

RED ALERT!

K'doshim

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DIVREI TORAH

- “You shall be holy...” (19:2). According to Rashi, the injunction to be holy calls upon Jews to avoid the illicit relationships described in the previous chapter. Separation from immorality creates holiness.

The Ramban claims the concept of holiness is not limited to one particular category of commandments. In fact, real holiness results only when one disciplines himself in the area of what is permitted. We must not surrender to self-indulgence, gluttony, or licentiousness even when the act itself is permitted by law.

The Akeidat Yitzchak writes as follows: Partaking of the pleasures of this world can occur in different fashions.

- (1) Partaking of the forbidden.
- (2) Partaking of the permitted pleasures.
- (3) Partaking only of those permitted pleasures that are vital for survival and good health of one's body.

The person who indulges in all physical and material pleasures regardless of God's ordinances is enslaved to his evil urges.

Of the second category of person, the one who indulges in everything that the Torah has not specifically forbidden, regardless of his need for these pleasures, Shlomo HaMelech (Kohelet 9,7) observes: “Go and eat your bread in joy.”

This third category is the person who does not indulge unless his vital needs are involved; he does not wish to partake of anything which by reason of his partaking may deprive someone else who is in need of it.

The fact that someone does not steal or rob or otherwise break the law, does not make such person holy. The Talmud (Yevamot 20) advises that if someone strives for holiness he should abstain from pleasures that are permissible. Most of our Sages are not described as saintly although doubtless all of them were righteous and pious. Only a handful qualify for the title “saintly”. Rabi Yehuda HaNasi, who never touched the flesh of the lower part of his body, is an example of such a saintly person (Shabbat 118). Even a Rabi Yosi, who never indulged in idle conversation, does not seem to rate the description “holy” (Sukka 28). Only those who apply to themselves the criteria listed for category 3 above can qualify for that distinctive appellation.

- In this week's sidra we read the mitzva of standing up for an elderly person and for a Talmid Chacham (Torah scholar).

The Gemara (Shavuot 50b) relates that Rav Nachman stood out of respect for the wife of Rav Huna because “the wife of a Torah scholar is like a Torah scholar.”

The Tosafot and RaN imply that there is a Torah obligation to stand up for the wife of a Talmid Chacham. The Minchat Chinuch (257:3) writes that while a Talmid Chacham can absolve others of the obligation to stand up for him (he can be Mocheil his Kavod), that only applies to him; his wife cannot be Mochelet the honor given to her as the wife of a Talmid Chacham since the Torah being honored is not hers.

If the wife of a Torah scholar is widowed, Tosafot, the Ramban and the RaN are of the opinion that there is no longer a Torah obligation to honor her. The Taz (Yoreh De'ah 242:14) cites the Maharam who wrote that if the widow of a Talmid Chacham marries an unlearned person, it is not necessary to honor her as before. The implication is that until she remarries there is an obligation to honor her because of her deceased husband.

(19:17) Reprove. Great is the power of merit of reproof even if the reproof goes unheeded, and the transgressor does not stop sinning. The importance of reproof can be learned from the following words of Chazal: “Three were consulted in that plot [to throw all the male newborns into the river]: Yitro, Iyov, and Bilaam. Bilaam, who suggested the plan, was killed. Iyov, who remained

silent, was punished by suffering. Yitro, who ran away, merited that some of his descendants would sit in the Chamber of Hewn Stone” (Sota 11). At that time, Yitro was an idolater. Moreover, his protest against Pharaoh’s decision only consisted of running away, and had no effect. Pharaoh’s decree conformed exclusively to Bilaam’s advice. Nevertheless, Yitro merited that the Almighty brought him to His service. He became a convert, and his descendants had the greatest good fortune one can have in this world – to sit as members of the Sanhedrin. And all this was in reward for a “silent protest”. By contrast, Iyov, who Scripture describes as “pure, honest, and God-fearing” (Iyov 1:1), was punished for not protesting; and not just any sufferings, but “the sufferings of Job” the most terrible ever known. He would have avoided all that pain if he had just protested. Even a “vain” protest, which would not have cancelled Pharaoh’s decree, would have been better than silence (Oznayim LaTorah).

- “And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Rabi Akiva noted that this is a great principle of Torah (Yerushalmi Nedarim 9:4). The commentators ask: Doesn’t Rabi Akiva contradict this in another statement (Bava Metzia 62a) where he said, “And your brother shall live with you – your life comes first?” The Chatam Sofer resolves the apparent contradictions in the following manner: In regard to worldly matters, one’s life comes before his friend’s.

Therefore, Rabbi Akiva says that if two people are in the desert and there is only enough water for one of them to survive, if the water belongs to one person, he is not required to share it with his friend. However, in reference to spiritual matters, such as Torah learning, one must place his friend's well-being before his own, and must instruct him even at the expense of his own learning, since by teaching another person, both teacher and pupil benefit (hence the word KAMOCHA). This is why Rabi Akiva stresses that loving one's neighbor as one self is a great principle of Torah.

Questions by RED

From the Text

1. Why do we have to be holy? (19:2)
2. What is Leket? (19:9)
3. Do not delay paying a worker. (19:13). May I delay in paying a babysitter?
4. You see a person drowning. Must you jump in the water to save him?
5. Am I permitted to hate someone who wronged me? (19:17)

From Rashi

6. How does Rashi translate the Hebrew word Kedoshim? (19:2)
7. Why does the Torah place the mother first (and in the Ten Commandments, it places the father first)? (19:3)
8. What is the difference between Don't

Steal here and in the Ten Commandments? (19:4)

9. Why does the Torah repeat the prohibition of Do Not Take My Name in Vain? (19:12)

10. Give a practical example of Do Not Place a Stumbling Block in Front of a Blind Person (19:14)

From the Rabbis

11. Why was it necessary to assemble all the people for Kedoshim? (Chizkuni)

12. Love your neighbor as yourself. How about if your neighbor is an evil person? (Ramban)

13. Am I required to wish someone success in his business? (Ramban)

From the Midrash

14. In the Book of Shmuel Alef, it says that Shaul built an altar to Hashem; he was the first who built an altar. (14:35). Didn't No'ach, Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and Moshe all build altars too?

From the Haftara (Amos)

15. What does Hashem expect from us after He freed us from the Egyptian slavery?

Relationships

16.
 - a) Yosef - Orde
 - b) Asher - Serach
 - c) Nachor - Aram
 - d) Yaakov - Naftali
 - e) Machli - Mushi

ANSWERS

1. Because Hashem is holy.
2. When harvesting, if one or two ears fall to the ground, they are gleanings that must be left for the poor.
3. No, you must pay her right away.
4. No, you are not required to risk your own life to save another. You may throw him a rope. (Although not required - because of the risk - if you assess the situation and feel you can do it, it is a voluntary mitzva.)
5. No, you may not hate him.
6. Being separate: separate from acts of sexual immorality.
7. It is natural to fear the father; therefore the mother is mentioned first here. It is natural to honor the mother first; therefore the father is placed first in the Ten Commandments.
8. In the Ten Commandments, the Torah refers to kidnapping. Here it is talking about stealing possessions.
9. Here it includes swearing with a nickname for Hashem.
10. Don't give another person bad advice on business.
11. Because all the Mitzvot are subsumed within this Sidra.
12. No, not if he is a Rasha, an evil person.
13. Yes, wish him success. It is under the Mitzva of Love your neighbor as yourself.
14. He was the first king to build an altar.
15. To be His loyal servants.

16. Relationships

- a) Uncle - nephew
- b) Father - daughter
- c) Grandfather - grandson
- d) Father - son
- e) Brothers