

God's order

Leviticus 20

This chapter continues on with the laws of holiness, v. 7, *and be ye holy*. This phrase is only used two more times in Scripture: 1 Pet 1:15 & 16. Therefore, the Lord through Peter had to be referring to this verse; referring to this verse, the Lord also had to be referring to its context.

This chapter also deals with the God ordained order of all creation. Everything is made by Him and has its divine order. Man is to respect this order.

Vv. 1-9

This first section deals with idol worship, demonism and rebellion: it contains some very interesting points, particularly when we notice the order the verses are in:

1) V. 2, ***Again... Molech...*** The Lord is very serious about this; it is not many times He says, ***again***. The Lord repeats Himself on many other things, but here He says, ***Again***. See RJR for comments on Molech worship: he identifies it as statism.

2) Notice vv. 2, 3-v. 2, calls for the offender's death, but v. 3 calls for him to be removed from the people of God.

Gill points out here that if civil government, man, will not take steps against the man of v. 2, the Lord Himself will.

Bonar notes the tremendous contrast between the worship of Molech and the worship of Jehovah God: Molech required the lives of his people--their children--to be sacrificed to himself; Jehovah God gave His life for His people. There is no way to describe what is deserved in punishment by those who chose Molech over Jehovah God. There are many great contrasts between Jehovah God and Molech: love vs hate, live vs death, &c.

3) Vv. 4, 5 confirm Gill's understanding. In fact, the Lord promises to judge both the idolater and those he influences to follow himself is society will not.

We should note v. 5, *to commit whoredoms with Molech...* Unfaithfulness to the Law of the Lord is unfaithfulness to the Lord. Thus one could be morally pure, but still be a *whoremonger* according to the law. This definition must also be carried over into the New Testament: Whoredoms, fornications must also include unfaithfulness to the Law of the Lord. In other words, one could be morally pure, yet commit fornication. V. 6 confirms this:

4) V. 6, is His command against familiar spirits, and those who use them. This verse, hence, deals with witchcraft.

Exo 22:18 demands witches be killed. See also Deut 13.

V. 6 evidently refers to, among other things, the situation of society not condemning witchcraft and ignoring it in the midst. It also speaks against non-Christian or non-theological counseling:

Though the people of the land entice you, and though you be in perplexity and laden with care, yet never must you go to other counselors than *the Lord*. [Bonar]

God does not ignore what is going on, and He judges it accordingly. The Lord will cut the persons off from His people....

It should be noted here that it is the Lord seeking to cut off those who have turned from Him; therefore, all the "secular" counseling in the world will not change the situation the person seeking "counsel" finds himself in. Only pastoral counseling from God's word will solve the problem.

5) V. 7, calls for holiness, and gives the reason for the Lord's requirement for holiness, *for I am holy*.

6) next we are told how to be *holy*. V. 8 continues the thought with the word, **And**. In other words, holiness is identified with *keeping* and *doing* the Lord's statutes.

The stage is set, vv. 7, 8, and now the Lord moves on to a most important area that needs to be brought under control, the home and family.

7) V. 9, NOTICE that the Lord restates 19:3, honour father and mother. **Follow the order given here:** V. 7, *be ye holy...*, v. 8, *keep my statutes, and do them...*, v. 9, *for every one that curseth his father or his mother...* Again, we see God's major emphasis upon the family. Proper respect for God the Father is formed in the home. And the Lord considers this respect so important that he places the death penalty upon it.

8) another point of interest here: V. 9 follows v. 6, and is, therefore, connected with it in context. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and death is the penalty for each and both. In fact, compare v. 6 with v. 9: the witch was only to be removed from the land in v. 6, but the rebellious child was to be killed.

See Deut 21:18-21. Note that the parents did not have to take part in the death of their son. It was enough that they had the godliness to bring him to the elders. I wonder how many sons were stoned in Israel?

We can refer back to v. 5: if society will not deal with the evil children, the Lord will. We are obviously facing the death of a social order because neither the family nor society will deal with the problem of incorrigible children. **Ungodly pity** is destroying Western civilization.

I think there may be a point we overlook in this law, vv. 6, 9. The witch is cut off -- the rebellious child is killed.

