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Leviticus 18

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Leviticus 18.

FOCUS: SEXUAL INCESTUOUS SINS, IDOLATRY AND CHILD SACRIFICE

Topics.

No one is to uncover the nakedness of:

- Their close relative, their mother, their father's wife or their sister
- Their father's sister, their mother's sister, their fathers' brother.
- Their daughter-in-Law, their brother's wife, or a woman and her daughter.
- A Woman in Her Menstrual Cycle.

You shall not:

- Take a woman as a rival wife or lie sexually with your neighbour's wife.
- Give or offer your children to molech or lie with any animal.
- The land became unclean, so the LORD vomited out its Inhabitants.
- Keep my statutes lest the land vomits you out.

INTRODUCTION: the book of Leviticus is about ceremonial rules and civil laws that God gave to Moses after He had given him the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

- These are the statutes and rules and laws that the LORD made between him and the people of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai. (Lev. 26:46).

Either on Mount Sinai or when he met with him in the Tabernacle (also called the tent of meeting) when they were in the wilderness near the Mountain. Moses was to give these ceremonial laws to the Levitical priesthood, they embrace rules concerning sacrifices, offerings and worship; the ordination of Aaron and his sons and their ceremonial cleanness; the Day of Atonement; feasts and holy days and the Year of Jubilee. The civil and social laws and laws of justice he was to give to the government of Israel to implement within their society.

The ceremonial and civil laws were not given to the secular world but are laws God gave to the nation of Israel. The central message is that God is holy and requires His people to be holy. The book also shows that God graciously provides atonement for sin through the shedding of blood. Most Jews and Christians recognise Moses as the author, writing sometime after the giving of the Law (about 1445 B.C.).

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

The previous chapter: speaks about killing animals and bringing them to the entrance of the tabernacle so that the people no longer sacrifice in open fields, but at the tabernacle, and about Israel sacrificing and whoring after goat demons and eating blood and being cut off from the people.

Whoever Follow the LORD'S Rules shall Live by Them.

- **Leviticus 18:1-5:** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. ³You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. ⁴You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the LORD your God. ⁵You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD.

After 430 years in Egypt the Israelites had become familiar with the Egyptians immoral practises and their idolatry, and the land of Canaan was full is similar and even worse practises. Now they are warned against adopting the past practises they have become familiar with and of the future sinful and occultic practises they will be dwelling amongst in the land of Canaan. The nations of Egypt and Canaan are mentioned, because these are the two nations that had and will have the biggest evil influence over them, but under them other nations are included.

LEVITICUS 18:6

NAKEDNESS OF A CLOSE RELATIVE

No One is to Uncover the Nakedness of their Close Relatives.

- **Leviticus 18:6:** "None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives (near of kin to him in KJV), to uncover nakedness (their nakedness in KJV). I am the LORD.

Though the verse only mentions men (i.e., his close relatives and near of kin to him), women are also bound by this and the following laws. Men are most likely mentioned because they had authority over woman and therefore had greater power to influence a woman to submit to their will and were also (as history shows) the ones most likely to transgress these laws. Though these laws and warnings are given to the Israelites they also apply to the Gentile nations, for all who do not heed them will be held guilty. This single verse is a general summary of most of the prohibitions that follow. All that is said (v 9-18) is an amplification and an explanation of this verse. The law of marriage that is implanted in the human heart, is that any mature man may marry any mature woman provided both parties are willing, but due to sin, the following verses lay down certain restrictions for marriage primarily to prevent incest. Early Egyptians openly sanctioned marriages between brothers and sisters and between parents and children. The following laws prohibited such practises and form the basis upon which marriage regulations today are chiefly founded.

Close relatives (near of kin to him in KJV): (v6) embraces those who are descended from the same ancestor bonded together by the same blood and connected and united together by family marriage relationships. When a man and woman are forbidden to approach those of the same flesh and blood, it does not mean that they may not come into each other's company and enjoy each-others friendly conversation, but that modesty should be preserved in all relationships.

To uncover nakedness (their nakedness in KJV): (v6) denotes unseemly exposure, sexual intercourse, extra-conjugal licentiousness, lying with and having unlawful sexual intercourse within and without marriage. It carries the idea of exposing the bodies secret parts, which puts us in mind of the fall of our first parents, whose first sense and shame had its rise from there awareness of their nakedness.

- Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. (Gen. 3:7).

