

11. God in every area of our life – Part 2

January 20, 2011

I don't know whether Moses was teaching the Israelites all these what they needed to do and should not do in one session or not. If they did, it must have been a long, long day for Moses who spoke all that time, for the people who stood and listened to him all day.

Regardless of the time, the instruction to the Israelites was vital for a brand new nation that would be in the midst of the pagan nations like our Bible instruction is vital to us who are in the midst of this pagan world.

Again, I trust that the Lord will bring forth the right principles and precepts for us to heed so that we don't do what the Israelites did.

A. DO NOT FOLLOW YOUR WICKED NEIGHBORS

Deuteronomy 18:9-12 "When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. 10 There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, 11 or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. 12 For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.

When people don't know the true and living God and His Word, the Bible, there is no limit what they would do and follow what kind of substitutes to help themselves making decisions in their lives. I've learned that Americans are more spiritual than ever before. I didn't say that they are more biblical, rather spiritual. Being spiritual covers a lot of areas that our Lord God hates.

Witchcraft is a broad word that describes a variety of occultic practices, basically, anything that makes contact with the demonic or dark spiritual world.

There is a modern revival of witchcraft, or a.k.a. Wicca, and many people claim that "white" witchcraft is a use of spiritual powers for good, as well as being a more feminist, ecology-friendly understanding of gods and spirituality. But whether a witch claims to be "white" or "black," they are still using occultic powers.

The objects of their worship are elements and nature deities, the 'Mother Goddess'. Characteristically they are active in 'Saving the earth' activities. They do not shy away from reincarnation theology either.

What they deny, yet don't understand is that the true power behind all kinds of witchcraft is satan himself, because he is the author of all deception and all rebellion. To practice or approve of witchcraft is to serve satan.

Soothsayer has reference to astrological type divination, predicting the future or seeking guidance through the stars, planets, clouds, or weather.

Do you know thirty two million Americans believe in astrology? There are 10,000 full time and 200,000 part time astrologers in America. Three out of four American newspapers carry a horoscope column.

I don't care what they call it – intuition, psychic, etc., it is idolatry and it is demonic. Because satan and his demonic forces know about humans a whole lot more than us and they have superior knowledge for being former angels. Though they do not know the future like our Lord God, but they can guess what can happen, or simply arrange a few minor future events within their limited power. They also can inform these so-called psychics about their clients' past to bring more credits.

The people who interpret omens often use tarot card, crystal ball, tea-leaf, palm reading, and Ouija board, etc.

Medium is someone who supposedly stands between the physical world and the psychic world. They claim to channel knowledge from the dead and comfort the surviving family members. Since no one can hear and see the dead person with the exception of the medium, he or she can scam the family members however they want.

Our culture is becoming more and more accepting of these occultic themes and practices while it is becoming more and more intolerant and hostile toward Christianity. In the Book of Revelation, we find that occultic practices will be very widespread in the end times.

Revelation 9:20-21 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

I find that it is rather interesting for the very people, who think that believing in Jesus Christ is stupid and lame, don't find a problem in seeking guidances and counsels from demonic horoscopes.

B. A PROPHET LIKE MOSES

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' 17 And the Lord said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. 18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

This portion of Scripture is a Messianic prophecy by Moses through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This Prophet was not only an Israelite, but also a 'man of the people'.

Like Moses, this Prophet would be a Mediator, representing people to God the Father and God the Father to the people.

I just love the way Moses said in v18 and 19. That is exactly what Jesus did.

John 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

Our Lord Jesus has three offices: Prophet, Priest, and King. When He ministered here on earth, He declared God's Word as Prophet, and by the inspiration of His Spirit has caused it to be written down for our learning. He intercedes for His people as the High Priest in heaven, and He also sits on the throne and reigns as King, working out His purposes in this world. One day He will return and reign on earth as King of kings.

C. FALSE PROPHET?

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' 21 And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?'-- 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

The Bible shows us many false prophets who spoke in the name of God for their own selfish gain, and it predicts that we will continuously have them. It is true. I will show you a couple of examples:

1) Edgar Whisenant, who worked as an engineer with NASA, predicted that the rapture would take place in September 1988, a certainty that he backed up with his booklet "88 Reasons Why the Rapture is in 1988" and he claimed, "Only if the Bible is in error, am I wrong." In case you haven't noticed, it is 2011 and we are still here.

2) The San Francisco Chronicle reports that Harold Camping "has scrutinized the Bible for almost 70 years and says he has developed a mathematical system to interpret prophecies hidden within the Good Book. One night a few years ago, Camping, a civil engineer by trade, crunched the numbers and was stunned at what he'd found: The date of the rapture will be May 21, 2011 with the end of the world to follow in October of the same year."

