

# Leviticus 18

2-22-01

## *“Walking w/God in Holiness!”*

### 1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Chapters 1-17** in Leviticus dealt with “**How to Approach God!**” – Now **Chapters 18-20** deal with “**Walking with God!**”
  - 1.1.1. Some call these ch’s(18-20) “**The Holiness Code**”.
  - 1.1.2. **Chapters 18,19** contain the **precepts** & **ch.20** states the **punishments**.
- 1.2. After dealing with **Physical uncleanness** now, what naturally follows is **moral impurities**.
  - 1.2.1. **I heard today** that there is a church in our Valley that is a “**Polygamist church**”...w/it’s own web site & all.
  - 1.2.2. We definitely live in a **sex-saturated society!**
    - 1.2.2.1. **Fulton J.Sheen** was right when he said, “The **Victorians** pretended sex didn’t exist; the **modernist** pretend that nothing else exists.”

### 2. **HOLINESS IN MARRIAGE RELATIONS! (1-5)**

- 2.1. Holiness is best realized in connection w/the **nature & character** of God.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.2. **The Basis of Holiness!** (1-4)
  - 2.2.1. “**I am the Lord your God**”(2) – God’s **character & claim** on us form the foundation of true life.
    - 2.2.1.1. This reminds us we are “under” His authority!
    - 2.2.1.2. **Q:** Are **you** under His authority? If so, does that change when you “**disagree**” w/God?
  - 2.2.2. If you’re going to belong to a **Holy** God then you will be expected to be **holy** yourself! (19:2; 20:7)
- 2.3. **The Principle of Holiness!** (3)
  - 2.3.1. “**you shall not do**” – There needs to be a **separation** form surrounding life!
  - 2.3.2. “**Unlikeness to others based on likeness to God.**”
  - 2.3.3. Don’t do as they do!
    - 2.3.3.1. As, “**but Johnny down the street does it**” doesn’t fly with you, neither does it fly w/God!
    - 2.3.3.2. You are different from your neighbors!
    - 2.3.3.3. It is like when our dad would tell us “remember you’re a Bell!”

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<sup>1</sup> Griffith Thomas

- 2.3.4. **SEPARATION** - The key Hebrew term is *badal*.
  - 2.3.4.1. It means to **remove** from something, and thus to make a distinction between them.
  - 2.3.4.2. In Genesis 1 **God separated light from dark, land from sea.**
  - 2.3.4.3. **Now** God separated **Israel** from **all other nations** of the world to be His own covenant people.
  - 2.3.4.4. A separation to God linked **every thing** in Jewish life to her Lord.
- 2.4. **The Evidence of Holiness!** (4,5)
  - 2.4.1. “**observe My judgements, keep My statutes, live by them**” – Obedience in heart & life, character & conduct.
  - 2.4.2. **Every area of life:** family relationships, worship, sexuality, the treatment of the poor, even personal grooming were to **reflect the purity** of God’s character.
  - 2.4.3. **Q:** How are you different? How have you changed? Are you different by what you don’t do, or, by what you do do?
- 2.5. (5) This verse is an oft quoted verse: (by Neh., Jesus, & twice by Paul)
  - 2.5.1. **See** Lk.10:25-29

### **3. INCESTUOUS RELATIONSHIPS! (6-18)**

- 3.1. Remember that Sex is a **wonderful gift** of God to the human family.
  - 3.1.1. Used **in His will** it is **wonderful** & brings  **blessings**.
  - 3.1.2. Used out **of His will** it is **destructive** & brings **tragic consequences**.
  - 3.1.3. Like fire, **controlled** in a fire place is **good**. Fire **uncontrolled** in a forest is **bad!**
  - 3.1.4. **1 Thes.4:3-5,7** “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;” ...“ For God did not call us to **uncleanness**, but in **holiness**.”
- 3.2. “**Near of Kin**” – is the key-thought or general principle of the whole chapter.
  - 3.2.1. Marriage to the near of kin is forbidden.
  - 3.2.2. A detailed list of these marriage prohibitions follows.
  - 3.2.3. *Interesting, All societies studied by anthropologists have rules against incest.*
- 3.3. “**uncover their nakedness**” - to have sexual relations with.

