

LEVITICUS 20:1-27 (IN THESE, ISRAEL WILL BE JUDGED)

When we get down to verse 22, we will once again read of the promise to Israel that they would enter and possess the land of Canaan. It would be theirs as an inheritance. It is a great promise, but it is one which is both conditional and unconditional, depending on certain things. That will be seen when we get to those verses. The nature of the promise is based on the law. That has been seen, it will be seen today, and it will continue to be seen.

But, there is a greater inheritance for us which is not based on the law. And it is a promise which actually predates the law itself. Paul speaks of it several times in his writings. In the book of Romans, he speaks of it quite a bit. If it is not based on the law though, then what is it based on? He tells us in our text verse of the day...

Text Verse: “For the promise that he would be the heir of the world *was* not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if those who are of the law *are* heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, ¹⁵ because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law *there is* no transgression.” Romans 4:13-15

Paul, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, clearly tells us that the law brings about wrath. Who wants that? What kind of perverse individual would set aside faith in Christ’s fulfillment of the law in order to face God’s wrath? Well, there are lots of them out there.

And I’m not talking about Jews who have simply rejected Christ outright. I’m referring to supposed Christians who have accepted Him in His Person, but rejected Him in His action. Unfortunately, one cannot separate a person from his actions. Just as David said to Saul, “Wickedness proceeds from the wicked,” so righteousness proceeds from the Righteous. What Christ did was righteous. And from Him proceeds righteousness.

When one receives Christ and what He did, they receive His righteousness. To reject what He did is to reject what He is. Paul says that if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect. We can either live by faith in Christ – all of Christ, meaning all of what He

has done for us, or we can attempt to earn God's favor and obtain the inheritance apart from Him. There are no other options. Israel found out that obtaining the inheritance was not so easy. In fact, they still don't have it. It is the constant and firm message of the Bible.

We can honor the Lord as He determines, and thus be pleasing to God, or we can set about to obtain righteousness on our own. But the Lord has determined – it is by faith in Christ Jesus and His work that we stand justified. It is by deeds of the law that we stand condemned. Do you want the promised inheritance? Then trust in Jesus. This is the message which is found once again in today's passage. It is the lesson of His superior word. And so let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Dishonoring the Lord as Father (verses 1-9)

¹Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Like the words of Chapters 18 & 19, words of law lie ahead, and so the Lord speaks directly and only to Moses. Whereas the previous chapters gave moral and ceremonial laws for holy conduct towards God and fellow man, these verses will explain the penalties for violating such laws. The Lord is slowly and methodically revealing to Israel His will, and consequences for disobedience to that will.

Chapter 18, after listing many of the perversions which were to be abstained from, said that it was for these things that the occupants of the land would be vomited out. He then said that any of Israel who committed these things would be cut off from among their people. Chapter 19 continued with prescribing laws for the people. Now, the specific punishments for violations will be given. This is to keep the land undefiled. If these judgments are not followed, the implication is that land would likewise vomit Israel out.

²“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:

The words given are for the whole congregation. They are to be commonly known and adhered to by all. The only way such laws could be expected to be obeyed is if all of the people heard them. The precepts laid down were to be commonly held knowledge, and the penalties for violating them were to be made known. In this, there was to be instilled in the people the fear of consequence for failing to be obedient to the precepts.

² (con't) **Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death.**

In Chapter 18, the laws of incest were mentioned first, and in detail. Only then was the prohibition against giving one's descendants to Molech addressed. Now that is reversed, and the prohibition concerning Molech is stated first.

As was the case in Chapter 18, the Hebrew word for "descendant" here is *zara*, it simply means "seed." This may actually be referring to child sacrifice as will be seen later in the Bible, but it very well may be speaking only of a perverse offering of intimacy to the idol Molech where the man's semen is made an offering, either to a prostitute of Molech, or to the idol itself. As most of the chapter deals with sexual misconduct, this is not at all unlikely.

