

# Acharei- K'doshim

	Ach	K'do	AK
of 54 sedras	29th	30th	-
of 10 in Vayikra	6th	7th	-
lines	154	109	263
rank	44th	49th	-
Parshiyot	15	4	19
P'tuchot	3	3	6
S'tumot	12	1	13
P'sukim	80	64	144
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	45/6	49/9	-
Words	1170	868	2038
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	43/6	49/9	-
Letters	4294	3229	7523
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	45/6	49/9	-
<b>Mitzvot</b> (pos/prohib)	<b>2+26</b>	<b>13+38</b>	<b>15+64</b>

## MITZVOT

K'doshim's 51 mitzvot give it 5th place on the mitzvot/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.

# Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra 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; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

## Kohen - First Aliya - 17+7=24 p'sukim - 16:1-24

[P> 16:1 (34)] The first part of Parshat Acharei (Mot) deals with the Yom Kippur service in the Beit HaMikdash - Seder HaAvoda. An emotional element is introduced when the Torah tells us that G-d gave these commands "after the deaths of Aharon's two sons". We cannot help but be struck by the combination of the Kohen Gadol performing the loftiest of spiritual tasks with the background of his personal grief. These feelings are especially powerful as we hear this reading on Yom Kippur morning.

Before the Service is described, kohanim in general are warned not to enter the Beit HaMikdash other than when they have tasks to perform there [184, L68 16:2].

It is hard to miss the additional connection to Nadav and Avihu, who

entered the Mikdash for the performance of an "improper" task.

The entire Yom Kippur service, with all of its details, constitutes one mitzva [185, A49 16:3]. Aharon is to take a bull as a sin-offering (CHATAT) and a ram as a burnt-offering (OLAH). He is to wear his special garments (the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur alternates between his full set of eight garments and a special set of four pure white garments which he wore when he entered the Kodshei HaKodashim).

The Kohen Gadol washes his hands and feet ten times throughout the day and immerses in a mikveh five times.

"From the People", Aharon takes two goats for sin-offerings and a ram as an Olah. The bull is an atonement for Aharon and the kohanim. Lots were cast to determine which of the two (identical) goats was to be offered as a korban and which was taken out into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

**SDT** There are two very different styles of sin - rejecting what G-d says and distancing oneself from the Divine, on the one hand, and violating His commands in an attempt to get closer to Him, on the other. Most sins are of the former type; that of Nadav and Avihu was of the latter kind. Correspondingly, we have two special offerings on Yom Kippur - one that was offered inside the Beit HaMikdash, its blood actually being brought into the Kodshei Kodashim, and the

other being sent completely away from the Beit HaMikdash. Two opposite destinations for the atonements of two opposite types of sin. Note, however, that both goats were identical. *(Based on a long-time-ago shiur by RYMKO z"l)*

The Kohen Gadol performs all of the duties of the Day, with minimal assistance from other kohanim. The Holy of Holies filled with smoke from the incense offering when the Kohen Gadol entered. The service of Yom Kippur is complex; it is detailed in the repetition of the Musaf Amida on Yom Kippur as well as in the Torah reading.

This next portion continues to describe the complex service of Yom Kippur. Among the many tasks of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, is VIDUI on behalf of all the people of Israel.

His confession of sin must be accompanied by t'shuva and vidui of each Jew, if complete atonement is to be achieved. Rambam says that there is "communal forgiveness" for "minor" offenses, but major sins require that the individual do his own T'shuva. Even when there is "communal forgiveness", an individual still has to be part of the community in order to benefit from it. He who distances himself from the community does not receive the benefits of communal prayer, repentance, and atonement. Over-simplified, to be sure, but there is a point here.

## Levi - Second Aliya - 10+7 p'sukim - 16:34-17:7

The Torah continues detailing the Yom Kippur service. It concludes with a reiteration of the rules of Yom Kippur for each of us, and the statement that the Day of Yom Kippur helps bring atonement to the People. It is thus the Day itself, the Temple service, communal prayer, AND our individual prayer, T'shuva, confession and fasting that combine to attain true forgiveness for ourselves and all of Israel.

[P> 17:1 (16)] It is forbidden to slaughter an animal that is to be offered as a korban, outside the area of the Beit HaMikdash [186, L90 17:3].

## MITZVAnotes

It is similarly forbidden to slaughter an animal for personal use within the precincts of the Temple. A korban slaughtered outside is invalid and must be burned; "personal" meat inside is likewise forbidden. Both are wasteful, hence sinful, acts which the Torah implies are akin to "bloodshed". In other words, G-d allows us to kill animals for acceptable purposes, but not to 'waste' the life of any creature.

