

קְדוּשִׁים

Q'doshim

(holy)

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 19:1-20:27

You Shall be Holy!

Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 19:2

“Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘You shall be holy; for I YHWH your Elohim am holy.’”

Three times in this Parasha YHWH commands His people, Israel, to be holy or set-apart. This is where the name of this Parasha comes from, the Hebrew word for “holy.” However, this word is actually in the plural form, קְדוּשִׁים – “q’doshim.” A form of this word is actually found twice in the above verse. Let’s examine this verse to see it.

דִּבֶּר אֶל כָּל עֵדֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדוּשִׁים תִּהְיוּ | כִּי קְדוֹשׁ
אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם

Notice that the first occurrence of this word is in the plural form. This word is in reference to Israel. However, the second occurrence of this word is in the singular form and is in reference to YHWH. He, the person speaking, is only one person and He is speaking to an entire nation of people. While He is only one, the nation is many and He expects and commands each and every person to be קְדוֹשׁ – “holy” or “set-apart.” However, what does it mean to be holy or set-apart?

The Hebrew root word is קדש – “qadash,” which means *prepare for task and dedicate all resources*. This is a very important understanding for us to have, as it clearly points to the following passage.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-5

4 “Hear, Israel; YHWH our Elohim, YHWH is one;

5 and you shall love YHWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength.”

In these verses known as the “Shema,” we are told that we are to love and serve YHWH our Elohim with everything that we are in both our spiritual lives and our physical lives, as well as with everything that we possess. This is the essence of this word קדש.

When YHWH commands us to be קדשים as He is קדוש, then we can know that He has already dedicated all that He has and is, to the task at hand. So, what is the task at hand? YHWH is making a family. He has extended all that He has to us and made an offer for us to become part of His family. It is up to each individual to decide whether they too will dedicate all that they have to being a part of that family.

In this family that YHWH is making He has set out certain rules that are to be followed. We know these rules as His Torah. In the two chapters found in this Parasha we find that YHWH outlines numerous individual commandments which are to be followed if one desires to be included in His family. This is part of what it takes to be set-apart to Him.

This is contrasted with how the world sees and does things. In the Babylonian system there are many causes which one may get involved in, some of which on the surface seem good, noble and legitimate. After all what is wrong with saving whales or the spotted owl? Or, what is wrong with saving our streams and rivers? We all need water to drink! And especially what is wrong with saving the unborn babies from a death by abortion? If there is anything wrong in a particular cause, then it will be with the focus. One needs to look at the focus. What YHWH wants us to do is to focus upon Him. We are to dedicate everything that we have to serving Him. Our focus must be upon that relationship. If it is not, then it is amiss.

So, when we look at any given cause, what is the focus of that cause? Is the focus simply to save the whales? If so, then the cause is misguided. Likewise, if the purpose of saving babies is simply to save babies, then as noble and good as that is, it is still a misguided cause. That is not to say that every single person in such a cause as Operation Rescue is misguided, but that the focus of the cause itself is not properly focused.

YHWH commands us to love Him with everything that we have and everything that we are. He may very well lead a person to go and save a particular baby from death. We are to obey His Voice in all matters. But even in that obedience we are to continue to listen for the sound of His Voice. Let us not forget Avraham. Elohim commanded him to go and offer up his son Yitzchak as a burnt offering. Avraham went in obedience to this command. However, if Avraham would have stopped listening to His Voice at that point and would not have begun listening for His Voice again until after he had completed what Elohim had commanded him, then Avraham would have missed a very important command not to kill his son!

In order to be truly set-apart to YHWH we need to live our lives in such a way that we are listening to His Voice day by day and moment by moment. When we do this, then we bring the most honor possible to YHWH our Elohim. When we live in this fashion, then we are truly dedicating all that we have and all

that we are to serving Him. Furthermore, we are building our family relationships between ourselves and our heavenly Father; but not only with Him, but also with our fellow brothers and sisters in the faith.

Yochanan Aleph (1st John) 2:10

He that loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him.

In the Babylonian system of this world the focus is upon doing what one wants to do. The focus is upon self. Everything in this present world's system is the antithesis of being a part of His family. Scripture teaches us that we are to watch out for our brother. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. If this is not watching out for the welfare of our brothers, then I don't know what is!

Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 19:18

"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 YHWH."

In the family of YHWH, our heavenly Father desires for us to watch out for and to take care of one another. This is part of what it means to be holy or set-apart, to be q'doshim. People who are a part of this world's system typically watch out for themselves. They will love their own, but no one outside of their own little clique.

Yochanan (John) 15:19

"If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

Even though the world hates us, we are to do good to those who would do us harm.

Matithyah (Matthew) 5:44

"but I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you;"

It is not easy to be holy or set-apart to YHWH. In fact, may I be so bold as to say that it is humanly impossible to do that which YHWH has asked us to do! We cannot be set-apart or q'doshim to YHWH in our own strength or by our own merits. We can only do this by His Spirit dwelling in us. The Torah teaches us what it is that YHWH requires of His people. But there is no power in the Torah to help us do that which we are commanded to do.

This is where the importance of Mashiach comes into the picture. Yeshua our Mashiach not only was able to keep and do and obey each and every Torah commandment perfectly, but He is also able to help us do the same. He helps us by giving us His Spirit.

Yochanan (John) 14:26

“But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

It is only by and through the Spirit of YHWH that we are able to be q’doshim to Him. It is only by and through His Spirit that we are able to walk in the commandments of YHWH in the Spirit of love rather than in a legalistic manner.

Philippians 2:1-5

1 If there is therefore any exhortation in Mashiach, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions,

2 make full my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind;

3 doing nothing through faction or through pride, but in lowliness of mind each counting each other better than himself;

4 not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.

5 Have this mind in you, which was also in Yeshua the Mashiach.

Even at the point of death, Yeshua still blessed those who did Him harm, asking His Father in heaven to forgive them because they did not truly understand what they were doing. May each one of us be filled so full of the love of Mashiach that we too have such a deep seated spirit of forgiveness to all those who do us wrong!

ABBA YHWH, fill us with Your Spirit and make us q’doshim in Your eyes; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach we pray. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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