Obviously, rebellion starts in the home, and the home is where it must be conquered. But this home, Deut 21:18ff., is a godly home, or the parents would not be willing to obey the Lord's command to bring the child to the elders for judgment.

In other words, all the Godly actions possible some times do not result in godly children.

OBVIOUSLY, OUR PRAYER MUST BE THAT THE SPIRIT WILL WORK IN THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN. Equally obvious is that it is presumption to pray and depend upon the Lord if godly action is not being practiced by the parents-consistently-to the best of their abilities.

Vv. 9, 11, 12, &c., *blood shall be upon them*. The sinner is responsible for his own death. See 1 Sam 1:15, 16. In other words, no matter what evil befalls the sinner, especially the rebellious against his parents or the adulterer, they brought it upon themselves. They can, therefore, blame no one but themselves.

Example: the sodomite who gets AIDS brought it upon himself. David, in 1 Sam 1:15, 16, seems to be hard hearted, but note that there are two people we are **not to pity**: Deu 19:13, 21; 25:12. The Lord did not pity His people in Jer 13:14.

Vv. 10-21

The Lord sees what evil lurks in the hearts of men, even in His people, so He builds a very strong fence to protect His order in the home. This section further protects the family. The deeds done in the dark are clearly seen, open, to Him with Whom we have to do, the Lord Jesus Christ. There are some interesting points herein:

1) Vv. 10, 11, 12 & 13, call for the guilty to be put to death. The normal means of carrying this out was by stoning. But v. 14, calls for the guilty parties to be burned with fire: **they**. Evidently, the women consented to the situation.

From the unique penalty, it is evident that the Lord considers this an extreme evil.

[Jewish writings say that faggots were burned by forcing the mouth open and pouring hot lead into their mouths.]

Burnt with fire:

Lev 21:9, **any daughter** of a priest who was immoral was to be burnt with fire.

Josh 7:15, the Lord commanded the **thief** to be burned with fire. He was not an ordinary thief, but one who clearly, willfully and presumptuously disobeyed a direct command from the Lord.

Only two sins merited burning with fire, Lev 20:14, and Lev 21:9. The situation in Josh 7:15 was unique, for the Lord desired to get the folk's attention.

2) vv. 13, 15, 16, protects the order between a man and a woman.

3) vv. 17-21, continues to protect the imitate family, but the penalty against this evil as not as strict.

4) V. 18, we mentioned this previously, but here the marriage relationship is also to be kept within the bounds of God's Law.

This shows us that all things, no matter how good, must be kept within the bounds of God's law-word.

5) v. 21, *childless...* This means they have no legal heirs. Children may be born to unlawful unions, but the children have no legal rights.

In today's words, children born outside of legal and godly wedlock have no legal rights of inheritance.

Vv. 22-25

This section gives the reason for God's people protecting the order ordained by God. This section, along with the previous, gives several things that are to separate God's people from the pagans:

A) *keep all my statutes, judgments, and do them.*

B) avoid *the manners of the pagan nations* who the Lord removed from the land. **MANNERS**- Statute, ordinance, limit, enactment, something prescribed. Overwhelmingly, *manners* refer to the things required by Israel's God. But in v. 23, it refers to the requirements upon the pagans by the gods they serve.

As a sub note here: vv. 22, 23, it is a shame that God's people are apparently unable to have the same dedication to **God's manners** as the pagans do to pagan manners; the Lord seems to recognize this problem.

To complicate matters, though, the Lord promises to move against those of His people who follow after pagan practices, and who seek to learn them.

C) part of the pagan's *manners* to be avoided by the child of God is the diet of the pagans: diet, thus, separates God's people from the pagans, v. 25.

V. 25, is placed in this strong passage against mixing kinfolks, sexes (sodomy), man and beast, and God and the devil. This has to do with diet. By its location in this chapter, the principle of clean and unclean meat cannot be dismissed as unimportant for us today.

Of equal importance is the verse which follows it, v. 26. This required holiness is a result of honoring God's

order, including His order in clean and unclean meat. Notice here in this verse is the same instruction as at the beginning, v. 24. The Lord here clearly tells His people that their diets reveal their separations from the surrounding paganism to the Lord.

