



ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY

RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS
RCA ISRAEL REGION

PARSHAT KEDOSHIM

Parshat Kedoshim is one of the best parshiot in the Torah. Or at least Rashi says so on the first verse: most of the topics of the Torah are contained in Parshat Kedoshim. Meaning – in learning this one parsha we touch on almost all the main themes of the mitzvot of the Torah.

There are 51 mitzvot in 64 verses. These include some of the most beloved ethical mitzvot: love your neighbor as yourself, help the poor with dignity by leaving parts of your harvest for them, honesty, care for employees, concern for the vulnerable; the deaf, blind and ger. As well as warnings to not follow all types of sorcery. And to administer justice with vigilance. And forbidden sexual relationships and idolatry.

But besides simply enjoying the content of all these rich mitzvot, their context provides an important principle.

The last 11 parshiot, reaching back to Teruma, have revolved around one main theme:

May the Torah learned
from this issue of Torah Tidbits be
לעילוי נשמת

שיינדל רחל בת שלמה
וקריינדל בלימא ע"ה
נלב"ג א"י

In loving memory of
Lilly Manheim a"h
on her 8th yahrtzeit - 3 Iyar, 5784

G-d's invitation to us to rendezvous with Him in the Mikdash. This holy encounter demands purity from us. These 11 parshiot have dealt with the many rules to ensure our encounter with Him is one of Kedusha. In these 11 parshiot we have also been instructed in Kedusha in 2 particular human activities: food (the laws of kashrut), and sexual relations. Both of these are also framed as being areas of holiness. And next week we will have the holy days outlined.

We could easily assume: our task as Jews is to be holy. Holiness means to encounter G-d on His terms in His place. And during holy times; Shabbat and holy days. And also to be holy in those things we most closely share with the animal world: food and procreation. We are not animals. We are in His Image. And so in those very things that are earthy, we limit ourselves, expressing our noble station. Food and sexual relations.

But then we have Parshat Kedoshim. Be holy. How? Honesty. Care for others. No sorcery. Caring for employees. No idol worship. A court system that is just. Forbidden relationships. Concern for vulnerable.

You know, it looks like every way you turn there is another mitzvah. I thought holiness is, well, I thought it was in things that are holy. Mikdash. Shabbat. Not your employees. Or your court. Or your generosity. Or honesty.

The Torah has introduced a dramatic and revolutionary idea. Holiness is everywhere. The Torah has transformed our lives into the stage for holiness. How we treat each other,

how we speak, our food, our relationships, our time. Our every moment becomes a moment of holiness: to be truthful, to be generous, to think, love and fear Him.

And one beautiful stylistic tool emphasizes this. The commentaries struggle to identify the thematic flow of the 51 mitzvot of this parsha. It certainly looks like there is no particular pattern. We all could rearrange the list of mitzvot into neater categories: those between man and G-d, those between man and man, societal mitzvot, encounters with idol worship. That would make a neater flow to the parsha.

It could be that the Torah is using a stylistic tool: a flow of consciousness. You know how our minds fly all over the place: we think about where we are going, then last night's dinner, then how our neighbor is feeling, then what the kids are up to Perhaps, the Torah is employing that style in our parsha. As if to say, whatever you think of, wherever you turn, that internal process of yours that travels the world in 60 seconds, moving from one topic to another – that is where Kedusha can be found. In everything we do. Respect parents, keep Shabbat, don't swear falsely, leave some harvest for the poor, be fair in your courts... Whatever you think of – there's a holiness moment. Our lives are full of moments that can be holy. Everything we do. What a gift: our trite and mundane everyday life has been transformed into the stage for holiness. And that is our Parsha.



1ST ALIYA (VAYIKRA 19:1-14)

Be Holy, as I, G-d, your G-d am holy. Revere parents, keep Shabbat. Do not turn to idols or make graven gods. A shlamim offering may only be eaten for 2 days. Help the poor and stranger when

harvesting a field by leaving dropped or forgotten produce or grapes. Don't steal, lie or swear falsely. Don't cheat; or tarry paying wages 'til the morning. Don't curse the deaf, trip up the blind.

There is a definite repetition or perhaps development of the 10 commandments in these mitzvot. Though not in the exact order they appear in the 10 commandments, but thematically connected.



2ND ALIYA (19:15-22)

Do not pervert justice by favoring either poor or powerful. Don't spread gossip, nor stand by your brother's blood. Don't hate. Don't take revenge; love your neighbor as yourself. Do not interbreed animals or seeds, or wear wool and linen.

Each of these mitzvot is rich. But to not spread gossip. That is a great one. Oh, how the information age has truly perfected the spreading of gossip.

And one of the best verses of the Torah: love your neighbor as yourself. As Rabbi Sacks says: it is easy to love mankind, quite a bit harder to love the person next door. We see the warts, as they see ours. But rise above it. All people have goodness.



