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# GODWARD SEXUALITY IN A SEXUALLY PERVERSE WORLD

*Leviticus 18*



Five  
Lies of Our  
Anti-Christian  
Age



Rosaria  
Butterfield

*Foreword by Kevin DeYoung*

“A set of moral principles: a theory or system of moral values.”  
MERRIAM-WEBSTER

“A system of accepted beliefs that control behavior, especially such a system based on morals.”

CAMBRIDGE DICTIONARY

“The ethical imperatives that God gives are in accord with his unchangeable moral character. That is, God wills what is right in accordance with his own moral attributes.”

**NORMAN GEISLER, CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

“Christian ethics is based on God’s will, but God never wills anything contrary to his unchanging moral character.”

**NORMAN GEISLER, CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

# WHY IS LEVITICUS 18 IMPORTANT?

Leviticus 18 provides the nation of Israel—and us today—a biblical sexual ethic to help us think and act godward about sexuality in a sexually perverse world.

# MAJOR OUTLINE FOR LEVITICUS

- I. The Institution of the Sacrificial System (1–7)
- II. The Ordination of the Priesthood (8–10)
- III. The Prescriptions for Cleanness/Purity (11–15)
- IV. The Instructions for the Day of Atonement (16)
- V. The Commands for Holy Living (17–27)

GODWARD SEXUALITY  
IN A SEXUALLY PERVERSE WORLD  
LEVITICUS 18

I. A Reminder to Embrace the Mosaic Covenant (1–2)

“If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall purge the evil from Israel.”

DEUTERONOMY 22:22

“If there is a man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, one who commits adultery with his friend’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”

LEVITICUS 20:10

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## LEVITICUS 18

- I. A Reminder to Embrace the Mosaic Covenant (1–2)
- II. An Exhortation to Flee Sexual Immorality (3–5)

“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. “

DEUTERONOMY 4:1

“You shall walk in all the way which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong *your* days in the land which you will possess.”

DEUTERONOMY 5:33

“Such faithfulness is never seen as a way to gain relationship with the Lord; it is always seen as a right response to the gracious Lord who has rescued his people and given them his law, that they might walk in fellowship with him and reflect his good and holy character in all the earth.”

JAY SKLAR, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS

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## LEVITICUS 18

I. A Reminder to Embrace the Mosaic Covenant (1–2)

II. An Exhortation to Flee Sexual Immorality (3–5)

III. The Prohibitions Against Sexual Immorality (6–23)

A. The Key Terms

i. “uncover”

ii. “nakedness”

iii. “approach”

iv. “blood relative”

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A. The Key Terms

B. The Prohibitions Against Incest (6–18)

# THE PROHIBITION AGAINST INCEST

## LEV. 18:6–18

- Sexual activity with mother (7)
- Sexual activity with step-mother (8)
- Sexual activity with sister (9)
- Sexual activity with granddaughter (10)
- Sexual activity with step-sister (11)
- Sexual activity with paternal aunt (12)
- Sexual activity with maternal aunt (13)
- Sexual activity with paternal uncle's wife (14)
- Sexual activity with daughter-in-law (15)
- Sexual activity with brother's wife (16)
- Sexual activity with stepdaughter or step-granddaughter (17)
- Sexual activity with wife's sister (18)

# THEOLOGICAL REASONS WHY LEVITICUS 18 PROHIBITS INCEST

1. Sexual purity is explicitly defined by Scripture as one man and one woman in a marriage covenant.
2. God's people need to know who is suitable for marriage.
3. God's people need to understand that biblical sexuality in marriage helps a society function godward.

“Marriage as a social institution is regarded throughout Scripture as the cornerstone of all other structures, and hence its purity and integrity must be protected at all times.”

**R. K. HARRISON, COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS**

“When a society turns a blind eye to marital faithfulness, it signals that absolute faithfulness in all relationships does not matter. If an individual cannot be true to his or her marriage partner, the one with whom he or she is most intimate, what expectation can others have that that person will remain faithful to them? Without faithfulness all relationships become considerably less than what God intended them to be. When marital unfaithfulness abounds unchecked within a society, the whole community becomes corrupted through a lack of trust in other people.... YHWH recognizes that a promiscuous society will not be true to the covenant being ratified, because its fundamental spirit proclaims that faithfulness in relationships is not a core value of its members.”

