

PARASHAT KEDOSHIM

(SET-APART PEOPLE)

LEVITICUS 19:1-20:27

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading

Amos 9:7-15; Ezekiel 20:2-20

B'rit Chadashah

On the saints being YHVH's spiritual temple: **1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:9-10, 15-20**

On not being a respecter of persons: **James 2:1-9**

On children obeying their parents: **Ephesians 6:1-3; Hebrews 12:9**

On destroying the works of witchcraft: **Acts 19:19; Galatians 5:20**

On walking in a holy and honest manner with others: **Ephesians 4:24-32; Colossians 3:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:6; James 5:4**

On sexual perversion: **1 Timothy 1:10; Revelation 21:8**

On swearing by YHVH's name: **Matthew 5:33-37**

On the proper use of the tongue: **James 3:1-12; 4:11; 1 Peter 2:1**

On not hating, but loving others: **Matthew 5:43-48; 1 John 2:11; 3:15; Romans 12:17-21; 13:8-10**

On being called to walk in holiness: **Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:13-21**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 19:1** Be *Kadosh* (Set-Apart/Holy) as YHVH Is, Revere Your Parents, Observe YHVH's Sabbaths and Shun Idols
- 19:5** YHVH Rejects Feast Peace Offerings That Are Eaten on the Third Day
- 19:6** Leave the Corners of Your Fields and Gleanings as a Gift to the Poor
- 19:11** Honest Dealings With Others
- 19:16** *Lashon Hara* (the Evil Tongue)/Tale Bearing Forbidden
- 19:17** Love Your Neighbor: Take No Revenge and Bear No Grudges
- 19:19** Forbidden Mixtures
- 19:20** Fornication With a Maid-Servant
- 19:23** Fruit Trees in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Years

- 19:26 Forbidden Sorcery Practices
- 19:29 Harlotry, More on Sorcery, Respect of Elders, Respect of Proselytes
- 19:35 Just Weights and Measures
- 20:1 Child Sacrifice and Worship of Molech
- 20:8 Cursing Parents
- 20:10 Penalties for Forbidden Sexual Relationships
- 20:22 The Land and Immorality, Do Not Follow the Heathen Practices of Other Nations Lest the Land Vomit You Out
- 20:25 Holiness and the Kosher Laws

Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

- 1 **19:3, *You shall fear.*** What is the relationship between children revering (or honoring) their parents, observing YHVH's Sabbaths (including the annual appointed times or festivals) and shunning idols? Is there a cause-and-effect chain reaction relationship between these three things? If so, what does this instruct parents about raising their children to prevent bad results later on?
- 2 **19:1 and 3 (compare),** Reverence for or fear of parents is part of walking in holiness. The rabbis say that this commandment prohibits children from sitting in parents' regular places, from interrupting them, contradicting them in a discourteous manner or otherwise showing them disrespect. Honoring one's parents, as mandated in the Ten Commandments, refers to caring for their personal needs. This is sometimes easier said than done, but it is part of a walk of holiness and a fulfillment of Torah. How would our society be improved were all members conscious of this one commandment alone? Though Scripture admonishes children to obey their parents, obeying YHVH's commandments (e.g., the Sabbath) takes precedence over the wishes of parents.
- 3 **19:5,** What are rejected offerings? The Torah teaches that offerings can be disqualified by improper intentions on the part of the offerer if they are given legalistically or mechanistically. Do you give of your time, talent and treasure out of obligation or selfish intentions or out of love for YHVH and your fellow man?
- 4 **19:6–7,** The terms *first*, *second* and *third day* are often significant prophetically (e.g. Hos 6:2; Gen 22:4; Luke 13:32; Exod 19:11,15) referring to the salvific work of Messiah Yeshua that occurred at Yeshua's first coming and will occur in the first, second and third millennia after his first coming. Day three would correspond with the beginning of year 7000—a date we must be very close to presently. If Torah reveals that the Peace Offering was not accepted on the third day, what is this prophetically telling us? Leviticus 7:17–18 says of the same offering that the portion of the sacrifice which remains until the third day shall be burnt with fire, while 19:6–8 says that the person who eats the Peace Offering on the third day will “bear his iniquity” and “will be cut off from his people.” That is, the Peace Offering will be of no avail to that person and they will not have peace with their Redeemer.

