

Leviticus 18:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

Analysis

Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion.

This verse falls within the section on **Unlawful Sexual Relations**. Prohibitions against various sexual sins, distinguishing Israel from Canaanite practices and protecting family sanctity.

The holiness demanded in Leviticus becomes possible through Christ, who both satisfies God's righteous requirements and transforms believers by His Spirit.

Historical Context

Prohibitions against various sexual sins, distinguishing Israel from Canaanite practices and protecting family sanctity. Chapters 17-27, often called the 'Holiness Code,' expand covenant obligations beyond ritual to encompass all of life—sexuality, economics, justice, and relationships. The repeated refrain 'I am the LORD' grounds these laws in God's character and covenant relationship with Israel. Israel received these laws while encamped at Sinai, before entering Canaan. The laws prepared them for life in the promised land, distinguishing them from Canaanite practices and establishing their identity as God's holy nation. The portable tabernacle, central to Levitical worship, accompanied them through

wilderness wanderings and eventually found permanent form in Solomon's temple. Ancient texts like the Code of Hammurabi show that law codes were common in the ancient Near East, but biblical law uniquely grounded ethics in God's character rather than merely social convention.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. In what ways does this verse challenge contemporary cultural values or your personal attitudes?
2. How does this verse reveal God's character, and how should that revelation shape your relationship with Him?
3. What does this verse teach about the seriousness of sin, the cost of redemption, or the beauty of holiness?

Interlinear Text

וּבְכֹל	בְּהֵמָה ה	לֹא	תִּתֶּן	שְׁכַבְתָּ	לְטַמְּאָהּ	בְּ
H3605	a beast	H3808	Neither shalt thou	lie	to defile	H0
	H929		H5414	H7903	H2930	
	וְאִשָּׁה		לֹא	תַעֲמֹד	לִפְנֵי	בְּהֵמָה ה
	thyself therewith neither shall any woman	H3808	stand	before	a beast	
	H802		H5975	H6440	H929	
לְרַבֵּעַ ה	תְּ בֹל	הוּא:				
to lie down	thereto it is confusion	H1931				
H7250	H8397					

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 22:19 (Parallel theme): Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.

Leviticus 20:12 (Parallel theme): And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

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