Then the Lord again says that those who use the familiar spirit are to be put to death. Comp. v. 6 with v. 27, and vs. 22-26 are between them.

BE YE HOLY...

The command in v. 26, is *And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy...*, and it is clearly referred to in the NT many times in places such as 1 Pet. 1:16.

In other words, **the diet of the believer** is not something to be taken lightly. This is seen by the location of this verse. In addition, look at v. 25, *and ye shall not make your souls abominable...* your diet. Note Lev 11:42, where, again, diet is equated with holiness, v. 44.

I find it strange that the same Christians who park on Deut. 22:5, pointing out that it is an abomination for women and men to ware each other's garments (it is referring to a sodomite rite), are, many times, the same ones who deny any validity for the OT dietary laws, Lev. 20:25.

What is an abomination to the Lord when it comes to Christian appearance is immodest apparel, *i.e.* tight fitting and/or revealing clothing.

Leviticus 20:6, tells us that if society will not deal with this evil in the manner prescribed in v. 27, the Lord will. The problem is though, that when it is left up to the Lord to deal with, He also destroys the society which tolerated the evil.

Lev. 20, contains several similar points, such as v. 3. If the people will not deal with the idolater, the Lord will.

God has separated His people from all other people and their pagan practices, unto Himself, v. 24, 26. Either they voluntarily separate themselves from sin and to Him, or He will separate them from that evil unto Himself. Either way, they will be separate unto the Lord. The way He does it is not usually very pleasant for the people.

Lev. 11:44 is interesting: Holiness there is identified with refusing to *defile* self with unclean animals. Follow the command to be holy into the NT! Paul does tell us that we can eat whatever is set before us. He did not enforce the dietary laws as such, upon the new Church. In fact, he rebuked Peter for eating with the Gentiles, then eating with the Jews. But, the dietary laws are laws of good health and long life: They will separate God's people from the pagans in their health.

Lev 19:3 is interesting as it is listed first after *Ye shall be holy...* This command, ***Ye shall be holy***, is given four times in the OT:

- 1) Ex 22:31, concerning diet.
- 2) Lev 11:44, again dealing with the diet.
- 3) Lev 20:26, again concerning diet; in fact, notice the context of v. 26, which pretty well sums up the total, ***Ye shall be holy***:

*22 Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out. 23 And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. 24 But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I [am] the LORD your God, which have separated you from [other] people. 25 Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. 26 And **ye shall be holy** unto me: for I the LORD [am] holy, and have severed you from [other] people, that ye should be mine. 27 A man also or woman that*

hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood [shall be] upon them.

Holiness includes **not walking** in the manners of the surrounding pagans, and it includes avoiding **witchcraft**-seeking other means of prosperity than is given by the Word of God. Moreover, **be ye holy** is found in Lev 20:7, and is quoted in 1 Pet 1:15, 16. Lev 20 deals with FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS also, as does this verse in Lev 19:3.

4) I skipped the third reference to **Ye shall be holy**, which is Lev 19:3. Thus, apparently the first law of holiness is, **Ye shall fear [3372] every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I [am] the LORD your God.** Holiness starts in the home where one learns proper respect for authority.

But notice that three of the four commands for holiness are given in the context of diet--in fact, I would say that every time diet is given in the OT, it has *holiness* attached to it. **We thus underestimate the importance of diet.**

Before we dismiss the dietary laws as no applicable for today, America was founded on these laws. The Biblical dietary laws required proper bleeding, as is done today. In fact, really the only Dietary laws violated in America are the shell fish and swine laws. The reason we do not eat dogs, monkeys, &c., is because of the Christian foundation of this nation.

But lest we place too much emphasis upon diet for holiness, notice Lev 20:22, **Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them...** Though **ye shall be holy** is given in the imitate context of diet, it is clearly given in the overall context of keep all God's statutes, and judgments.

A concluding thought to this chapter, vv. 3-6 & v. 22. Clearly, it is man's responsibility to enforce the laws, judgments and statutes of God, but if man refuses, God's laws are still in effect. If man will not enforce them, God will.