

Notes: June 13, 2015

Start: 10 AM

**Order of service:**

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Justification By Relativism – Ignoring The Smallest Mitzvot

The title is a mouthful, but it is accurate.

There are many congregations who teach their people in this manner, yet are ignoring the bigger picture.

Today's mindset is based on a minimalist view. What is the least I need to do and still remain a believer in Yeshua?

How quickly can I get in and out of church? Most services will last anywhere from 1 – 2 hours, not including a Sunday school class. This time usually includes music, announcements and a sermon. Many congregations have a midweek service for about an hour. In many ways the mindset is that we are “fitting God” into our schedules.

Yet our congregation blocks out the entire day, Shabbat. Yet we still have people whose families still plan things on Shabbat, thus creating a conflict.

A believers walk is more about convenience than dedication. It is more about self than sacrifice. There tends to be a great deal of justification as to why or why not. So when we look at this passage, we are looking at Yeshua's expectations for us.

They are lofty but not impossible.

**Mat 5:17** "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete.

**Mat 5:18** Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud ( ך ) or a stroke will pass from

the Torah — not until everything that must happen has happened.

**Mat 5:19** So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Mat 5:20** For I tell you that unless your righteousness is far greater than that of the Torah-teachers and P'rushim, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

Today, I want to focus on verse 19 and try to understand what Yeshua meant by “the least of these mitzvot”

This passage is obviously referring to Torah and the mitzvot found in Torah.

So, let's look at what might be considered one of these least mitzvot...

I was given this link by a congregant who has been having a dialog with their granddaughter regarding the efficacy of tattoos and a common question...is getting a tattoo a sin? The granddaughter provided this video whereby the speaker justifies believers getting tattoos.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rN3voADV14Y&feature=youtu.be>

The speaker in this video is in essence saying...

When attempting to establish an argument in support of tattoos for believers, thus justifying a position in direct opposition to Scripture, the speaker is in essence “placing his own spin” on Scripture. His context is partially correct, yet he has missed the mark in truly conveying what the context of Leviticus 19 truly is.

Partially correct in that the scriptures are spoken to Israel, yet missing the mark because he doesn't convey the correct relationship for the reason these ordinances are given.

The speaker lists all these different ordinances for Israel, whom have come out of Egypt, an extremely worldly and pagan culture, and are receiving instructions from Adonai, who brought them out of Egypt. Yet the speaker doesn't recognize the correlation between Israel and believers in Yeshua.

He calls these passages a “wisdom issue”, citing that there were no pesticides or refrigerators for the verses he did reference, therefore rationalizing by today's culture the reason Adonai conveyed them in the first place.

“I am looking out for your joy and vitality and this is how I want things to operate”

The speaker goes on to identify these mitzvot given to Israel as “wisdom nuggets”

He is taking the classic position of justifying why to do something when Scripture clearly states that it is something that isn't to be done.

He focuses on what many tend to focus on when they are speaking against Torah, namely a kashrut, kosher ordinance, in a similar manner to the flow chart diagram I gave you a few weeks ago during Torah study whereby attempting to justify same sex relationships by Scripture. They used the same tactics...

1. They identified the Scripture that spoke against their position
2. They asked if it was relevant

Then, once they had framed their argument, they went to other scriptures, asking “Do you eat bacon?” “Do you eat shell fish?”

They are attempting to nullify the validity of the verse they are in support of by nullifying other Scriptures.

Yet there are many other Scriptures that the speaker never addressed as “wisdom nuggets”, such as...

**Lev 19:11** " 'Do not steal from, defraud or lie to each other.

**Lev 19:16** " 'Do not go around spreading slander among your people, but also don't stand idly by when your neighbor's life is at stake; I am Adonai.

**Lev 19:18** Don't take vengeance on or bear a grudge against any of your people; rather, love your neighbor as yourself; I am Adonai.

Yet he chose passages that the majority of Christians don't follow.

What about the ones that I just read?

I have told you in the past that not all Torah applies to all people and there were ways in discerning this.

When something is addressed specifically to Israel when they enter the land, it is applicable to when they enter the land.