Is there coming a time when the door of opportunity for salvation will be shut (as was the case when the door of Noah's ark was shut before Elohim brought judgment upon the earth by the flood), the period of grace that we are now in will end when the wrath of Elohim will be poured out upon the unregenerate (Rev 15–16) just prior to the return of Yeshua? Are you saved by the blood of Yeshua, the Lamb of YHVH? Have you repented of your sins (violation of YHVH's Torah-laws [1 John 3:4]), and are you walking in a righteous and obedient relationship with your Heavenly Father through Yeshua the Messiah by the power of the *Ruach Kodesh* (Set-Apart Spirit)?

For he says, “I have heard you in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured you: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Cor 6:2)

- 5 **19:9, *Corners of your field.*** Leaving the corners of the fields unharvested, and leaving the gleanings in one's field for the poor was a wonderful way to help the disadvantaged. Helping the poor is a timeless principle of how YHVH expects his people to show love for others. The Jewish sages teach that we are first obligat-

ed to help the needy of our spiritual family, immediate physical family, extended family, and then any poor in general. What do you do to help the poor? When was the last time you extended your hand of love to a person in need?

6 We have been taught thus far in this Torah-portion to emulate the holiness of YHVH by honoring our parents, and honoring his servants the priest through peace offerings and in charitable giving to the poor. YHVH is merciful and charitable. Are we? Or are we primarily focused on ourselves and our own wants and needs?

7 **19:11, 35**, Holiness extends into our business dealings with others. Much of our economic system (especially the banking system, false advertising and exaggerated claims about products) is predicated on unjust weights and measures: taking more than you give. Dishonesty and thievery are all around us. How easy it is for us to fall into sinful practices in this regard, yet our walk must be set-apart and everything we do, say and think must be “as unto YHVH.” What are some areas in your life where you cheat and steal from others, where you take unjustly, and where you are dishonest in your dealings with others? YHVH in the Torah says to his people to, “Be *kadosh/set apart [holy]*, for I am *kadosh*” (Lev 20:26). This is part of loving your neighbor as yourself (Lev 19:18).

8 **19:16**, *A talebearer among your people*. The dictionary definition of a talebearer is, “a person who maliciously gossips or reveals secrets.” Consider these scriptures:

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. (Proverbs 26:20)

Death and life are in the power of the tongue... (Proverbs 18:21)

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles. (Proverbs 21:23)

Lack of control of one’s tongue is one of the most out-of-control areas in many people’s lives. In 19:16, tale bearing or *lashon hara* (the evil tongue) is forbidden. This is a holiness issue. Does your mouth issue forth raw sewage and acid or healing and life-giving springs of water? YHVH holds us accountable for our words. They can wound or heal others, bless or curse, bring life or death. How about yours?

9 **19:19**, Holiness even extends into the areas of forbidden mixtures regarding clothing fabrics and mixed seeds. Holiness is truly a lifestyle, not just an idea, but actual words, thoughts and deeds on a daily basis. Holiness involves making a difference between the secular/profane and the *kadosh/set-apart* (as defined by YHVH’s Word) and then living out that difference (see Lev 20:26). How is your walk more set-apart today than it was a year ago? As you read and study the Torah (and the rest of YHVH’s Word) and get it inside of your mind and heart, are you more conscious of holiness issues? What steps have you taken and changes have you made in your life in this regard?

10 **19:23–25**, We are to honor YHVH and give him his due in all areas of life including our fruit trees. This principle of reaping and sowing and giving YHVH his portion of that which is his is universally applicable in Scripture, NOT just to agriculture. There are some believers who say that giving YHVH the first fruits of our increase applies only to those involved in agricultural enterprises. If this is the case then how do we account for Abraham’s tithing to Melchizedek from the spoils of war (Gen 14:20)? Furthermore, Solomon taught that we are to honor YHVH with the first fruits of *all* our labors (Prov 3:9). Malachi taught that to not tithe is to rob YHVH and to invite the destroyer to ravage our finances (Mal 3:8–11). Yeshua taught the blessedness of giving (Luke 6:38) and Paul taught that we reap what we sow and that if we sow nothing we will reap nothing (Gal 6:7–10) and this does not apply just to finances, but to all areas of life. Do you have an attitude of honoring YHVH whenever possible by your giving? Is it a lifestyle practice motivated by a heart attitude of love and a desire to please and honor your heavenly Father?

