

Leviticus 17-20

Bible Study

Review

Chapter 15—Purification following bodily secretions

- Least defiling: normally one week isolation before one could enter tabernacle area
 - Seven days isolation, wash clothes and body in running water
 - Eighth day a sacrifice of inexpensive type

Chapter 16—Day of Atonement

- Most Holy place purified by blood only on this one day of the year
- Lots cast to select on goat to be sacrifice and one sent into the wilderness
 - Formal institution of the Day of Atonement on God's calendar

Leviticus 11: 44

“For I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore consecrated yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy.



Chapter 17

This chapter continues the theme of holiness

[v. 1-9]—1st section

The place where God would accept sacrifices

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
²“Speak to **Aaron**, to **his sons**, and to **all the children of Israel**, and say to them, ‘This is the thing which the Lord has commanded, saying:

“to Aaron, to his sons, **and to all** the children of Israel”

1st time this phrase is used

Ritual purity is the topic in this chapter:

- To Aaron and his sons, and then to Israel
 - Instructions in regard to sacrifices
- Last two verses are clearly concerning ritual purity

1st section—domestic animals killed must be offered to the Lord

in sacrifice...the main sacrificial animals

³“Whatever man of the house of Israel who **kills** an ox or lamb or goat **in the camp**, or who kills *it* **outside** the camp,

⁴and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord, the guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people,

God gives special instructions—the sacrifices are to be done only at the tabernacle, not throughout the camp

v. 3 “kills” (NIV) “any Israelite who sacrifices”

(Expositors) “There are several Hebrew words for ‘kill.’ The one used here [*sahat*] practically always is used for killing animals for sacrifice...”

(Word) “The case concerns a person who slaughters a domesticated animal as a sacrifice away from the altar of the sanctuary.

Because the animal has been slaughtered away from the altar, its blood, which effects expiation, has not been cast on the altar. The casual pouring out of blood is viewed as blood shed in vain.”

Reasons: v.5-7

⁵to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, **to the priest**, and offer them **as peace offerings** to the Lord.

⁶And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the Lord *at* the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the Lord.

v. 5 God was warning Israel not to offer sacrifices in the open field—but to bring them to the tabernacle court...so the priest could do the blood ritual and burn the fat v. 6

v. 5 (last part) “as **peace offerings** to the Lord”

➤ The Lord receives the portion due the sanctuary

- Peace offerings shared between family, after the priest received his portion

(Word) “Because it was a less formal type, people would be more readily **inclined** to offer it **away** from the altar...”

Another reason for this legislation was so that Israel would not fall into idolatry [v.7]

⁷They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.”

“demons” (Heb. *Sa 'ir*)= he goats...half goat half man...who were supposed to haunt areas of the wilderness

- Goat worship practiced in parts of Egypt [lower Egypt]

This was timely legislation—Israel had already shown their tendencies to be influenced by idolatry from the golden calf incident

These regulations given in the early phase of the nation:

- 1)Lived on manna and only on occasions killed an animal for a peace offering
- 2)Goat worship an influence they were exposed to while in Egypt

2nd section--No one should ['sacrifice']...offer a burnt offering or peace offering outside the tabernacle

⁸“Also you shall say to them: ‘Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice,

⁹and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the Lord, that man shall be cut off from among his people.

(Int. Com. OT) “This law could be effective only when eating meat was a rare luxury, and when everyone lived close to the sanctuary as during the wilderness wanderings.

After the settlement it was no longer feasible to insist that all slaughtering be restricted to the tabernacle.”

This legislation was modified as Israel was about to disperse throughout the land of Canaan...

(Deuteronomy 12: 20-23) allows Israel to kill sheep and oxen and eat them without doing the sacrificial procedures laid down in Leviticus...although the regulations concerning blood must still be followed

3rd section—prohibition against eating blood [v.10-12]

¹⁰‘And whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

“who eats blood”

(JSB, Tanakh)“The act referred to is that of eating meat without first draining the blood”

Genesis 9:4

⁴But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood.

