

INTRODUCTION: Leviticus 19

- Today we look at the 2nd half of what is known as a double portion of Torah (Acharei Mot and the Kedoshim)
- Normally the 2 parshas, 2 sections of scripture are covered in one week
- This week we will cover the 2nd half known as Kedoshim
- It derives its title from vs. 2 where the LORD speaks to Moses and commands him to speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel and say you shall be holy for I the LORD your God am holy
- This means that our holiness comes from God's holiness
- Now the word holy is "kadosh" and it means "separate, removed or above and beyond"
- When God declares us holy, He is saying that we are above and beyond the limitations of this world, we are above and beyond any of its characteristics or qualities... we are not like the world we are above
- Thus, by partaking of God's holiness, His otherness... our reach is infinite, just as God is infinite
- Now... as I always say... the order of things is important
- First comes Acharei... death and then comes Kedoshim or holiness
- Yom Kippur is the dividing line of teshuva (repentance)
- When I experience my own personal Yom Kippur, my own personal repentance... I become alive to God meaning the Consciousness of God that I experienced before the fall is restored
- Now I can break out of the rut of my natural life and be elevated spiritually towards God and His purposes for my life
- That comes after I've experienced "teshuva" or repentance

Leviticus 19:1–4 (NKJV)

19 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak to all the congregation ("adat" witness) of the children of Israel ("bene Ysrael"), and say to them: 'You shall be holy ("kadosh"), for I the LORD your God *am* holy. ³ 'Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God. ⁴ 'Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves molded gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

- In vs. 1-18, 6 of the 10 commandments are referred
- The first 4 laws have to do with being set apart for God (holiness)
- As we draw near to God we are changed from the inside out

- We are declared holy and this change on this inside becomes expressed through our actions
- Honoring parents is a recognition of God's authority over our lives
- Holiness begins in the home
- This is the fifth commandment
- Sabbath observance is a recognition of God's sovereignty over time
- This is the fourth commandment
- Not turning to idols or making molded gods is a recognition of God as the only God in our life
- In the Hebrew it says... you shall not turn to worthless gods or literally "nothingness"
- Idols are worthless, they do nothing, no power, no authority
- This is the first and second commandment
- All of this is in response to Yom Kippur where we dedicate ourselves completely to God and declare that He is the only LORD our God

Now the question is often asked...

- Why don't believers worship on the Sabbath? Why do believers worship on Sunday?
- Orthodox Jews who believe in Yeshua are convinced that believing Gentiles must worship on Shabbat
- This was the case with the Judaizers who followed Paul's ministry and sought to convert Gentiles to Judaism
- However, Paul said don't let anyone judge you with regards to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day (Col 2:17)
- At the council in Jerusalem in Acts 15, the decision was made not to place the law on the Gentiles
- All they required were for Gentiles to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled and from blood
- These restrictions came from this portion of scripture (the holiness laws)
- Initially, all believers worshipped on the Sabbath, but as Gentiles joined the church it caused a controversy
- Orthodox Jews and Gentiles would not worship together because it was considered against the law
- This is why the Gentiles were being pressured to convert to Judaism
- So believers gathered on Sunday (the 1st day of the week) to worship... both Jew and Gentile... outside the synagogue in a new community

Leviticus 19:5–8 (NKJV)

⁵ ‘And if you offer a sacrifice of a peace offering to the LORD, you shall offer it of your own free will. ⁶ It shall be eaten the same day you offer *it*, and on the next day. And if any remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire. ⁷ And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it *is* an abomination. It shall not be accepted. ⁸ Therefore *everyone* who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the hallowed *offering* of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from his people.

- The holiness laws have to do with the intent of the heart
- Man looks on the outward appearance by God looks on the heart
- The peace offering has to do with fellowship with God
- The peace offering was to be eaten within 2 days of being slaughtered with the intention of offering something that would be acceptable to God
- Remember a peace offering was shared between you and the LORD
- When you brought a peace offering you were making time to be with the LORD and since it was shared you and the LORD your intent should be to please the LORD
- That’s what people do who want to be together... they make time for each other and they seek to bless each other
- If you want to be with God, If you want to please the LORD you will do what the LORD desires... not what you desire
- Thus, If you don’t do what the LORD desires then you really don’t want to please Him
- If you don’t set time aside then God knows you really don’t want to have fellowship with Him and your decision to be separated is honored and you are cut off from the people

Leviticus 19:9–18 (NKJV)

⁹ ‘When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. ¹⁰ And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather *every* grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God. ¹¹ ‘You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. ¹² And you shall not swear by My name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I *am* the LORD. ¹³ ‘You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob *him*. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. ¹⁴ You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I *am* the LORD.

15 'You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor: I *am* the LORD. 17 'You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin because of him. 18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I *am* the LORD.

