

Acts 15:20 - The Heart of Torah

Acts 15:20 But that we write unto them, that **they abstain from pollutions of idols**, and from **fornication**, and from **things strangled**, and from **blood**. 21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.

What are the apostles really saying to the Gentile believers?

- a. Since Jesus abolished the Law of Moses, just follow these guidelines.
- b. Now that we are in the Age of Grace, all you need to do is follow these guidelines.
- c. Circumcision is done away with; never get circumcised just follow these guidelines.
- d. Follow these core principles of the Torah and as you continue to go to synagogue on the 7th day you will pick up the other instructions on how to love YHWH and live with your fellow man.

My people perish for a lack of knowledge. If we as Gentile believers were properly instructed in the foundations of Hebrewism (the Old Testament), we would know that the apostles were summarizing Leviticus 17 & 18 when they instituted Acts 15:20. Leviticus 17 & 18 is known as the "Heart of Torah" within the Hebrew community. It is referred to as the "Heart" not only because these chapters physically divide the five books of the Torah into two equal halves, but also because these chapters encompass the foundational aspects of how we are to live in the Kingdom of YHWH---Love YHWH and love your neighbor as yourself. To love YHWH is to honor, respect and adore Him. The Old Testament uses the word "fear" in the same way the New Testament uses the word "love"; they are opposite sides of the same concept.

The first 3 commandments of Acts 15:20 correspond with Leviticus 17 and give the basic instructions for life in the Kingdom: acceptable and unacceptable worship, YHWH's method of exchange and the proper way to operate within that system.

How to approach YHWH: **"...abstain from the pollution of idols..."**

Leviticus 17:7-9 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations. 8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, 9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.

YHWH's Economy: **"...from blood..."**

Leviticus 17:10-12 And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. 11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. 12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

How to Operate in that Economy: **"...from things strangled..."**

Leviticus 17:13-16 And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. 14 For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

How to not Defile your Fellow Man: **"...from fornication..."**

Leviticus 18:7-8 "The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she is thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. 8 The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.

Verses 9-23 continue defining what not to do and conclude with a prohibition against animals.

The Set-Apart Spirit is the author of both testaments. In fact the apostles re-affirmed that the Set-Apart Spirit inspired these basic requirements in Acts 15:28. **Is this all a coincidence?** Or is the Set-Apart Spirit saying to Gentile believers who are coming into the Kingdom that these things must stop immediately, but as you learn more of the Torah each week (Acts 15:21) you will be expected to comply just as Abraham (Genesis 26:5), Moses, Job, David, Israel, "the stranger among you" (Exodus 12:49), the "mixed-multitude" from Egypt (Exodus 12:38), Jesus, Peter, Paul, Cornelius (Acts 10:2) and anyone else who wishes to enter the New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:14). "D" is the correct answer.