- 3.4. These breaches of the law were common in both of these other countries(Egypt & Canaan).
- 3.4.1. God didn't want the children of Israel to "**look back**" & imitate the sins of **Egypt**, not "**look around**" & imitate the sins of the **Canaanites**, but to "**look up**" & observe Gods commands.
- 3.4.2. God **could not** except the moral standards of either Egypt or Canaan.
- 3.4.3. **Note:** Tamar's plea to her ½ brother Amnon,when he sought to lie w/her, "**No, my brother, do not force me, for no such thing should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing!**" (2 Sam.13:12)
- 3.4.4. **Q:** What are your "standards" based upon?
- 3.4.5. **Q:** If you could choose your own standards, wouldn't your "standard" be pretty low?
- 3.4.6. Isn't **the world** asking Christians today? To be tolerant to others!
- 3.4.6.1. **Worse yet**, isn't that what **some Christians** are using today for an excuse for these immoral lifestyles?
- 3.5. (8) Paul speaks to the Corinthian church about this in 1 Cor.5.
- 3.6. (9) "**sister**" – **Q:** Ok, where did Cain & Abel get their wife's?
- 3.6.1. Adam lived to be 930 years old. - He had other sons & daughters. - He & Eve were ordered by God to "**fill**(populate) **the earth**". – It is reasonable to assume they had children for a long period of time.
- 3.6.1.1. **W/o question it was necessary for the generation following Adam to pair off brothers & sisters to serve as parents for the ensuing generation.** – It would have been soon where this wasn't necessary any more & soon it was forbidden.
- 3.6.1.2. There is no mention of incestuous relations until the time of **Abraham** when he assures **Abimelech** that **Sarah** was his **sister**, implying to them she couldn't have been his wife.
- 3.6.1.3. Thus as for Cain & Seth & all the other sins of Adam who married, they must have chosen their sisters as wives. (**again this multiply's out very quickly**)
- 3.6.1.3.1. It would only have been necessary during the lifetime of Cain (approx. 800 yrs.).
- 3.6.1.3.2. Henry Morris says, possible 7 billion people by the time of the flood.

- 3.7. (16) The only exception is in the case of levirate (lev-ir-it) obligation (Deut 25:5-10).
- 3.7.1. When a man's brother dies he was required to take his sister-in-law to wife in order to continue his brothers line.
- 3.8. **Q:** Why is God concerned with...sexual hygiene, sexual morality, & marriage?
- 3.8.1. 1] **The Creator Knows Best!** - The Creator **knows what's best** for his creation!
- 3.8.1.1. As any **inventor, designer, architect**, wants you to follow his directions for the optimum results!
- 3.8.2. 2] **A Sanctified Channel!** - God choose Israel to be the **channel** in which His Son would come into the world, & thus it was important for this channel to be sanctified.
- 3.8.3. 3] **Godly marriages!** - When God sought "**godly offspring**" (in Malachi 2:15) that could only come though Godly marriages.
- 3.8.4. 4] **A Witness!** - A Christian Marriage should be a **witness** to the world, of the love that Christ has for His Church.
- 3.8.5. 5] **Terrible consequences!** - He also wants us to avoid **terrible consequences** that come as a violation of His laws. (including: physical, spiritual, emotional, mental consequences)
- 3.8.6. 6] **His Inventions!** - Since God invented sex & ordained marriage, He has every right to establish the regulations that control them.
- 3.8.7. 7] **Science concurs** today that "**there is a tendency for children birthed from an incestuous relationship to inherit the recessive detrimental genes**, & bring out the **worst** in the family tree rather than **the best**."<sup>2</sup>
- 3.9. **Q:** Do we have, & give, answers to why God says no(when we know)?