11 **20:2**, *Give of his seed unto Molech*. Child sacrifice comes in many forms and has existed from time immemorial through to the present. In ancient times, it was practiced as a means of appeasing the gods and of relieving parents of the financial “burdens” of raising their children. What form does child sacrifice take in our society? Many of the motives are still the same: Abortion is rampant in our society because the wicked want to have “fun,” but without the responsibilities of raising children. We are not just talking

about surgical abortions, which occur in this country on a scale that makes the Holocaust look tame, but also through abortifacient drugs such as the birth control pill. Yes, that is right. If you are sexually active and you take the pill you are from time to time killing a fertilized egg! Few know that the pill contains drugs that can kill a newly conceived child. The word *holocaust* means, “a sacrifice consumed by fire” and can be rightly applied to child sacrifices offered on the altar of Molech. Though modern child killers may not be worshipping Molech, per se, the motives for disposing of their children by other means are no different: conveniences, economic, lust, hedonism, selfishness and so on. Take a look at your life. Are you involved in any practices that could take the life of a child? The abortion rate is as high in the American church as outside of it. Now is the time to repent for the shedding of innocent blood and averting the curses of YHVH that will otherwise come (verses 5 and 6).

12 **20:23–27**, Why all these restrictions? In verse 24 YHVH says, “*I am YHVH, your Elohim, Who has separated you from the peoples.*” The big picture is that YHVH does not want his people to follow “the traditions of the nations.” His people are *called away from* or *out of* that. How can we be salt and light if we look, act, dress, talk, and live the way the heathens do? The practices of the heathens, including eating unclean meats (verse 25) is an abomination to YHVH and likewise renders us abominable or detestable in the eyes of YHVH. Has YHVH changed his standards of holiness and “nailed them to the cross?” Or are these just the ideas of rebellious men who have made of none effect the Word of Elohim by their religious traditions (Matt 15:6–9)? How could YHVH at one time have one standard of righteousness and then later on have another standard now (as the Christian church teaches) when he forbids dishonesty and unequal weights and measures (as noted earlier in this Torah portion)? To accuse YHVH of making these laws of righteousness binding upon the Jews, but not upon the Christians is to accuse YHVH of unequal weights and measures, is it not?

HAFTORAH READING — AMOS 9:7-15; EZEKIEL 20:2-20

Be Set-Apart Unto YHVH and Prosper; Be Worldly and YHVH Will Spit You Out

Amos 9:7–15

Amos the prophet, though from Judah, carried his message of repentance and predictions of destruction to the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom about 25 to 35 years before the fall of that nation to the Assyrians. This Haftorah portion is yet another occasion where YHVH, through his servants the prophets, is pleading with his people to return to righteousness and Torah, yet he under no uncertain terms lays out what their fate will be if they ignore him. What are the lessons we can take away from this?

1 **9:8**, *I will not utterly destroy the House of Jacob.* Though the northern kingdom would cease to exist, a righteous remnant would survive that kingdom’s meltdown and deportation. What did YHVH say would be the final outcome of the Northern Kingdom?

The Return or Regathering of Israel

In the last days, the sons of the Children of Israel (both Ephraim and Judah [Ezek 39:25]) shall return to the land of Israel with David as their king (Hos 3:5; 6:11; Ezek 37:24; see also Deut 30:4; Jer 16:15; 30:3; 31:23; 32:44; 46:27; Mic 4:6–7; Isa 27:11–13; cp. Matt 24:27–31). In rabbinic Jewish thought, this regathering is called the “final redemption” and involves the return of the exiles (both the Jews from the Southern Kingdom of Judah as well as those of the ten tribes) to the land of Israel, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the coming of Messiah, and the establishment of a world-ruling, Torah-based Messianic kingdom. This will mark the beginning of a period of peace and prosperity on this earth called the “Messianic Era” (or known in Christian parlance as “the Millennium”).

2 **9:9**, *I will sift.* As part of their punishment for their sins, the ten tribes of Israel would go through a period of time likened to a farmer sifting his grain to separate out the good grain from the bad. This is something YHVH does with his people in every generation. What is the fate of sinners during this process? See verse ten for the answer. How does the Bible define sin? (See 1 John 3:4.) What are sinners saying in verse ten?

Are there those today who say that no evil will befall them, and that “we’ll be raptured out of here before evil comes upon the earth”?

