

KEDOSHIM (HOLY THINGS)

Vayikra 19:1 - 20:27

This particular portion is often viewed as very difficult teaching to the new seeker of Torah.

It contains a lot of “dos and don’ts”.

The detailed instruction of Vayikra 19 & 20 are varied and tedious because they represent YHVH’s important and specific instructions to the redeemed community.

They concern how we are to walk and how we are to reflect the character of YHVH in this world.

They are not a “grocery list” of human behaviors which if obeyed will earn us a place in heaven and a “better” standing with YHVH; or if disobeyed, will result in ones demise in hell.

The main theme of chapter 19 is “Be Holy for I am Holy”.

Chapter 20 agrees and adds, “If you do not be holy, you could be cut off from your people”.

The text indicates that Moshe is speaking to all of Israel.

The point was that if Israel was to walk as YHVH intended them to walk, it required the obedience of the entire community for it to come to pass.

Rabbi Munk states, “**The presence of the entire assembly signifies that the ultimate goal of holiness can be achieved only through the collective efforts of the whole nation.**”

We can learn from this that there is a personal holiness in which YHVH wants us to individually walk. But there is also a community holiness in which we, as a community, are to walk.

We are not islands to ourselves.

Remember in Yeshua’s day that the Ruach did not manifest His presence until they were gathered together “in one accord”.

This section of Torah tells us the purpose for each of the specific instruction. It tells us the motive for doing them and it also tells us the means for doing them.

What does YHVH expect from us as individual members of the called out community?

HOLINESS

YHVH's definition of holiness is spelled out clearly in this parasha. It encompasses being totally set apart unto YHVH in absolutely every area of our life.

There is **no distinction** between secular and holy. Not even one area of our lives is left uncovered.

This parasha repeats the Ten Commandments, however, they are in a different order. Why would YHVH have Moshe rearrange His commandments?

To show that they are equally important. They were not given in an ascending or descending order of importance.

At the end of Chapter 20, YHVH informs Israel that He does not want them to live like the people around them.

So to, **we are not** to live like, worship like, think like, or look like the world around us.

The holiness of all Israelites is to be in complete contrast to the world.

When we consider living out these commands, we need to ask:

How do I do this in such a way as to visibly communicate to those around me the matchless perfection of YHVH who instructed me to do this to begin with?

When we read that YHVH wants us to be holy because He is Holy, we also learn the *motivation for being holy*, i.e. living the teachings in Vayikra.

The only revealed motive is that we are to do so only because YHVH is holy. We are to seek to be imitators of Him alone who called us out of the wilderness into His perfect light.

We are not to do so to earn merit with Him. We are not to do it to try and earn His love. We already have His love, and we rest totally on the merit of our Messiah Yeshua. We are to follow these teachings only because they reflect who He is inside of us.

There is **a hidden secret** in the words, "Be holy because Yahweh your Elohim is holy.

If we understand the secret, we will be able to accomplish what these words are asking us to do.

The **first part** of the secret is to understand that in and of ourselves we cannot be holy; we cannot live according to the standards set forth in this chapter.

The **second part** of the secret is to make sure that He is, in fact, YHVH our Elohim.
If YHVH is not our personal Elohim then it is impossible to be like Him.

Yeshua said that if we receive Him it is the same as receiving His Father.

So, how does one have YHVH as his personal Elohim:
By receiving His Son.

So the secret is that we can be holy only if we have received Yeshua as our Messiah.
Without Him as Savior, we have no access to the Ruach.

He then transforms us into being completely holy, blameless, righteous and upright – just like He is!

We are a new creation according to Sha’ul.

NOW: the commandments to Keep Shabbat, Honor our father and mother, avoid idolatry and so forth **become a delight**. We become like David in realizing the importance of YHVH’s instructions.

Lets look at Psalm 119 and what David had to say about YHVH’s word.

A STUDY OF PSALM 119

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(NKJ with minor word corrections)

IN PSALM 119 THERE ARE NINE OTHER WORDS THAT RUN PARALLEL TO OR ARE SYNONYMS WITH “TEACHING”.

