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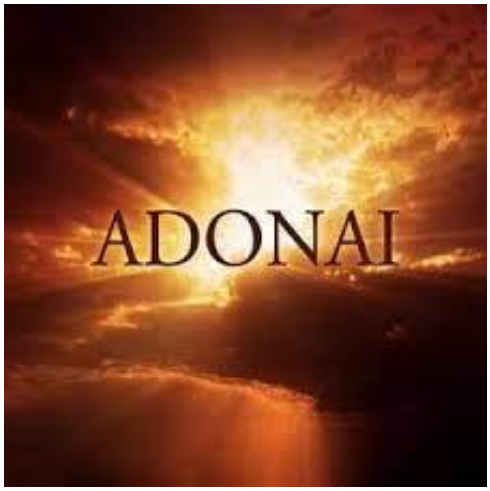
Avoid Worldly Practices
18: 1-5

Avoid worldly practices DIG: In Chapter 18, Isra'el is called to be different than other nations (18:3, 21, 24-30). What does that tell you about the sexual practices of those other nations? How would not being set apart harm Isra'el's relationship with ADONAI?

REFLECT: Do you embrace the fact that the Word of God tells us how to live and how to act, or is there a part of you that resents it? If so, where does that attitude come from? Is there any part of your life that is still in Egypt? How can God help you leave Egypt forever?

We are to be easily distinguishable from the secular/pagan culture in which we live.

Chapter 17 opened up a new section of **Leviticus** by way of **the blood** we can approach **YHVH** (**to see link click Cy – The Holiness Code**). For that purpose, **the Messiah** died for us. Once this concept is grasped, now **Leviticus** teaches the reader how to live and how to act. This is the practical aspect of the Torah. What we have here in **Chapter 18** was not merely good advice that was being offered to **Isra'el** here – it was a matter of covenant loyalty. The text of this message follows the pattern of the ancient suzerain-vassal treaties (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Ah – Treaty of the Great King**).[301]



Preamble (18:1-2): ADONAI said to Moshe, "Speak to the people of Isra'el; tell them, 'I am ADONAI your God' (18:1-2)." This is the main point of the message we need to grasp. When **God** becomes our **Lord**, then our lives will be so much easier, and the mitzvot which follows will be the breath of life, not a burden. These words: **I am ADONAI your God** can be seen in **the first commandment: I am ADONAI your God, who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. You are to have no other gods before Me (Deuteronomy 5:6-7).** The phrase **"no other gods"** is emphasized by the mention of **Molech** in the next file (see **Dd – Incest and Other Uncleanness: Molech**). The phrase **I am ADONAI your God** is repeated twelve times in the next three chapters. We also have the words: **I am ADONAI**, which occur thirteen times in the next three chapters. That's twenty-five times in the next three chapters. But now, these two verses summed up in the next three verses.

Historical prologue (18:3): The people of **Isra'el** were on the move. They were leaving **Egypt** and **Canaan**. **YHVH** warned them not to imitate the ways of **the Egyptians** (don't turn back to the evil of your past), and **He** told them not to do as **the Canaanites** do (don't be seduced by new temptations). This is the mission of the people of **God**. We are set apart. We are to be easily distinguishable from the secular/pagan culture in which we live, and one of the most obvious ways in which we can be different is in the area of sexuality, as we shall soon see.[302]

You are not to engage in the practices found in the land of Egypt, where you used to live; and you are not to engage in the practices found in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you; nor are you to live by their laws (18:3). But you may be asking yourself, "What does my life have to do with ancient

Egypt or **Canaan**?" Let us first remind ourselves that the history of **Egypt** and **the Israelites themselves** have become an example for us to follow, being a reflection of who we are. As Paul reflected on **Isra'el's** time in the wilderness, he said: **These things happened as an example for us (First Corinthians 10:11-13).** It's as if he were saying, "Go back and read the Torah and see how **Ha'Shem** dealt with them." In the same way, **God** deals with us today. As **Isra'el** was saved as a nation through **the blood** of **the Lamb**, so are we. **Egypt** and **Canaan** symbolize **the world (First John 2:15-17)**.

General stipulations (18:4): You are to obey My statutes and ordinances and live accordingly; I am ADONAI your God. The words **statutes** and **ordinances** are often seen together in the Torah (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Bb – Hear and Obey**), and here repeated twice, the second time in reverse order. We will sometimes see that these **statues and ordinances** are very harsh and at times, seemingly overly severe to us. For instance, the death penalty for those who violate Shabbat, or the death penalty for a son who insults his father or mother. These might act as a deterrent for some. However, the main reason that they are there is to remind us that **the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)**. Today, we live in a **world** that is at odds with **God's statutes** (Hebrew: *hachukkim*, meaning *to write into law permanently*) and **ordinances** (Hebrew: *hammishpatim*, meaning *a judgment of the court*), which makes this book of **Leviticus** very contemporary for us. As the people of **God**, we are expected to imitate **God**, that is, to **be holy**. **For I am ADONAI your God; therefore, consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am holy (11:44a).**

Blessings (18:5): You are to observe My ordinances and statutes, if a person lives by them, he will have life through them; I am ADONAI (18:5). The word live brings us to consider the power behind the Torah of **ADONAI**. It has much more value than mere human laws. Torah is our blueprint for living here on the earth, but it also prepares us for the hereafter. **Ancient rabbis have understood this. The targum of Jerusalem, Aramaic translations of the Hebrew before the first century, renders this verse, "You are to keep My statutes and ordinances so whoever does so may have eternal life." The Words of YHVH** are **eternal** and have **eternal** consequences. This is why it is so important to read **the Word of God**. **Psalm 118:89** demonstrates this truth when David wrote: **Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.** This is why **the Word** says we should **live by them**. **For we must all appear before the bema seat of Messiah, where everyone will receive the good or bad**

consequences of what he did while he was in the body (see the commentary on **Revelation Cc – We Must All Appear Before the Bema Seat of Christ**).[303]

Dear Heavenly Father, *Praise **You** for being such a wonderful **Father** in so many ways. **Your** love took sin's penalty of death at the cross and gave **Messiah's** righteousness to those who **declare with their mouth that Yeshua is Lord, and believe in their hearts that God raised Him from the dead. They will be saved (Romans 10:9).***

*Everyone wants to live in heaven and you also would like all to enter heaven, but there is a requirement to enter heaven – a heart that loves **You** as **Lord** and **Savior (Romans 10:9-10). For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In unrighteousness they suppress the truth, because what can be known about God is plain to them- for God has shown it to them (Romans 1:18-19).** Many know about **You**, even Satan, but that is not good enough. Knowledge must be accompanied by a heart that delights to follow **You** in love. **And He said to him: You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind (Matthew 22:37).***

*While some think that everyone gets into heaven, you express a very different thought. **"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow is the gate and difficult the way that leads to life, and those who find it are few." (Matthew 7:13-14).** Not even doing many good deeds will allow anyone into heaven. **Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your name, and drive out demons in Your name, and perform many miracles in Your name?' Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you. Get away from Me, you workers of lawlessness (Matthew 7:21-23)! Lord**, I love **You** and want to live a holy life to please **You**. **You** are our joy to live for! In **Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*