

Kedoshim "Holy Things"

Torah Reading: Leviticus 19:1 - 20:27

Haftarah Reading: Amos 9:7-15

Study Notes

The Entire Assembly

- The text indicates that Moshe was not just to speak to some of the Israelites, like just the priests, but to everyone.
- "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"
- From this we can learn that there is a personal holiness in which God 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 unto ourselves. As believers, we are intimately connected.

Be Holy, For I the Lord Your God Am Holy

- What does God expect from the individual members of His redeemed community? Holiness.
- This encompasses being totally set apart unto the Lord in absolutely every area of our lives.
- God did not want Israel to live like, worship like, think like, or look like the Canaanites.
- The world should be able to see that we are different.

The Motive

- The only revealed motive for these commands is that we are to do so only because God is holy. We are to seek to be imitators of Him alone.
- We do not do so to earn His love. We live like Him because we desire to reflect Him.

The Means

- We cannot be holy in and of ourselves.
- The only means to holiness is through Yeshua.
- For followers of Yeshua this list of holy actions is not a checklist but is a description of what we really want to do from our innermost being.

Food for the Poor

- Leviticus 19:8-10. James 1:27.
- A holy person is one who's faith in the Lord demonstrates itself by how he takes care of the vulnerable in society, especially the holy community.
- Gleaning is still a law in modern Israel.

Lying and Stealing

- Leviticus 19:11-13. These verses deal with the sin of theft.

- Notice that the teachings concerning theft, lying, and oppression come very closely together and immediately follow the instructions about the poor.
- This is no accident. How can theft be avoided in society?
 1. The holy community collectively providing for the poor: leaving food in the fields.
 2. By not provoking people to sin or anger by slandering them, oppressing them; but instead by being honest with them.
 3. By employers giving their employees honest, fair wages, and paying them on time.

Justice

- Leviticus 19:15.
- “Injurious gossip may often do as much harm as slanderous defamation”.
- Because of the seriousness of the sin, some pray the *Amidah* three times per day. “My God, guard my tongue from evil, and my lips from speaking falsehood.”.
- We are also to physically help those who are in physical danger.
- This could also apply to the society level. Helping those groups that are oppressed.

No Mixtures

- This seems to be another teaching about the reality of the two kingdoms.
- It could also be tied to our the idea of the ‘flesh’ and the ‘new man’.

Patience

- Patience is a vital aspect of personal holiness. Vayikra 19:23.
- We see the idea of patience when someone abuses a slave-woman instead of waiting for a proper, legal marriage.
- The same patience was needed as they waited on the fruit in it’s fifth year.

Prohibition Against Canaanite Practices

- Leviticus 19:26-31. Mentioned are bodily mutilation, harlotry, idol worship, and participation in demonic activity.
- We also know from history that other Near East religions had sacred days, even Sabbaths. God wanted Israel to observe only His holy days.
- Leviticus 19:27. Many Orthodox Jews wear ‘peyote’, elongated hair on the temples. Was this God’s intention?
- Possibly not. It seems that the Canaanites trimmed their beards and sideburns in certain ways for worship and this is what was to be avoided.

Discipline

- Leviticus 20 mentions the disciplines which are to be meted out to violaters of the various teachings described in chapter 19.

The summation of this whole parasha is “Be Holy, For I the Lord Your God Am Holy”. Spend some time praying about the areas of your life that may need to change so they can reflect Christ to the world.