## Shlishi - Third Aliya - 14+16 p'sukim - 17:8-18:21

The Torah reiterates the prohibition of slaughtering korbanot "outside" and then states emphatically that it is forbidden to eat blood. Blood symbolizes life.

When one slaughters a bird or a "wild" animal (e.g. deer, wild goat - as opposed to the domesticated farm animal for which this mitzva does not apply), he is required to cover the first amount of blood with "dust" (sand, sawdust, etc.) [187, A147 17:13]. This gets its own b'racha, in addition to the b'racha for Sh'chita - AL KISUI DAM BE-AFAR. The prohibitions relating to blood are repeated and stressed. Blood of korbanot goes on the Altar as an atonement; blood of animals that are not eligible for korbanot must be covered.

**CLARIFICATION...** Mammals divide into two categories: B'HEIMA and CHAYA. The three types of kosher B'HEIMOT - cow, goat, and sheep - are "fit for the Altar". They are not included in the mitzva of KISUI DAM, covering the blood. Their blood is "atoning" (because of their eligibility to be korbanot\*). No CHAYA is fit for the Mizbei'ach. Among the birds, only two types - the dove and the turtle-dove - can be korbanot. All other birds are unfit for the altar. Therefore, the rule for birds follows



the majority, and covering the blood applies to birds (including doves).

In our "everyday" experience, when a cow is slaughtered for food, the blood of the Sh'chita is not covered. When chickens are slaughtered, the additional mitzva of covering the blood (additional to the mitzva of Sh'chita) applies. It is forbidden to slaughter a chicken without being prepared to cover the first gush of blood with sand or sawdust.

\* Go back up a bit and see where the asterisk is and then come back here and read on...

Not every breed of cow nor other animals in the cow family are fit for the altar. Same for goat. Same for sheep. And this has ramifications in halacha. On this particular issue of KISUI DAM, all kosher B'HEIMOT would not require covering the blood and all CHAYOT would. And if there is a question as to which category a particular animal belongs, then KISUI DAM should be done without a bracha, just to play it safe. Some of the other ramifications are more 'interesting', but we'll save those for another time. Bottom line, the fact that there are probably many types of animals in the cow, goat, or sheep family that are not fit for the altar, doesn't change the fact that the official altar-fit animals are (generically) cow, goat, and sheep - and that is - according to the Sefer

HaChinuch (the Torah itself doesn't give a reason) - the reason for KISUI DAM not applying to B'HEIMOT.

[P> 18:1 (5)] Chapter 18 contains the many forbidden sexual relationships. First there is a general warning against copying the negative practices of Egypt (from where we came) and those of the peoples of Canaan (to where we are going).

We have only to follow the laws and statutes of G-d and live by them.

**SDT** From the term V'CHAI BAHAM, "and live by them", we are taught two important concepts. Judaism is not just a religion; it is a way of life.

Furthermore, this pasuk is (one of) the source(s) of the concept that mitzvot (in general) are to LIVE by, not to die by, in other words, that for most mitzvot - with very important exceptions - we may violate them if it means saving a life.

[S> 18:6 (1)] It is prohibited to be intimate with any of the forbidden relations [188, L353 18:6].

[S> 18:7 (1)] The Gemara seems to understand "uncovering the nakedness of one's father" as forbidding homosexual relations with one's father [189, L351 18:7] (in addition to the general prohibition of homosexual acts). One may not have sexual relations with his mother [190, L330 18:7].

**CLARIFICATION** (actually, the opposite) - The English translation of 18:7

is "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother. You shall not uncover her nakedness." Rashi says: "This refers to relations with your father's wife (no matter whether she is your own mother or your stepmother)." He continues to analyze the phrase ERVAT AVICHA and points to a later pasuk where it definitely refers to relations with one's father's wife. The second part of the pasuk, says Rashi, refers to one's mother who is not one's father's wife. Rashi's explanations are based on the Gemara in Sanhedrin.

Ramban quotes Rashi, seems to agree with him but also mentions the Gemara's presentation, as relations with one's father. Ramban concludes that the pasuk is forbidding relations with one's father's wife - whether or not she is one's mother, and with one's mother, whether or not she is one's father's wife - part of which is the focus of the next pasuk, 18:8. Rashi on this pasuk says that relations with one's father's wife are prohibited even after the father's death.