The seed of Israel was to be kept pure and holy. It was not to be used for defiled purposes, and the intent of the people was to lead to Messiah, if the people offered their seed – literal, or in the form of children – it was a direct challenge to the redemptive purposes of the Lord for bringing Messiah into the world. And so, regardless as to what the offering is, the person was to be put to death.

² (con't) **The people of the land shall stone him with stones.**

Not only was the person to be put to death, but the Lord determines the exact type of death he was to suffer, that of stoning. In this verse is the first use of the verb *ragam*, or stoning, in the Bible. The act of stoning has already been mentioned eight times in Exodus, but using a different word,

saqal. The two are actually synonyms, and both are used in one verse in Joshua, for example, to convey the same meaning -

And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day.” So all Israel **stoned** (ragam) him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had **stoned** (saqal) them with stones. Joshua 7:25

Stoning, or lapidation as it is known, was the most severe means of capital punishment among the people of Israel. It was something which carried on, even into New Testament times. It continues to be practiced by followers of Islam today. The idea of this type of punishment is that the person was no longer fit to touch. Instead, the people were to stand at a distance and destroy him *ba’eben*, or “by (a) stone,” The word is singular. Stone is created by God, thus this indicates that they were the instruments of God’s righteous judgment upon the offender.

³ I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people,

The verse in the Hebrew begins with “And.” “And I will set my face...” It has already been said that he was to be put to death by stoning, and so this, at first, seems curious. But the next verses explain the matter. If the people refuse to stone him, or if there is not sufficient evidence in order to convict him, it will not in any way negate what is coming to him. The Lord promises that no matter what, 1) He will set His face against him, and 2) He will cut him off from his people.

For the Lord to set His face against someone is an indication of wrath and indignation. He will be the object of the Lord’s fury. This then will result in the person being cut off from his people.

^{3 (con’t)} because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name.

There are three main reasons for cutting him off. The first is that he has cut himself off through his act. He has taken his seed and offered it to a false god. This has essentially been a willful cutting off of himself from both the Lord, and from posterity within the Lord’s covenant people.

Secondly, he has defiled the Lord's sanctuary. Through sin, the people contracted defilement. In turn, they defiled the sanctuary of the Lord which remained in the midst of them. This was seen, for example, in Leviticus 15:31 concerning uncleanness from discharges. There the Lord said, "Thus you shall separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, lest they die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is among them." He repeats this same sentiment in Leviticus 16 as well.

Thirdly, the offender would profane the Lord's holy name. This would occur in several ways, first, by acknowledging a lesser god, it would diminish the name of the Lord in the eyes of other nations, having reduced Him to the level of any false god. It would also diminish His name because the man offered his own seed to a false god, but only animal sacrifices to the Lord. Thus in other's eyes, the greater offering was made to the false god. In this, the name of the Lord would be despised by the man, and disgraced in the eyes of others.

⁴ And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him,

There is a stress in the Hebrew here where the word "hide" is repeated. In essence, it says, "And if in hiding, the people hide their eyes." It is a way of saying that the people have willingly shut their eyes to what this man has done.

In this, they may know what he did and refuse to acknowledge it, or if they simply look away from it as if it was his own business, or if they will not bear witness against him, or if the court will not find guilt in him for his action, or for any other such reason, they will have failed to act. Instead of executing him, they allow him to live. If such be the case...

⁵ then I will set My face against that man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech.

When the people hide their eyes from the thing that has been done by such a man, all involved will suffer the wrath of the Lord. He will set His face against him as the offender, against his family who was aware of his actions, and he will cut off every person who was aware of, but unwilling to respond against, his actions. In this, the Lord says they have prostituted themselves and committed harlotry. This is to be taken in the general, biblical sense of idolatry with false gods being considered harlotry. In this case, it is with *ha'molekh*, or "the Molech," that they have so acted.

The name Molech means "king." By placing an article in front of it here, the Lord is essentially saying they are commuting harlotry with "the king." They have willfully chosen another sovereign over themselves in place of the Lord. It is the greatest of offense.

