



Parshas Acharei Mos & Kedoshim 2021, love that defines

This week's Parsha Perspective is sponsored by the Hess family. May G-d bless them with much health, success, and happiness!

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Shlomo Ben Edward and Edward Ben Shaul. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parsha begins immediately following the death of Aaron's two sons, Nadav and Avihu. G-d commands Moshe to tell Aaron and his 2 remaining sons not to go into the Holy of Holies at will, lest they will share the same consequences as Nadav and Avihu. Only Aaron can enter the Holy of Holies on the year's holiest day, Yom Kippur.

The Torah then explains the service of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, which entails an incense sacrifice in the Holy of Holies and the drawing of lots for the fate of two goats, one for G-d and one for Azazel.

The next portion begins with the statement: *"You shall be holy, for I, the Lord your G-d, am holy."* This declaration is followed by the commandment of many Mitzvahs, including charity, Shabbos, and morality.

Honesty in business, honor, and awe of one's parents, and the sacredness of life. We also have the commandment of *"Love your fellow as yourself,"* which, according to Rabbi Akiva, is a cardinal principle of the Torah.

However, a question comes to mind: At the end of Parshas Acharei Mos, the Pasuk writes (18:4-5), *"My rules you shall observe, and faithfully follow My laws: I am your G-d. You shall keep My laws and My rules; by pursuing which man shall live, I*

am your G-d.” Why does G-d seemingly repeat Himself when speaking with Moshe about following His laws?

The *Kli Yakar* (Rav Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz, a famous commentary on the Parsha and the Rabbi of Prague in the early 1600s) explains that the Torah repeats itself to teach us that if we follow & guard G-d’s commandments, we will receive rewards in both this world and the world to come.

The first Pasuk refers to the rewards in this world since it adds “*Laleches Bahem - to follow them*” to follow the path G-d set for you. But the second Pasuk refers to the rewards in the world to come.

He learns this from “*Vachai Bahem - and you shall live by them.*” Since our actions can have lasting outcomes, our reward in the world to come will continuously be updated by the actions we did and the life we led.

However, the *Malbim* (Rav Meir Leib Wisser, a famous Polish Rabbi) gives a deeper explanation. He writes that the Pasukim are referring to two different types of laws. The first Pasuk refers to commandments between people, such as stealing, helping, and giving charity to your fellow Jew. But the second Pasuk is referring to the commandments between man & G-d, such as Shabbos and holidays.

He learns this from the switching of the beginning words of each Pasuk. “*Es Mishpatay Ta’asu, Ve’es Chukotay Tishmeru - My rules you shall observe, and faithfully follow My laws. Ushmartem Es Chukotay Ve’es Mishpatay- You shall keep My laws and My rules.*”

He explains that there are three general categories of Mitzvahs, **Chukim, Edos, and Mishpatim.**

Chukim - decrees are laws that transcend rational reason, such as the prohibition against wearing Shatnez, which is any clothing that contains both wool and linen. These are laws that are done just for the sake of G-d.

Edos - testimonials are the laws that commemorate or represent something, such as eating matzah on Passover or putting on tefillin. Without the Torah, we would not have thought of these; nevertheless, they are rational laws.

Mishpatim - Judgments are the rational laws necessary for a moral and ethical society, such as the laws against murder, kidnapping, and stealing. These are laws that had we not been commanded to follow, we would have done anyway.

The Malbim explains that the first Pasuk refers to commandments between people because it leads with Mishpatim, laws primarily dealing with people. But the second Pasuk is referring to the commandments between man & G-d since it starts with Chukim, laws mostly between G-d and us.

He continues that this is significant because how we act with other people has the same importance as our connection with G-d. We can not differentiate between the Mitzvahs that deal with people and those that deal with G-d.

In fact, how we behave and act dictates how strong our relationship with G-d truly is. As the great Hillel said, *“Love your fellow as yourself is the entire Torah, and the rest is just commentary.”*

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand how we interact with others directly correlates with our relationship with G-d. Since G-d created all of mankind, how we act and treat others openly demonstrates how we view G-d's sovereignty over our life. As a result, we must show kindness and compassion to everyone, even if they do not deserve such kindness or respect, **because it reflects who we truly are.**

***“Treat everyone with respect and kindness,
not because they are nice, but because you are!”***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*