- 1. HIS TORAH**
- 2. HIS WITNESSES**
- 3. HIS WORDS**
- 4. HIS LAWS**
- 5. HIS TEACHINGS**
- 6. HIS COMMANDS**
- 7. HIS RIGHT-RULINGS**
- 8. HIS ORDERS**

9. HIS TRUSTWORTHINESS

10. HIS WAYS

THERE IS ONE OF THESE IN EVERY VERSE OF PS 119 EXCEPT VERSE 122.

THIS GREAT PSALM ABOUT THE TEACHINGS OF YHVH FOLLOWS THE MESSIANIC PSALM 118.

UNLESS WE ARE FIRST DECLARED RIGHTEOUS THROUGH BELIEF IN YESHUA, WE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY IN SAYING, “OH HOW I LOVE YOUR TEACHINGS”. (TEHILLIM 119:97)

a ALEPH

¹Blessed are the undefiled in the way,
Who walk in the Torah of YHVH!

²Blessed are those who keep His testimonies,
Who seek Him with the whole heart!

King David is telling us how to be blessed. If we want to receive the blessings of YHVH all we have to do is walk in YHVH's Torah and keep His testimonies. Understand that this is not about salvation, however, only those who truly seek Him are able to meet these requirements. If we truly seek Him we will accept Messiah because Torah leads us to Him.

³They also do no iniquity;
They walk in His ways.

What are iniquities? How do they differ from walking in His ways?

(Iniquity = Gross injustice, wickedness, sin, a wicked act)

Walking in His ways means being obedient to Torah. Without the Torah, we do not know what iniquity would be.

⁴You have commanded us
To keep Your precepts diligently.

⁵Oh, that my ways were directed
To keep Your statutes!

⁶Then I would not be ashamed,
When I look into all Your commandments.

David is saying that he knows YHVH has commanded us to follow all His instructions.

He wishes that He was able to do so with out failure. As he studies the Torah he is reminded of those times he has failed and is ashamed.

⁷I will praise You with uprightness of heart,
When I learn Your righteous judgments.

⁸I will keep Your statutes;
Oh, do not forsake me utterly!

As he learns more of the depth of the Torah he is committing to follow the commands and statutes. Are we ready to make the same statement?

B BETH

⁹How can a young man cleanse his way? David answers his own question.
By taking heed according to Your word.

¹⁰With my whole heart I have sought You;
Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

How do we avoid sin? Can we really become Holy before YHVH?

¹¹Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.

¹²Blessed are You, YHVH!

Teach me Your statutes.

¹³With my lips I have declared

All the judgments of Your mouth. We are to voice the commandments of YHVH.

¹⁴I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies,
As much as in all riches.

¹⁵I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways.

¹⁶I will delight myself in Your statutes;
I will not forget Your word.

Remember how Moshe told us to meditate on YHVH's word. We are to constantly remember what He has told us. That is the purpose for the Mezuzah, tzitzit, and tefillin. The festivals are to serve as additional reminders.

G GIMEL

¹⁷Deal bountifully with Your servant,
That I may live and keep Your word.

¹⁸Open my eyes, that I may see
Wondrous things from Your Torah.

David realizes that there is a wondrous depth to the Torah. He wants to actually live the word. It is life. We need to realize as David does, that we cannot see and understand the Torah without the guidance of the Ruach of YHVH.

¹⁹I am a stranger in the earth;
Do not hide Your commandments from me.

What does he mean that he is a stranger in the earth. Could it be that he realizes that there is more to Torah than mankind can ever grasp in his lifetime? Only by the revealing of the Ruach can we find all the commandments for our lives.

²⁰My soul breaks with longing
For Your judgments at all times.

What a special position to be in. To yearn for YHVH so much it hurts.

²¹You rebuke the proud—the cursed,
Who stray from Your commandments.