When something is addressed to a specific people, The King, Cohen, Levites, Men or Women, those mitzvot apply specifically to them.

If it involves the Temple, only when the Temple is standing can these mitzvot be done, such as a Nazir vow.

This is what I call cafeteria Christianity whereby one picks and chooses which Scriptures are for them, ultimately attempting to justify their position.

Consider verse 20 again...

**Mat 5:20** For I tell you that unless your righteousness is far greater than that of the Torah-teachers and P'rushim, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

As believers, our pursuit and goal should be righteousness.

Whose righteousness? Adonai's

Yeshua amplifies Adonai's righteousness, not to mention where it can be found. Why else would He reference Torah in verse 17?

As I was watching this video in preparation for today, a term came to mind...relativism.

What is relativism?

The doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.

So, the speaker here is saying that Leviticus 19:28 was applicable for a time and a people, but doesn't really apply to anyone else and does not apply to this time we live in.

If this is true, what about the other passages I read, or for that matter all of Scripture?

We are seeing more and more of this thinking amongst believers and it is being disseminated by pastors.

It is identified as hyper-grace

“The term *hyper-grace* has been used to describe a new wave of teaching that emphasizes the grace of God to the exclusion of other vital teachings such as repentance and confession of sin. Hyper-grace teachers maintain that all sin, past, present, and future, has already been forgiven, so there is no need for a believer to ever confess it. Hyper-grace teaching says that, when God looks at us, He sees only a holy and righteous people. The conclusion of hyper-grace teaching is that we are not bound by Jesus’ teaching, even as we are not under the Law; that believers are not responsible for their sin; and that anyone who disagrees is a pharisaical legalist.”

Read more: <http://www.gotquestions.org/hyper-grace.html#ixzz3csAKejI0>

“Hyper-grace teachers commonly claim that the words of Jesus no longer apply to us. Instead, they argue, Jesus’ teaching was for the Jews under the Law before the new covenant was inaugurated, whereas Paul brought the message of grace. If this false dichotomy doesn’t raise a red flag of warning, nothing will. Simply stated, any teaching that minimizes (or even ignores) the teachings of Jesus should be rejected.” Michael Brown

Hyper-grace tends to emphasize God's grace while at the same time minimizing God, repentance, Torah and Yeshua and ultimately elevating man, in essence making it more humanistic...

An outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems.

So the rational behind the justification of a tattoo is...

It isn't pagan  
I am not worshiping dead people

Yet lets take this a step further.

As being created in the image and likeness of Adonai, were we created with “ink” on our bodies?

What does it say when we choose to mark up our bodies with a tattoo?

It says that we don't believe Adonai was perfect, but that I will improve upon what Adonai has made. Thus we are taking on a humanistic view, rationalizing and justifying our position. We in essence are taking on the position of Adonai, just as they did in Genesis 11.

“ unless your righteousness is far greater than that of the Torah-teachers and P'rushim”

The Prushim were considered to be the leaders and appeared to be righteous, however, Yeshua constantly challenged their beliefs and understanding of Torah. He challenged the oral law, aka tradition of the elders as being equally authoritative as Torah. Yeshua is in essence saying that your righteousness should be greater than that of the ones who are in authority, because there is room for improvement. We see this room for improvement in Matthew 23.

In dismissing the passages the speaker in the video does, he in essence dismisses all of chapter 19. Once you dismiss a verse, how much easier is it to dismiss a chapter, and then why not the entire Scriptures?

What I have told you today is nothing new and has been going on for centuries. And would you believe there is a term for this...

Antinomianism: (*anti* means "against"; *nomos* means "law").

This is the belief that the moral law of the Tanakh has been done away with and that, once we are in Messiah, there is free grace in which we can almost live any way we want since we are not under the Law but under grace. Thus, according to this view, the Tanakh is not that important to read except for metaphors, types and symbols regarding the coming of Messiah. The New Covenant is all about grace and does away with Torah!

To the point that you can go even further...whereby free-grace preachers are twisting the Scriptures by teaching that "we are no longer under the Law" means "we are no longer under any obligation to obey even the moral aspects of Torah once we are saved."

