

K'DOSHIM

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



Written on 109 lines • ranks: 49th

4 Parshiyot, 3 open and 1 closed

64 p'sukim, ranks 49th (9th in Vayikra)

868 words, ranks 49th (9th in Vayikra)

3229 letters, ranks 49 (9th in Vayikra)

MITZVOT

51 mitzvot - 13 pos. and 38 prohibitions

K'doshimis 5th place on the mitz./sedra list, following Ki Teitzei's 74, Emor's 63, R'ei's 55, and Mishpatim's 53.

However, on the Mitzva-density list, K'doshim is number 1. If we create a new statistic of mitzvot per 1000 p'sukim, K'doshim heads the list with a MD of 797 ($51/64 * 1000 = 796.875$). Ki Teitzei has a MD of 673. Emor, 508. R'ei, 436½. Mishpatim, 449. Just for comparison purposes, Acharei's MD is $28/80 * 1000 = 350$.

The 17 sedras without mitzvot have MDs of 0. The 1-mitzva sedras vary in MD depending on number of p'sukim.

Sedra-by-Sedra Aliya Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI (positive mitzva); L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek and pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya - 17 p'sukim - 16:1-17

[S> 19:1 (22)] K'DOSHIM TIHYU! BE HOLY! - HOW? In light of the exceptionally large number of mitzvot in this sedra (K'doshim), one can fairly assume that the answer to that question is - by the observance of mitzvot. But, this means more than "just going through the motions". It means a Torah way of life, mitzvot for the right motives and with the right enthusiasm, and performance of mitzvot motivated by AHAVAT HASHEM, love of G-d (not just YIR'AT HASHEM, fear of G-d - but that too).

One must revere his parents [212, A211 19:3], yet keep the Shabbat, meaning (among other things) that if one's parents tell him to violate the Shabbat (or any other mitzva - Torah ordained or rabbinic), he may not listen to them. (Neither may he be disrespectful in his refusal to obey.) Parents and their children are all commanded by G-d to keep the Shabbat (and all mitzvot).

We may not "turn towards" idolatry in thought or words [213, L10 19:4] nor may we make idols [214, L3 19:4]. This specifically prohibits making idols for others. Both these mitzvot are among

the many that are designed to keep the Jew far away from idolatry.

Korbanot must be offered in the Beit HaMikdash in a proper and pleasing manner. Specifically, one must keep to the time limits presented for eating sacred meat [215, L131 19:8]. Violation carries a death penalty from heaven.

Watch this next set of mitzvot: Leave the corner of your field uncut, so that poor people might come and find grain to reap [216, A120 19:10]; do not reap your entire field [217, A210 19:9]. A positive mitzva and a prohibition that basically say the same thing. Here's another pair: Leave the gleanings of the field for the poor [218, A121 19:10]; do not take the gleanings [219, L211 19:9]. And then these two pairs of mitzvot are doubled again - each pair of mitzvot is counted separately as applied to a vineyard [220-223; A123-124, L212-213 19:9-10].

This is one of many examples of the statement made by Rabi Chananya ben Akashya in the last mishna of Masechet Makot, the mishna chosen to conclude the reading/learning of each perek of Pirkei Avot. He said: G-d wanted to merit the People of Israel, therefore he 'heaped' upon them Torah and Mitzvot. Note that it doesn't say that He merely gave us mitzvot - but rather, he heaped (HIRBA) them upon us. This suggests multiple merit for proper observance (but multiple demerits for violations - it is a double-edged sword).

Stealing [224, L244 19:11], denying holding that which belongs to someone else [225, L248 19:11], and swearing to that effect [226, L249 19:11] are all forbidden. Swearing falsely [227, L61 19:12] is forbidden.

That the Torah says one who swears falsely disgraces G-d's name, is echoed by Rambam when he distinguishes between 'serious' sins and 'light' sins. Rambam puts into the serious category all sins that carry a death penalty... and swearing falsely. So destructive are false and vain oaths to the under-pinnings of society, that it is placed with the capital offenses (even though swearing falsely is not per se a capital offense).

