

## **Responding to the New Atheists' attacks on the God of the Old Testament-31: The Mosaic Law-4 Eternal and Provisional Mosaic Laws (and a few words about homosexuality)**

Before we move into some of the Mosaic laws that are so often criticized by atheists as well as believers, I want to make sure that we understand that the Mosaic Law was not God's ideal standard for the human race. It was ideal for Israel *for that stage* of her history, but only for that early period. Christ Himself said that God permitted certain things, like the Mosaic Law on divorce, because of the hardness of their hearts (Matt. 19:8). God's ideal for man was one man and one woman united for life (Gen. 2:24).

It is important to understand that the attitudes and customs in 1450 B.C. in the Ancient Middle East were much different than they are today. Modern man should resist the temptation to move into what C.S. Lewis called "chronological snobbery." By the way, there are many ways in which modern man is much less civilized than even the Israelites to whom God gave the law (e.g., Mammonism, being anti-natural law, idolatry, neglect of God and family).

By pointing out the provisional nature of the Mosaic Law, I do not want to leave the impression that there was nothing in it that was not absolute for all people for all time. It did contain absolute truths, like it is wrong to steal, murder, commit adultery, lie, and to engage in homosexual acts. Homosexuality is a sin and evil. While I am on this subject, let me just say that it is not the same-sex *attraction* that is the sin. Rather, it is the engagement in that activity that breaks fundamental principles of God's law, natural law. The idea that some people experience same sex attraction does not make it right or natural anymore than when people experience a vast array of other unnatural desires. Just because someone may have a desire to eat dirt (pica) or have sex with children does not mean that it is natural or OK. Pederasty is wicked and evil regardless of someone's desires. By the way, there are attempts by certain organizations to lower the age of consent to accommodate pederastic activity. Another point, when Christians tell homosexuals that they are choosing to be homosexual, it really comes across as incoherent to the homosexual. They think the Christian is saying that the homosexual *desire* is a choice—and he knows that is not true. This would be like saying that your *desire* in food, music, and the like is simply something you choose (this is not to deny that desires are a result of previous activity or influences; it is to deny that the desire that *currently exists* can be turned off or on by the will). We need to be careful when we speak to homosexuals. It is not the desire that is the issue; it is the homosexual activity that is condemned in the Old Testament and New Testament and even in the context of God's eternal kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9). Just because someone has same sex desires does not mean that it is OK to engage in activity—any more than a married man or woman who experiences a desire for sex with someone other than their spouse means that it is OK to act on those desires. Countless homosexuals have been delivered from this malady by the grace of God and simply by not acting on their unnatural impulses. In spite of what our politically correct

culture says, homosexuality is wrong according to natural law, the Mosaic Law, and God's eternal law. The reason that an increasing number of people are accepting homosexuality is because they do not care about God's eternal law and because in their self-righteousness they want to be viewed as loving, open-minded, and enlightened. They are afflicted with a homophobic phobia. They are afraid of being tagged as homophobic! We should have compassion for those who are plagued by same sex attraction, but we must never accept it as normal. The Word of God and empirical data demonstrate how destructive it is. The average life expectancy for a lesbian and homosexual is 45 and 42 years respectively. That is neither natural nor cute, and it is certainly not loving or compassionate to provide encouragement to an early grave.

Aside from certain eternal Mosaic laws (homosexuality, adultery, theft) many of its laws were provisional. God Himself promised in the Old Testament that a time would come when it would be replaced by a much different Law—one that was written on the heart.

Jeremiah 31:31-33, "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

In Him,

*Pastor Don*