In this harlotry to Molech, Israel failed. Several times. Solomon built a high place for Molech, and both 2 Kings 23 and Jeremiah 32 explicitly state that the people offered to Molech. It is also implicitly referred to in Ezekiel 23.

⁶'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.

This was first forbidden in 19:31. There the Lord said to give them no regard nor seek after them. By doing so, they would become defiled. Here, the punishment is stated as coming from the Lord. He would personally act against anyone who failed to obey this precept. A record of Him doing just this is found in 1 Chronicles 10. King Saul had sought out a medium, and the Lord acted –

"So Saul died for his unfaithfulness which he had committed against the Lord, because he did not keep the word of the Lord, and also because he consulted a medium for guidance. ¹⁴ But *he* did not inquire of the Lord; therefore He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse." 1 Chronicles 10:13, 14

⁷ Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the Lord your God.

This is a positive command in order to battle against the need for negative ones. This is the purpose of the entire passage. The people were to stay clear of that which was unclean, morally offensive, and which would profane the name of the Lord as well as defile His sanctuary. This could only come about by refraining from such sin, punishing such sin in those who did not comply, or by purification through the sacrificial system when allowed.

⁸ And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them:

The words here point not just to the statutes so far mentioned, but to all of those which had and would issue from Him. They were to both keep and perform. One can keep without performing, such as in the person who knows to do right, but doesn't do it. One can also perform without keeping. Such would be the person who does what is right without having considered it as right or not. He simply acted, and his actions were proper. The Lord wanted a wholeness in the people where they would mentally carry His statutes with them, and also perform what they carried in their minds.

⁸ (con't) I *am* the Lord who sanctifies you.

This is one of three times that the Lord states this in the Pentateuch. He also repeats it in Ezekiel 20. The Lord told the people to sanctify themselves because He had, in fact sanctified them. There is a mutual outworking of the sanctification which needed to occur. If they failed to do this, the Lord's sanctification of them was nullified in them.

⁹ 'For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

The verse begins with the word *ki*, or "for." Therefore, it is being uniquely tied in with what was just said. To curse father or mother is to bring discredit upon the name of the Lord who ordained the genealogy of the child.

In the previous chapter, the opposite of what we see here was stated. There it said, “Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father.” Now it uses the word *qalal*. It means “curse,” but it also carries the sense of making light of something. Thus it includes speaking disrespectfully, or diminishingly of one’s parents. It is the polar opposite of revering them.

Further, unlike verse 19:3, where the mother was placed first, here the father is. It is a clear indication that the Lord expects equal reverence for both parents, and to do verbal harm to them is a punishable offense. In this, it says that, “His blood shall be upon him.” In Exodus 21:17, it explicitly says that he who cursed his father or his mother was to be put to death. The words here, “his blood shall be upon him,” signify that. He is guilty of death, and that is what he is to receive.

*Lord, You are as a Father to us, it is true
But we often dishonor You in thought and act
In the things we think, and say, and do
We diminish Your glory, by showing no tact*

*Help us to be pleasing children in Your sight
Correct us when we walk in the wrong way
Illuminate our path with Your guiding light
And keep us, O Lord, from ever going astray*

*Lord, You are as a Father to us, it is true
And it is our heart’s desire to honor You as such
To live holy in all we think, and say, and do
And so when we stray, send Your corrective touch*

II. Dishonoring the Lord through relations (verses 10-21)

¹⁰ ‘The man who commits adultery with *another* man’s wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.

This is the seventh of the Ten Commandments, and it is also explicitly warned against in verse 18:20. In Israel, this went only one way. When a

man, single or married, slept with a married woman, both were to be put to death by stoning. However, as polygamy was allowed in Israel, the same was not true with an unmarried woman sleeping with a married man.

¹¹ The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:7, 8. For disobeying this, the penalty was death. Again, it says, "Their blood *shall be* upon them." What they have done is deserving of death, and death is what they are expected to receive.

