

Day 141 - SUNDAY: April 30th

Leviticus 20

Leviticus 20:1–27 NKJV

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "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. I 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. And 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, then 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. 'And 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. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am the LORD your

God. And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I am the LORD who sanctifies you. 'For 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. 'The 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. The 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. If 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. If 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. If 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. If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. If 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. '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. If 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. 'You 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. If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless. '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. And 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. But 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. You 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. And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine. '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.' "

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the chapter over view from the UCG reading plan: "God's purpose was to bring Israel into the Land of Promise—and He would do just that. But the land was filled with people who practiced abominable wickedness. Because Israel was a carnal people, not having the Holy Spirit, and because they had been raised in an oppressive pagan culture, they would be tempted to syncretize and "borrow" pagan elements in their worship of God. This, of course, was completely unacceptable to God. One of the practices of the people of Canaan was child sacrifice. Children, most often the firstborn, were burned alive to the false god Molech in the belief that their

innocence and sinlessness would appease him and make the prayers the children supposedly brought before him more acceptable (hence the mention of mediums and familiar spirits, which were other forms of communication with a god). While it may seem incredible to us that anyone could be seduced into such horrific practice, Israel would not have found it unthinkable—it was simply one of many religious practices of the day. God, however, found it utterly loathsome! So, He unambiguously condemns child sacrifice in the first seven verses of the chapter. The penalty for such conduct was death, and the executioners were to be the people, not the state. This crime was so appalling that God wanted the entire community involved in its eradication. And notice, God directly connects holiness and sanctification not with such abhorrent practices, but with conscientious obedience to His laws.

This chapter also contains a repetition of the laws of sexual morality, albeit in a condensed form. The laws regarding sexual relations are repeated, but the emphasis is on the punishment and the enormity of the crime. Once again, notice the connection between sin and the defilement of the land.

Notice also that the dietary laws of clean and unclean meats are mentioned and specifically connected to holiness—that is, separation from the people of the surrounding lands. The dietary laws, too, were given primarily for holiness purposes rather than physical health. Indeed, the dietary laws do have many health benefits, and no doubt God so intended them; but their primary purpose is stated as being for holiness. By creating such dietary laws, God added a dimension to daily living that constantly reminded the Israelites that they were to continue to be separate from the people of the world, and the laws created a significant frustration to fellowship with non-Israelites. Does God want such a distinct separation between Christians and the world? Yes! Notice what the apostle Paul wrote: "And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' Therefore, 'Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty'" (2 Corinthians 6:16–18)." [END]

Verse 4 – Notice that if God’s people turn a blind eye away from one of His people who is sinning, God holds them responsible for ignoring the sinful actions. We see Paul have to deal with a similar situation in 1 Corinthians 5 where the whole congregation knew of a brother walking in sin and was doing nothing about it. Paul put the man temporarily out of the church to keep sin from spreading through the congregation and to hopefully lead him to repentance (which he did).

Verse 6 – This scripture discusses those who turn to “mediums and familiar spirits” (NKJV). “Mediums” in Hebrew means “one who evokes the dead” (BDB) and “familiar spirits” means “a knowing one, one who has a familiar spirit” (BDB). God equates one of His people who turns to demons and these evil practices as someone who is like a prostitute, a harlot, who commits adultery. God’s people were supposed to be in a marriage-like relationship with God, just as we are today when we commit to Him at baptism, and when we turn to other gods (demons), God sees it like a spouse who commits adultery. This is a comparison that we see throughout the whole Bible.

Verse 7 – God wants us to separate ourselves from all these evil practices (and all evil practices in general) so that we will be Separate/Holy.

Verse 9 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “The term “curses” signifies, not only to curse, but to speak of a person contemptuously and disrespectfully, to make light of; so that all speeches which have a tendency to lessen our parents in the eyes of others, or to render their judgment, piety, etc., suspected and contemptible, may be here included; though the act of cursing, or of treating the parent with injurious and opprobrious language, is that which is particularly intended.”

Verse 26 – Through all these commands and throughout this whole book, God continues to teach and emphasize the need for us to walk in a “clean” manner and be Holy. God wanted Israel, and wants us, to live differently than those around us in this world. We have been called to be different.