- Vs. 9-18 has to do with loving your neighbor as yourself
- God is love and love is the foundation of the holiness laws
- This is what separates God's law from man's law... it is built on love
- Thus a life of holiness is a life of compassion and love for people
- During the harvest, Israelites were to leave grain or fruit for the poor
- Vs. 11 you were not to steal or deceive one another
- You were not to cheapen the name of God by using God's name to gain someone's trust so you could rip them off
- You were not to take advantage of the handicapped or withhold wages from someone you hired to do a job
- You were not to show favoritism because of someone's position, power or poverty
- You were not to slander or murder people (slander is murdering with your words)
- Rather, if your neighbor did something wrong you were to tell them they were wrong and give them the opportunity to change their behavior
- You were not to take matters in your own hands and seek revenge or hold a grudge
- Rather... you are to love your neighbor the same way you love yourself
- This is the most famous verse in Leviticus... but it also summarizes this section of scripture... love is to govern our actions

Leviticus 19:19 (NKJV)

19 'You shall keep My statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you.

- Now, this is something that we don't understand in our culture
- But love respects boundaries

- Man is to keep separate what God created separate and this includes livestock, sowing mixed seed in one field, blending linen and wool...

Leviticus 19:20–25 (NKJV)

²⁰ 'Whoever lies carnally with a woman who *is* betrothed to a man as a concubine, and who has not at all been redeemed nor given her freedom, for this there shall be scourging; *but* they shall not be put to death, because she was not free. ²¹ And he shall bring his trespass offering to the LORD, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, a ram as a trespass offering. ²² The priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the trespass offering before the LORD for his sin which he has committed. And the sin which he has committed shall be forgiven him. ²³ 'When you come into the land, and have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count their fruit as uncircumcised. Three years it shall be as uncircumcised to you. *It* shall not be eaten. ²⁴ But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, a praise to the LORD. ²⁵ And in the fifth year you may eat its fruit, that it may yield to you its increase: I *am* the LORD your God.

- Vs. 20 refers to a woman who is a slave betrothed to be married
- She is not redeemed (purchased out of slavery) or free, she is owned
- Therefore, the death penalty for adultery does not apply, but a trespass offering (a willful breaking of God's law) must be made
- Vs. 23 refers to planting new trees in the promised land
- The 1st 3 years the fruit is forbidden, the 4th year it is an offering to the LORD and the 5th year the fruit can be eaten

Leviticus 19:26–37 (NKJV)

²⁶ 'You shall not eat *anything* with the blood, nor shall you practice divination or soothsaying. ²⁷ You shall not shave around the sides of your head, nor shall you disfigure the edges of your beard. ²⁸ You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I *am* the LORD. ²⁹ 'Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness. ³⁰ 'You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary: I *am* the LORD. ³¹ 'Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I *am* the LORD your God. ³² 'You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I *am* the LORD. ³³ 'And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. ³⁴ The stranger who dwells among you shall be

to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God. ³⁵ ‘You shall do no injustice in judgment, in measurement of length, weight, or volume. ³⁶ You shall have honest scales, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. ³⁷ ‘Therefore you shall observe all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them: I *am* the LORD.’ ”

Vs. 26-31 deal with pagan and other idolator worship practices

- They were not to drink blood, make incantations or participate in mediums or fortune telling
- They were not to cut or tattoo themselves like the prophets of Baal, which included cutting or shaping their hair
- They were not to defile their daughters by turning them into cultic sex slaves (prostitutes)
- They were to keep the Sabbath and worship in the Sanctuary

Vs. 32-37 deal with valuing what God values

- They were to respect the aged and show consideration to residents who were foreigners
- They were to conduct business with integrity and honesty
- Now all these practices were common amongst the Canaanite nations, but Israel was governed by God and therefore they were different
- They were to observe God’s appointed times and rules (statutes) and His decisions (judgments) to do them because “I AM” the LORD.
- Again... this is not I am God and you are not... this is God saying to them... you call me LORD, so honor your word.

Chapter 20 gives the consequences for defiling yourself

Leviticus 20:1–8 (NKJV)

20 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Again, you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘Whoever of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who gives *any* of his descendants to Molech, he shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones. ³ I will set My face against that man, and will cut him off from his people, because he has given *some* of his descendants to Molech, to defile My sanctuary and profane My holy name. ⁴ And if the people of the land should in any way hide their eyes from the man, when he gives *some* of his descendants to Molech, and they do not kill him, ⁵ then I will set My face against that

man and against his family; and I will cut him off from his people, and all who prostitute themselves with him to commit harlotry with Molech. ⁶ And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people. ⁷ Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I *am* the LORD your God. ⁸ And you shall keep My statutes, and perform them: I *am* the LORD who sanctifies you.

Vs. 1-5 deals with the worship of the Canaanite deity Molech

- Molech is a distortion of the word for “king” or “ruler” and it literally means “King of Shame”
- The worship of Molech required child sacrifice (ancient abortion)
- The Molech was made of metal with it’s arms held out
- The Molech was heated and then the babies were placed on the arms and burned to death
- Anyone participating in the worship of Molech was put to death and anyone who turned a blind eye was exiled
- Vs. 6 deals with necromancy or sex with the dead
- If you participated in necromancy you were exiled
- THOUGHT: In Genesis 6 there is a reference to demons having taking wives from the daughters of men
- This prohibition could be the result of Genesis 6

Leviticus 20:9 (NKJV)

⁹ For everyone who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother. His blood *shall be* upon him.