[S> 18:8 (1)] his father's wife (even if she is not his mother) [191, L331 18:8]

[S> 18:9 (1)] his sister (from same father or mother or both) [192, L332 18:9]

[S> 18:10 (1)] his granddaughter from a

son [193, L334 18:10] or from a daughter [194, L335 18:10], his daughter [195, L336 18:10]

This last prohibition is derived by KAL VACHOMER, the logical reasoning that if a man is forbidden to have relations with his granddaughter, how much more so is he forbidden to his daughter. It further is taught by other Talmudic principles, since a Kal VaChomer by itself is subject to weaknesses. This is significant by being a full-fledged prohibition in the Torah that has no direct wording to point to, but is taught to us as part of the Oral Law. It is as if G-d commanded this mitzva specifically this way, rather than spelling out the prohibition, as all the others are, in order to teach us that this prohibition is in no way less than all the others.

[S> 18:11 (1)] The Torah singles out the daughter of one's father's wife and forbids relations with her [196, L333 18:10] although she is his sister, already being forbidden to him by mitzva #192. There are different opinions as to the significance and ramifications of this "seemingly" extraneous prohibition. This prohibition is definitely not a father's wife's daughter that is not a child of the father, what in today's terminology is called a step-sister, because there is no prohibition in that case.

[S> 18:12 (1)] One may not have relations with his paternal aunt [197, L340 18:12],

[S> 18:13 (1)] nor his maternal aunt [198, L341 18:13],

[S> 18:14 (1)] nor may a man have homosexual relations with his uncle [199, L352 18:14] nor may he have relations with his uncle's wife [200, L342 18:14]. See the above comments on 18:7.

[S> 18:15 (1)] One may not have relations with his daughter-in-law [201, L343 18:15],

[S> 18:16 (1)] his brother's wife [202, L344 18:16] (except for the unique circumstances of the mitzva of YIBUM).

[S> 18:17 (14)] A man is forbidden to have relations with his wife's mother or daughter [203, L337 18:17], or her grandmother or granddaughter from son or daughter [204,205; L338,339 18:17]

A man may not have relations with his wife's sister, during the wife's lifetime - even if he divorced his wife first [206, L345 18:18].

Relations with a woman in a state of NIDA is forbidden [207, L346 18:19].

Relations with a married woman is forbidden. (This prohibition is counted elsewhere, but restated here with all the other forbidden relationships.)

It is forbidden to give one's child to the pagan rituals of Molech [208, L7 18:21].

## R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 9+19 p'sukim - 18:22-19:14

*The fourth Aliya is always the bridge  
Aliya between two combine sedras*

Homosexual acts are forbidden [209, L350 18:22]. Sexual behavior with animals is forbidden for men, women [210,211; L348,349 18:23]

We must not defile ourselves by doing any of the above. These abominable practices defile the Land and result in expulsion therefrom. We must scrupulously shun these practices.

**NOTE:** In addition to the Torah's prohibitions, there are many other relations that the Sages forbid in the spirit of the Torah's prohibitions.

[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. 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).

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. The mishna is also used to conclude many shiurim - Kaddish d'Rabbanan usually follows. 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 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 underpinnings of society, that it is placed with the capital offenses.

On another note: The prohibition of swearing to one's denial that he has

the property of the other is a total overlap with the mitzva before it and the one after it. If one is prohibited from claiming that he has something that belongs to the other person, when, in fact he does -and- if the Torah forbids swearing falsely, then the Rambam's Prohibition #249 and the Chinuch's mitzva #226 is covered. And yet, it is counted among the Torah's Taryag.

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 should have 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, 150nis. You don't have change. Only a 200nis 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 isur 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. Rather, take steps to get the change, or give her the 200nis 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 - this will satisfy both the prohibition and the positive mitzva.

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.

## **Chamishi** -5th Aliya - 8+10 p'sukim - 19:15-32

Do not pervert justice [233, L273 19:15], 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];

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).

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.

Next we find the complicated issue of the atonement for improper relations with a maidservant who is partially freed and partially still a slave.

[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].

## Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 5+7 p'sukim - 19:33-20:7

[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.

[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).

## Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 15+5 p'sukim - 20:8-27

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.

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.

**The classic example of a practice that originated from the non-Jewish world and is NOT considered a violation of Chukat HaGayim, is medical personnel wearing white. I would add to this that standing for a memorial siren is definitely not Chukat HaGoyim either.**

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**

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 ongoing challenge.