In the ancient world it was a common practice to consume animal blood in a variety of forms...but God forbids it

Reason: v.11

¹¹For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.'

¹²Therefore I said to the children of Israel, 'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.'

Blood was reserved by God for a special purpose—for making atonement for sin upon the altar

v. 12 "no one among you shall eat blood"

➤ six times this important principle is repeated throughout verses 10-14

4th section—Blood of clean game caught in the hunt [v. 13-16]

¹³“Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust;

¹⁴for *it is* the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’

v. 13 “cover it with dust”

(JSB, Tanakh) “the explicit reason for draining and covering of the blood is to prevent its being eaten”

(Tyndale) “The life had thus returned to the ground from which it had come, and the hunters and others who chanced to be in the vicinity were protected from the possibility of communicable disease or infection.”

(Expositors notes) “Blood of ordinary butchering was to be disposed of by pouring it out and covering it”

⁵“And every person who eats what died *naturally* or what was torn *by beasts, whether he is* a native of your own country or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening. Then he shall be clean.

¹⁶But if he does not wash *them* or bathe his body, then he shall bear his guilt.”

v. 15 “be unclean until evening”—regarding ceremonial cleanness

(New Int. Com. OT) “If an animal dies naturally, or as the result of an attack by another creature, one cannot be sure **whether its blood has drained away properly.**

Therefore if a man eats meat from it he may become unclean and he must wash himself and change his clothes to rid himself of potential impurity”

Chapter 18
Laws regarding sexual
immorality

Chapter shifts from ceremonial defilement
to moral purity
➤ Guidelines for holy living

1st section—avoiding pagan customs [v. 1-5]

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
²“Speak **to the children of Israel**, and say to them: ‘I am the Lord your God.

v. 2 (last part) “I am the Lord your God”—repeated in six verses

■ An almost identical phrase introduces the ten commandments [Ex. 20:2 ; Deut. 5:6]”

Exodus 20: 2; Deuteronomy 5:6

⁶ ‘I *am* the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of
the house of bondage.

³According to the doings of the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, you shall not do; and according to the doings of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, you shall not do; nor shall you walk in their ordinances.

v. 3 “the doings of the land of Egypt....and...the land of Canaan”

- The Egyptian royal family brothers married sisters [pertains to chapter]
- Abominable practices of the Canaanites [all kinds of wickedness]

‘their **ordinances**’ (Heb. *chuqqah*; *huqqa* from *Hoq*)—an enactment (engrave)

“a decree or rule handed out by a law-giver, whether he be human or divine”
(NICOT, Wenham)

⁴You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I *am* the Lord your God.

Judgment (Heb. *Mishpat*)—in the sense of ultimate authority
(Theological Wordbook OT) “in the Hebrew scriptures all authority is God’s and it is this authority which is denominated *mishpat*”

My ordinances (Heb. *chuqqah* from *hoq*) =enactment— God’s rules and enactments

⁵You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I *am* the Lord.

v. 5 “statutes” (Heb. *chuqqah* from *hoq*)
(Tyndale, Harrison) “Comes from a root ‘to engrave’ thus describing permanent behavioral rules prescribed by authority and recorded for the instruction and guidance of the individual or society”

v. 5 ‘which if a man does, he shall live’

Romans 8: 6
“For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace”

2nd section—forbidden unions [v. 6-18]

⁶None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I *am* the Lord.

Verse six provides a summary of the entire section [v. 6-18] by prohibiting sexual relations with any close relative other than one's spouse

⁷The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She *is* your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness.

⁸The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it *is* your father's nakedness. ⁹The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, *whether* born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover.

¹⁰The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs *is* your own nakedness.

¹¹The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she *is* your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness.

¹²You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she *is* near of kin to your father.

¹³You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she *is* near of kin to your mother.

¹⁴You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she *is* your aunt.

¹⁵You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she *is* your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness.