- I think every child should have to memorize this verse
- This is a reference to the 5th commandment to honor father and mother
- NOTE: His blood shall be upon him occurs 6 times and it refers to someone bringing judgment on themselves by their actions
- Thus it should be noted that God does not want to judge man
- God makes his judgments known upfront and man has the choice to listen to God or choose judgment for Himself

Leviticus 20:10–21 (NKJV)

¹⁰ The man who commits adultery with *another* man’s wife, *he* who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress,

shall surely be put to death. ¹¹ The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹² If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death. They have committed perversion. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹³ If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *shall be* upon them. ¹⁴ If a man marries a woman and her mother, it *is* wickedness. They shall be burned with fire, both he and they, that there may be no wickedness among you. ¹⁵ If a man mates with an animal, he shall surely be put to death, and you shall kill the animal. ¹⁶ If a woman approaches any animal and mates with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood *is* upon them. ¹⁷ 'If a man takes his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it *is* a wicked thing. And they shall be cut off in the sight of their people. He has uncovered his sister's nakedness. He shall bear his guilt. ¹⁸ If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people. ¹⁹ 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt. ²⁰ If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. ²¹ If a man takes his brother's wife, it *is* an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

- This section contains a list of sexual immorality and perversions that the nation of Israel was not to participate in including incest.

This reminds me of a song by Ray Stevens

Many, many years ago when I was 23. I was married to a widow who was pretty as can be. This widow had a grown-up daughter who had hair of red. My father fell in love with her and soon they too were wed. This made my dad my son-in-law and really changed my life. For now my daughter was my mother 'cause she was my father's wife. And to complicate the matter even though it brought me joy. I soon became the father of a bouncing baby boy. My little baby then became a brother-in-law to dad. And so he became my uncle though it made me very sad. For if he were my uncle that would also made him brother. Of the widows grown-up

daughter who was of course my stepmother. Father's wife then had a son who kept them on the run. And he became my grandchild for he was my daughter's son. My wife is now my mother's mother and it makes me blue. Because although she is my wife she's my grandmother too. Now if my wife is my grandmother then I'm her grandchild. And every time I think of it, nearly drives me wild. 'Cause now I have become the strangest case you ever saw. As husband of my grandmother I am my own grandpa

You can see why God prohibits sexual immorality... it gets confusing!

- Certain types of sexual immorality were capital crimes such as adultery, incest with a parent and child by blood or marriage, homosexuality and bestiality.
- Other types of sexual immorality were not capital crimes, but still had consequences such as marriage between a brother and sister or sister in-law, marriage with an uncle or aunt
- Now the Bible refers to this as cohabitation, not marriage because God doesn't recognize their marriage
- The same is true in same sex marriages... our culture may refer to them as married, but God doesn't recognize the marriage

Why does God prohibit sexual immorality?

- Because you can't undo the effects of sexual immorality on the people involved or the innocent children who are victimized
- There are things that you can't unsee or memories you can't erase
- We were involved in a ministry called Exodus International and the testimonies of sexual abuse due to immorality and the long-term effects of such abuse is horrifying
- After hearing hundreds of testimonies, you begin to understand that homosexuality is not something you're born with
- Same Sex Attraction is the result of abuse, neglect or coercion and most of this happens before a child is 3 years old.
- Most women who work as prostitutes have been physically or sexually abused as children
- 57% were sexually abused by an average of 3 perpetrators
- Two thirds were sexually abused by a father figure
- 40% of prostitutes are victims of human trafficking
- The effects of sexual immorality are far reaching and can lead to the collapse of nations... i.e. The Roman Empire

Leviticus 20:22–27 (NKJV)

22 'You shall therefore keep all My statutes and all My judgments, and perform them, that the land where I am bringing you to dwell may not vomit you out. 23 And you shall not walk in the statutes of the nation which I am casting out before you; for they commit all these things, and therefore I abhor them. 24 But I have said to you, "You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey." I *am* the LORD your God, who has separated you from the peoples. 25 You shall therefore distinguish between clean animals and unclean, between unclean birds and clean, and you shall not make yourselves abominable by beast or by bird, or by any kind of living thing that creeps on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. 26 And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD *am* holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine. 27 'A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood *shall be* upon them.' "

God reminds them of their identity... they belong to God

- As God's people, they represent God to the nations
- They are to keep His appointed times and rules and live by His decisions
- Thus, when they enter the land of promise... the land will not vomit them out and they will be blessed
- They are not to walk in the appointed times and rules of the nations they are driving out of the land
- They are to discern between clean and unclean and they are not to defile themselves with anything unclean for they are set apart for God

Vs. 27 God makes it clear they are not to represent any other god

- A medium is someone who practices demon possession and allows the demons to speak through them
- God sees this as a direct challenge to His sovereignty as LORD
- He is God and nothing else... thus if the people give themselves over to another God, they will die
- Now keep in mind the perspective... Chapters 1-15 you are drawing near to God... Chapter 16 you repent and surrender to God... Chapters 17-27 you live a life of holiness unto the LORD
- This is not... obey God or die... it's you love God and want to obey Him, you want to serve only Him because He is the LORD YOUR GOD!