**T. DESMOND ALEXANDER, COMMENTARY ON EXODUS**

# WHY THE LAWS PROHIBITING INCEST?

1. Sexual purity is explicitly defined by Scripture as one man and one woman in a marriage covenant.
2. God's people need to know who is suitable for marriage.
3. God's people need to understand that biblical sexuality in marriage helps a society function godward.
4. Men need to understand that they are responsible for their own sexual purity as well as their family's.

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## LEVITICUS 18

I. A Reminder to Embrace the Mosaic Covenant (1–2)

II. An Exhortation to Flee Sexual Immorality (3–5)

III. The Prohibitions Against Sexual Immorality (6–23)

A. The Key Terms

B. The Prohibitions Against Incest (6–18)

C. The Prohibitions Against Various Sexual Acts (19–23)

# GODWARD SEXUALITY IN A SEXUALLY PERVERSE WORLD

## LEVITICUS 18

### III. The Prohibitions Against Sexual Immorality (6–23)

#### C. The Prohibitions Against Various Sexual Acts (19–23)

- i. During a woman's menstrual cycle (19)
- ii. With your neighbor's wife (20)
- iii. Performing child sacrifice (21)
- iv. With someone of the same gender (22)
- v. With an animal (23)

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## LEVITICUS 18

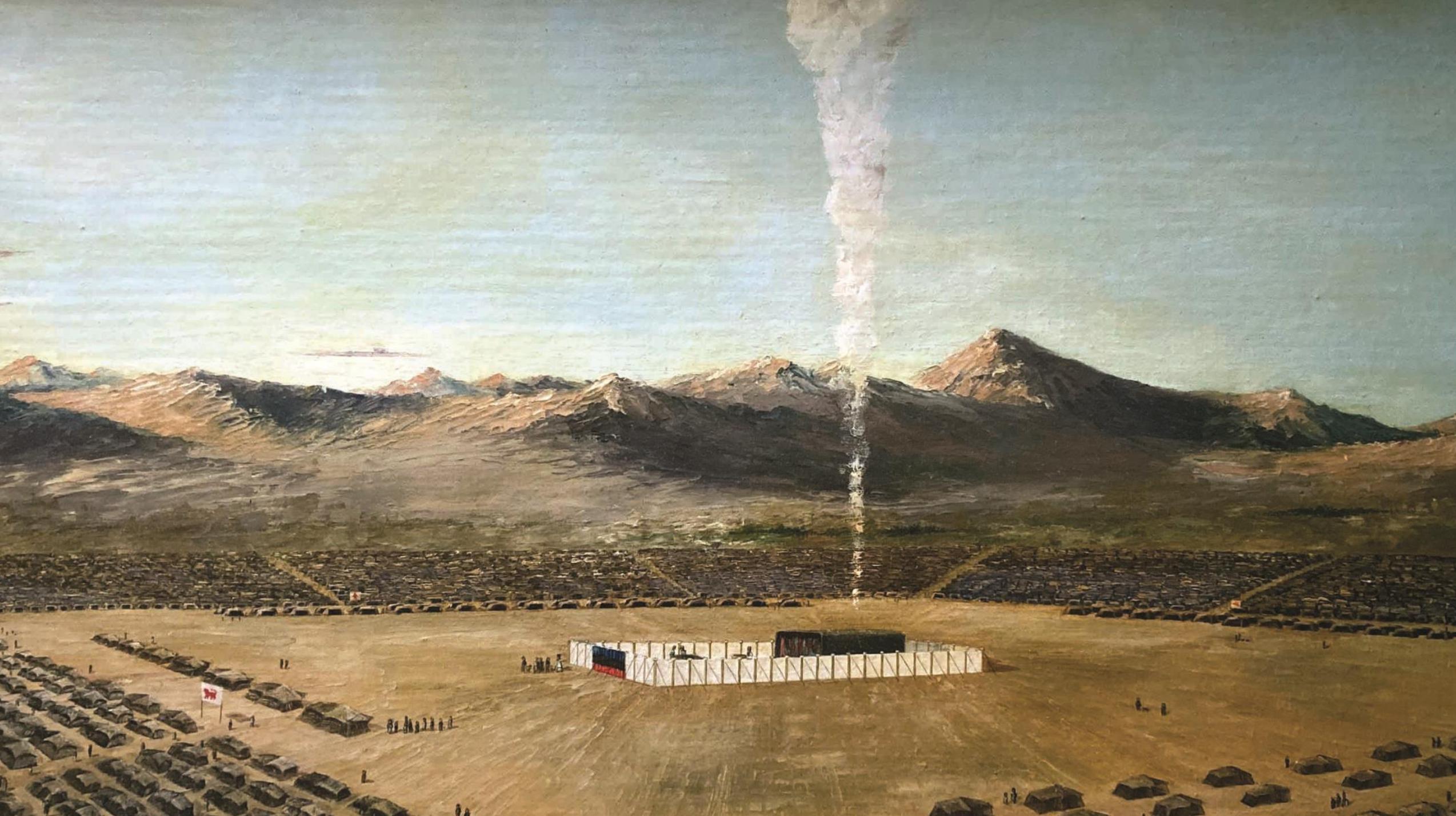
- I. A Reminder to Embrace the Mosaic Covenant (1–2)
- II. An Exhortation to Flee Sexual Immorality (3–5)
- III. The Prohibitions Against Sexual Immorality (6–23)
- IV. The Consequences of Pursuing Sexual Immorality (24–30)
  - A. The Key Terms
  - B. A Key Reminder (30)

