

PARSHAT KEDOSHIM

PART I - QUESTIONS FOR THE 'SHABBOS TABLE'

'TALKING REVENGE' & 'HOLINESS'

1. Review 19:18, noting how it discusses a very important mitzva of "lo tikom" (which unfortunately is often overlooked). As you study the first half of 19:18 (not to mention the second half), be sure to see Rashi's commentary (and Ramban's) re: the meaning of both phrases: 'lo tikom' and 've-lo titor'.

According to Rashi's interpretation of what these phrases imply, isn't it rather amazing that this type of behavior - which most of us would consider 'normal' (or even 'expected') - is actually an 'issur de-oraita' [a Torah prohibition]!

Can you explain why the Torah forbids this type of behavior? Also, how does it relate to being "kadosh" (holiness), which is the primary topic of this unit of mitzvot?

In your opinion, why do you think that there are so many people (and unfortunately sometimes even rabbis) who are not familiar with this law? [And why is it that many people who do know these laws have trouble observing them?]

2. Based on the above question, attempt to explain how 19:18 thematically relates to 19:14-17.

Then, note the sudden change of topic in 19:19, and especially its 'header' [that introduces the laws in the next set of psukim]. Can you explain the thematic nature of this transition?

Finally, review the finale of this chapter, i.e. 19:33-36. Use these psukim [and their finale (i.e. 19:36)] to explain how this can explain the transition from 19:18-19.

SHABBAT & the MIKDASH

3. Review 19:30, noting the connection between the mikdash and Shabbat. Where else in Chumash do we find a similar thematic connection between Shabbat & the mikdash / mishkan?

[If you give up, see Shmot 31:12-16 and 35:1-4.]

Can you explain why this pasuk is located specifically at this point in Parshat Kedoshim?

[Relate to "kedushat zman" vs. "kedushat makom".]

If you have ample time, note as well the various commentaries on 19:30, noting how each one takes a slightly different angle.

WHY THE REPEAT?

4. Note how the commandment 'lo ta'aseh avel ba-mishpat' is stated twice in chapter 19 (see 19:15 & 19:35). Read each of these psukim carefully, noting their context; and attempt to ascertain whether this is simply a repeat of the same law, or if each commandment relates to a different type of situation.

Then, see Rashi on 19:35, noting the way he explains how each commandment is unique.

See the interpretation of Ibn Ezra as well.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN PARSHAT KEDOSHIM

[for shiur #1 this week]

1. Many commentators have noted that one can find an example of each of the Ten Commandments (or a very similar mitzva) in the opening psukim of Parshat Vayikra.

Before seeing the commentaries inside, carefully review chapter 19 and attempt to find these parallels on your own.

When you finish, record your answers so that later on, you can compare your conclusions to those of the various commentators.

2. Review your conclusions once again, this time organizing them as follows:

a) Commandments that have an obvious parallel.

[for example - 'honoring parents' / see 19:3]

b) Commandments that have only a tangential parallel
c) Commandments that appear to have no parallel

Considering that there are so many Commandments that have parallels, can you explain why the commentators are so eager to find parallels for all of the ten commandments?

Can you explain why only some of the parallels are obvious, why others or only 'alluded' to?

3. For the Commandments that you did find parallels for, note their order within Parshat Kedoshim. How does that order relate to their order in the original Ten Commandments?

Note as well the phrases 'Ani Hashem' and 'Ani Hashem Elokeichem' that repeat themselves so often in this section, and note especially where we find each phrase. Does this appear to be random, or organized? If you find some type of 'organization' - attempt to explain its logic.

Relate these two phrases and where they appear to the Ten Commandments that the psukim that precede each phrase corresponds to.

4. Now, let's see how the commentators related to these parallels.

First see the Chizkuni on 19:2, and make a list of all of his conclusions. Did your list match his? Can you explain the differences (if there are any)?

Next, see Ramban on 19:4 (towards the end), where he too finds all of the Ten Commandments in this parsha.

Finally, see also the Ibn Ezra on 19:2 ('ki kadosh...')!

Using your list, make note in regard to which Commandments everyone agrees (on the parallel), and on which we find differences of opinion.

Based on your own attempt to identify these parallels, attempt to explain why.

5. Even though these mitzvot are similar to the Ten Commandments, they are not identical. There are also many examples of additional mitzvot. Try to define the manner in which the mitzvot in Kedoshim are different than the dibrot (i.e. are they more strict or lenient etc.), even though they may also be 'parallel'.

Is this difference significant? Can you relate it to the title of the Parsha - 'Kedoshim tihiyu'?

6. Review the first 18 psukim of chapter 19 once again, this time noting how often the phrase ANI HASHEM is repeated. Is there a pattern to this repetition?

Note when it states ANI HASHEM and ANI HASHEM ELOKEICHEM. Does this also fit into a pattern?

Does this pattern relate in any way to the division of the DIBROT into 'two halves'?

How does this observation relate to the parallels that you found between the DIBROT and the mitzvot in chapter 19? [See questions #1 & #2 above.]

Which mitzva in Parshat Kedoshim seems to 'ruin' this pattern? Can you explain why?

7. Review 19:5-10. Based on the pattern set by "ani Hashem Elokeichem", can you explain why this set of psukim could be considered a 'sub-unit'? Are these psukim connected in any manner to the Ten Commandments, or did you list them in any of your parallels?

