

Day 139 - FRIDAY: April 28th

Leviticus 18:

Leviticus 18:1–30 NKJV

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'I am the LORD your God. According 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. You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the LORD. 'None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's nakedness. The 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. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she is your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she is your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. You 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. Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive. 'Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her customary impurity. Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile

yourself with her. And 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. You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. Nor 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. 'Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. You 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 (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you. For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off from among their people. 'Therefore 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.' "

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll again begin with the UCG reading plan: "Chapter 18 continues the theme of holiness and separation. The instructions here are directed to all Israel, and no mention is made of the priesthood. Hence, the instructions are not for ritual sanctification, per se. Since the instructions regard prohibited sexual relationships, they appear to be for social holiness, that is, for producing right relationships between the basic units of society—men and women.

Sexual immorality has been a persistent problem in all human cultures. The societies of Israel's time committed a variety of sexual perversions, as do ours today. To create a holy nation, a nation whose individual and societal conduct was pure and stable, God had to make clear which sexual relationships were forbidden.

The list of prohibited relationships includes marriage between (1) parent and child, (2) stepparent and stepchild, (3) full siblings, (4) half-siblings, (5) grandparent and grandchild, (6) uncle and niece, or aunt and nephew, (7) father-in-law and daughter-in-law, and (8) brother-in-law

and sister-in-law. Also, a man was forbidden to marry a woman as well as her daughter or granddaughter. God also now prohibited a man from taking his wife's sister as a second wife while his wife was alive; such a marriage would likely ruin the relationship between the sisters and produce endless rivalry and strife within the family.

These prohibitions, which are still in force, prevent destructive sexual relationships with the near of kin, prohibiting sexual relations with persons within two generations of an individual. As can be seen, these prohibitions, had they been enacted earlier, would have prohibited the marriages of any of Adam and Eve's children (per prohibition 3 above), Abraham and Sarah (per prohibition 4 above), as well as Jacob and Leah and Rachel (per the prohibition against marrying a wife's sister). No particular reason is given for the prohibitions, but medical science has demonstrated that the children of unions between near of kin, as defined by God, have a greater risk of genetic abnormality—and it is possible that this was a factor in the enactment of these prohibitions.

God also prohibits sexual relations with a woman during menstruation. While no reason for the prohibition is given, it is possible that a sensitive God gave it to provide a

measure of protection for women during this often-uncomfortable period. Menstruation frequently produces mild or even severe physical discomfort, and a woman's emotional condition at this time can be fragile. Moreover, medical science has shown that sex during menstruation poses a greater risk of tissue injury or infection to the woman, as well as of transmitting blood-borne disease from one partner to another. God's giving of this law may also be tied to the special role of blood for the atoning of sin, as blood seems to be the major concern in Leviticus 20:18. Whatever the reason, God takes this matter very seriously—in the verse just cited, where God imposed a severe penalty for violation, as well as in Ezekiel 18, where it is declared a matter of righteousness (verses 5–9). God concludes his instruction regarding illicit sexual relations and practices by pointedly reminding the Israelites that such conduct defiles not only them but also the land. It is easy to assume that bad conduct only affects the perpetrator and those immediately around him. Not so. The moral quality of a people extends far beyond them to the very land upon which they dwell. God reminds Israel that because such abominable acts were committed by the people of Canaan, that land was going to "vomit them out."

Far from being a figure of speech or a poetic device, God's warning reveals a very real moral law of the universe. Sin has a material impact on the natural world. Lucifer sinned and Scripture seems to indicate that the creation was devastated as a result. Adam sinned and the plant and animal natures were corrupted. Just so, when a nation becomes sinful, even its land is defiled. Sin affects everything—man, beast, vegetation and land.” [END]

Verse 3 – The nation of Israel witnessed and learned a number of practices from living in Egypt. God makes it clear that they had to come out and act differently.

Verses 4 & 5 – At the end of verse 3, God tells Israel to not walk in the “ordinances” of Egypt. In verses 4 & 5, God uses this same Hebrew word for his correct ordinances (translated as “statutes” in verse 5, but the same word).

These statutes/ordinances of God were “requirements” of God. It tells us what to do and sets limits.

By comparison, “judgments” of God were a process where decisions and justice were determined within the laws and commandments. This typically was in reference to how to handle situations between people in the right and proper way.

Verse 6 –John Gill’s commentary states: “this phrase signifies the same as to lie with another, or have carnal knowledge of them, wherefore the following laws are generally understood of incestuous marriages; for if such an action is not to be done between persons standing in such a relation, as here in general, and afterwards more particularly described, then there ought to be no intermarriages between them; and if such marriages are forbidden, and such actions unlawful in a married state, then much more in an unmarried one;” [END]

This brought back to my mind, the similar language used in Genesis 9:21–23 when Noah was drunk in his tent.

Verse 21 – This is the first time we find the name “Molech” in the Bible. JFB commentary adds clarity by stating: “Molech, or Moloch, which signifies “king,” was the idol of the Ammonites. His statue was of brass, and rested on a pedestal or throne of the same metal. His head, resembling that of a calf, was adorned with a crown, and his arms were extended in the attitude of embracing those who approached him. His devotees dedicated their children to him; and when this was to be done, they heated the statue

to a high pitch of intensity by a fire within, and then the infants were either shaken over the flames, or passed through the ignited arms, by way of lustration to ensure the favor of the pretended deity. The fire-worshippers asserted that all children who did not undergo this purifying process would die in infancy; and the influence of this Zabian superstition was still so extensively prevalent in the days of Moses, that the divine lawgiver judged it necessary to prohibit it by an express statute.” [END]

Adam Clarke’s commentary adds additional value in stating: “That some were actually burnt alive to this idol several scriptures, according to the opinion of commentators, seem strongly to intimate; see among others, Psa_106:38; Jer_7:31, and Eze_23:37–39. That others were only consecrated to his service by passing between two fires the rabbins strongly assert; and if Ahaz had but one son, Hezekiah, (though it is probable he had others, see 2Ch_28:3), he is said to have passed through the fire to Molech, 2Ki_16:3, yet he succeeded his father in the kingdom, 2Ki_18:1, therefore this could only be a consecration, his idolatrous father intending thereby to initiate him early into the service of this demon.” [END]

Verses 22 & 23 – In addition to the prohibited sexual relationships mentioned earlier in the chapter between a man and woman, God makes it clear that there are other practices that are perversions (Hebrew meaning: “perversion, confusion, violation of divine nature”) to His design within creation. These include sex between those of the same sex, as well as a person having sex with an animal. This scripture clearly shows these behaviors are outside of God’s intended design.

Verse 26 – Even strangers in this model nation of Israel were prohibited from these practices.