

# 119

## MINISTRIES

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### **Parashah Points: Acharei Mot – The Torah and Inappropriate Relationships**

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Acharei Mot (Akh-ah-reh Moht), which is Hebrew for “After the death,” and it goes from Leviticus 16:1 to Leviticus 18:30.

Because of the subject material, this Parashah Point may not be appropriate for younger viewers. We recommend parents use discretion and preview this teaching first.

This Torah portion gives instructions for Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. It also discusses general rules with regard to the sanctuary, laws against eating blood, as well as laws prohibiting certain sexual relationships.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about God’s design for proper relationships.

Perhaps one of the most controversial commandments in the Torah is the commandment against homosexual behavior:

#### **Leviticus 18:22**

[You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination.](#)

Just like other commandments in the Torah governing sexual behavior, such as laws against adultery and incest, this commandment prohibiting homosexual behavior is pretty straightforward. However, recently liberal Christians have attempted to find ways to undermine the Torah’s authority in this regard.

A typical response is that this commandment has been done away with in light of the New Covenant inaugurated by Yeshua’s resurrection. However, Yeshua is very clear in Matthew 5:17-20 that He did not abolish the Torah but affirmed its ongoing authority in the lives of His followers. Furthermore, homosexual behavior is specifically condemned in New Testament passages such as Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 6.

Noticing the weakness of their position, some liberal Christians have attempted to take another route. Some have suggested, for instance, that the laws against homosexual behavior were unique purity laws given only to Israel and not intended to be morally binding on all believers for all time.

However, this argument falls short, and it's easy to see why. First, as we already established, Yeshua affirmed the authority of every command of the Torah in Matthew 5:17-20. He later told His disciples, in Matthew 28:19-20, to make disciples of "all nations" and teach them "all" that He commanded them. Obviously, that entailed teaching non-Jews all the laws of the Torah, which Yeshua clearly affirmed, including the laws against homosexual behavior.

But it's even clear in the very passage of Leviticus 18 that these laws were not intended only for Israel. After God gives the list of forbidden sexual relationships, including homosexuality, he says this:

#### **Leviticus 18:24-26**

**Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, either the native or the stranger who sojourns among you.**

Right here God is warning Israel not to commit these sexual sins or else they will be judged just as *the nations* were judged for these sexual sins. That entails that these commandments have a wider application, otherwise why would God judge non-Israelites for transgressing them? That wouldn't make sense if these laws were intended only for Israel!

Also, remember that Israel was to be a kingdom of priests. They were to be like priests to the nations, teaching the nations about God and bringing them into a relationship with the God of Israel. In fact the passage says that these laws apply both to the native *and* the stranger. Every person who came into relationship with the God of Israel was expected to keep His laws.

Now we understand that the unbelieving world is going to do what the unbelieving world does. But everyone who follows the God of Israel is to submit to His commandments, including the commandment against homosexual behavior. That doesn't mean we should be unloving toward people engaged in that lifestyle—God forbid! But we cannot compromise God's standards. Truth is truth.

God demands that we be holy in our conduct, including our relationships, which, according to the Bible, is only to be enjoyed within the boundaries of a Covenant marriage. And marriage, by definition, is a heterosexual union.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

*We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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