²²Remove from me reproach and contempt,
For I have kept Your testimonies. There is a punishment and lack of blessing for those
who do not keep Torah. We want to avoid the contempt of YHVH?

²³Princes also sit and speak against me,
But Your servant meditates on Your statutes.

²⁴Your testimonies also are my delight
And my counselors.

Psalm 1 instructs us not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly; those who do not obey
Torah.

? **d DALETH**

²⁵My soul clings to the dust;
Revive me according to Your word.

²⁶I have declared my ways, and You answered me;
Teach me Your statutes.

David is saying that his ways are not good enough. He has come before YHVH in
Teshuvah and YHVH has forgiven him. He wants YHVH to teach him so that he
will not continue to sin.

²⁷Make me understand the way of Your precepts;
So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works.

We are not able to even meditate upon the precepts of YHVH unless we understand them.

²⁸My soul melts from heaviness;
Strengthen me according to Your word.

²⁹Remove from me the way of lying,
And grant me Your Torah graciously.

³⁰I have chosen the way of truth;
Your judgments I have laid before me.

³¹I cling to Your testimonies;

YHVH, do not put me to shame!
³²I will run the course of Your commandments,
For You shall enlarge my heart.

David is saddened by the fact that he is having trouble living up to the Torah. Even with all his own effort he still finds himself lying and having trouble keeping the commandments. Only YHVH can give him the stamina to complete the race.

h HET

³³Teach me, YHVH, the way of Your statutes,
And I shall keep it to the end.
³⁴Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your Torah;
Indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.
³⁵Make me walk in the path of Your commandments,
For I delight in it.

David continues to plead with YHVH to guide and direct him. He needs additional wisdom and understanding.

³⁶Incline my heart to Your testimonies,
And not to covetousness.
³⁷Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things,
And revive me in ^עYour way.

We must strive to seek only the things of YHVH. We must learn to let Him show us what is worthy of our time and effort. So much of what we set great store by is worthless in the plan of YHVH for our lives. Only YHVH can help us to follow His way.

³⁸Establish Your word to Your servant,
Who is devoted to fearing You.
³⁹Turn away my reproach which I dread,
For Your judgments are good.
⁴⁰Behold, I long for Your precepts;
Revive me in Your righteousness.

W VAV

⁴¹Let Your mercies come also to me, YHVH—
Your salvation according to Your word.

Only through the mercies of YHVH can we receive His salvation.

⁴²So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me,
For I trust in Your word.
⁴³And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
For I have hoped in Your ordinances.

The Torah will give us the words to answer our enemies as they attack our beliefs and even our lifestyle. By constantly studying we will always be prepared.

⁴⁴So shall I keep Your Torah continually,
Forever and ever.

⁴⁵And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.

⁴⁶I will speak of Your testimonies also before kings,
And will not be ashamed.

⁴⁷And I will delight myself in Your commandments,
Which I love.

⁴⁸My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments,
Which I love,
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

David's words of praise for YHVH's Torah are awesome. He commits to keep the Torah before himself at all times and use it to guide all his actions.

L ZAYIN

⁴⁹Remember the word to Your servant,
Upon which You have caused me to hope.

He is asking YHVH to remember the words of Moshe (the Torah) .

⁵⁰This is my comfort in my affliction,
For Your word has given me life.

⁵¹The proud have me in great derision,
Yet I do not turn aside from Your Torah.

Those of the world are constantly attacking him, they consider him with disdain because of his attempt to follow Torah rather than the ways of the world. And you thought this was something new. You thought that what you are going through with family and friends is your personal plague. It's been around since the garden.

⁵²I remembered Your judgments of old, YHVH,
And have comforted myself.

⁵³Indignation has taken hold of me
Because of the wicked, who forsake Your Torah.

⁵⁴Your statutes have been my songs
In the house of my pilgrimage.

⁵⁵I remember Your name in the night, YHVH,
And I keep Your Torah.

⁵⁶This has become mine,
Because I kept Your precepts.

All that he has in life he credits to the obedience to Torah. Even when his fears awaken him in the night, he remembers YHVH and His protection.