Notice something else. Denying that you are holding someone else's possession is a LAV, a Torah prohibition. So is swearing falsely. And so is swearing that you don't have someone's possession when you do, is also a prohibition. Counted separately, even though that violation is covered by two other mitzvot LO TAASEI. Rabi Chananya again. And maybe other reasons as well for the apparent 'duplication'.

Withholding someone's property [228, L247 19:13], robbery [229, L245 19:13], and delaying payment of a laborer [230, L238 19:13] are prohibited. Most people would probably rationalize the situation and not consider delaying payment as a form of theft. The Torah implies that one is (can be?) as serious as the other.

There are many everyday situations for which the prohibition of delaying wages apply: hair-dresser or barber, taxi driver, babysitter... In most cases, people pay for services rendered when they are expected to. We all pay a cab driver at the conclusion of a ride. No one says to the driver, "Sorry, I haven't got the money for the fare; I'll pay you tomorrow." But the mitzvot still apply.

It is suggested that one has KAVANA for the mitzva of paying wages on time, when one pays for a taxi ride or a visit to the hair dresser...

Now take this example: Your regular cleaning lady finishes a few hours of work and you are supposed to pay her, let's say, 150₪. You don't have change. Only a 200₪ note. If you tell her that you don't have change and that you'll pay her the next time she comes, you are in possible violation of mitzva 230, above, and in non-fulfillment of the positive command to pay a laborer on time (counted elsewhere). If the worker freely agrees, without any hard feelings, to wait for payment - then the issur was not violated, but the positive command was not fulfilled either. And if the worker only half-heartedly agrees to the delay - because she is, perhaps, embarrassed to tell you that she needs the money now, then the prohibition is also violated by you. Rather, take steps to get the change, or give her the 200₪ and ask her to bring you change the next time she comes. No violation on your part and a

mitzva has been performed by your hand.

It is forbidden to curse a fellow Jew [231, L317 19:14]; and one may not place a stumbling block before the blind [232, L299 19:14], meaning [not exclusively] that one may not mislead or entrap others. Care must be taken not to mislead anyone, even inadvertently. This can include stretching the truth or saying something that is not actually a lie, but it will convey to others that which is not really so. (Helping someone do the wrong thing is part of this prohibition - even if the other knows what he's doing and wants to do it.)

Levi - Second Aliya - 8 p'sukim - 19:15-22

Do not pervert justice [233, L273 19:15], do not favor a poor person in a judgment, nor show honor to a prominent person during a trial [234, L275 19:15]. We must always carry out true justice [235, A177 19:15]. Once again, notice that we have a positive mitzva which, in essence, is the "flip side" of several prohibitions, the violation of which results in distorting and perverting justice.

Even though these mitzvot are directed to judges and the courts, each individual Jew must draw from these mitzvot the importance of being fair and apply some of these rules on an informal basis, to everyday life.

Neither gossip nor slander (regardless of whether what you say is true or false) [236, L301 19:16];

Even plain gossip is prohibited - it's called R'CHILUT. Malicious gossip is worse - it's called LASHON HARA. The prohibition is from the same words in the Torah - LO TEILEICH RACHIL B'AMECHA. An even worse level of the same prohibition is spreading a lie to defame someone - this is called MOTZI SHEIM RA. None of it is good.

Do not stand by while your fellow is in danger of life, limb, or property [237, L297 19:16]. Do not hate your fellow Jew in your heart [238, L302 19:17]; reproach your fellow SENSITIVELY [239, A205 19:17] being careful to avoid embarrassing him [240, L303 19:17] (even while reproaching).

Notice: A person is reproaching a fellow Jew for doing a sin, yet he must avoid embarrassing him - how much more so (KAL VACHOMER) must we avoid ever embarrassing another individual who has done nothing wrong.

