

Still On the Books

Did you know it's a law in Alabama that you cannot carry an ice cream cone around in your back pocket? In the state of Indiana, a law still on the books says that baths are not allowed to be taken between the months of October through March. The Book of Leviticus contains some old laws that are also still in force. We'll look at a few in today's Templates of Truth.

God wanted His people to live holy lives, so He gave them laws and commandments by which to live. Some were meant only for the people of Israel in ancient times, but many still have application for our lives today. For instance, chapter eighteen of the book gives guidelines for how to uphold sexual purity. It is here that God says, *You shall not lie with a male as one lies with a female; it is an abomination* (Leviticus 18:22). Later in chapter 20:13, God adds, *If there is a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act*. It is not just homosexuality God condemns in this passage. He mentions incest, adultery, bestiality and other forms of sexual perversion. God speaks of nations that have allowed sexual promiscuity to run rampant, and declares, *for the land has become (sexually) defiled, therefore I have visited punishment upon it* (Leviticus 18:25). God still expects nations to uphold sexual purity, and those who do not will suffer His judgment.

In the next chapter, God directs His people, *You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead, nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves; I am the Lord* (Leviticus 19:28). It was common in the day for those who worshipped pagans, idols and other deities to outwardly display their allegiance to their god by piercing parts of their body and placing tattoos depicting symbols to their gods. God is the One and only true God, and this practice was spiritual adultery against Him. This will still be a practice of the Tribulation Period as those who worship the Antichrist and the False Prophet will take the mark of the beast – a tattoo, in order to even buy & sell food for their families. It is a reason why tattooing is becoming so accepted among all ages and genders today. It is laying the foundation for the entrance of the Antichrist.

God addresses the use of psychics, astrologists, mediums and the like: *Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them* (Leviticus 19:31). In chapter 20:27, God declares that, *a man or a woman who is a medium or a spiritist shall surely be put to death*. These individuals flirt with the powers of darkness, communicating with demonic spirits and unleashing the Satanic powers of wickedness and evil. There are many who still practice these dark arts today, and many naïve people who grapple for their insight and advice. God calls their work defilement and pronounces the sentence of death upon it.

God's Word speaks to crimes against fellow human beings. He said, *If a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death* (Leviticus 24:17). Capital punishment is a Biblically-based principle of retributive justice. God was establishing that the punishment should fit the crime, and exact retribution was a strong deterrent: *And if a man injures his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him...just as he has injured a man, so it shall*

be inflicted on him (Leviticus 24:19-20). Don't you think incidence of violent crime would be lessened if our modern justice system applied this principle with more consistency?

No matter how you interpret and apply these ancient laws today, one thing is for certain - we have to learn to hate what God hates, and love what God loves. God hates sin. He despises perversion, wickedness and evil. He hates the pain and destruction sin brings into human lives. Too many people today are complacent about, tolerant of or outright accept too many things that God declares He clearly rejects and condemns. God hates sin, but God loves the sinner. He is always ready to show mercy, grace, love and forgiveness to those who confess and repent of their evil ways and sinful behaviors.

Not all old laws are humorous and ridiculous. Some are just as valid today as they were thousands of years ago, for they preserve human dignity and promote human decency. Above all, they reverence, honor and glorify the God who gave them for the best welfare of His people.

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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