¹⁶You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it *is* your brother's nakedness.

¹⁷You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They *are* near of kin to her. It *is* wickedness.

¹⁸Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive.

Parent and child; stepparent and stepchild; full siblings; half siblings; grand parent and grandchild; uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew; father in law and daughter in law; brother in law and sister in law

v. 17 forbidden to marry a woman and daughter or granddaughter

v. 18 Prohibition against a man marrying both a woman and her sister as a second wife while his wife was alive

3rd section—other sexual deviations and Canaanite customs to be avoided [v. 19-23]

¹⁹Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her *customary* impurity.

v. 19 God prohibited sexual relations with a woman during menstruation

(Tyndale) “it had been prohibited earlier on the basis of ceremonial uncleanness [15:24], but here is regarded as a moral offense, and would be punished accordingly” [Lev. 20:18]

²⁰Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor’s wife, to **defile yourself** with her.

v. 20 Adultery further defined

- The emphasis is the defilement for the offender himself
- Brought into the priestly scheme—defiling (as a metaphor for wickedness)
 - Lev. 20: 10—death penalty

²¹And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through *the fire* to Molech, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the Lord.

v. 21 “descendants” (OKJ)– ‘seed’ = children (Companion)

“pass through” (Heb. ‘pass to Molech’)
“into his arms, from which it passed through the fire to him”

v. 21 “pass through the fire to Molech”
(Wenham) “it is now fairly certain that it involved child sacrifice”

²²You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It *is* an abomination

(Holman OT Com.)“The Bible forbids homosexuality of any sort [Lev. 20:13; Rom. 1: 26-27].

The modern term sodomy derived its name from the failed attempts of the inhabitants of Sodom to rape the visiting angels. [Gen. 19: 4-11].

The degree to which a society gives way to such practices is a good gage to measure not only the nation’s separation from God but also its prospects for long-term survival.”

Romans 1:27

²⁷Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

²³Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It *is* perversion.

(Companion) “This was part of the religious worship of the Egyptians”

- Hittites, Babylonians and Canaanites

(Tyndale, Harrison)

“These pronouncements against bestiality are the most specific statements of their kind in the whole of the ancient Near East legal literature, and establish the most advanced kind of moral standards.”

4th section [v.24-30]
Concluding warnings about Canaanite practices

²⁴Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you.

²⁵For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.

v. 25 God's stern warning: "I visit the punishment of its iniquity"

²⁶You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you
²⁷(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled),
²⁸lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you.

²⁹For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people.

³⁰Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the Lord your God.”

This section parallels Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28—blessings and cursings chapters

God would soon exterminate the Canaanites for their sacrilegious and detestable practices, but Israel could face a similar fate if she should fall into the same sort of sins

Chapter 19

Laws designed to maintain holy relationships—with God and men

¹And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
²“Speak to *all the congregation* of the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God *am* holy.’”

The motto of Leviticus: “you shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy”—reminds them of their fundamentals calling [Ex. 19:6]...to be a holy nation

Exodus 19:6

⁶And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct,
¹⁶because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*” [£]

Verses 3-4 reiterate the second, fourth and fifth commandments

³‘Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the Lord your God.

⁴‘Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I *am* the Lord your God.

v. 3 (NICOT, Wenham) “Even as honoring of parents stands foremost among human duties, the sanctification of the Sabbath is the first step towards holiness in his spiritual life”

v. 3-4 (BKC) “Honoring parents and the Sabbath summarizes the whole Law and illustrates that holiness begins in the home.
A child who learns to respect his mother and father is also likely to ‘fear’ God and flee from idols”

References to the Sabbath occur twenty-four times in Leviticus—the word “**Sabbaths**” refers to the feasts, sabbatical years and the weekly Sabbath

“I am the Lord your God”—a motivational phrase occurs frequently in chapter 19

v. 5-8: instructions for peace offerings—addresses the relationship between God and Israel

⁵And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the Lord, you shall offer it of your own free will.