X HETH

⁵⁷You are my portion, YHVH;
I have said that I would keep Your words.
⁵⁸I entreated Your favor with my whole heart;
Be merciful to me according to Your word.

YHVH, judge me by the words of your Torah. Grant me the mercy promised if I attempt to follow your commandments.

⁵⁹I thought about my ways,
And turned my feet to Your testimonies.
⁶⁰I made haste, and did not delay
To keep Your commandments.

David says, “I have thought about what I am doing and turned to you as soon as I realized my errors”. David made many major mistakes in his life but always was quick to return to YHVH. For this reason, YHVH said he was a man after His own heart. *Failing is not fatal*, only refusing to seek YHVH’s mercy can keep you from his presence.

⁶¹The cords of the wicked have bound me,
But I have not forgotten Your Torah.

Even if others entice him to failure, he will always remember the Torah and return to its wisdom.

⁶²At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.

Even when he wakes up during the night, he will stop to give thanks.

⁶³I am a companion of all who fear You,
And of those who keep Your precepts.

He seeks to be with those who fear YHVH and obey His Torah.

⁶⁴The earth, YHVH, is full of Your mercy;
Teach me Your statutes.

J TETH

⁶⁵You have dealt well with Your servant,
YHVH, according to Your word.

⁶⁶Teach me good judgment and knowledge,
For I believe Your commandments.

⁶⁷Before I was afflicted I went astray,
But now I keep Your word.

Even when things were going well with me I go astray. Now I am dedicated to keeping YHVH's word.

⁶⁸You are good, and do good;
Teach me Your statutes.

⁶⁹The proud have forged a lie against me,
But I will keep Your precepts with my whole heart.

⁷⁰Their heart is as fat as grease,
But I delight in Your Torah.

⁷¹It is good for me that I have been afflicted,
That I may learn Your statutes.

⁷²The Torah of Your mouth is better to me
Than thousands of coins of gold and silver.

David realizes that the afflictions of life are good for us if they cause us to turn back to Torah. They are times of testing and growth. More valuable than any amount of earthly wealth.

y YOD

⁷³Your hands have made me and fashioned me;
Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.

⁷⁴Those who fear You will be glad when they see me,
Because I have hoped in Your word.

⁷⁵I know, YHVH, that Your judgments are right,
And that in faithfulness You have afflicted me.

He wants to be a blessing to those like himself that fear YHVH but are going through times of trial. The afflictions that are allowed to come upon him are the will of YHVH and are good.

⁷⁶Let, I pray, Your merciful kindness be for my comfort,
According to Your word to Your servant.

⁷⁷Let Your tender mercies come to me, that I may live;
For Your Torah is my delight.

David does not ask for the removal of the affliction, but rather for YHVH's mercy in going through them.

⁷⁸Let the proud be ashamed,
For they treated me wrongfully with falsehood;
But I will meditate on Your precepts.

⁷⁹Let those who fear You turn to me,
Those who know Your testimonies.
⁸⁰Let my heart be blameless regarding Your statutes,
That I may not be ashamed.

He is not concerned with what others have tried to do to him, only that he be given the ability to walk rightly in the Torah. Let him be a witness to those who fear YHVH.

K KAPH

⁸¹My soul faints for Your salvation,
But I hope in Your word.
⁸²My eyes fail from searching Your word,
Saying, "When will You comfort me?"
⁸³For I have become like a wineskin in smoke,
Yet I do not forget Your statutes.
⁸⁴How many are the days of Your servant?
When will You execute judgment on those who persecute me?
⁸⁵The proud have dug pits for me,
Which is not according to Your Torah.
⁸⁶All Your commandments are faithful;
They persecute me wrongfully;
Help me!
⁸⁷They almost made an end of me on earth,
But I did not forsake Your precepts.
⁸⁸Revive me according to Your loving-kindness,
So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

The world seems to be winning. I am tired. Is the end near? Don't let those who persecute me win. Help me, YHVH! Let me be a witness for you.

