.
- As far as the basics, the seven laws are as follows:
  - For Justice, which involves establishing courts of law, and it is imperative to pursue social justice and prohibitions against any miscarriage of justice.
  - Against Blasphemy, which means not to pronounce the Name of God and prohibits curses directed toward God.
  - Against Idolatry, which prohibits the worship of idols or planets.
  - Against Immorality, which prohibits four areas of immorality: adultery, incest, sodomy, and bestiality.
  - Against Homicide, prohibiting both murder and suicide.
  - Against Theft, prohibiting wrongful taking of another's property.
  - Prohibiting eating regarding limbs of a living creature, meaning the flesh of a living animal, which prohibits the eating of animal parts severed from a living animal, thus protecting the animal from unnecessary pain.
- The first category of the Noachide Law is Justice, which covers twenty of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (176) to appoint judges and officers in each and every community
  - (177) to treat litigants equally before the law
  - (178) to testify in court
  - (179) to inquire diligently into the testimony of a witness
  - (226) for the courts to administer the death penalty by the sword
  - (273) against wanton miscarriage of justice by a court
  - (274) against the judge accepting a bribe or gift from a litigant
  - (275) against a judge showing marks of honor to only one litigant
  - (276) against a judge acting in fear of a litigant or of a litigant's threat
  - (277) against a judge acting out of compassion and favor for a poor litigant because he is poor
  - (278) against a judge acting out of discrimination against a litigant, because the litigant is a sinner
  - (279) against a judge acting out of a softness and putting aside the penalty of a murderer or killer
  - (280) against a judge discriminating against a stranger or orphan
  - (281) against a judge hearing one litigant in the absence of the other
  - (284) against appointing a judge who lacks knowledge of the law
  - (285) against testifying falsely

- (289) against the court killing an innocent man
- (290) against incrimination by circumstantial evidence
- (292) against taking the law into one's own hands to kill someone guilty of capital punishment
- (294) against punishing for a crime committed under duress
- The second category of the Noachide Law is Blasphemy, which covers eight of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (1) to acknowledge the existence of God
  - (4) to fear God
  - (5) to pray to God
  - (9) to sanctify God's Name, even in the face of death when appropriate
  - (11) to study the Torah
  - (16) against blaspheming
  - (63) against desecrating God's Name, even in the face of death when appropriate
  - (209) to honor the scholar and to revere one's teacher
- The third category of the Noachide Law is Idolatry, which covers ten of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (1) against entertaining the thought that there exists any deity other than God
  - (2) against making any graven images or having someone else make them for us
  - (3) against making idols for use by others
  - (4) against making any forbidden statue, even for ornamental purposes
  - (5) against bowing to any idol or to sacrifice or to burn incense even when it is not the customary way of worship in worshipping this particular idol
  - (6) against worshipping idols in any of the customary manners of worship
  - (7) against causing our children to pass through the fire in the worship of Molech
  - (8) against practicing witchcraft
  - (9) against practicing the consultation of the dead
  - (10) against turning to idolatry in word, thought, or deed by any observance that may draw us to idol worship
- The fourth category of the Noachide Law is Immorality, and this covers ten of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (330) against a man lying carnally with his mother
  - (331) against a man lying carnally with his sister
  - (332) against a man lying carnally with the wife of his father
  - (347) against a man lying carnally with another man's wife
  - (348) against a man lying carnally with an animal
  - (349) against humans lying carnally with an animal
  - (350) against a man lying carnally with a man
  - (351) against a man lying carnally with his father
  - (352) against a man lying carnally with his father's brother
  - (353) against engaging in erotic conduct that may lead to prohibitive union

- The fifth category of the Noachide Law has to do with Homicide.
  - The rabbis do not list a specific number, because it does not add anything to go beyond the law against murder.
  - All the other laws in relation to homicide were either relevant only to Israel or are already included in the categories of justice or theft.
- The sixth category of the Noachide Law is Theft, which covers sixteen of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (194) robbers are to return or make restitution for stolen property
  - (201) workers are permitted to eat from the food among which he works
  - (208) all are to be exact in use of weights and measures
  - (243) against kidnapping
  - (244) against dealing with violence
  - (245) against robbing with violence
  - (246) against moving a landmark
  - (247) against cheating
  - (248) against repudiating a claim of money earned
  - (250) against overcharging
  - (265) against coveting or outwardly asking for another's property
  - (266) against desiring or an inner craving for another's property
  - (267) against a laborer eating of such fruit when not working in the orchard
  - (268) against a worker taking food home
  - (271) against false weights and measures
  - (272) against possession of false weights and measures
- The seventh category of the Noachide Law has to do with the Limbs of a Living Creature, which covers two of the 613 Mosaic Law commandments:
  - (181) against eating the flesh of any animal which was torn by a wild beast, since it is prohibited to eat of such flesh as was torn off an animal while it was still alive
  - (182) against eating a limb severed from a living animal, beast, or fowl