Do not take revenge [241, L304 19:18] nor bear a grudge [242, L305 19:18]; "Love thy neighbor..." [243, A206 19:18]. Notice the constant reminder: "I am G-d" or words to that effect. Being nice to others is not just nice; it is part of Torah and the fulfillment of G-d's commandments.

It is forbidden to cross-breed animals of different species [244, L217 19:19], to sow mixed seeds [245, L215 19:19],

and to wear Shaatnez, mixtures of wool and linen in a garment. Note that in this one pasuk, there is a forbidden animal-animal mix, a plant-plant mix, and an animal-plant mix, making the point (among others) that G-d allows us a dominance over nature but has imposed restrictions and limits.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 10 p'sukim - 19:23-32

Next we find the complicated issue of the atonement for improper relations with a maidservant who is partially freed and partially still a slave. In some cases, a Korban ASHAM is required.

[P> 19:23 (10)] Fruits of the first three years of a tree's life are forbidden, i.e. they are ORLA [246, L192 19:23]. The 4th year's yield is sacred [247, A119 19:24] and must be eaten only in Yerushalayim, or redeemed and the money used for food and drink in Yerushalayim. From the fifth year on, the fruits are permitted. One may not eat gluttonously [248, L195 19:26]. One may not consult and rely on omens, divination, conjuring, or some aspects of astrology [249,250; L32,33 19:26]. Shaving the temple area of the head is forbidden [251, L43 19:27] as is shaving the face with a razor [252, L44 19:27].

Permanent tattooing is forbidden [253, L41 19:28]. Protect your daughters from loose behavior. Keep the Shabbat and respect the place of the Mikdash

(even when no Beit HaMikdash stands there) [254, A21 19:30].

[There is a dispute as to whether the Torah-level sanctity of the place of the Mikdash applies when no Mikdash stands. Some say it is d'Rabanan in our time; others say it remains Torah law.]

Ov and Yid'oni (mediums and wizards) are forbidden [255,256; L8,9 19:31]. One must rise and otherwise respect the elderly and Torah scholars [257, A209 19:32].

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 5 p'sukim - 19:33-37

[S> 19:33 (5)] One must not take advantage of the newcomer to the Land (convert and/or stranger). The convert shall be treated with love; we must learn from our Egyptian experience. It is forbidden to cheat with any false measures [258, L271 19:35]; one must be honest in weights and measures [259, A208 19:36]. Keep all of G-d's statutes and laws.

Chamishi - 5th Aliya - 7 p'sukim - 20:1-7

[P> 20:1 (27)] The punishment for Molech (a perverse idolatrous practice involving child-sacrifice) is death by stoning. G-d will cut off the one who serves Molech. If society does not punish the violator, G-d will. So too for the practice of Ov and Yid'oni.

Sanctify yourself and be holy.

As the sedra started with the command to Be Holy, the major section of mitzvot in Parshat K'doshim concludes with the same command (different wording).

Shishi Sixth Aliya 15 p'sukim - 20:8-22

Preserve the statutes and do them, for G-d sanctifies us because of our deeds.

Cursing one's parents, even after their deaths, is forbidden [260, L318 20:9], and is a capital offense.

The Torah reiterates the forbidden relationships that were presented at the end of Acharei. They are all capital offenses. The specific methods of execution vary, but it is in this context that Rambam learns the command to Sanhedrin to carry out the punishment of "internal burning" when called for [261, A208 20:14].

Again, the Torah commands us to preserve all of the mitzvot, thus preventing the Land (of Israel) from expelling us.

Sh'VII Seventh Aliya 5 p'sukim - 20:23-27

It is forbidden to follow the practices of the nations amongst whom we find ourselves [262, L30 20:23]. This ISUR applies to idolatrous practices, immoral acts, and that which has no apparent reason. There is no prohibition of following a non-Jewish practice that is reasonable and constructive.