⁶It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire.

⁷And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it *is* an abomination. It shall not be accepted.

⁸Therefore *everyone* who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

Fellowship between God and Israel were symbolized by the peace offerings— they were not to be treated in a common manner

Meat spoils quickly... Meat that could not be eaten was to be promptly shared with others or else burned up

Gleanings set apart for the poor of the land

⁹When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest

¹⁰And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather *every* grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the Lord your God.

God set apart a certain part of the harvest for the poor...widow, orphans, etc.

A certain portion was set aside for them to use...but they had to gather for themselves

Dealing with neighbors [v.11-18]

¹¹'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another.

¹²And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the Lord.

v. 11 The eighth commandment stealing is addressed along with deception and lying, the ninth commandment

v. 12 Forbids falsely swearing by and therefore profaning God's name [Ex. 20:7] the third commandment

¹³You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.

(Tyndale) “Where servants are hired by the day they must be paid before nightfall [Mat. 20:8], since the poor would have immediate need of the day’s wage.”

¹⁴You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the Lord.

(Tyndale) “The fact that the deaf and blind were legislated for as classes in society indicates the prevalence of these two afflictions in the Mosaic era. “

¹⁵You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.

¹⁶You shall not go about *as* a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the Lord.

¹⁷'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him.

“hate your brother in your heart”—Jesus Christ expounded upon this principle in Mat. 5:22

Matthew 5:21-22

²¹“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘*You shall not murder*,[£] and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’

²²But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother[£] without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment....

v. 17 [mid. Part] “rebuke your neighbor’

(NSB) “The way to avoid letting hatred build up was to confront the person. Ideally this would involve resolving the issue face to face.

¹⁸You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the Lord.

(NSB) “Vengeance belongs to God [Deut. 32:35] partly because human vengeance often is carried out too zealously. But God’s vengeance is entirely just”

v. 18 ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself’

The “golden rule” —quoted by Christ [Mat. 19;19; Mark 12:31]

(Tyndale) “unique in the ancient world, and represents one of the Old Testament’s most outstanding moral precepts”

Principles of **separateness** [v. 19-25]

¹⁹You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

“You shall keep My statutes”

(JSB, Tanakh) “*hukkotay* (statutes) should be understood here more literally as the ‘boundaries I have fixed in the natural world’”

‘you shall not let your livestock breed with another kind’

(NIV) “Do not mate different kinds of animals”

(Word) “ Houtman says this law seeks to prevent the blurring of the variety of species and kinds that God created; that is it seeks to preserve the diversity in the created world”

v. 19 (middle and last part)

You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

Deuteronomy 22:9

⁹“You shall not sow your vineyard with different kinds of seed, lest the yield of the seed which you have sown and the fruit of your vineyard be **defiled**. (RSV) “be forfeited to the sanctuary”

‘defiled’ (Heb. *qodesh*)

(Theological Dictionary OT) “connotes the concept of holiness, i. e. the essential nature of that which belongs to the sphere of the sacred and which is thus distinct from the common or profane”

Wool and linen were woven together in the priestly garments (Ex. 28:6) and other fabric mixtures were used in the sanctuary realm.

(NIV Application Com) “The laws regarding mixtures seem intended to protect the distinction between the ordinary domain of laypersons and the sacred sphere of the sanctuary.”

A slave woman betrothed to another man [v. 20-22]

²⁰“Whoever lies carnally with a woman who *is* betrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

v. 20 (TEV) “If a slave girl is the recognized concubine of a man and she has not been paid for and freed, then if another man has sexual relations with her, they will be punished, but not put to death, since she is a slave”

²¹And he shall bring his trespass offering to the Lord, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering.

²²The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the Lord for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him

(Tyndale) “The offense is not a capital crime, since the woman was not free. Despite this, the offender had to sacrifice a guilt offering to the Lord after an inquiry had been made, and only then could proper atonement be made for the transgression.....