3RD ALIYA (19:23-32)

In the Land, fruit is forbidden for the first 3 years of growth, 4th

May the Torah learned in this
Torah Tidbits be **לעילוי נשמת**

**החבר אשר בן החבר נפתלי
ומטלה הירש ז"ל
נלב"ע ג אייר**

In loving memory of
A. Asher Hirsch z"l
on his 17th yartzeit - Gimmel Iyar

You are dearly missed by all

year holy, 5th year permissible. Do not use divination. Nor round the corners of your face or use a straight razor on your beard. Nor tattoo. Nor seek sorcery. Rise before the aged, glorify the wizened.

There are a series of “don’t do what they do” mitzvot; as if to say, do not just imitate the things you will see when you get to the Land. Your hair is different, tattooing isn’t for us, and all those tricks and magic to find answers to the mysteries of life? Not for us.

Rise for the aged; for the wisdom that life itself brings. Quite a contrast to the glorification of youth of our times.



4TH ALIYA (19:33-37)

Love the convert. Employ accurate weights and measures.

The convert may feel out of place, different, self conscious, without family, not part of the crowd. Be extra sensitive to those feeling left out.

I have the good fortune to be the Director of Machon Milton, the RCA course of study for conversion here in Jerusalem, run in partnership with Shavei Yisrael. So, I need to pause on this “love the convert”. We need to be sensitive to everyone’s feelings; but the Torah emphasizes the convert. When you meet someone and find out they are converting or did convert; be sensitive to their feelings. Perhaps they don’t want to tell their story again, for the 50th time. Or 100th. Maybe they just want to enjoy Shabbat dinner and speak of the parsha, sing zmirot, and participate like everyone else. So. Don’t ask them their story. And we need to go out of our way to bring a siddur over to the one who is clearly uncomfortable; and invite them to sit beside us. After all, love the convert.

Accurate weights and measures? Seems

obvious. But the Torah is emphasizing that even when you can get away with it, don’t. Like cursing the deaf. Who will ever know?



5TH ALIYA (20:1-7)

One who gives their child to Molech shall be put to death. And if you don’t do it, I will. The one who turns and follows sorcery, I will deal with them. Be holy; for I am Holy.

There are things done in the name of great piety that are not pious at all. Child sacrifice has a rationale to it: I am willing to give my most precious to G-d. Just that it is a perverted rationale. While we should always strive to understand those who behave unlike us, we should not tolerate behavior that is perverse in the name of piety.



6TH ALIYA (20:8-22)

The following receive the death penalty: cursing parents, the long list of forbidden sexual relationships listed above. Observing these laws and not those of the nations will prevent the Land from spitting you out, as it has done to those nations. Since I have distinguished you, it is you who shall possess the Land, the land flowing with milk and honey.

The Jewish idea of ethical monotheism is on full display in Kedoshim. Holiness wanders seamlessly in the parsha from taking care of the poor, to laws of sacrifices, to honesty, to sexual prohibitions, to loving your neighbor, not hating; all under the rubric of holiness. We are to be holy so that the Land not spit us out. This is certainly something that ought to give pause, those of us walking the streets of our Land. We, the privileged ones living in this Land; we in particular need to be extra vigilant in all these holy things, ritual, interpersonal, speech, care, love; for our success in this Land rests upon it.



7TH ALIYA (20:23-27)

And you shall distinguish between animals to be eaten and those not. Be holy to Me and I will distinguish you to be My people.

The wide range of holy things outlined in the parsha is our expression of being holy to Him. And He, in turn, will make us distinct. ■



STATS - METZORA

30th of 54 sedras; 7th of 10 in Vayikra.

Written on 109 lines in a Torah (49th in Torah).

4 Parshiot; 3 open, 1 closed.

64 pesukim (49th in Torah, 9th in Vayikra).

868 words (49th in Torah, 9th in Vayikra).



MITZVOT - METZORA

51 mitzvot; 13 positives, 38 prohibitions.

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**רפואה שלמה
אורה בת ראינה**

A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES
Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

לא תשנא את אחיך בלבבך הוכח תוכיח את עמיתך (וי"ז)

"You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall surely rebuke your neighbor." (19:17)
What is the connection between these two statements in the same verse?

Rabbi Isser Zalman Melzter (1870-1953, Jerusalem) in his work, the "Avnei Ezel" explains that rebuking someone else for their actions can only properly be done when the person who the rebuke is directed to is loved and respected by the one rebuking. When the two individuals are close to each other and there is genuine concern of the other's welfare, only then can a rebuke be given. If such a concern is sincere, then any criticism will be understood as constructive and will be received and accepted likewise.

The pasuk, in its entirety, is defining the command of "rebuking one's neighbor". "You shall not hate your brother in your heart" and only then, and not otherwise, can one take upon himself to act in accordance with rebuking someone else, "you shall surely rebuke your neighbor."
- Shabbat Shalom