Do you know why the media give Camping's view front-page coverage every time he opens his mouth about the rapture on a specific date? They know he'll be wrong. Their goal is to discredit the Bible. That's why the San Francisco Chronicle describes Camping as a "Biblical scholar." If a "scholar," even a self-proclaimed one, makes a prediction about the Bible and is wrong, then the Bible must be wrong and everything else the Bible teaches.

I guess Whisenant and Camping didn't read Mark 13:32:

Mark 13:32 But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Yet someone would say, "Maybe Camping is wrong on the rapture date. But he might be right on other accounts." If a prophet is wrong in one account, he is completely wrong. This is not a baseball that goes for batting average. One wrong prophecy means that the person who prophesied becomes a false prophet. The Bible is never wrong in prophecies as well as everything else.

So what do we do with false prophet? Do we stone him? If you do that, you will go to jail. Just ignore them, they will go away after their false prophecy doesn't come to pass.

Believers today must exercise spiritual discernment because many false prophets are in the world. We need to test everything against the Word of God. Because the Lord never contradicts against His own Word.

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

D. THREE CITIES OF REFUGE

Deuteronomy 19:2-4 you shall separate three cities for yourself in the midst of your land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess. 3 You shall prepare roads for yourself, and divide into three parts the territory of your land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, that any manslayer may flee there. 4 "And this is the case of the manslayer who flees there, that he may live: Whoever kills his neighbor unintentionally, not having hated him in time past--

Deuteronomy 19:6 lest the avenger of blood, while his anger is hot, pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and kill him, though he was not deserving of death, since he had not hated the victim in time past.

Deuteronomy 19:11-13 "But if anyone hates his neighbor, lies in wait for him, rises against him and strikes him mortally, so that he dies, and he flees to one of these cities, 12 then the elders of his city shall send and bring him from there, and deliver him over to the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. 13 Your eye shall not pity him, but you shall put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with you.

Even though the people of Israel were blessed greatly by having a wonderful land and God as their king and a holy law for their guide, yet they had their shares of problems – sinful human nature and inhumanity to others. Why? because the heart of every problem is still the problem of every heart. The law cannot change the human heart, it just reveals. But the grace of God can.

Since they didn't have an elaborate police force with computers, satellites, SWAT, helicopter and K9 unit supports and, of course, a scientific CSI unit that solves any complicated crime within one hour, they had to rely on the elders and the judges.

The Lord wanted to make sure that an innocent manslayer would not be killed by the avenger, He instructed Moses to set up the three cities of refuge east of the Jordan and now it became Joshua's responsibility to set up another three refuge cities on the west of the Jordan.

The roads leading to these cities were to be maintained in good condition and well marked.

We find several points that give us a picture of Jesus from the city of refuge, yet there is one clear distinction:

Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.

1) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are within easy reach of the needy person.

2) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge are open to all, not just the Israelite.

Numbers 35:15 These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.

3) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge became a place where the one in need would live.

Numbers 35:25a So the congregation shall deliver the manslayer from the hand of the avenger of blood, and the congregation shall return him to the city of refuge where he had fled

4) Both Jesus and the cities of refuge provide protection only within their boundaries; to go outside meant death.

Numbers 35:26-27 But if the manslayer at any time goes outside the limits of the city of refuge where he fled, 27 and the avenger of blood finds him outside the limits of his city of refuge, and the avenger of blood kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood

5) With both Jesus and the cities of refuge, full freedom comes with the death of the High Priest.

Numbers 35:25b he shall remain there until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil.

6) A crucial distinction: The cities of refuge only helped the innocent; the guilty can come to Jesus and find refuge.

E. NO PERSONAL VENGEANCE

Deuteronomy 19:15 "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Deuteronomy 19:20-21 And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. 21 Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

The liberal legal experts argue that capital punishment hasn't stopped people from committing capital crimes. But according to the Bible, it does.

ACLU singlehandedly has done more damage to this country than all the other foreign enemies of America combined. They have been desecrating the fair and balanced justice systems and advocating crimes, immorality, injustice and atheism in this once-Christian nation. They are devil's henchmen.

If our judicial systems worked fairly, efficiently, and promptly according to the biblical principles, and put real capital criminals to death in short time from their trials, there would be far less crimes in this country. It seems that the criminals have more rights and privileges than victims because of the ACLU.

V21 is known as "Lex Talionis" in Latin which is the law of retaliation. It is not for personal vendetta. It is paying back in kind through proper justice systems – not capital punishment for pick-pocketing, nor a slap-on-the-wrist for a murder, etc.

F. APPLICATIONS

- 1) To practice or approve of witchcraft is to serve satan.
- 2) We need to test everything against the Word of God. Because the Lord never contradicts His own Word.
- 3) *Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble.*