**RAMBAM Sefer Shoftim Hilchot Melachim**

**Chapter 9**

**Halacha 1**

Six precepts were commanded to Adam:

a) the prohibition against worship of false gods;

b) the prohibition against cursing God;

c) the prohibition against murder;

d) the prohibition against incest and adultery;

e) the prohibition against theft;

f) the command to establish laws and courts of justice.

Even though we have received all of these commands from Moses and, furthermore, they are concepts which intellect itself tends to accept, it appears from the Torah's words that Adam was commanded concerning them.

The prohibition against eating flesh from a living animal was added for Noah, as [Genesis 9:4](http://www.chabad.org/8173#v4) states: 'Nevertheless, you may not eat flesh with its life, which is its blood.' Thus there are seven mitzvot.

These matters remained the same throughout the world until Abraham. When Abraham arose, in addition to these, he was commanded regarding circumcision. He also ordained the morning prayers.

Isaac separated tithes and ordained an additional prayer service before sunset. Jacob added the prohibition against eating the sciatic nerve. He also ordained the evening prayers. In Egypt, Amram was commanded regarding other mitzvot. Ultimately, Moses came and the Torah was completed by him.

**Halacha 2**

A gentile who worships false gods is liable provided he worships them in an accepted manner.

A gentile is executed for every type of foreign worship which a Jewish court would consider worthy of capital punishment. However, a gentile is not executed for a type of foreign worship which a Jewish court would not deem worthy of capital punishment. Nevertheless, even though a gentile will not be executed for these forms of worship, he is forbidden to engage in all of them.

We should not allow them to erect a monument, or to plant an *Asherah*, or to make images and the like even though they are only for the sake of beauty.

**Halacha 3**

A gentile who curses God's Name, whether he uses God's unique name or one of His other names, in any language, is liable. This law does not apply with regard to Jews.

**Halacha 4**

A gentile who slays any soul, even a fetus in its mother's womb, should be executed in retribution for its death. Similarly, if he slew a person who would have otherwise died in the near future, placed a person before a lion, or starved a person to death, he should be executed for through one manner or other, he killed.

Similarly, one should be executed if he killed a pursuer when he could have saved the latter's potential victim by maiming one of the pursuer's limbs. These laws do not apply with regard to Jews.

**Halacha 5**

There are six illicit sexual relations forbidden to a gentile:

a) his mother;

b) his father's wife;

c) a married woman;

d) his maternal sister;

e) a male;

f) an animal.

These prohibitions are derived from the verse [Genesis 2:24](http://www.chabad.org/8166#v24): 'Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and cling to his wife and they shall become one flesh.'

'His father' - alludes to his father's wife;

'his mother' - is to be understood simply;

'cling to his wife' - and not his colleague's wife;

'his wife' - and not a male;

'They shall become one flesh' - this excludes a domesticated animal, beast, or fowl for man can never become 'one flesh' with them.

The prohibition against relations with a maternal sister is derived from the verse [Genesis 20:13](http://www.chabad.org/8215#v13): 'She is my sister, my father's daughter, but not my mother's. Thus, she became my wife.'

**Halacha 6**

A gentile is liable for relations with his mother even though she was seduced or raped by his father and never married to him. She is, nevertheless, his mother.

He is liable for relations with his father's wife even after his father's death.

He is liable for relations with a male whether a minor or an adult and with an animal whether young or old. In the latter instance, the gentile alone is executed and not the animal. We are only commanded to kill an animal with which a Jew engaged in relations.

**Halacha 7**

A gentile is not executed for adultery with his colleague's wife unless they engage in relations in the normal manner after she had engaged in relations with her husband at least once. However, if she was merely consecrated or had undergone a wedding ceremony, but had never engaged in relations with her husband, one is not liable for engaging in relations with her, as [Genesis 20:3](http://www.chabad.org/8215#v3) states: 'For she has been possessed by her husband.'

When does the above apply? When a gentile engages in relations with a gentile woman. However, a gentile who engages in relations with a married Jewess is liable whether their relations were carried out in a normal or abnormal manner.

Similarly, a gentile who engages in relations with a Jewish maiden who has been consecrated is stoned to death because of her as is the law regarding Jews. If he engages in relations with her after she has undergone the wedding ceremony, but has not engaged in relations with her husband, he is strangled to death as is the Jewish law. However, if he engages in relations with a Jewish woman after she engaged in relations with her husband once, he is sentenced to be executed by decapitation as if he had engaged in relations with a gentile woman.

**Halacha 8**

A gentile who singles out one of his maid-servants for one of his slaves and, afterwards, engages in relations with her is executed because of her for violation of the prohibition against adultery. However, he is not liable for relations with her until the matter has become public knowledge and everyone refers to her as 'the wife of X, the slave.'

When do relations with her become permitted again? When he separates her from his slave and uncovers her hair in the market-place.

When is a gentile woman considered divorced? When her husband removes her from his home and sends her on her own or when she leaves his domain and goes her own way. They have no written divorce proceedings.

The matter is not dependant on the man's volition alone. Whenever he or she decide to separate, they may and then, are no longer considered as married.

**Halacha 9**

A gentile is liable for violating the prohibition against theft whether he stole from another gentile or from a Jew.

This applies to one who forcefully robs an individual or steals money, a kidnapper, an employer who withholds his worker's wages and the like, even a worker who eats from his employer's produce when he is not working. In all such cases, he is liable and is considered as a robber. With regard to Jews, the law is different.

Similarly, a gentile is liable for stealing an object worth less than a *p'rutah*. Thus, if one gentile stole an object worth less than a *p'rutah* and another gentile stole it from him, they are both executed because of it.

**Halacha 10**

Similarly, a gentile is liable for violating the prohibition against eating a limb or flesh from a living creature. This applies regardless of the amount involved, for the specification of minimum amounts only applies to Jews.

A gentile is permitted blood from a living creature.

**Halacha 11**

The prohibition applies to a limb or flesh that is separated from either a domesticated animal or a beast. However, it appears to me that a gentile is not executed for eating a limb taken from a living bird.

**Halacha 12**

Though one slaughters an animal, even if one severs the two signs that distinguish it as having been slaughtered in a kosher manner, as long as the animal moves convulsively, the limbs and meat which are separated from it are forbidden to a gentile because of the prohibition against a limb from a living creature.

**Halacha 13**

All prohibitions that apply to a Jew regarding a limb from a living creature also apply to gentiles. Furthermore, there are instances where a gentile would be held liable and a Jew will not for a gentile is liable for a limb or flesh from a living creature whether from a domesticated animal or a beast, whether from a kosher or non-kosher species.

Similarly, a gentile is forbidden to partake of a limb from a living creature for a limb or flesh which is separated from an animal that is moving convulsively even though a Jew has already severed the two signs.

**Halacha 14**

How must the gentiles fulfill the commandment to establish laws and courts? They are obligated to set up judges and magistrates in every major city to render judgement concerning these six mitzvot and to admonish the people regarding their observance.

A gentile who transgresses these seven commands shall be executed by decapitation. For this reason, all the inhabitants of Shechem were obligated to die. Shechem kidnapped. They observed and were aware of his deeds, but did not judge him.

A gentile is executed on the basis of the testimony of one witness and the verdict of a single judge. No warning is required. Relatives may serve as witnesses. However, a woman may not serve as a witness or a judge for them.