¹² If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:17. The act is described by a word, *tebel*, which was first seen in 18:23 in regards to bestiality. It means "mixture," and thus "confusion." In this act, there is a confusing of what is right and proper. The lines of propriety have been completely jumbled up through such an act, and thus their blood is upon them. This is the last use of *tebel* in Scripture, *tata* to it.

¹³ If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them.

This was forbidden in 18:22, and it is considered as an especially revolting crime because it is contrary to nature itself. For such, there was to be but one penalty, death. Literally, "dying they shall die." They were deserving of death, and they were to be executed.

¹⁴ If a man marries a woman and her mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you.

This was warned against in 18:17. Here it is described as *zimmah*, or “wickedness.” It literally means “a plan,” and thus it is an especially bad one. The offenders devised something perverse, and for it they were to be burned with fire. What this most likely means is that they were to first be stoned, and then their bodies burned with fire. This is the penalty for Achan in Joshua 7:25. That account seems to interpret what this passage here means.

¹⁵ If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal.

Like the perverse sin of homosexuality, the same is true with bestiality. This was warned against in 18:23. If such a thing occurred, then dying he shall die, and the animal was to be killed as well. This held for both man and woman...

¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them.

There was no partiality or unfairness against one sex or the other. Just as if a man committed this perverse act, so it was with a woman. In the end, dying they shall die, and the beast was to be killed as well. In this, they were deserving of death, and the sentence was to be carried out.

¹⁷ ‘If a man takes his sister, his father’s daughter or his mother’s daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister’s nakedness. He shall bear his guilt.

This was forbidden in 18:9 & 11. The second clause explains the first. To “see” his or her nakedness means to participate in the physical act of a union, not just to behold with the eyes. This is what King David’s son Amnon was guilty of, but nothing was immediately done about the crime. However, in the end, he was cut off from his people, just as is promised here when he was killed by his brother Absalom.

The act here is termed a *khased*, or disgrace, and the one who is so engaged in it is said to bear his guilt. The term “cut off” is debated though. Does it mean formal excommunication, or does it mean death. Scholars are divided, but either way it is termed a disgrace.

¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.

This was forbidden in 18:19. The command extends to both in the use of the two clauses – 1) He has exposed her flow, and 2) she has uncovered the flow of her blood. This indicates prior knowledge by both, and they have willfully violated the precept. The problem with this is that it is an intimate act, and so for the punishment of being cut off from the people to be brought about, they would have to openly admit the act.

¹⁹ ‘You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother’s sister nor of your father’s sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt.

This was expressly forbidden in 18:12, 13. No civil punishment is explicitly made for this offense. Instead, it simply says that they shall bear their guilt. It appears then that the Lord would determine what was suitable to the offense as He directed their lives according to His wisdom. Such is seen in the next verse...

²⁰ 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.

This was spoken against in 18:14. The punishment given here, that they shall die childless, is one which could carry several meanings. It seems unlikely that the Lord would divinely intervene in every such marriage, keeping them from having children. It also seems unlikely that any children born to such a union would die before their parents, thus rendering them childless at their own death. What is more likely is that any child born to such a union would not be counted as the result of that union. Instead, it would – by law – be reckoned as the child of the uncle to whom she was

first married. In this, the offending man would never have his own progeny after him, and the offending woman would bear the disgrace of having a child which was not reckoned to the natural father. Such seems more likely, and it follows through to the next verse...

²¹ If a man takes his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

This was prohibited in 18:16. The same penalty for the previous offense would be imposed here, bearing the same disgrace to the offenders. The explanation given seems all the more likely, because the only other times that *ariri*, or "childless," is seen in Scripture are in Genesis 15:2, and Jeremiah 22:30, both of which carry the connotation of bearing shame at dying without progeny. The person mentioned in Jeremiah 22:30 actually did have children though.