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# GODWARD SEXUALITY IN A SEXUALLY PERVERSE WORLD

*Leviticus 18*





## THE TABERNALE AND COURT

The tabernacle was a portable temple—a “tent of meeting”—within a movable courtyard (Exodus 25–31; 35–40). It was constructed after the pattern that Yahweh revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai, and was assembled in the desert as Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land. For an enlargement of the tent itself, see p. 186. The tabernacle courtyard was 150 feet (46 m) long and 75 feet (23 m) wide, totaling 11,250 square feet (1,045 square meters).

The Most Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance).

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It housed the table (Ex. 25:23–30), the golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24), and the altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–10; 37:25–29).

The veil separating the Holy Place from the tabernacle courtyard was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it (Ex. 26:36–37). It hung on five golden pillars.

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The bronze altar, also known as the altar of burnt offering (Ex. 27:1–8; 38:1–7), was made from a hollow wooden box (7.5 feet/2.3 m long and wide, and 4.5 feet/1.4 m high), overlaid with bronze. It had four horns at its corners. It was transported by means of two poles on its journey through the wilderness.

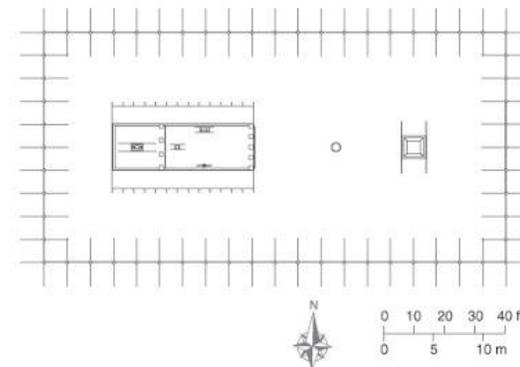
The entire tabernacle tent was 45 feet (14 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high. It was a wooden skeletal structure, overlaid with gold, with no solid roof or front wall (Ex. 26:15–29). Five wooden bars (overlaid with gold) passed through rings attached to each frame (Ex. 26:26–30).

The bronze basin with its stand was for ceremonial washings (Ex. 30:17–21; 38:8).

The 30-foot (9.1-m)-wide gated entrance to the courtyard was covered with a screen made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns that were woven with fine twined linen (Ex. 38:18–20).

The surrounding hangings (fine twined linen curtains connected to pillars and stabilized by guy ropes and pegs) stood about 7.5 feet (2.3 m) high. The 60 wooden pillars were overlaid with bronze, stood in copper sockets, and had capitals overlaid with silver (Ex. 27:9–19; 38:9–17).

Tabernacle and Court Architectural Plan



The Most Holy Place was a 15-foot (4.6-m) cube, containing only the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:10–22; 37:1–9). It was here that Yahweh would descend to meet with his people in a cloud theophany (divine appearance). The high priest could enter only once a year, on the Day of Atonement (see note on Heb. 9:7).

The framed structure was covered by four layers of cloth and skin (Ex. 26:1–14).

The table for the bread of the Presence (Ex. 25:23–30)

The Holy Place of the tabernacle tent was 30 feet (9.1 m) long, 15 feet (4.6 m) wide, and 15 feet (4.6 m) high.

The veil separating the Most Holy Place from the Holy Place was made from blue, purple, and scarlet dyed yarns woven with fine twined linen and embroidered with cherubim (Ex. 26:31–33). It hung on four golden pillars.

The altar of incense (Ex. 30:1–10; 37:25–29)

The golden lampstand (Ex. 25:31–40; 37:17–24)

The veil that formed the entrance to the tabernacle was similar to the veil separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, except that cherubim were not embroidered on it. It was suspended on five golden pillars (Ex. 26:36–37).