Nature itself teaches that we should always be covered as Adam and Eve covered themselves when they perceived their nakedness and were ashamed. The expression, "to uncover their nakedness," is not limited to having intercourse only, but embraces every form of sexual nakedness, all forms of sexual acts and having carnal (i.e., erotic and sensual) knowledge of them. The primary purpose of these laws was to forbid incest both within marriage and outside of marriage. The following laws in very clear detail strongly forbid incestuous, marriages and every other sexual act between near-relations, because these were common among the nations in the land of Canaan and in Egypt.

YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

LEVITICUS 18:7

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Mother.

- **Leviticus 18:7:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness.

The nakedness of the father and the nakedness of the mother are one and the same thing, because the two are one flesh, and therefore her nakedness is his also. It is one fact expressed in two ways, which means seeing the nakedness of the one is the same as seeing the nakedness of the other. Such an action is doing great dishonour to one's father and mother. The reason one is not to uncover the nakedness of their father, is the same reason one is not to uncover the nakedness of their mother, which is given in the following clause, "because they are their father and mother." It means you shall not be taken into your fathers or mothers' bed for sexual purposes or become their wife or husband. Though such marriages are incestuous and shocking marriages between son and mother was permitted amongst the Persians and other eastern nations,

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YOUR FATHERS WIFE

LEVITICUS 18:8

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Father's Wife.

- **Leviticus 18:8:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness.

The previous law refers to the son's own mother, whereas this law is directed against illicit sex with his stepmother. The phrase, "to uncover the nakedness" in this verse embraces both illicit sex and incestuous marriage for she is his near of kin and another man's wife. Amongst the ancient Arabs, marriages with stepmothers were common, even today among some tribes in Africa, if a father is unable because of advanced age to attend to his young wives, he will voluntarily give them over to his eldest son.

YOUR STEP SISTER

LEVITICUS 18:9

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Sister.

- **Leviticus 18:9:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another home.

This seems to be a repeated in (v11), but here the words, "your father's daughter or your mother's," implies that the daughter in focus is a step daughter either of the father or the mother. This is especially supported

by the fact that (v11) applies to daughters born biologically of both the father and the mother. The statement, "Whether she be born at home, or born abroad," (v9) carries the following ideas:

- Whether the sister was raised in the family home in Israel or in a Gentile country, town or province
- Whether she is a sister by another marriage either by the fathers' side and not the mother's side or from the mother's side and not the father's
- Whether the sister was born under Israel's laws of marriage or born abroad under the marriage laws of the Gentile nations.
- Whether the sister is legitimately born in marriage or illegitimately born out of marriage or in adultery or in whoredom on the father or mother's side.

It matters not which of these scenarios a brother's step sister was born under, he is not to sexually lie with her or uncover her nakedness with sexual intent or have carnal knowledge of her or marry her. Following are three examples of people who did marry their half-sister:

1. Abraham, the father of the faithful, married his half-sister. (Gen. 20:12).
 - Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father though not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife. (Gen. 20:12).

The same practice continued amongst various other ancient nations.

2. The Athenians married their half-sisters by their father's side.
3. The Spartans married half-sisters by the same mother.

YOUR SONS DAUGHTER

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LEVITICUS 18:10

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Sons Daughter.

- **Leviticus 18:10:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness.

A man must not marry his son's daughter or his daughter's daughter for these are his grandchildren from his own flesh and blood, nor is he to sexually look upon their nakedness or commit any form of sexual act against them. This law applies whether his grandchildren are born within marriage or outside of marriage it matters not the father is forbidden to marry his daughters, daughters and his sons' daughters. This law is very clear, so imagine how strongly the law is against a father marrying his own daughter.

YOUR SISTER BY BIRTH AND BLOOD

LEVITICUS 18:11

You shall Not Uncover Nakedness of Your Father Wife's Daughter.

- **Leviticus 18:11:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, brought up in your father's family, since she is your sister.

This seems to be a repetition of (v9), but verse nine says, "the daughter of your father, or daughter of your mother," implying that the sister is a step daughter of either the mother or father, whereas here in (v11) the focus is solely on the father and his wife, which means the focus here is a biological daughter. It refers to the brother's sister born of the same

father and mother and not a step sister. The idea of the previous verse (v9) is that if a man marries a woman, and she has a daughter by a former husband, that daughter may not be given in marriage to his son, whereas this verse solely focuses on the daughter that is born of the father (i.e., a true sister by birth and blood). It is possible that the ancient Hebrews used the fact that Adam married "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh," and his sons married their own sisters as an excuse to marry their sisters. However, during the time of Adam, Eve, Able and Cain people had long lifespans reaching from five hundred to almost a thousand years, and for mankind to fulfil God's command, "go forth and multiply," it was necessary for a man to marry his sister, for who else could Cain and Abel marry? Added to this the seed that brings new life during these early years would have genetically still been relatively pure. Whereas when there was an increase of mankind, and there were multitudes of people dwelling in various places from each other, it became unlawful for men and woman with such near ties of to marry each other. Nothing could be more clearly stated than the law here laid down concerning marrying sisters and the following verses show that the penalty for it was capital punishment: -

- If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness, and he shall bear his iniquity. (Lev. 20:17).
- Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.' (Deut. 27:22).

To be cut off: the expression, "shall be cut off," in Hebrew comes from the word (*karath*) and means cut off, cut down, cast asunder, and by implication to consume and destroy. It carries two ideas, firstly to be cut off from the people and secondly, to be put to death.

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1. **To be cut off:** in some contexts, carries the idea that the offender was to be immediately:

- Excommunicated from the people and treated as an outlaw, not a friend.
- Denied all the privileges of the nation Israel.
- Removed from their land, their home, their business and from their people.
- No longer considered to be a person in a covenant relationship with the LORD.

2. **To be cut off:** the following verses show that in other contexts, the expression, "to be cut off from the people," is a Jewish idiom meaning to be put to death by stoning at the hand of the people or by capital punishment at the hand of a civil magistrate.

- I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood, to destroy the earth. (Genesis 9:11).

Since all mankind was killed by the flood except for Noah and his family the expression, "to be cut off," in this context carries the idea of being killed.

- You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. Everyone who profanes (defiles in KJV) it shall be put to death. Whoever does any work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. (Exod. 31:14).

In this verse the expression, "put to death," refers those who profane the Sabbath day while the statement, "to be cut off," refers to those who work on the Sabbath day, however, (Num. 15:30-36) shows that those who did work on the Sabbath day were to be put to death. In Leviticus chapter eighteen the expression, "shall be cut off," is used as the punishment for various crimes that various laws laid down in Leviticus chapter twenty are to be punished with death. All these facts show that the expression, "to be cut off from the people," is a Jewish idiom meaning, to be put to death.

In summary: depending upon the nature of the offence or crime the expression, "to be cut off," can be taken to mean, to be cut off from the people of Israel and denied all privileges or to be literally put to death.

The following verse shows that incest was widely practised:

- One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter. (Ezek. 22:11).
- The Assyrians and Egyptians also married full sisters.

YOUR FATHERS SISTER

LEVITICUS 18:12

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Father's Sister.

- **Leviticus 18:12:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's relative. (thy father's near kinswoman in KJV).

The focus here is the aunt by the father's side, as the next verse speaks of the aunt by the mother's side. It is forbidden for a son to marry or have any sexual relationship with his father's sister, because she is a member of his father's flesh, meaning both are born of the same bloodline from which their father came. It matters not whether she was a father's sister in lawful marriage or by fornication the fact she came from the same bloodline as the father's son forbids the son from marrying her, because they are too near akin to each other. It is interesting to notice that Moses himself was the offspring of such a relationship, since his father Amram married his own aunt Jochebed, who was the sister of his father.

- Amram took as his wife Jochebed his father's sister, and she bore him Aaron and Moses, the years of the life of Amram being 137 years. (Exod. 6:20).

It appears that marriages with an aunt was not considered wrong by the Israelites when they were in Egypt.

YOUR MOTHERS SISTER

LEVITICUS 18:13

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Mother's Sister.

- **Leviticus 18:13:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's relative.

The focus of the previous verse was upon the aunt by the father's side, whereas the focus of this verse is upon the aunt of the mother's side. It is equally forbidden for a father's son to marry or have any sexual relationship with an aunt by the mother's side as it is an aunt on the fathers' side, because they are too near akin to each other. However, we find that Nahor married Milcah the daughter of his brother Haran.

- Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. (Gen. 11:29).

And Othniel, the son of Kenaz, married his niece Achsah, being the daughter of Caleb, his father's brother.

- Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, captured it, and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife. (Joshua 15:17).
- Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife. (Judges 1:13).

In some country's marriages between an uncle/aunt and a niece/nephew are prohibited by law, while in other countries and societies marriages between biological relatives of this kind are both legal and common.

YOUR FATHERS BROTHER'S WIFE

LEVITICUS 18:14

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Father's Brother.

- **Leviticus 18:14:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt.

A son was not to sexually approach or marry the wife of his fathers' brother, for she is his aunt and they are too near akin to each other. During the time of Adam and Eve when there were no others in the world, there was a time when God allowed Adam's immediate children to marry brothers and sisters. But, from this time forward, those who transgressed this law had to bear their sin and were doomed to die childless.

- 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. (Lev. 20:20).

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YOUR DAUGHTER IN LAW

LEVITICUS 18:15

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Daughter-in-Law.

- **Leviticus 18:15:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness.

Fathers are forbidden to have any form of sexual relationship with their son's wife for the father and the son are of the same blood and she is one flesh with the father's son and therefore the nearness of the relation forbids all forms of incestuous sexual behaviour. For an offence of this kind both parties were punished with death.

- If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death; they have committed perversion; their blood is upon them. (Lev. 20:12).

Though this law here is given to the people of Israel, other Gentile nations regarded the same type of relationship an abhorrence and loathing.

YOUR BROTHERS WIFE

LEVITICUS 18:16

You shall Not Uncover the Nakedness of Your Brother's Wife.

- **Leviticus 18:16:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness.

This law only applies during the lifetime of the brother, for the LORD commanded that if a brother died childless his brother was to marry his brother's widowed wife.

- If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. (Deut. 25:5).

This was so that the inheritance of the land would remain with the brother's tribe and not go to another. If the brother refused to perform the duty of a husband, the widow made him pass through a ceremony in which she heaped upon him the greatest indignity. But if any brother had any form of sexual relationship with their brother's wife while he was alive, they would remain childless themselves.

- If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless. (Leviticus 20:21).

The law laid down in (Deut. 25:5) was a special and unique law to the Jews and an exception from the general rule, for it did not make the law against taking one's brother sexually void in all other respects. In the New Testament we read of John the Baptist boldly rebuking Herod to his face, saying, "it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife."

- For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. (Matthew 14:3).

A WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER

LEVITICUS 18:17

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You shall Not Uncover Nakedness of a Woman and Her Daughter.

- **Leviticus 18:17:** You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and of her daughter, and you shall not take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are relatives; it is depravity.

A man is not to have any type of sexual relationship with:

- A woman and her daughter.
- The daughter of the woman's sons.
- The daughter of the woman's daughter.
- The daughter of the woman's daughter's daughter.

For these are all relatives.

If a man marries a widow: who has a daughter by a former husband, or if he forms a relationship with a woman who has a daughter out of marriage, he is also forbidden to marry the daughter or her daughter. For the woman and the man are made one flesh and if his wife has a daughter, she is the man's daughter-in-law, of the same flesh with her mother, who became one flesh with the man she married, and therefore it is forbidden for him to marry the daughter because they are too near akin to each other. Such a marriage would be a type of polygamy which is forbidden under the law.

- If a man takes a woman and her mother also, it is depravity; he and they shall be burned with fire, that there may be no depravity among you. (Lev. 20:14).

It is wickedness because they are very near to the man's wife for, they are descended from her.

LEVITICUS 18:18

You shall Not take a Woman as a Rival Wife.

- **Leviticus 18:18:** And you shall not take a woman as a rival wife (to vex her in KJV) to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive. (in her life time in KJV).

Even though the following words of Jesus show that under the original institution of marriage a man was to have one wife:

- For God created them from the beginning male and female, ⁵and said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh"? ⁶So they are no longer two but one flesh, therefore God has joined together, no man should separate." (Matthew 19:4-6) (Mark 10:7-8).

The following verses shows that the law of Moses made allowance for a man to have two wives:

- If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him children, and if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, ¹⁶then on the day when he assigns his possessions as an inheritance to his sons, he may not treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn. (Deut. 21:15-16).

It appears that God made provision for a man to have more than one wife prior to the law, as Abraham and Jacob and also after the law as Elkanah and David. It seems that though polygamy was not God's ideal will, it was tolerated in the Old Testament. Here in this verse (Lev. 18:18) it is forbidden for a married man to take his wife's sister as another wife and to have any form of sexual relationship with her.

To vex her: (v18) following are three reasons why a man should not marry the sister of his wife:

1. If he shows more favour or affection to one, especially if it is toward the new wife, or one of the wives thought he was showing more favour and affection to the other it would cause disharmony and strife between the two sisters.
 2. If the sister is younger than his wife (rarely will a man chose an older woman), it would naturally cause jealousy to arise in his first wife and therefore the natural love and goodwill that sisters have toward each other would be converted into ill will and in some cases even hostility.
 3. The husband by marriage becomes one flesh with his wife, and his wife is of the same blood as her sister which means it was against the law for a husband to lie with and uncover the nakedness of one so closely related to his wife.
- None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am the LORD. (Leviticus 18:6).

While her sister is still alive (in her life time in KJV): (v18) as long as the sister who the man first married is still living, he is forbidden to marry one of her sisters, but he may marry her when his wife is dead. This shows that it was permitted for a man to marry one wife after another, after his wife was dead. This why our wedding vows commonly contain the words, "until death do us part."

During the ancient generations of the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and various other nations marriage to wife's sister while she was still living was a common practice.

LEVITICUS 18:19

Not Uncover the Nakedness of a Woman in Her Menstrual Cycle.

- **Leviticus 18:19:** "You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. (as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness in KJV).

The marriage laws are now followed by sexual uncleanness, the words, "as long as she is put apart," refers to the woman being put apart (separated from the camp) for seven days.

- When a woman has a discharge, and the discharge in her body is blood, she shall be in her menstrual impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening. (Lev. 15:19).

If a man unaware of her condition did lie with her he was defiled for seven days.

- If any man lies with her and her menstrual impurity comes upon him, he shall be unclean seven days, and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean. (Lev. 15:24).

But if a man and woman being fully aware of her condition laid together, they were both to be cut off from among the people.

- If a man lies with a woman during her menstrual period and uncovers her nakedness, he has made naked her fountain, and she has uncovered the fountain of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people. (Lev. 20:18).

For further information concerning the expression, cut off, see the title:

- Cut Off, following (v11) (above)

NOTE: the practical reason women, during their menstrual period were set apart for seven days was one of hygiene, for unlike women today, there was no running water, flushing toilets and tampons, etc., so to keep the camp clean and hygienic women during their monthly cycle were to go outside the camp. This is not as bad as it sounds to us today, since it would have been a time of fellowship and bonding for all these women, since they all knew they were there for the same reason and therefore had a common bond.

LYING SEXUALLY WITH A NEIGHBOR'S WIFE

LEVITICUS 18:20

You shall Not Lie Sexually with Your Neighbour's Wife.

- **Leviticus 18:20:** And you shall not lie sexually with your neighbor's wife and so make yourself unclean with her.

Sexually lying with another man's wife is adultery and is here branded as a defilement, both are held guilty and the following verses show that they incurred the penalty of death by stoning.

- If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Lev. 20:10).
- If a man is found lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman, so you shall purge the evil from Israel. (Deuteronomy 22:22).

The scribes and the Pharisees said to Jesus:

- The Law of Moses commanded us to stone such women (caught in adultery), so what do you say? (John 8:3-5).

Jesus said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." When they heard it they went away. (John 8:9).

The seventh commandment says:

- You shall not commit adultery. (Exod. 20:14).

In the book of Proverbs, it is written:

- He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself. (Proverbs 6:32).

Not only does adultery defile a man's wife, but the adulterer also defiles himself for by it he brings a blot and stain upon his character. The reason adultery is so extremely offensive before God is because it not only defiles the man and the woman and destroys their reputation, but also brings massive hurt to the one that has been betrayed and to their children, grandparents and friends.

Today: the Bedouins the adulterous wife is executed by her husband, father, or brother, without any mercy and in various Eastern nations an adulterous man and woman are punished with death.

OFFERING CHILDREN TO MOLECH

LEVITICUS 18:21

You shall Not Give or Offer Your Children to Molech.

- **Leviticus 18:21:** You shall not give any of your children (thy seed in KJV) to offer them to Molech, (pass through the fire to Molech in KJV), and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

Molech (or Moloch) also Milcom: are both of similar signification, one signifies a king, the other a lord, the priests of Molech are called Chemarims. It was the national idol and deity of the Ammonites, the idol itself is describe in Scripture as the abomination of the Ammonites. (1 Kings 11:5). In the later period of Jewish history, the worship of Moloch was moved to the valley of the Son of Hinnom (Jer. 7:31) (2 Kings 23:10) east of Jerusalem. (1 Kings 11:7) (2 Kings 23:13) (Hinnom is the Hebrew word for Gehenna) which was a valley of Jerusalem. The punishment for worshipping Molech was death by stoning. (Lev. 20:2). In the New Testament Gehenna, where the statute of Molech stood became a very appropriate symbol to depict the horror and total-destruction of the human body, soul and spirit.

The statute of Molech: his temple was outside Jerusalem, in a place by itself. The idol was a hollow brass image that was so tall that it appeared as if it was staring down at its devotees. Its head resembled a bull or calf with two large horns. The statue rested on a base of brass, with a fire pit at its feet so that the hollow core of the idol acted as a chimney. When the fire was burning in the pit at it base the flames would reach up through the idols hollow core and lick around the edges of Molech's open mouth, with a column of smoke billowing high into the air that could be seen from some distance. The arms of Molech reached upward and out forming a steep incline that descended into his open mouth giving the appearance that he like a human with their hands stretched out was waiting to receive a gift. It is said that the temple had seven compartments (signifying seven levels of the afterlife), into which the person making the offering went according to the worth of their gifts, if the sacrifice was:

1. A fowl they went into the first compartment.
2. A sheep, into the second.
3. A lamb, into the third.

4. A ram, into the fourth.
5. A bullock, into the fifth.
6. An ox, into the sixth.
7. A son or daughter they were guided into the seventh compartment.

It is said that the devotees dedicating their children to this disgusting idol would firstly kiss the image, as it is written, "let the sacrifices of men kiss the calf" (Hosea 13:2), whereupon a fire was kindled in Molech until its arms became red hot; the child was then placed into its hands, and drums were beaten in unison, partly, to create an atmosphere of frenzied worship and partly to make enough noise to prevent the terrifying screams of the child reaching the parent's ears, lest they should be moved with pity and attempt to rescue their child. Some say the child was firstly laid on an altar and then a priest after reciting some sacred words to the god would raise a knife-like dagger and plunge it down through the child's heart, after which the sacrificed child would be given to the flames of the fire burning in the idol Molech. Each of these descriptions may well have applied at different times depending upon which nation was worshipping the idol and at what period of history.

The frenzied worship of Molech: priests would bring a child to be sacrificed to Molech and chant, Molech, Molech, Molech and the frenzied crowd would also chant Molech, Molech, Molech to the throbbing beat of drums. While the priests and the crowd chanted to the pounding rhythm of drums, the chief priest faced Molech with his arms raised, pleading with the god in a frenzied cry, when he had finished his prayer, he would lower his arms and lift the child sacrifice in the air and toss the child into the monsters waiting arms. The child would roll down the hot and smoothly polished arms and into Molech's open mouth and the roaring fire and flames would devour the sacrificial child.

God's great grief: God's heart must have been torn in grief as He looked down on His people doing such cruel and horrific things to His innocent and helpless children, is it any wonder that He was angry with His people and allowed the Babylonians to invade their land, destroy Jerusalem and take the people of Judah and Israel into captivity for seventy years.

Pass through the fire to Molech: (v21) this expression signifies the victim being purified and consumed by fire. Pagan religions believed their gods had greater power than Israel's God and were of far more value therefore they offered their own sons and daughters, believing their gods deserved sacrifices of much greater value than animals. Israel's God is spoken of in Scripture as supernaturally consuming certain animal sacrifices by fire, and the priests of Israel offered their animal sacrifice to God by burning them on the brazen altar. The pagan nations deceived by Satan offered their child sacrifices to the deity they worshiped by burning them in flames of fire, believing that in this manner their god was mysteriously consuming the sacrifice.

Israel, Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem worshipped Molech: there are many verses that speak of Israel, Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem offering up their sons and daughters by fire, following are just a few:

- Solomon went after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites (1 Kings 11:5) and built a high place for Molech on the mountain east of Jerusalem. (1 Kings 11:7) (2 Kings 23:13).
- Ahaz king of Judah burned his sons in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom. (2 Chron. 28:3).
- The people of Judah built the high places of Topheth, in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire (Jer. 7:31).
- Israel and Judah sacrificed their sons and daughters to Molech. (Jer. 32:35).

- King Josiah of Judah destroyed Topheth, in the Valley of Hinnom, so that no one could sacrifice their son or daughter as a burnt offering to the god Molech. (2 Kings 23:10).

The law of God strongly forbids sacrificing sons and daughters (Deut. 18:10) and the LORD Himself says that it did not even enter His mind that His people would do such a horrific thing. (Jer. 7:31).

Topheth: is a place near Jerusalem, it is from the Hebrew word (taphaph) and carries the idea of smiting, and figuratively contempt. It is derived from toph, which amongst most commentators carries the following two ideas:

- **A drum:** so, called because the cries of the terrified sacrificed children, as they passed through the fire in places of idolatrous horror were drowned out by the sound of many drums beating in unison as the child passed through the fire.
- **To burn:** since it was a place in the valley of Hinnom where children were sacrificed in fire to the idol Molech.

Both, of these interpretations are perfectly fitting for the place called Topheth.

PROFANING THE NAME OF GOD

You shall not profane the name of your God: (v21) by causing other nations to say that, "the Israelites believe that their God is an inferior deity to Moloch, because they offer mere animals to Him, whereas to Molech they sacrifice their own children which clearly shows that they believed Molech to be the more worthy and powerful god." The following verses show that whoever violates Gods commands, or misrepresents Him, or believes other gods are equal to Him, is profaning His name.

13

- You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. (Lev. 19:12).
- I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name. (Lev. 20:3).
- They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God. For they offer the LORD 's food offerings, the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. (Lev. 21:6).
- Speak to Aaron and his sons so that they abstain from the holy things of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they do not profane my holy name: I am the LORD. (Lev. 22:2).
- You shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel. I am the LORD who sanctifies you, (Lev. 22:32).

Israel's worship of the idol Moloch was not only the foulest and most profane renunciation of the true GOD, but also gave occasion to other nations to blaspheme the name of LORD, by saying that He authorized this type of horrific and barbarous worship. By giving themselves over to the worship of Molech and sacrificing their children to him gave foreign nations justifiable reason to blaspheme the name of Israel's God as a cruel and bloodthirsty deity, who demands the sacrifice of human babies and children and who encourages this cruelty in His worshippers.

LYING WITH A MAN AS WITH A WOMAN

LEVITICUS 18:22

You shall Not Lie with a Male as with a Woman.

- **Leviticus 18:22:** You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.

Some years ago, I was with a dear Christian family, the phone rang, the wife answered, and came back crying, we asked what's wrong? She told us that her best friend had told her Christian mother that she was Gay, and her Christian mother told her to get out of the house and that she does not want to see her again unless she changes. Being a Christian myself, I knew that this was not the right response, and went home asking myself, "What would I do if it was one of my children?" This caused me to put aside what I had been taught and search the Scriptures myself concerning same sex relationships. Over the following three months I went through every Scripture (Old and New Testament) concerning this topic and to my surprise I found when these Scriptures are read in the full context they are written in, rather than being pulled out, isolated, and used as bullets to condemn those in such relationships the subject is not as black and white or as harsh as much of traditional Christianity makes it out to be.

Ponder for a moment: if we condemn men and women born Gay, because we believe they are sinning against the word of God, by living in a committed relationship with the partner they love we should also apply this same principal of condemnation to every man and woman who has been divorced and remarried. I suspect some are now saying, "That's utter foolishness?" But consider the following:

- Jesus never spoke against those born Gay living in committed loving relationships, but he did say, "Whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery." Now I am not saying that those who have divorced and remarried are committing adultery. I am simply using Jesus words to show those who do vehemently condemn men and woman who live in same sex relationships that their traditional understanding of the Scriptures concerning such people, is not as clear as they tend to think it is. I suspect there are heterosexual men and women worldwide today who choose to sex around with each other in this way simply for self-centred sexual gratification and lustful pleasure, but to condemn those who are truly born with a natural attraction to the same sex (for whatever reason) because of the wrong behaviour of others (who can easily change their behaviour) is a most cruel infliction upon innocent men and women who cannot change the inward nature that they have inherited at birth. Consider for a moment how difficult it would be to change your own sexual orientation, that's the same amount of difficulty it would take for a person born Gay to change their sexual orientation, clearly an impossibility for those born heterosexual and those born Gay.

An interesting fact: the only time I ever hear religious leaders using the word abomination is when they are talking about people who are in same sex relationships, yet the Bible says, a religious leader with pride or a lying tongue and deceit is an abomination before the LORD, a religious leader who uses his followers for his own gain is an abomination before the LORD and prideful and corrupt religious leaders are an abomination before the LORD, yet I have never heard a sermon that uses abomination in this context or any other context even though there are many other things the Old Testament refers to as abominations. Jesus, the only man who never sinned said, "If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge them; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. (John 12:47) and the apostle John said, "If we say we have not sinned, we make Christ a liar, and his word is not in us." (1 John 1:10). We all sin even as Christians, if Jesus never came to condemn why should we? Especially when Jesus said nothing against same sex couples in a committed loving relationship who are doing no harm or hurt to anyone. For all the reasons mentioned above, this topic is far too big to deal with here, so for those who enjoy going on a spiritual adventure and are mentally open and willing to challenge what they have been taught concerning same sex relationships see the title:

- Same Sex Relationships (ON WEBSITE MENU).

LEVITICUS 18:1-5

You shall not Lie with any Animal.

- **Leviticus 18:23:** And you shall not lie with any animal and so make yourself unclean with it, neither shall any woman give herself to an animal to lie with it: it is perversion.

This is such a shocking, detestable, unnatural act that all that needs to be said is that the penalty for it was death.

- If a man lies with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.
¹⁶If a woman approaches any animal and lies with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them. (Leviticus 20:15-16).

THE LAND OF CANAAN BECAME UNCLEAN

LEVITICUS 18:1-5

The Land became Unclean, the LORD Vomited out its Inhabitants.

- **Leviticus 18:24-25:** "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, ²⁵and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants.

From creation the earth shared in the punishment of man's guilt:

- To Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; (Gen. 3:17).

The land vomited out its inhabitants: (v25) the land of Canaan is likened here to a human stomach that is loaded with such bad food that the body throws it up for it is so repulsed by it that it cannot hold it down. Likewise, the land is represented as having such a loathing against its inhabitants, that its only desire is to rid itself from them as a dog longs to shake fleas off its body. The expression, "vomits out her inhabitants," carries the idea that because of the Canaanites extreme incestuous immoralities and idolatries they outraged the LORD and were therefore to be exterminated from the land. At the revealing of the sons of God, not only will the faithful be eternally blessed, but the earth will also be set free from its decay and enjoy in their glory:

- For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. (Rom. 8:19-22).

NOTE: some feel that it was unjust of God to drive the people of Canaan out of their land to give it to Israel, but consider the following, throughout the land of Canaan the inhabitants were sexually involved with:

- Their own fathers and mothers and their own fathers' wife and mothers' husband.
- Their brothers and sisters and their own sons' daughter and their daughter's daughter.
- Their mother's sister and fathers' brother, their aunts and their own children's spouses.
- Men were sexually involved with both the mother and her daughter and taking their wives younger sister for another wife and men were having sexual affairs with their neighbor's wife.

In summary the land was full of incest, sexual perversion and lustful licentious (i.e., unrestrained sexual behavior), but even worse than these the people were sacrificing their children to Molech and men and women were sexually lying with animals. In the same way that the LORD gave the land of Canaan to His people Israel, a day will come again when He will give the earth to the family of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Behold, the LORD is coming out from his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, and the earth will disclose the blood shed on it, and will no more cover its slain. (Isaiah 26:21).

LEVITICUS 18:26-27

You shall Not do these Abominations, that Made the Land Unclean.

- **Leviticus 18:26-27:** But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you ²⁷(for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean).

This appears to be a repetition of the previous verses, but in different words, this style of writing is designed to emphasize what has been spoken. In the previous verse the Israelites are commanded not to pollute themselves as the nations in the land of Canaan had polluted themselves, whereas here in these verses the inhabitants of Canaan are specifically described as having already practised the abominations that have been mentioned. The people of Israel are forbidden to defile themselves with the pollutions of the pagans, in the same way that Christians are to keep themselves unstained from the sinful things of the world (unspotted from the world in KJV) (James 1:27).

LEVITICUS 18:28-30

Keep My Statutes Lest the Land Vomits You Out.

- **Leviticus 18:28-30:** lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. ²⁹For everyone who does any of these abominations, the persons who do them shall be cut off from among their people. ³⁰So keep my charge never to practice any of these abominable customs that were practiced before you, and never to make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God."

Depending upon the nature of the offence or crime the expression, "to be cut off," can be taken to mean, to be cut off from the people of Israel and denied all privileges or to be put to death. For further information concerning the expression, cut off, see the title:

- Cut Off, following (v11) (above)

Sexual abominable behaviour: prior to Israel crossing the River Jordan and entering the land of Canaan the inhabitants of the land were guilty of indulging themselves in all forms of unlawful sexual behavior, incestuous, marriages, fornication and adultery, bestiality and idolatry and cruel child sacrifice. The LORD commanded the people of Israel to cast the Canaanites out of the land for the following two reasons:

- To clean the land from all uncleanness and abominations.
- To remove from the people of Israel all forms of temptation to enter into the same sins.

The abominations that the ancient Canaanites polluted the land which ultimately bought about their ruin and extermination. Near the end of the Old Testament Israel had embraced all these abominations and therefore God used Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon as His servant (Jer. 25:1-9)

to bring judgment on Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and take the people of Israel into captivity for seventy years (Jeremiah chapter 49, 50, 51, 52). The laws God has laid down here in this chapter are just and reasonable, so much so that many secular nations being far more civil followed the light of nature and condemned those who practised such things in their societies, communities and nations.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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