In order to inherit the land of Israel, we must not behave in the abominable ways of nations that preceded us. We must distinguish between kosher and non-kosher animals (and life-styles); we must be holy and distinct from others. We are not automatically different from anyone else. Torah makes us different. Torah gives us our unique identities.

Every Jew must play a dual role. We are each individuals and we are part of Klal Yisrael. We are exhorted to keep the Torah as individuals, but we are also "advised" to be faithful to G-d so that tragedies will not happen to the People of Israel as a whole.

Ov & Yid'oni are punished by stoning.

Maftir is the final 3 p'sukim. They make a powerful summary of all the mitzvot of Acharei and K'doshim. There is a repeat of the command to be holy, and the reason: that G-d is holy. And we find G-d's promise that He will keep us apart from the other nations, to be His.

Haftara 9 p'sukim

Amos 9:7-15 short haftara

Let's put it like this: There is a haftara for each sedra. And that includes one for Parshat Acharei and one for K'doshim. These two haftarot are one from Amos - HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM - let's call it HALO. and the other is from Yechezkeil - let's call it HATISHPOT. It is not clear which haftara is for which sedra - some Chumashim have HALO for Acharei and HATISHPOT for K'doshim, and some Chumashim have it the other way

around.

In all one-Adar years, Acharei and K'doshim are combined and HALO is the haftara for the double sedra. It doesn't matter which haftara goes with which haftara, everyone (Ashkenazim) read HALO when the sedras are combined.

In two-Adar years, the sedras are read separately, and...

In most of these year-types, one or the other sedra has a special haftara that pre-empts the regular haftara. When that happens, regardless of whether it is Acharei or K'doshim that has a special haftara, the other gets HALO. Acharei is sometimes Shabbat HaGadol. We then read HALO for K'doshim. K'doshim can sometimes be Shabbat Rosh Chodesh Iyar. Then the week before, we read HALO for Acharei. Sometimes one or the other (different for Israel and Chutz LaAretz) is Machar Chodesh. The other one gets HALO.

If it looks to you like HATISHPOT is not a popular haftara, you'd be right. And why is that so? Because HATISHPOT is very down on Yerushalayim. HATISHPOT is sometimes referred to as TO'EIVAT YERUSHALAYIM.

This year, 5784, is the one year-type of the 14 different year-types of our Calendar, that neither Acharei nor K'doshim is a 'special'.

In that case, one of them gets HALO and the other gets HATISHPOT.

Some say that it should be HALO for Acharei and HATISHPOT for K'doshim; some say the other way around.

And finally, to YERUSHALAYIM. There is a prevalent minhag to read HALO for both Acharei and K'doshim, resulting in Yechezkeil's HATISHPOT haftara NEVER being read.

Prevalent minhag, but not without controversy. Some authorities object to reading the same haftara for two consecutive sedras. Yet, there is another example of that being done.

Do you know when and where a haftara is read on two consecutive weeks?

5784's year-type is coded MEM-ZAYIN-CHET, meaning it is a Shana M'uberet, that began on Shabbat (ZAYIN) and its Kislev is CHASEIR, the 30th of that month is removed. Only this year-type has both Acharei and K'doshim separate and neither is a 'special'. The last time we had a year like this was back in 5757 (1997) - 27 years ago. And before that in 5733 (1974, 24 years earlier). It is scheduled next for 5801, 17 years from now. It doesn't happen often.

The haftara basically clarifies the "deal part" of the command to be holy. Amos stresses that we will be just like all other of G-d's children on Earth, no different from the Ethiopians, the Philistines, etc. That is, of course, if we don't remain faithful to G-d. Because if we do, and keep the mitzvot sincerely, then the promises of the Torah will be

realized and we will be unique among the nations. It's really up to us. That's our challenge.

See Rabbi Winkler's haftara atricle on the next page for his presentation of HATISHPOT.