#### 4. **PROHIBITIONS OF SEXUAL CRIMES! (19-23)**

- 4.1. **Further** prohibitions are placed here because the worship of idols & licentiousness were regularly associated(see vs.21 Molech).
- 4.2. (19) Deals w/a woman on her menstrual cycle(see ch.15)

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<sup>2</sup> Warren Wiersbe

- 4.3. (20) Deals w/Adultery.
- 4.3.1. I think this is included in the list here because their thoughts might have been, “since my neighbors wife isn’t “family” then it must be legal!”
- 4.3.2. But he reminds them of the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment “You shall not commit adultery.”
- 4.3.3. Notice: God has built a strong fortress around **the Love of family**(6-19) & now here, around **the Love of neighbor**(20).
- 4.4. (21) Deals w/Idolatry.
- 4.4.1. Q: Why was this placed within the sexual crime category?
- 4.4.1.1. Because of its association w/Canaanite worship. **Sacred prostitution & infant sacrifice** were the 2 most degrading of Canaanite culture.
- 4.4.1.2. It can be explained as a means of promoting **fertility** (Mic 6:6-7) or as a way of **obtaining a military victory** (Judg 11:30-40; 2 Kings 3:27).
- 4.5. (22) Deals w/Homosexuality.
- 4.5.1. This is in no way an “**alternative lifestyle**” it is a “**lethal lifestyle!**”
- 4.6. (23) Deals w/Bestiality.
- 4.6.1. “**Sexual perversions**” – these were not simply the result of **human depravity**. Sex had been ritually incorporated into **worship**.
- 4.7. The good news all of all of these sins mentioned is that these sins can all be forgiven!
- 4.7.1. Just **repent, forsake** your ways, **abandon** your old lifestyle.
- 4.7.2. **Mt.12:31** “And so I tell you, **every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.**”
- 4.7.3. **See** 1 Cor.6:9-11.

## 5. **SOLEMN WARNINGS! (24-30)**

- 5.1. When Israel would enter the land they’d be faced with immorality to the N<sup>th</sup> degree.
- 5.1.1. **They** would have to maintain position of separation in order to be pleasing to God.
- 5.1.2. **The church** today must maintain that same position!
- 5.1.2.1. **Read** - Col.3:1-7
- 5.2. We see the relation of **national life** to **individual life** is emphasized.
- 5.2.1. (Merick) “**Dissolute morals** are always a symptom which **precedes** the ruin of an empire, or the fall of a nation.”

- 5.3. Remember God was about to give the land of Canaan to Israel as a possession.
- 5.3.1. The sin of the **Canaanites** had reached the point where the land was about to **vomit** them out!(25)
- 5.3.1.1. Sexual perversions are like a **disease**...they can make a society & a nation sick.
- 5.3.1.2. Not only does sexual sin make **God sick**...but even the earth you stand on knows better!
- 5.3.1.3. **Note:** that these were **gentile nations** that God judges even though God had no covenant with them! – But he still held them accountable for their filthy deeds against nature.
- 5.3.1.3.1. **Rom.1:18** “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against **all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**”
- 5.3.2. **Israel** was warned that the same would be done to them if they didn’t heed this same warning.(28)
- 5.3.2.1. Which eventually took place in their captivity to **Assyria & Babylon**.
- 5.3.2.2. How much more accountable are those **who know** His commands, warnings, & consequences?
- 5.3.2.3. *“The judgement is greatest where the light has been the brightest.”<sup>3</sup>*
- 5.3.3. **Q:** What would the land under your feet cry out about you...if it could speak?
- 5.4. “**abominable**” – detestable. *tow-ebah*. - Expresses strong revulsion, and is used of practices that are **morally** rather than **ritually** disgusting to God.
- 5.4.1. **Prov. 6:17-19** lists seven other *tow-ebahs*, including “*A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.*”
- 5.4.1.1. **Vs.16** “These six things the LORD **hates**, Yes, seven are an **abomination** to Him:”
- 5.4.2. **Q:** What *tow-ebah* do you struggle with?

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<sup>3</sup> Warren Wiersbe