In your opinion, what is the connection between 19:5-8 and 19:9-10? How do either of these mitzvot relate to the other mitzvot in chapter 19?

8. Review Shmot 20:19-23, noting how these psukim are the first mitzvot that Bnei Yisrael receive after the Ten Commandments. Can you find a parallel between these mitzvot and the DIBROT as well? Then, continue reading into chapter 21 [Parshat Mishpatim] and see if this pattern continues. Relate these parallels to your answers to the above questions.

[See also the TSC shiur on Parshat Mishpatim.]

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PART TWO - QUESTIONS FOR PREPARATION

for SHIUR #2

- The Header: "KOL ADAT BNEI YISRAEL"

1. In what manner is the header of Parshat Kedoshim (19:1-2) different than the standard header introducing a parsha of mitzvot that is usually found in Chumash?

Does Rashi comment on this?

If so, what is his comment? How does it explain the reason for this difference?

2. Where else in Chumash do we find a parsha of mitzvot that also includes the header of "KOL ADAT BNEI YISRAEL"?

Does it relate in any way to Parshat Kedoshim?

[If you give up, try Shmot 12:1-3, and 35:1]

Do any of these sources help you better understand the Rashi referred to above/ 19:2 - "daber...melamed she-ne'emar be-hakhel..."?

See also Vayikra 8:3-5!

3. What does the word 'eida' mean? What is the Hebrew 'shoresh' of this word?

Can you relate this shoresh to the reason why this parsha was given to the entire eida?

4. In what context do Bnei Yisrael serve as 'eidim' [witnesses?] when they fulfill the commandments of KEDOSHIM TIHIYU?

See Seforno on 19:2, and relate his commentary to your answer?

5. See also Chizkuni on 19:2, and compare his peirush to that of Rashi on 19:2 [in regard to 'daber el kol adat Bnei Yisrael']. In what way is Chizkuni similar, and in what way is his statement different from Rashi's? Attempt to explain why.

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for SHIUR #3

THE REPETITION OF THE 'ARAYOT'

1. Even though the 'arayot' [forbidden marital relationships] were already detailed in chapter 18, most all of them are repeated again in chapter 20. After verifying this point, attempt to determine in what manner their presentation in chapter 20 is different. At this point, relate only to the laws of the arayot themselves in 20:10-21 AND to the laws that 'surround' them in 20:1-9 and 20:22-27.

Can you suggest a reason for this repetition of the same set of laws twice? In your answer, relate as well to the placement of chapter 19 in between them.

2. Next, carefully review the psukim that surround these arayot (in 20:10-21), i.e. to 20:1-9 and 20:22-27. Attempt to understand (and explain) the internal 'structure' of chapter 20.

Then, compare this structure to the internal structure in chapter 18, where we also find psukim that 'surround' the arayot, i.e. to 18:1-5 and 18:24-30 that surround 18:6-23.

In what manner is this structure similar to the pattern in chapter 20? In what manner is it different?

3. What specific laws does chapter 20 contain that were not found in chapter 18? What 'general' statements are found in both chapters, and what is their importance?

4. In regard to the structure of chapter 20, what is especially difficult about its final pasuk (i.e. 20:27)? In your opinion, why is this pasuk 'out of place' and where in this chapter does it belong?

5. If you are familiar with 'chiastic structures', see if you can find one within chapter 20. Use this (and your answer to question #1) to explain the final pasuk of chapter 20.

Be sure to compare the overall structure of chapter 20 to that of chapter 18. Attempt to explain the nature of this parallel.

How does the topic of chapter 19 [i.e. kedoshim tihiyu] relate to one of the levels of the chiastic structure found in chapter 20?

6. For those of you familiar with the sugya in the Gemara of "ein onshin ela im kein mazhirin" [there is no punishment (by Bet Din) unless first this is a warning], relate this principle to the above question!

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PART III - PARSHANUT

PARSHAT KEDOSHIM AS PART OF SEFER VAYIKRA

1. See Ramban on 19:2. How does Ramban explain why Parshat Kedoshim is recorded in Sefer Vayikra?

Review Ramban's introduction to Sefer Vayikra (on 1:1). Relate this to his peirush on 19:2.

2. Next, see Ibn Ezra on 19:2. How does he answer this question? How and why are their answers different?

3. Finally see Seforno on 19:2. Study it very carefully!

According to Seforno, why is Parshat Kedoshim in Sefer Vayikra? How does Seforno use this to explain the progression of parshiot in Sefer Vayikra?

In what manner is his approach TOTALLY different than Ramban's (in regard to this question)?

Note carefully how Seforno finds not only a thematic connection between Parshat Kedoshim and the first half of Sefer Vayikra, but also how he connects this progression to primary themes in both Sefer Shmot and Sefer Breishit!

Explain how, and how this is consistent with Seforno's overall [thematic] approach to Parshanut.

[Relate this as well to his intro. to Chumash!]

THE FLOW OF TOPICS IN CHAPTER 19

4. See the first Ibn Ezra on Vayikra chapter 19, noting how he explains his entire approach to his interpretation of sets of mitzvot in the Torah (like chapter 19), and why he tries to find a reason for the progression of topic from one mitzvah to the next.

Then, if you have time, review the entire commentary of Ibn Ezra on chapter 19, noting how he explains the flow of topic from one pasuk to the next. If you have even more time, before you see each Ibn Ezra, attempt to suggest a reason first on your own.

be-hatzlacha,
menachem