*Lord God, Your word is written, Old Testament and New
And the words are clear concerning sexual sin
There is intimacy we may enjoy, and other things we may not do
One will bring us life; by the other we are done in*

*But the lines are blurred, even in our church today
People call evil that which is right and good
And that which is perverse is given a resounding "It's OK!"
How can something so clear be so hugely misunderstood?*

*Lord God, keep us from sexual immorality which does defile
Keep us on the narrow path where life and health is found
In paying heed to your word, we shall receive a welcome smile
And in Your presence joy and peace shall evermore abound*

*Lead us, O God, be near and watch over us
We come to You, O Father, through our Lord Jesus*

III. Separation Unto the Lord (verses 22-27)

²² ‘You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out.

This is what is known as a prosopopoeia. It is a figure of speech in which an abstract thing is personified. In this case, the land is so personified, indicating that the sins of the people would cause it to vomit the people out. This was to be the case with the current inhabitants, and Israel would not be immune from such a measure if they failed to pay heed to the statutes and judgments which were placed before them now.

In the end, the two exiles of Israel can only be ascribed to their own disobedience. The two returns of Israel must then be ascribed to the covenant faithfulness of the Lord, which is in accord with His mercy towards those He covenanted with. There is no merit in Israel in their return, and there is only blame in them for their exile.

²³ And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them.

Although these words are a part of the Law of Moses, many of these are moral standards which are directed by the conscience. An obvious one is homosexuality. Paul speaks of this in Romans 1. In fact, this entire passage contains mandates which are generally considered normal in most societies. However, only through the giving of the law can sin be imputed. The natural workings of the world dictate that immorality be avoided, but once the law was introduced, a definite penalty for violating it could then be imposed. Paul explains this in Romans 5:12, 13 –

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— ¹³For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

The law now is defining what sin is, how to avoid it, and what its consequences are. As the law is now annulled in Christ, such sin is not imputed for those who are in Christ. This is the marvel of what God has done for us in Christ. Paul explains it in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19 –

“Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

Instead of imputing our trespasses to us, God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and His fulfillment of this law. That is what makes the next promise so marvelous for the Christian...

²⁴ But I have said to you, “You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

God promised the land to Israel, but it is both a conditional and an unconditional promise. It is unconditional in whose land it is, but it is conditional in how they may use it. “When you are obedient, the land is yours and you may dwell in it. When you are disobedient, the land is yours and you may not.” However, the land is theirs as an inheritance. But sometimes the inheritance wouldn’t be so great, because even the nature of the land was subject to the obedience of Israel.

This is the first, and only, time that the term “a land flowing with milk and honey” is used in Leviticus. A land flowing with milk and honey implies richness and fertility. Milk comes from cows and so it means there will be abundant pasture lands. Honey comes from bees which pollinate flowers and so it implies all sorts of fruit trees, herbs, and flowers.

Further the term "a land flowing with milk and honey" has a spiritual connotation. It isn't just speaking of the physical abundance but also of spiritual abundance. It is the land of God's word and the people through whom that word has come.

The word of God is said to be sweeter than honey. It is also equated with milk which nourishes. Thus, this is a reference to that as well. The land would literally flow with milk and honey for sustaining Israel's physical lives. It would also flow with milk and honey for sustaining their spiritual lives.

In looking back on Israel, it is possible to see that both the physical and spiritual aspects of this verse have come about in the land. The Lord promises them abundance now, but later in Scripture, He promises that both of these – the physical and spiritual aspects – would be denied them for their disobedience. The conditional nature of the covenant is seen in this. And the reason is given...

²⁴ (con't) **I am the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples.**

Yehovah their God had separated them from the peoples, and thus they were to separate themselves from the practices of the peoples. Should they fail to do this, they would be taught their lesson *among* the peoples. They would live in defiled lands, and among defiled people because they too had defiled themselves.

But, as I said a minute ago, what Christ has done for us, in fulfilling the law and in granting a new covenant, is far superior to what Israel was promised. We are free from the law, and thus free from sin's penalty. God is not imputing sin to us because of our transgressions. And thus, our promised inheritance cannot be conditional. Rather the inheritance is eternal, and the mediation by Christ is superlative to that of Aaron –

“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15.

