

ParShaT *QeDoShiM* - One Pager Series

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[Background: We have been bringing controversies between Rashi and either academic scholars or other Jewish commentaries. Today we deal with the view of several academic scholars that QeDoShim is an ancient version of the 10 commandments. How should we approach this?]

Rashi Biblical Text: Lv19-03e, 04, 03, 12, 13, 15, 16, 22

#	Commandment	Qedoshim Verses /Rashis	Text (Cf with Column 2)	Comment On Difference
1	Believe in God	Lv19-03e Lv19-14e	I am God; Don't stumble the blind, Fear God	
2	No idolatry	Lv19-04,	Don't turn to idols; Don't manufacture idols (A)	Lv. emphasizes even turning to idols
3	No false oaths	Lv19-12	Almost Same	
4	Observe Sabbath	Lv19-03	Almost Same	
5	Honor Parents	Lv19-03	Almost Same	
6	No murder	Lv19-16b	Don't stand by (in silence) murder (D)	Lv. emphasizes not to be silent on seeing murder
7	No adultery	Lv19-20:22	Case of affair with married slave (F)	Lv. emphasizes adultery "even with slaves"
8	No theft	Lvv19-13,	Don't oppress workers (B) (C)	Lv. emphasizes "even delaying wages
9	No false witness	Lv19-16	Not to any injustice in court (recognize economic hardship or wealth)	Lv. emphasizes any injustice
10	No coveting	Lv19-15	Don't be spiteful ("You didn't loam me; I won't loan you) (E)	Lv. emphasizes negative vs. just feeling

NOTES

A) v5-7 Offer to God. Enjoy oneself (with God) rather than deprive oneself (idolatry)

B) v8-10 Leave left over gleanings in field. Charity to poor prevents theft.

C) v14 Besides not stealing from workers, don't even curse the deaf or stumble the blind

D) v16 To avoid murder avoid slander and being gossipy

E) v17 Besides not being spiteful, don't even hate someone; talk it out

F) v19 Besides not committing adultery don't even graft plant or animal species with each other.

Earlier Versions of the Torah: We all believe (even the ultra-orthodox) that Abraham received the commandment to circumcise. In fact the Torah tells us he so received (Gn17). What then did Moses do? Moses gave this particular commandment given to Abraham Torahitic authority by placing in the Bible at the word of God. Moses also finalized the version of the prophecy given to Abraham. So versions of some commandments given earlier do exist.

Earlier Versions of Holiness: The idea of priests serving God who bless devoted followers of God is explicitly mentioned in Genesis (14:18). The idea of ordinary people seeking prophetic guidance and advice is also explicitly mentioned in Genesis (25:22). Certainly the idea of prophecy preceded Moses as we find many prophets in Genesis, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob etc. It is very reasonable that in the Genesis era just as in all eras people naturally wondered about God and how to achieve the religious state of being holy. Let us explore further.

Earlier Versions of Several Decalogue commandments: The following verses show the earlier presence of five Decalogue prohibitions - (1) Belief in God, and the prohibitions of 6) Murder, 7) Adultery, 8) theft, 9) and of coveting what is not yours i) The prohibition of murder, known to Noah (Gn09-05), and Kayin (Gn04). ii) The flood is actually blamed on the excessive theft in Noah's time (Gn06-11:12). iii) The consequences of adultery (Gn 12:17-19, Gn20, Gn26-06:11). iv) The consequences of jealousy and coveting leading to murder (Gn04-01:07). v) The numerous times Abraham called people to believe in God (Gn12-08, 13-04, 21-33).

Decalogue vs entire Torah: Since Jews are obligated to the entire Torah the significance of the Decalogue is that it presents 10 general categories of commandments. All commandments belong to one of the Decalogue commandments. For example, charity to the poor ameliorates poverty and hence prevents theft (See opening table).

Rabbinic support: The Leviticus Rabbah (24:5) provides two opinions why this chapter was "said to the entire Jewish congregation" an opening not found elsewhere in the Torah. except for building the Holy Temple (Ex35-01): Opinion #1 (cited by Rashi): *Because many Torahitic principles are found here*; Opinion #2 (not cited by Rashi) *Because it contains the 10 commandments*. But as shown in the opening table, everyone agrees that the Decalogue is found in Lv19. Opinion #2 believes that only the Decalogue is found there while Opinion #1 believes that the Decalogue and more is found there (like the *charity* laws).

Summary: Lv. 19 mentions the 10 commandments, many of which are found earlier in the Torah (like circumcision). Moreover, the 10 commandments are elaborated more in Lv19. It is very reasonable that earlier versions of the Decalogue did exist. Moses simply finalized them.