L LAMED

⁸⁹Forever, YHVH,
Your word is settled in heaven.
⁹⁰Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
You established the earth, and it abides.
⁹¹They continue this day according to Your ordinances,
For all are Your servants.

YHVH spoke the world into existence, now it continues to be obedient to the rules He established at that time. It does not show partiality to anyone.

⁹²Unless Your Torah had been my delight,
I would then have perished in my affliction.

⁹³I will never forget Your precepts,
For by them You have given me life.

⁹⁴I am Yours, save me;
For I have sought Your precepts.

Because I have followed your commands, you have saved me.

⁹⁵The wicked wait for me to destroy me,
But I will consider Your testimonies.
⁹⁶I have seen the consummation of all perfection,
But Your commandment is exceedingly broad.

III MEM

⁹⁷Oh, how I love Your Torah!
It is my meditation all the day.
⁹⁸You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies;
For they are ever with me.
⁹⁹I have more understanding than all my teachers,
For Your testimonies are my meditation.
¹⁰⁰I understand more than the ancients,
Because I keep Your precepts.
¹⁰¹I have restrained my feet from every evil way,
That I may keep Your word.
¹⁰²I have not departed from Your judgments,
For You Yourself have taught me.
¹⁰³How sweet are Your words to my taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!
¹⁰⁴Through Your precepts I get understanding;
Therefore I hate every false way.

David almost becomes ecstatic in describing what life is like following Torah. It allows you to overcome your enemies. Gives you a joy unspeakable.

II NUN

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.
¹⁰⁶I have sworn and confirmed
That I will keep Your righteous judgments.
¹⁰⁷I am afflicted very much;
Revive me, YHVH, according to Your word.

¹⁰⁸Accept, I pray, the freewill offerings of my mouth, YHVH,
And teach me Your judgments.

If you want YHVH to teach you His Torah, keep lifting up praise to Him.

¹⁰⁹My life is continually in my hand,
Yet I do not forget Your Torah.
¹¹⁰The wicked have laid a snare for me,
Yet I have not strayed from Your precepts.
¹¹¹Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever,

For they are the rejoicing of my heart.
¹¹²I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes
Forever, to the very end.

S SAMEK

¹¹³I hate the double-minded,
But I love Your Torah.
¹¹⁴You are my hiding place and my shield;
I hope in Your word.
¹¹⁵Depart from me, you evildoers,
For I will keep the commandments of my God!
¹¹⁶Uphold me according to Your word, that I may live;
And do not let me be ashamed of my hope.
¹¹⁷Hold me up, and I shall be safe,
And I shall observe Your statutes continually.
¹¹⁸You reject all those who stray from Your statutes,
For their deceit is falsehood.
¹¹⁹You put away all the wicked of the earth like dross;
Therefore I love Your testimonies.
¹²⁰My flesh trembles for fear of You,
And I am afraid of Your judgments.

[AYIN

¹²¹I have done justice and righteousness;
Do not leave me to my oppressors.
¹²²Be surety for Your servant for good;
Do not let the proud oppress me.
¹²³My eyes fail from seeking Your salvation
And Your righteous word.
¹²⁴Deal with Your servant according to Your mercy,
And teach me Your statutes.
¹²⁵I am Your servant;
Give me understanding,
That I may know Your testimonies.
¹²⁶It is time for You to act, YHVH,
For they have regarded Your Torah as void.
¹²⁷Therefore I love Your commandments
More than gold, yes, than fine gold!
¹²⁸Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things
I consider to be right;
I hate every false way.

ρ PE

¹²⁹Your testimonies are wonderful;
Therefore my soul keeps them.
¹³⁰The entrance of Your words gives light;
It gives understanding to the simple.

¹³¹I opened my mouth and panted,
For I longed for Your commandments.

¹³²Look upon me and be merciful to me,
As Your custom is toward those who love Your name.

If you want YHVH to be merciful to you, LOVE HIS NAME.

¹³³Direct my steps by Your word,
And let no iniquity have dominion over me.