²⁵ **You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.**

In the previous verse, the Lord used the word *badal*, or “separated,” by saying He has “separated you from the peoples.” Now the same word is used again to make a theological point. As we saw in the dietary laws, each unclean animal actually carried a spiritual meaning in the New Testament. It is not that they are actually unclean, but that they were being used as types and pictures of other things for our benefit. Paul explains to us that what is recorded in the Old is meant to teach us in the New.

The Lord has asked them to separate between clean and unclean animals to teach them that they have been separated as clean from the unclean peoples. The fulfillment of this lesson is recorded in Acts where Peter was told to eat exactly what is forbidden here in Leviticus. When he refused, the Lord told him, “What God has cleansed you must not call common or unclean.”

The dietary laws, like circumcision, and like Sabbath observance, were given as theological insights into what God would do for us in Christ. Now, our separation is a spiritual, not a physical one. We are separated unto God through Christ, not through adherence to an annulled system of laws. It’s rather difficult to see how people miss this, but it is a common, and growing, problem in the church today.

²⁶ And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

These words are a close repeat of those found in Leviticus 11:44, and they comprise what is essentially the central theme of the entire book. The Lord again says that he has *badal*, or “separated” Israel from the peoples, therefore, they were to be holy as He is holy. It is the observance of the laws which could make this possible for them, but such was impossible.

The bracketing of the dietary laws, in particular, by these statements of separation show us rather clearly that those restrictions were to be markers of their separation. And the nullifying of them in Acts shows that the separation which is now found is far, far superior.

In Christ, it is faith in His *fulfillment of the law* which make this possible for us, and such is not only possible, it is accomplished. We are holy because He is holy. Now He asks us to be holy as He is holy. Our position will remain unchanged, but our current state is to be worked out for Him and for His glory in holiness.

***27 'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.'**

It seems on the surface as an odd way to suddenly end the chapter, but it fits rather well when one considers the flow of what has been said. In 19:31, consulting such a person is forbidden. In verse 6 of this chapter, the penalty for consulting such a person was then given. However, now the penalty for performing as a medium or having a familiar spirit is expressly stated. Whether a man or a woman, dying they shall die.

Women are specifically mentioned here for a couple reasons. First, it has always been more common that women have acted in this capacity. This is seen throughout cultures and ages. Secondly, due to man's tendency to provide clemency towards females, the Lord specifically directs that anyone, regardless of sex, was to die.

And this is to be accomplished "by (a) stone," it is singular again. As noted before, stone is created by God, and thus Israel is to be the instrument of the Lord's righteous judgment upon such offenders who would attempt to usurp these rights and roles which belong to the Lord alone.

And even in this, there is a lesson for us. As I just said, the mediums and wizards were to be stoned because they infringed upon a realm which belongs to God alone. But this is what each of us does when we attempt to merit God's favor through deeds of the very law we are looking at.

In this, *we infringe upon what Christ has done for us*. We step into a realm of personal merit before God and say, "I am fully capable of accomplishing those things which will make me holy." This is a place which is completely contrary to the New Covenant in Christ. It is He who makes man holy,

because it is He who has fulfilled this law. Our righteousness is an imputed one, not one which is earned. To set that aside is to step into that terrible realm which belongs to Christ, and it is that Stone by which we shall die in our futile attempt at outdoing Him.

Let us never be found in such an unhappy position. Instead, let us hold fast to Christ, let us be holy because He is holy, and because He has made us holy. Our work is not *for*, but *because of*. If we can keep this distinction clear, we will be in the sweet spot. Let us rest in Christ, trust in Christ, and honor God through Christ. Thank God for Jesus Christ.