3 9:11, *In that day*. This is a standard expression taken to mean prophetically “in the last days.”

4 9:11, *Tabernacle of David ... close up the breaches ... raise up his ruins*. What is this breach, and what is the Tabernacle of David?

The Breach

By dictionary definition, a *breach* is “an infraction or violation of a law; a broken, ruptured or torn condition; a split, crack or divide between two sides; a break in friendly relations.” This is what occurred when the Northern Kingdom was torn away from King Rehoboam causing a split in the nation of Israel (1 Kgs 11:13,29–40; 12:1–20). This unnatural breach caused a serious wound within the nation of Israel such that the last question the disciples asked Yeshua before his ascension to heaven was whether he was about to restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). What was Yeshua’s response to them? He told them to preach the gospel everywhere (verse 8). This message of restoration and repairing the breach was the focus of what Paul called the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18). Paul likened this breach to the wall of partition called the *soreg* that existed at the Temple in Jerusalem to keep non-Jews from entering the inner courtyards of the Temple. The *soreg* kept Jews and Gentiles apart. With this wall in place, how could the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom, who after their captivity and exile and had become lost among the Gentile nations, ever come back to YHVH and be reunited with their brothers (the Jews) of the Southern Kingdom? Paul made it clear that through the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua that *soreg* or middle wall had come down and that the divided kingdom of Israel would become a reunited nation once again. This new nation made up of redeemed Israelites Paul calls “the one new man” (Eph 2:11–19).

The Tabernacle of David

There is much debate as to what is the *Tabernacle of David*. It is the opinion of this author that this is referring to the *kingdom of David*, which during his reign consisted of his ruling over all twelve tribes of Israel, something he will again do in the Millennium (Ezek 37:24–25).

After the death of David’s son, Solomon, as we have seen, the united Kingdom of Israel was divided between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms or Houses of Israel. They have yet to be reunited to this day, yet there are numerous Scriptures in the Tanakh (OT) prophesying that a time is yet to come when they will be reunited in the land of their promised inheritance. The time frame of those prophecies (e.g., Ezek 37) is pre-millennial. The Jewish sages have traditionally taught a pre-millennial regathering of the exiles, as well. Listed below are the several Scriptures pertaining to the raising up of the Tabernacle of David:

And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the **Tabernacle** [*obel*, meaning “tent, dwelling, covering, nomad’s tent symbolic of wilderness life”] **of David**, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness. (Isaiah 16:5, emphasis added)

In that day will I raise up the **Tabernacle** [*sukkah*, *Strong’s H5521*, meaning “tabernacle, booth, pavilion, etc.”] **of David** that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old. (Amos 9:11, emphasis added)

After this I will return, and will build again the **Tabernacle** [*skene*, *Strong’s H4633*, meaning “tent, tabernacle made of green boughs”] **of David**, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up. (Acts 15:16, emphasis added)

When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, “Master, will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” And he said unto them, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in his own power. But you shall receive power, after that the Set-Apart Spirit is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. (Acts 1:6–9)

These were the last words that Yeshua spoke on this earth before ascending to heaven. Mark that! Before leaving this earth for two thousand years, he gave to his hand-picked and personally trained disciples their most important commissioning statement. He told them to wait in Jerusalem to be filled with the power of the Spirit of Elohim. Why? It is a logical deduction that they needed that supernatural and divine empowerment of the gifts of the Spirit so that they would be able to fulfill the great commission to restore the kingdom of Elohim to those Israelites who had been scattered to the far corners of the earth because of YHVH's judgments against them for their sin. Now, thanks to the preaching of the gospel, these same people, along with the Gentiles they had mixed with, would now have a chance to be brought back into the commonwealth of Israel through a relationship with Yeshua, the Jewish Messiah.

The message the disciples were to preach was "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." That was the same message that John the Baptist, who had come in the spirit of Elijah the prophet preached, and the same message that Yeshua himself preached (Matt 3:1; 4:17). That same spirit of Elijah, through YHVH's chosen end-time vessels, will go forth in the last days before the great and terrible day of YHVH's wrath to help turn the hearts of the children back to their spiritual Hebraic fathers (Mal 4:4-6). All this, called the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21), must happen before Yeshua can return again.