¹³⁴Redeem me from the oppression of man,
That I may keep Your precepts.

¹³⁵Make Your face shine upon Your servant,
And teach me Your statutes.

¹³⁶Rivers of water run down from my eyes,
Because men do not keep Your Torah.

C TZADDE

¹³⁷Righteous are You, YHVH,
And upright are Your judgments.

¹³⁸Your testimonies, which You have commanded,
Are righteous and very faithful.

¹³⁹My zeal has consumed me,
Because my enemies have forgotten Your words.

¹⁴⁰Your word is very pure;
Therefore Your servant loves it.

¹⁴¹I am small and despised,
Yet I do not forget Your precepts.

¹⁴²Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
And Your Torah is truth.

¹⁴³Trouble and anguish have overtaken me,
Yet Your commandments are my delights.

¹⁴⁴The righteousness of Your testimonies is everlasting;
Give me understanding, and I shall live.

Q QOPH

¹⁴⁵I cry out with my whole heart;
Hear me, YHVH!

I will keep Your statutes.

¹⁴⁶I cry out to You;
Save me, and I will keep Your testimonies.

¹⁴⁷I rise before the dawning of the morning,
And cry for help; I hope in Your word.

¹⁴⁸My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word.

¹⁴⁹Hear my voice according to Your loving-kindness;
YHVH, revive me according to Your justice.

¹⁵⁰They draw near who follow after wickedness;
They are far from Your Torah.

¹⁵¹You are near, YHVH,
And all Your commandments are truth.
¹⁵²Concerning Your testimonies,
I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

ר RESH

¹⁵³Consider my affliction and deliver me,
For I do not forget Your Torah.
¹⁵⁴Plead my cause and redeem me;
Revive me according to Your word.
¹⁵⁵Salvation is far from the wicked,
For they do not seek Your statutes.

This is a very strong statement!

¹⁵⁶Great are Your tender mercies, YHVH;
Revive me according to Your judgments.
¹⁵⁷Many are my persecutors and my enemies,
Yet I do not turn from Your testimonies.

¹⁵⁸I see the treacherous, and am disgusted,
Because they do not keep Your word.

We can become disgusted as David did, we just need to be sure that we complain about them to no one but YHVH.

¹⁵⁹Consider how I love Your precepts;
Revive me, YHVH, according to Your loving-kindness.
¹⁶⁰The entirety of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.

ש SHIN

¹⁶¹Princes persecute me without a cause,
But my heart stands in awe of Your word.

¹⁶²I rejoice at Your word
As one who finds great treasure.

¹⁶³I hate and abhor lying,
But I love Your Torah.

¹⁶⁴Seven times a day I praise You,
Because of Your righteous judgments.

How many times a day do you praise YHVH? How many times have we become so involved in our lives that we forget how wonderful He has treated us?

How great it is that He has called us back to His Torah.

¹⁶⁵Great peace have those who love Your Torah,
And nothing causes them to stumble.

¹⁶⁶LORD, I hope for Your salvation,
And I do Your commandments.

¹⁶⁷My soul keeps Your testimonies,
And I love them exceedingly.
¹⁶⁸I keep Your precepts and Your testimonies,
For all my ways are before You.

† TAU

¹⁶⁹Let my cry come before You, YHVH;
Give me understanding according to Your word.
¹⁷⁰Let my supplication come before You;
Deliver me according to Your word.
¹⁷¹My lips shall utter praise,
For You teach me Your statutes.
¹⁷²My tongue shall speak of Your word,
For all Your commandments are righteousness.
¹⁷³Let Your hand become my help,
For I have chosen Your precepts.
¹⁷⁴I long for Your salvation, YHVH,
And Your Torah is my delight.
¹⁷⁵Let my soul live, and it shall praise You;
And let Your judgments help me.
¹⁷⁶I have gone astray like a lost sheep;
Seek Your servant,
For I do not forget Your commandments.

David winds up this Psalm with a recap of what he has been saying all through this great work.