As I have told you in the past, grace doesn't eliminate the law, because the opposite of law is lawlessness, not grace.

There would be no grace if there were no law. It is the existence of Torah that amplifies grace...

**Rom 7:7** Therefore, what are we to say? That the Torah is sinful? Heaven forbid! Rather, the function of the Torah was that without it, I would not have known what sin is. For example, I would not have become conscious of what greed is if the Torah had not said, "Thou shalt not covet."

How can you truly know what grace is if you don't know what Torah is?

How can you truly know what grace is if you don't know what sin is?

How can you truly know what grace is if you don't know what Yeshua's death, burial and resurrection means.

The foundation of grace is revealed in Torah.

What sin is

What is required for atonement

So, I left you hanging, there is still one question I haven't answered yet...

What is the context of Leviticus 19?

The context for Leviticus 19 is found right at the beginning of the chapter...

**Lev 19:2** "Speak to the entire community of Isra'el; tell them, 'You people are to be holy because I, Adonai your God, am holy.

You people are to be holy because, I Adonai your God, am holy.

This same concept is also referenced in:

**Lev 11:44** For I am Adonai your God; therefore, consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am holy; and do not defile yourselves with any kind of swarming creature that moves along the ground.

**Lev 11:45** For I am Adonai, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. Therefore you are to be holy, because I am holy.

**Lev 20:7** Therefore consecrate yourselves — you people must be holy, because I am Adonai your God.

**Lev 20:26** Rather, you people are to be holy for me; because I, Adonai, am holy; and I have set you apart from the other peoples, so that you can belong to me.

In addition to these passages where Adonai specifically tells Israel that He is Holy there are 73 verses in Torah whereby He just says "I am Adonai." or "I am Adonai, your God"

Whenever His name is attached to a passage the implication of His Holiness is also included, even though it is not specifically referenced.

To be holy, is to be set apart, not to be common, not to be like the world, but to be like the one we follow.

Consider Kefa's words...

**1Pe 1:10** The prophets, who prophesied about this gift of deliverance that was meant for you, pondered and inquired diligently about it.

**1Pe 1:11** They were trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of the Messiah in them was referring in predicting the Messiah's sufferings and the glorious things to follow.

**1Pe 1:12** It was revealed to them that their service when they spoke about these things was not for their own benefit, but for yours. And these same things have now been proclaimed to you by those who communicated the Good News to you through the Ruach HaKodesh sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things!

**1Pe 1:13** Therefore, get your minds ready for work, keep yourselves under control, and fix your hopes fully on the gift you will receive when Yeshua the Messiah is revealed.

**1Pe 1:14** As people who obey God, do not let yourselves be shaped by the evil desires you used to have when you were still ignorant.

**1Pe 1:15** On the contrary, following the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in your entire way of life;

**1Pe 1:16** since the Tanakh says, "You are to be holy because I am holy."

Thinking, Kefa is speaking to the Jewish people and it only applies to them...

What about Sha'ul's second letter to the Corinthians? He conveys the following:

**2Co 6:16** What agreement can there be between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God — as God said, "I will house myself in them, . . . and I will walk among you. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

**2Co 6:17** Therefore Adonai says, " 'Go out from their midst; separate yourselves; don't even touch what is unclean. Then I myself will receive you.

**2Co 6:18** In fact, I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters.' says Adonai-Tzva'ot."

**2Co 7:1** Therefore, my dear friends, since we have these promises, let us purify ourselves from everything that can defile either body or spirit, and strive to be completely holy, out of reverence for God.

These are passages that speak without compromise or relativity, but convey an absolute destination:

“Become holy yourselves in your entire way of life.”

“Completely holy, out of reverence to God.”

It is through our study of the Scriptures and the direction of the Ruach ha Kodesh that we are to pursue His righteousness. It is possible because we are told that our righteousness is to exceed that of the Prushim and Torah-teachers.

We are not to be like the nations.

We are not to be like other people.

We are sons and daughters of the Living God.

P.S. And lastly, the reference that was made to this verse...

**Rev 19:16** And on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

If it were a tattoo, then He wouldn't be Messiah because He had gone against His Word.