What are you doing to follow Yeshua's commissioning command to his disciples to advance the kingdom of Elohim and to help prepare the way for his return by helping to raise up the Tabernacle of David?

5 **9:12**, Edom is referring to the descendents of Esau, many of whom comprise the hostile Arab nations that presently surround the modern state of Israel. David subdued these enemies of Israel during his reign. Will this happen again and if so, when and how? (See Ezek 35.)

6 **9:12-15**, A time is coming when Israel, including the ten northern tribes, will be redeemed and regathered back to the land of Israel. What is the captivity (verse 14) from which Israel will be returning? The time frame of this is the coming of the Messiah.

What Is This Captivity?

The biblical term *captivity* is often a reference to Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom or House of Israel, being brought out of captivity by YHVH (Ezek 16:53). Also compare Isaiah 61:1 with Luke 4:18-21 where, while preaching in the region of Galilee and Nazareth (the historic homeland of the Northern Kingdom or House of Israel), Yeshua quotes the Isaiah 61 passage relating it to his ministry to the ten tribes of the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matt 10:6). Yeshua states that it is his mission "to preach the gospel to the poor ... to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of YHVH." To what "captivity" is Yeshua referring? Is it a physical or spiritual captivity? Compare this with Revelation 18:4 where YHVH states that his people (the saints) are enslaved to the last days' Babylon the Great religious-economic-political system and must come out of it. What is this religious system that he is calling his people to leave?

Ezekiel 20:2-20

The Parashah, entitled *Kedoshim* or *Holiness*, starts out with YHVH calling his people to be holy or set-apart (*kadosh*) even as he is (Lev 19:2). It ends with YHVH denouncing the basest of human sinful behaviors such as bestiality, incest, homosexuality and child sacrifice. For these evil practices, the Promised Land would vomit out its inhabitants (Lev 18:28). At anytime, a thin line separates between sinful debauchery and holiness. One is but one step removed from the other. The Parashah warns the Israelites about falling from holiness into spiritual depravity. The Haftorah portions we are studying show Israel in the latter state. Indeed, as we noted above, Amos prophesied that the debased and animalistic inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom would indeed be removed from their land and taken into captivity for their sinful behavior. This was a fulfillment of Leviticus 18:28.

7 **20:12,13,16,20**, *My Sabbaths*. YHVH cites Israel's failure to keep his Sabbaths as a prime reason for the older generation's not entering the Promised Land. Judah's not keeping the land Sabbaths determined the length of her captivity in Babylon; namely, 70 years. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews brings up

the Sabbath issue in chapter four of that book. What is the connection between keeping YHVH's Sabbaths and entering the spiritual rest of his Promised Land? (Read Heb 4:1–11.)

8 The Sabbath was the eternal sign between YHVH and his people, and it was one of the first Torah laws YHVH called upon Israel to practice. As noted, the failure of YHVH's people to keep his Sabbaths prevented the Israelites from going forward into their spiritual destiny.

Likewise, the fourth or Sabbath commandment of the Ten Commandments is the only one of the ten where YHVH instructs his people to “remember” it implying that they would eventually forget to keep his Sabbaths. History records that the Sabbath was the first “Jewish” law that the early church left replacing it with Sunday (in the second century A.D.). In the modern Hebrew Roots/Messianic Israel Movement, YHVH's people are beginning to leave the non-biblical religious traditions of men by returning to a more true-to-Scripture spiritual walk (a fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy about the heart of the children being turned back to their fathers in the end days in preparation for Messiah's arrival [Mal 4:4–6]).

How prominently does the Sabbath figure in the lives of those believers who are returning to the Hebrew roots of their Christian faith? How significant is this prophetically? Is history repeating itself in reverse? Instead of YHVH's people leaving the Sabbath, they are returning to it. The keeping of the Sabbath is an acknowledgment of YHVH's sovereignty as the Creator of all, and of his sovereignty over our time, work and lives. Keeping the Sabbath is a direct assault on idolatry, materialism, selfishness, rebellion, and assimilation into the surrounding pagan culture that occurred when Israel forsook the Sabbaths of YHVH. Notice how Ezekiel ties the idolatry, rebellion and general apostasy of Israel with her desecration of YHVH's Sabbaths. What was Israel's heart condition that caused her to rebel against this commandment of YHVH? What are the excuses used by many today in order to justify themselves in desecrating YHVH's Sabbaths?