This passage shows that, although a woman might be a slave in Israel, she was still entitled to the protection of covenantal law”

Problems associated with planting orchards [v. 23-25]

²³‘When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten.

“uncircumcised”

(Theological dictionary OT) “The denominative verb *aral* is used only twice. In Lev. 19:23 the RSV and NASB render the Qal, ‘forbidden’ and Holladay suggests ‘leave unharvested’.”

(Tyndale, Harrison) “The legislation forbidding the fruit of new trees to be eaten is based upon sound horticulture principles...By the **fourth year** the fruit would be more mature and was reserved as an offering of praise to God.”



²⁴But in the fourth year all its fruit **shall be holy**, a praise to the Lord.

[OKJ] 'holy to praise the Lord'

(Companion) "(Heb.) 'holiness of praises' ...for emphasis= for a sacred and great praise unto Jehovah"

v. 24 (NIV Application Com.) "In the fourth year the first fruit considered edible is holy, which means that it, like other required first fruits belongs to the sacred domain and presumably must be given to the priests to eat—in this case, for the purpose of offering rejoicing to the Lord"

²⁵And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I *am* the Lord your God.

(Word) “This statute is motivated by the promise that God will increase the harvest of the orchards for those who are obedient. This kind of law reinforces the community’s consciousness that Yahweh is the owner of the land”

Proverbs 3:9-10

⁹ Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase;

¹⁰ So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine

²⁶You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying.

v. 26 “you shall not eat anything with the blood”

- Eating blood was part of Canaanite worship

(NIV Appl. Com.)“In this context, and because we know that in some parts of the ancient world blood was poured into the ground to netherworld deities, it has been suggested that eating over the blood may involve consultation of ancestral spirits”

²⁷You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard.

Shaving around the sides of the head was used by pagans as hair styles laden with sun worship symbolism

Trimming of the beard in a certain way was also part of pagan worship in honor of their god

²⁸You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the Lord.

v. 28 [first part]—associated with pagan forms of divination and magic, conjuring up dead spirits from the underworld

The last part of verse 28 can stand independent from the first part

(Keil and Delitzch) “The prohibition of tattooing.....had no reference to idolatrous usages, but was intended to inculcate upon the Israelites a proper reverence for God’s creation”

v. 28 (last part) “nor tattoo any marks on you: for I am the Lord”

“nor tattoo any marks” (Heb. *Nathan qa ‘aqa*)
(Int. St. Bible Enc.) “the procedure of making a mark or pattern on the skin by pricking it with a needle coated with pigment”

(Unger’s Bible Dictionary) “In Lev. 19:28 we find two prohibitions of an unnatural disfigurement of the body: ‘you shall not make any cutting in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you.’
The latter (Heb. *qa ‘aqa*, ‘incision’) refers to tattooing, and has no reference to idolatrous usages, but was intended to inculcate upon the Israelites a proper reverence for God’s creation.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

²⁰For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your [£]body and in your spirit, which are God’s.

²⁹Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.

(Keil and Delitzch) “The reference is not to spiritual whoredom or idolatry [34:16], but to fleshly whoredom, the word *zimmah* being only used in this connection.

If a father caused his daughter to become a prostitute, immorality would soon become predominant, and the land (population) fall away to whoredom.”

³⁰You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the Lord.

(Tyndale, Harrison) “As elsewhere, it is moral rather than ceremonial offences that defile the land. Its sanctity will be preserved as the Israelites observe Sabbath worship and reverence the Lord’s sanctuary.”

Pagan religious customs:

³¹'Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the Lord your God.

(Tyndale) "Necromancy, which is the attempt to gain contact with spirits of the deceased, is specifically prohibited to the Israelites. The medium was usually a woman who was able to obtain a materialization of certain deceased persons on request."

Principles of respect and love:

³²'You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I *am* the Lord.

(Word) "Showing proper honor to the elders is an expression of one's fear of God"

³³'And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him.

³⁴The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the Lord your God.

