



The Quarry Gospel Church

BIBLE STUDY - 28.04.21

BIBLE STUDY - LEVITICUS - 12.THE MANUAL OF HOLINESS - Leviticus 17-26

Part 2 - GOD'S WORD ON FAMILY HEALTH - Ch.18

God focuses on sexuality and sexual relationships. The inevitable question - is Leviticus 18 relevant to today?

1. OPENING STATEMENT (vv1-5) - THIS IS GOD'S WORD TO THE NATION

a) A call to be loyal (vv2,4) - I am the Lord your God

- seems to be just a "relationship" statement.
- BUT - God uses His personal name associated with His promise of deliverance.
- He conveys faithfulness, grace and His love for Israel.

b) A call to be different (v3)

- Different from the lands around them;
- To follow God's pattern not the world's;
- to be holy - in "**practical**" terms as well as "spiritual".

c) A call to "life" (v5)

- A call to abundant and full life brought about by obedience;
- these are not the instructions of a "kill-joy"!
- God wanted to remove hurt and pain and give life in its fullness.

2. REGULATIONS (vv6-23)

a) Sexual relationships within the family (vv6-19)

- the identification and prohibition of incest;
- phrase "uncover his nakedness" (repeated 17 times) refers to sexual activity;
- various relatives mentioned include some by marriage; these are in addition to the obvious relations not mentioned specifically here (e.g.daughter);
- Why forbidden? - it is dishonouring to the sinner, the one who is violated and the one to whom she belonged. (N.B. wives and children were an extension of a man's household)

b) Sexual relationships outside of the family (v20)

- Sexual acts outside of the marriage covenant go against God's design (echoing the 7th commandment).
- If you commit adultery you "defile yourself", showing yourself to be unfaithful and without control.

c) Child Sacrifice (v21)

- Pagan practice to worship Molech by sacrificing a child on the red hot metal statue of Molech until the child burnt to death.
- Molech identified with the demonic - *Psalms 106:37; Leviticus 20:1-5*.
- Even Solomon sanctioned the worship of Molech - *1 Kings 11:7*.
- Other instances among the tribes of Israel and Judah: *2 Kings 17:17; 21:6; 23:10*.

Possible reasons for this being included in this section of sexual regulations:

- sacrificing children to Molech was used as a method of infanticide to destroy the children who had been born outside of a right relationship of marriage. Almost like a method of birth control.
- Adultery was seen as idolatry - worshipping another God and breaking the "marriage relationship" between God and His people.

d) Homosexuality (v22)

- A simple clear command - very clearly a sin.
- God's intention for sexual expression is within a marriage covenant - *Genesis 2:18-25*.
- The word "**abomination**" - one of strongest Hebrew words of condemnation; see also *Leviticus 20:13*.
- Seen as sin/idolatrous perversion: *Genesis 19:5; Judges 19:22-25; 1 Kings 14:24, 15:12 and 22:46*.
- N.B. Lesbianism not mentioned specifically but dealt with elsewhere in Scripture.

e) Bestiality (v23)

- A simple clear command against sexual acts with animals.
- It steps over the boundaries God laid out in *Genesis 1:1-2:3* and improper mixes different species. (The word "perversion" means a "mix")
- This practice was prevalent among the Canaanites.

3. CLOSING STATEMENT (vv24-30)

God explains the reasoning behind these regulations:

a) Why? The unbridled sexual activity of the Canaanites defiled the land as well as the people. The land would respond (even creation has a limit on its tolerance of sin) and vomit the people out.
The sin talked of in *Genesis 15:16* had now been completed and God uses Israel as a cleaning agent.

b) Who? God is speaking to His people..
BUT v24 - "*the nations in the land of Canaan have defiled themselves*"
Even those not in a covenant relationship with God are still accountable to God for their actions. God's laws apply to all men.

c) **What if?** God has no favourites - if God's people obey Him they will have life - if not they will be judged as the Canaanites were judged. vv28-29
When Israel did not obey God, this resulted in being thrown out of their land - the Exile.

DO THESE INSTRUCTIONS STILL APPLY TO US TODAY? - YES!

Opening Statement we are still called:

- **to be loyal** - *Matthew 7:21-23; 5:17-19; 22:37-40*
Obedience to Leviticus 18 is an expression of our love for God and our neighbour.
- **to be different** - *1 Peter 1:16; 2:9-12; Romans 12:2*
In the New Testament the believer is called to be different from the world.
- **to have abundant life** - *John 10:10* - "life in all its fullness"
The Bible is God's instruction as to how to get the most out of life.

Regulations

- As a whole, Christians are not "under the law" - *Romans 6:4; Galatians 5:18*.
- The principles of the law remain in place.
- God's will is re-stated in these matters:
Ephesians 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8;
- New Testament echoes teaching of Leviticus 18:
Prohibits Incest: *Mark 6:17-29; 1Cor.5:1-5.*
Prohibits Adultery: *Romans 13:9; 1Cor.6:9; Hebrews 13:4.*
Prohibits Homosexuality: *Romans 1:27; 1Cor.6:9-11; 1Tim.1:10.*
(Paul also deals with lesbianism in *Romans 1:26-27*)
These commands still declare God's sexual design for man.

Closing Statement - we see that these rules are not just for us but for humanity as a whole.

- The world may feel they don't apply but they do.
- *Rom. 21:18-20* "...so that men are without excuse" God has made it clear who He is.
- Sexual misconduct is wrong!
It damages and destroys God's ordained unit - the family
It causes hurt and pain and separates us from God.
- These regulations are not a list of "Do-nots" - they are a guide that will strengthen family life and bring blessing.

Final point

The world will try to say that Jesus never said homosexuality was wrong.

BUT - JESUS IS GOD! - the same God who wrote the laws in Leviticus and who is the "word made flesh" in the New Testament!