Closing Verse: “Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law. ²⁹ Or *is He* the God of the Jews only? *Is He* not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also, ³⁰ since *there is* one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.” Romans 3:27-31

Next Week: Leviticus 21:1-24 *My, Jedidiah! In those garments you sure look good...* (Suitable for the Priesthood) (34th Leviticus Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if you have a lifetime of sin heaped up behind you, He can wash it away and purify you completely and wholly. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

In These, Israel Will be Judged

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying
These are the words He was then relaying

“Again, you shall say to the children of Israel:
These things to them you are to tell

‘Whoever of the children of Israel
Or of the strangers who dwell in Israel

Who gives any of his descendants to Molech
He shall surely be put to death, as to you I now tell
The people of the land shall stone him with stones
Toss good and hard and break those bones
I will set My face against that man
And will cut him off from his people; he will bear the blame
Because he has given some of his descendants to Molech
To defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name

And if the people of the land
Should in any way hide their eyes from the man
When he gives some of his descendants to Molech
And they do not kill him, according to My plan

Then I will set My face against that man
And against his family; they shall be a wreck
And I will cut him off from his people
And all who prostitute themselves with him
-----to commit harlotry with Molech

'And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits
To prostitute himself with them in this way
I will set My face against that person
And cut him off from his people; I shall perform what I say

Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy
For I am the Lord your God
These things you shall do
And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them:
-----I am the Lord who sanctifies you

'For everyone who curses his father or his mother
Shall surely be put to death, it shall be so
He has cursed his father or his mother
His blood shall be upon him; to the pit he shall go
'The man who commits adultery with another man's wife
He who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife

The adulterer and the adulteress
Shall surely be put to death; so shall end their cheating life
The man who lies with his father's wife
Has uncovered his father's nakedness
Both of them shall surely be put to death
Their blood shall be upon them, as to you I address

If a man lies with his daughter-in-law
Both of them shall surely be put to death, so I to you say
They have committed perversion
Their blood shall be upon them; such evil you shall put away
If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman
Both of them have committed an abomination
They shall surely be put to death
Their blood shall be upon them; you are to be a holy nation

If a man marries a woman and her mother
It is wickedness, so it is true
They shall be burned with fire
Both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you
If a man mates with an animal
Pay heed to what I now tell
He shall surely be put to death
And you shall kill the animal as well

If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it
You shall kill the woman and the animal too
They shall surely be put to death
Their blood is upon them, as I am telling you
'If a man takes his sister
His father's daughter or his mother's daughter as I am telling
And sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness
It is a wicked thing
And they shall be cut off
In the sight of their people, so it shall be
He has uncovered his sister's nakedness

He shall bear his guilt; abide by these laws from Me
If a man lies with a woman during her sickness
And uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow
And she has uncovered the flow of her blood
Both of them shall be cut off from their people; you shall do so

'You shall not uncover the nakedness
Of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister too
For that would uncover his near of kin
They shall bear their guilt, as I now say to you
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

If a man takes his brother's wife
It is an unclean thing, you see
He has uncovered his brother's nakedness
They shall be childless; pay heed to these words from Me
'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments
And perform them, no doubt
That the land where I am bringing you to dwell
May not vomit you out

And you shall not walk in the statutes
Of the nation which I am casting out before you
For they commit all these things
And therefore I abhor them through and through
But I have said to you
"You shall inherit their land; things will be sunny
And I will give it to you to possess
A land flowing with milk and honey

I am the Lord your God
Who has separated you from the peoples
-----in the land that you will trod

You shall therefore distinguish
Between clean animals and unclean, check the kosher label
Between unclean birds and clean
And you shall not make yourselves abominable

By beast or by bird
Or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground
Which I have separated from you as unclean
Eat only that which the law proclaims is sound
And you shall be holy to Me
For I the Lord am holy
And have separated you from the peoples
That you should be Mine, yes to belong unto Me

'A man or a woman who is a medium
Or who has familiar spirits, shall be put to death surely
They shall stone them with stones
Their blood shall upon them be

Lord God, You have from among the nations called us
Not to live the law given so long ago
But to live by faith in the work of Christ Jesus
And on the straight path of faith, we shall go

Our hope is found in Him alone
We will not look to our own righteousness
From the law like children into sons we have grown
And so in Christ we shall praise You, and Your name we shall bless

Only in Him can we find peace with You
Only in Him are we counted as holy in Your eyes
Thank You for Christ, ever faithful and true
Thank You for Christ, our heavenly prize

Hallelujah and Amen...