(Tyndale) "Although the stranger is a temporary resident among the covenant people, he must be treated a regular member of the community, and loved as a neighbor."

³⁵You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume.

³⁶You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.

(Word) “The grace God has shown Israel in redeeming her from slavery calls Israel to express her gratitude by acting justly in all her activities”

³⁷“Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the Lord.”

Obedience to God’s will is the key to blessings in lives

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

²“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.

“gives any of his descendents to Molech”—one of the pagan practices of the Canaanites was child sacrifice

- God condemns this practice in the first seven verses of this chapter
- This law applies to Israelites and aliens living among them
- The people of the land have responsibility to stone the transgressor to death

Molech

(Aid to Bible Understanding) “A deity particularly associated with the Ammonites. At Jer. 32: 35, Molech is referred to in parallel with Baal, suggesting, if not an identification, at least some connection between the two.

The view has been advanced that Molech to whom children were sacrificed had the form of a man but the head of a bull.”

³I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.

⁴And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him,

⁵then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.

v. 4-5 If the people of the land ignore anyone's offering a child to Molech by not putting the guilty person to death, God himself will punish the guilty party and the entire family who make a child sacrifice

⁶And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.

Other forms of communication with a pagan god condemned

⁷Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the Lord your God.

⁸And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I *am* the Lord who sanctifies you.

God connects holiness and sanctification with obedience to his laws

⁹For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

(Tyndale) “Capital punishment, presumably by stoning, is prescribed for those who curse father or mother. Since the parents symbolize God’s authority...cursing them would be comparable to blasphemy. Elaborate curses, many of which appear to have the nature of magical spells, were current in the ancient Near East...”

¹⁰The man who commits adultery with *another* man’s wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

¹¹The man who lies with his father’s wife has uncovered his father’s nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

¹²If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

Laws of sexual morality are repeated but with an emphasis on the punishment

¹³If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

Homosexuality an abomination and a capital crime

¹⁴If a man marries a woman and her mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you.

v. 14 “shall be burned with fire”

(Word) “this punishment, may not be in place of stoning, but in addition to it, i. e. burning the corpse....it also cleansed the land from the defilement of such a lewd act”

¹⁵If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.

¹⁶If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.

(Word) “Bestiality carries the death penalty for both the human and the beast. In some way guilt from his unnatural act attaches to the beast.
The beast must be put to death to remove the impurity from the community”

¹⁷“If a man takes his sister, his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness. He shall bear his guilt.

¹⁸If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.

v. 17 “sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness”

(Word) “The wording of this law, means that both are passionately involved, therefore both are cut off”

v. 18 (TEV) “If a man has intercourse with a woman during he monthly period, both of them are to be driven out of the community, because they have broken the regulations about ritual uncleanness”

▪ Blood is the critical factor

¹⁹You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt.

²⁰If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless.

²¹If a man takes his brother's wife, it *is* an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

v. 21 "they shall die childless"

In ancient times childlessness was regarded as a great calamity

²²‘You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

²³And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them.

v. 23 “I am casting out”

(Word) “God points out the he is the one who is going to expel the nations that are in the land, because he “abhors” their defiling practices”

²⁴But I have said to you, “You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.” I *am* the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples.

²⁵You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

²⁶And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

v. 25-26 God’s dietary laws of clean and unclean meats are specifically connected with holiness—a separation from the people of other lands

²⁷‘A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them.’”

(Keil and Delitzch) “Because Israel was called to be a holy nation, every one, either man or woman, in whom there was a heathenish spirit of soothsaying, was to be put to death, stoned, to prevent defilement by idolatrous abominations”

(Holman OT Com.) “The Bible pronounced anathema on those who practiced such divination.
They should have consulted the law and testimony instead [Isa. 8:20]”

Lessons

God is holy and his people must be holy in their conduct, and approach God in a holy way

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct,
¹⁶because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*” £

Leviticus 18:5

“You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord”

Romans 8: 6

“For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace”