

Leviticus 18

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 23 August 2020

[0 : 00] And then we'll see Leviticus 18 and we'll come back and we'll see application to it. The Word of God says, Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God.

You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you live, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You are to perform my judgments and keep my statutes, to live according with them or to live in accord with them. I am the Lord your God. So you shall keep my statutes and my judgments by which a man may live if he does them. I am the Lord. None of you shall approach any blood relative of his to uncover nakedness.

I am the Lord. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father. That is the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother. You are not to uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife.

It is your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born outside, 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 their nakedness is yours.

[1 : 07] The nakedness of your father's wife, born to your father, or your father's wife's daughter, born to 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 your father's blood relative. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's blood relative. 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 of her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness. They are blood relatives. It is lewdness.

You shall not marry a woman in addition to her sister as a rival while she is alive to uncover her nakedness. Also, you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during her menstrual impurity. You shall not have intercourse with your neighbor's wife and be defiled with her.

[2 : 05] You shall not give any of your offspring to offer them to Moloch, nor shall you profane the name of your God. I am the Lord. You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female. It is an abomination. Also, you shall not have intercourse with any animal to be defiled with it, nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it.

It is a perversion. Do not defile yourselves by any of these things, for by all these, the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled. For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so that the land has spewed out its inhabitants.

But as for you, you are to keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not do any of these abominations, neither the native nor the alien who sojourns among you. For the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled, so that the land will not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nations which has been before you.

For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do so shall be cut off from among their people. Thus you are to keep my charge, that you do not practice any of the abominable customs, which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them.

I am the Lord, your God. Leviticus 18. Let's open with a word of prayer. Lord, we thank you so much that you've given us this evening.

[3 : 27] Lord, as we have read your word, and Lord, we pray that the truth of it would captivate our hearts and minds. We pray that we would be drawn closer to you, Lord, and that we would shine as lights in this world that you've put us in, and for your glory and honor, we would live out these principles and these truths, and Lord, in all things, that you would be magnified, that it would be a testimony to the world in which you've put us in, for your glory, and we ask it all in Jesus' name.

Amen. In Leviticus 18 tonight, I want you to see a call of separation from immoral practices. A call of separation from immoral practices. Ecclesiastes tells us there is nothing new under the sun.

So for the believer today to say that now is a harder time than any other time in history to live as a follower, a true devout follower of Jesus Christ, is absolutely untrue. Because the things that we are seeing today are things that have already been, and the things that we are seeing being even publicized and even promoted in our culture are things that have been promoted in cultures that have went before us.

We don't have to look very far in history to see some of the number of immoral behaviors that are going on in our land and around the world being practiced in other countries and other nations, and we see the demise which led to that.

Looking back to the Roman Empire would be very easy to do and see how the breakdown of the Roman Empire began with the breakdown of the home. That when the home structure began to fall, the Roman Empire began to fall, and the reason the home structure began to fall is because immorality and promiscuity and all these things began to be rampant in the nation.

[4 : 57] And these are things that the early church were dealing with, and these are things which the church today is dealing with. But these are also the things that God's people, as he had called them out of Egypt and was leading them into Canaan, he was preparing for them to exist in the midst of.

So it has never been God's intention to isolate and completely set his people in this little cloister, if you will, of isolation where they are not living in any kind of influence or around any kind of influence from the world.

By the way, many people, this is going to complete side note. During the time of Christ, when Christ was born, there were about five major religious sects, if you will, in that land of the Jewish people.

We're introduced to three of them in the New Testament. One of them you know very well is the Pharisees. The Pharisees are still in existence today. That is the very legalistic Jewish people. There were the Pharisees, and then there were the Sadducees. They're pretty easy to understand why they died out because they didn't believe in angels, they don't believe in demons, they don't believe in the resurrection, and as Sidney Gibson used to see, since they did not believe in the resurrection, they were Sadducees.

[6 : 05] So they were the Sadducees. They had no hope outside of this world. And then there were a group called the Herodians. The Herodians were people who promoted the reign and the rule of Herod. They were Jewish people who thought the Roman influence was good, so they were trying to get other Jewish people to jump on board with the Roman influence.

It would be like welcoming the world into the church and saying, you know, everything the world does is not bad, so we need to be like the world more than standing apart from the world. There were a couple of other groups, and one of them that is known most in history, and we see a little bit of its influence, were called the Essenes.

The Essenes were desert dwellers who decided that they wanted to be so pleasing to God that they would separate themselves and get away from all worldly influences. So they lived in cloisters out in the desert regions.

And the way I say that you are kind of introduced to it is because John the Baptist lived where? In the wilderness. And many people believe that more than likely when he left home, he was living with a community of Essenes.

We don't have to go very far to figure out why the Essenes died out because they believed in putting away all influences of the world, which means marriage. So you had a group of men living out in a society, growing their own gardens, and none of them were married, so they didn't have any children.

[7 : 17] So when they died, guess what? Their ideology died with them. And while they were attempting to live perfectly, they were not actually living biblically. I say all of this to say, God does

not call his people to isolate themselves and go move out into the desert region and create this utopian environment, this perfect world where we have no outside influence.

God has always had the intention of having his people separated from in the midst of the world. It is like the mixing of water and wine, or not water and wine, but of water and oil, where oil is in water, but it's not of water.

It is in the middle of it, but it is separate from it. It is this idea that we are living in the midst of immorality, and we are living in the midst of these practices which are not right, but God has called us to live there separate from because only by our separation can we be that which influences it. We cannot influence the world by looking like the world, and we cannot influence the world by being isolated from the world, but you do influence the world by living in it, but not like it.

Very, very big difference. So what we see here in Leviticus 18 is God calling for a separation from the immoral practices because they were in the wilderness.

[8 : 40] We called it a place of sanctification, but they were only going to be there for a season, right? God was calling them from wickedness and leading them to a land affected by wickedness, and in this place of preparation, the wilderness, the sanctification process, he was preparing them to live separate from in the midst of.

Now, they failed. Let's just say, we can read the rest of the Old Testament, and we can see that they failed. The northern kingdom of Israel, which would have been the people, well, they referred to themselves as Israel.

The northern kingdom was Israel. The southern kingdom was Judah. The northern kingdom of Israel failed first because they succumbed to the very things that God is telling them not to in Leviticus 18, and 150 years later, the southern kingdom of Judah also failed.

That would be when Nebuchadnezzar came in. The northern kingdom failed to the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrian Empire was taken over by the Babylonian Empire, which was Nebuchadnezzar. 150 years later, Nebuchadnezzar knocks on the door with his captain of guards, Nebuchadnezzar, and knocks on the door of Jerusalem and besieges Jerusalem, and they fall. Why? Because they could not live separate from in the midst of. I want you to see three things from this text that God is calling his people then and calling his people now to live a life of separation from immoral practices.

[10 : 00] Number one, we see the authoritative source from which this command comes. There's this repeated phrase in this chapter that shows us the authoritative source because any command that we are given is only as strong as the source it comes from.

Any command or any order which we are given is only as strong or as powerful or has as much influence over us as the source it comes from. Much like in the workplace, if a co-worker of equal rank tells us to do something, we have the right to say, maybe you do that and not me.

If our supervisor tells us to do something, then it would probably be very becoming of us to do it. If those further up the line tell us to do something, maybe it's the owner of the boss, then we better do it, right?

Because the commands or the orders are only as powerful as the source from which it comes. And God is commanding his people to live totally different. And he is dealing with the immoral behaviors of the people of that world.

And he is dealing with the immoral behaviors of the people that have ran rampant throughout mankind. Man perverting what God has created to be perfect. It's God who is the author of all these things which man has perverted.

[11 : 15] God is the author of marriage. He is the author of the procreation of children. He is the author of all these things. And man perverts it very easily, very quickly. And we see here that God gives this command.

It starts with, then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, immediately we should be caught by the name of God here. The names of God matter, right?

The names of God are important. God reveals himself by name. Had someone ask me this week, I had a meeting with an individual. It's kind of humorous. I had an email sent to me just randomly about a week and a half ago and said, hey, my name is so-and-so.

We've attended church a couple of times but we haven't been there in about five or six months. Not that we're overly scared of any of this COVID stuff. We just haven't been away. I'd like to meet with you sometime. Had no idea who the individual was. I said, sounds great.

Let me know when we'll meet. One thing about War Trace that I've noticed is we get a lot of people that just come through and while they may recognize me, I will never recognize them if I meet them on the street. So I had this email.

[12:15] It's like, okay. And he said, well, let's meet. So it went back and forth. He finally responded and he said, well, hey, Friday sounds good. If you just want to come to the house to have a cup of coffee, hey, that sounds awesome. But then all of a sudden I got to thinking, who is this?

So in order not to be blindsided, I did what any good person would do. I asked my wife, I said, do you know who this is? She said, no. I said, let's look it up and see if we can find them on Facebook. I don't have Facebook. So yeah, I want to know who it is. I want to walk up to the house and know who I'm looking for, right?

I don't want to go, hey, are you such and such? I'm like, no, you got the wrong house. So we looked it up and I had the name, I had the first and last name and the only people that I could find, I said, I don't recognize any of these people. I have no idea who this is.

And ended up finding the right one and I still, I said, have no idea who this is. And she's like, but you're going to their house. I said, yeah, I'm supposed to be at their house having a cup of coffee at 8.30 Friday morning. She said, seriously?

I said, yeah. And she gave me the spiel. She said, do you know how hard it is to be married to you? I said, why? She said, because if you're cutting a tree down, I have to pray, God, keep him safe. Don't let a tree fall on him. If you're out there driving a school bus, I say, God, please don't let any crazy person come up on that school bus and have to, if you're going to meet somebody at their house who you have no idea, I have to say, God, please help him not to be walking into some kind of trap.

[13:24] She said, I'm at the school all day long and here, I don't even know. She said, so if I don't get a message from you by such and such time, I'm calling the cops. I said, okay, that sounds fine. If I'm having a cup of coffee when the police show up, I'll invite them to join with me.

Because she said, you don't know any of these people. I said, that's great. But I went with them, but they knew who I was because they knew my name, right? So they knew how to get in touch with me, Pastor Calvert at Ortrace Baptist Church.

So my name mattered. And I went there, and very nice couple, by the way. It's great. They were here this morning. It was just awesome. Having a great meeting with them. But he said, what do you like to be called? What do you like to be called?

And I said, well, Billy Joe's fine. And he said, well, I know some people that like to be called pastor. I said, well, I love the term pastor. I do. Because it reminds me of my responsibilities. It reminds me of my personal responsibilities.

But anytime somebody asked me, I said, you can just call me Billy Joe. Why? Because that's more of a fellowship term for me. You're calling me by name. Pastor Calvert is some obscure individual, even though I don't mind being called pastor, by the way.

[14:24] Pastor Billy Joe. But when you can call me by name, it's more of a fellowship. We're more family-like, right? I didn't tell him to call me any of the names that some of my dearest friends call me, but I said, just call me Billy Joe.

It's fine. Because names matter. So I said all of that to get to this. Notice who it is that's speaking. And then the Lord, and how is that word Lord? Capital L, capital O, capital R, capital D, Yahweh. That name is important because that is what type of name for God? You need to know this because this is the God who is speaking. He is speaking with this term. When I stand up, I'm speaking as Pastor Calvert.

When you meet me at Walmart, I might just be Billy Joe, but depending on the office and the position that I'm at there, that is the time. When I'm on the school bus, it's bus driver Calvert, right? So, Mr. Billy Joe, usually on the bus.

But here, speak as Pastor. When God is speaking, He is speaking as Yahweh, which is the covenant God. So everything He has said, everything He says from this point forward is because He is the God in covenant with them.

[15:27] That is important because how is He in covenant with them? He rescued them when they were enslaved. He went and delivered them. He parted the Red Sea and led them out.

He brought them to Himself and He Himself initiated the covenant with them. I will be your God and you will be my people. A contract depends upon two parties.

A covenant only depends upon one. Right? In a contract, both parties have a responsibility. In a covenant, one person has that responsibility and that person is God.

So God is speaking as the one who has led them and redeemed them and brought them out of enslavement. He has literally redeemed these people.

We call that salvation, right? We don't properly understand our salvation experience until we really understand Exodus. So He is speaking to them as their Savior, literally. And look at what He says.

[16:24] Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, I am the Lord your God. Do you see that? I am Yahweh, your Elohim. I am the covenant God, Yahweh, your almighty, powerful God.

That word God is Elohim. What is He saying? Here we see the authoritative purpose. This is God saying this, not just some suggestion.

And He has the right to say it because He has redeemed them. He has the right to say it because He's rescued them. He has the right to say it because He's entered into a covenant with them. And the things He's commanding them to do is now setting the authority to dictate their life.

Listen, they can no longer use their bodies what they feel like. They can no longer use their feelings as the authority to determine what they do with their bodies.

Because this is what Leviticus 18 tells us about is the use of our bodies in sexual immorality. They cannot say, well, it feels good to me so I'm going to do it because God says, I'm your God. They can no longer use as the authority of what they do with their bodies by what the world says, those around them.

[17:39] Because He says, I am the Lord your God. This should remind us of 1 Corinthians chapter 6. By the way, in case we think this is an Old Testament principle, there is all these things about a father's wife and not doing all this, uncovering the nakedness of your family members.

Well, that's addressed in the New Testament as well. Remember, that's one of the things that happened in 1 Corinthians. Paul says, you have there among you who have uncovered the nakedness of his father's wife and you accept that. And he began to rebuke them.

They were called saints. That was a church, right? In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul reminds the church that they no longer belong to themselves. Verse 20 in 1 Corinthians 6 says, For you have been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body.

Why? Because He is the Lord your God. He has bought you, redeemed you, and purchased you. Therefore glorify God in your body. There's the authoritative source.

It is the one who has redeemed us. It is the one who has rescued us. It is the one who is leading us. And it is the one that is in covenant with us. And He comes as the source of authority to dictate to them how they will live a life of separation in the midst of immoral practices.

[18:49] Number two, we see the established standard. We see the established standard. It says in verse 3, You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived.

You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived. How long was the nation of Israel in the land of Egypt? 400 years. Thank you. 400 years is the good round number.

If you do the math, literally it's 430 something years, but 400 years because God said 400 years they will sojourn and land is not their own. Now the math you do, you have to figure in all this other time of the judges and things like that, but God speaks in whole numbers, big numbers.

It's 400 years. So what does that tell us? Do you think that anybody walking around right there when God is speaking to them in the wilderness is over 400 years old? No. Everybody that he's speaking to were born in Egypt.

Okay? So what he is saying and everybody he's speaking to whose grandparents were born in Egypt. There have been generations born in Egypt. What he is telling them? Where you were born, the society you grew up in, your environment of your home, where you lived your entire life is not to dictate who you are from this point forward.

[19:56] The things you were introduced to when you were born, Egypt. The place you've lived your entire life, Egypt. That which you have only known, Egypt.

That which you have always seen, Egypt. You're not to do that anymore. You understand that even as believers. We are influenced by that environment in which we grew up in.

We cannot help it. The Latin term is *sitzane in limbium*. It means your situation in life. You have other life situations that influence the way you interpret things.

How you grew up, the things you were introduced to, the things you saw growing up, the things you heard growing up, the affirmation or the lack of affirmation. Those influence how you interpret things that come your way.

The influence of a father, the influence of a mother, those all have an influence upon the life of every individual. And too many times those individuals, Satan uses those influences to dictate or to set the standard for how we live our life.

[21 : 01] They determine how we live our life and the wording is this, it is all I have ever known. And God says, that's not the case any longer.

That which you have always known will no longer dictate or be the standard to how you live. You're not to do what you've seen done in Egypt. I'm introducing you to something completely new. Behold, I make all things new. He says, you shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived. Now look at what he says. He's talking about an established standard. Nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I'm bringing you.

You shall not walk in their statutes. So now he's saying, you can't do what you've always known and you can't do what you're about to see. You can't do the environment you're about to be in. This is why that moment right after we're saved, those precious few years when someone accepts Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and they're really, you know, you have that newborn baby excitement feel, right?

You have that, and I'm not talking about we people watching, I'm talking about that individual who's fresh on life and they're in that wilderness period and they've left what they've always known and they're about to be led to where God is leading them.

[22 : 12] There's a few precious years there where God is really dealing with them and this is why we need to fan those flames. And let God continue to speak to them because he says you're not going to do what you've always done and you can't do what you're about to see because in this sanctification period I'm preparing you to live different than anybody else around you.

And unless we catch that fire then we won't take that command. We'll let the world set the standard for us. So Egypt can't be the standard. Canaan can't be the standard. What is the standard? You are to perform my judgments and keep my statutes to live in accord with them.

I am the Lord your God. You shall keep my statutes and my judgments by which a man may live if he does them. I am the Lord. What does he say? The standard which dictates how we live in the world he's placed us in is him and him alone.

It is his standard. It doesn't really matter how we grew up what everybody told us was acceptable or what was right or what was wrong and it doesn't matter where we live currently that tells us what is right and what is wrong.

All that matters is what God says about it. That's the reality. The world doesn't set the standard. The environment doesn't set the standard. The people around us doesn't set the standard.

[23 : 25] Friend, listen, this is not just about immoral sin. This is about all sin. The world does not have the right to dictate to us what is acceptable and unacceptable. Only God has the right to dictate to us what is acceptable and unacceptable because I can promise you if there is a sin in which we love, if there is a sin which appeals to us, we will find some standard in the world that accepts that sin and we will do what we call justifying that behavior because we say, well, over here and you don't have to go even outside of Christian circles because you can go into a Christian bookstore or you can go onto online and look up Christian books and you will find a Christian quote unquote book which justifies any sin you want to have justified.

The only book that we need to know whether or not it justifies or condemns it is this book because the standard is not set by those around us it is not Egypt and it is not Canaan the standard is God's judgments and his statutes and this standard by the way these laws which he gives in Leviticus 18 are not the Levitical law which is for a nation of Israel it is a law which transcends time it transcends history and it is shown to us again in the New Testament many of the laws which we read in Leviticus many of the sun dry laws and the food laws we don't see those repeated again in the New Testament right?

There's a law some of the Ten Commandments we don't see the law of the Sabbath repeated again in the New Testament and there's no repetition of that but we do see this law of moral purity being repeated over and over and over again the book of Romans the book of 1 Corinthians the book of Ephesians these repeat these same standards which God gives here and in other places by the way we see the immorality spoken of that is rampant in the world in the book of Revelation so we

see here the established standard is God's judgments and God's statutes and if we live by them then we live and now we come to the third thing the consequences of sin the consequences of sin verse 24 picks this up because verse 6 through 23 he lists the sin some of these will be magnified later on like in verse 21 where it says you shall not give your offspring to offer them to Molech that will be picked up in Leviticus 20 Molech was a god of that time of Canaan in which they would have children and they would offer living sacrifices of their children to Molech and that will come about a little bit later we see all these things which will be magnified later so he's speaking them in part here but verses 6 through 23 speak of the sins that he is referencing and then verse 24 he begins to pick it up he says do not defile yourself by any of these things for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled so here we see when God lists these things starting in verse 6 and going down to verse 23 he wasn't just speaking random things right

God wasn't just calling out random acts and picking and choosing which ones he dictated to be immoral rather he was talking about things that the people in Canaan were doing he said by all of these things the people I am driving out before you have been defiled I believe come on Billy Joe call the name I know him with all my heart preaching and preachers he has a great book on sermon on the mount ah Billy Joe I can't believe you went blank on this but it's okay he'll come to me just a little bit and you won't care and you won't be here to hear it so oh man he says when I asked the question of do I believe a loving God would judge the people of Canaan his answer was I could not have a God who would not judge the people of Canaan I could not love a God who would not judge the people of Canaan because these are the things they were doing these are the things that were rampant look at what he says do not defile yourself by any of these things for by all of these all of these immorality homosexuality child sacrifices bestiality all of these things the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled they've done them all for the land has become defiled therefore I have brought its punishment upon it so that the land has spewed out its inhabitants here we see some of the consequences of sin this immoral sin affects the land you know the Bible speaks over and over again of the sins of the people affecting the land in which they live in sins of this nature affect the land that is the very nations in which they live in

Romans tells us that all of creation groans and cries out until the day of redemption because our sins literally affect the land in which we live I told you that the beginning of the demise of the Roman empire was the breakdown of the family and that began with the immoral practices going on by its leaders and therefore it went down to its political leaders and then it went down to the military leaders and it began to be an acceptable thing among people and they had all these practices that were going on and it affected the land to the point that it broke apart and died and we see this going on over and over and over and over again these sins are affecting the land and therefore God says I will drive them out and the land is going to spew them out one of the things that we find historically I remember I was watching a show not too long ago and it's one of those history shows you know that tend to put most people to sleep I like watching those I don't know why and it was this guy who was doing this investigation to try to figure out if the Bible was really true and what he wanted to know was the exodus event true historically could he prove it historically and could the capturing of the land of Canaan the people coming into the promised land true and he wanted to see if he could see it historically and he made this great point now this guy's not a believer he didn't deny the existence of it he was just using the Bible as his platform to see if he could prove it and he said this thing it really struck to me he said you know you cannot find any evidence in the land of Canaan where there was this great warfare typically when one nation comes in and takes over another nation you find all this hazing and raising of warfare you find where their artifacts have been destroyed you find mass graves you find where buildings were charred and new buildings were rebuilt you have all he said you can't find that in the land of Canaan he said what seems to happen in the land of Canaan he said there seems to be some point in history that over a number of years it seems as if the original inhabitants moved out and some new inhabitants with new cultures and new thoughts moved in but they used their same buildings they used their same pottery they used their same wells and they used their same gardens but their writings changed and all of a sudden you should say well that sounds a whole lot like the book of

[30 : 08] Joshua because God drove them out bit by bit not one big cataclysmic battle and God said I'm going to give you houses you did not build and cisterns you did not dig and gardens you did not plant and you're going to live in them right so what happened did the people of Canaan just all of a sudden get wiped off the face of the earth by some great battle scene and then all of a sudden the people of God rebuilt it no God drove them out little bit by little bit he said unless I drive them out

