

Lesson 24 – Perek 14:1-21 - Behavior for a Holy Nation

Fifth Commandment

Objective: For students to see how the contents of this chapter elaborate the fifth commandment and, at the same time, also picks up on the previously discussed subjects of centralized worship and eating animals outside the Bet Mikdash.

Activity:

1. Break the class into small groups. Each group should scan the perek and break down its structure based on paragraphs and subject matter. Make an outline of the structure. If students will have trouble making an outline themselves then hand out the worksheet so they have a framework to start with.

<u>Perek 14:1-21 Structure</u>	
<u>Outline:</u>	
A. 1-2: No pagan mourning rituals	
2 Holy Nation	
B. 3-21: _____	
4-8	Animals
	4-6 Kosher
	7-8 Tameh
9-10	_____
	9 _____
	10 _____
11-18	_____
	11 _____
	12-19 _____
19-20	_____
	19 _____
	20 _____
21	_____
<u>Notes:</u>	
1. Compare the structure of section B with that of Vayikra 11. Notice how they are almost exactly the same.	
2. Notice how each of the two sections ends with the same phrase. The two sections have a common theme that they instruct concerning behavior befitting a nation holy to Hashem.	
(ב) כִּי עַם קְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לִיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבְךָ בָחַר יְהוָה לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ לְעַם סִגְלָה מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ:	
(כא) לֹא תֹאכְלוּ כָל גְּבִלָה לֶגֶר אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֵיכֶם תִּתְּנֶנָּה וְאָכְלָהּ אוֹ מִכֹּר לְנִכְרֵי אֱלֹהֵיךָ לֹא תִבְשַׁל גְּדֵי בְּחֵלֶב אֱמוֹ:	

[Sourcebook\L24 Perek 14 - Holy Nation - Worksheet.doc](#)

Then give out the summary sheet and review responses.

Perek 14:1-21 Structure

Outline:

- A. 1-2: No pagan mourning rituals
- 2 **Holy Nation**
- B. 3-21: Kosher and non-Kosher Species
 - 4-8 Animals
 - 4-6 Kosher
 - 7-8 Tameh
 - 9-10 Fish
 - 9 Kosher
 - 10 Tameh
 - 11-18 Birds
 - 11 Kosher
 - 12-19 Tameh
 - 19-20 Flying Insects
 - 19 Tameh
 - 20 Kosher
- 21 **Holy Nation**

Notes:

1. Compare the structure of section B with that of Vayikra 11.
2. Notice how sections A and B both end with the same phrase. The two sections have a common theme that they instruct concerning behavior befitting a nation holy to Hashem.
(ב) **כִּי עַם קְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לִיְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ** וּבָרַךְ בְּחַר יְהוָה לֵהְיוֹת לּוֹ לְעַם סְגֻלָּה מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה:
(כא) לֹא תֵאָכְלוּ כָל נֶבֱלָה לִגְר אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֵיךָ תִּתְנַנֵּה וְאָכְלָהּ אוֹ מִכָּר לִנְכָרִי **כִּי עַם קְדוֹשׁ אַתָּה לִיְהוָה** אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תִבְשֵׁל גְּדִי בְחֵלֶב אֱמוֹ:

[L24 Perek 14 - Holy Nation - Summary Sheet.doc](#)

These two topics are connected with the phrase “for you are a people consecrated to Hashem your God.” Any behavior that is not befitting a holy nation is prohibited to Israel. The first example given is not recognizing human dignity by mutilating the body. The second example prohibits eating “disgusting” creatures since what we eat affects who we are.

2. Why are these laws situated here?

The chapter is introduced by a unique expression in the Torah – “You are children of Hashem your God.” Knowing that the entire second speech of Debarim is a detailed explication of the ten commandments, it is likely that this phrase extends the fifth commandment of honoring parents to honoring Hashem - the third partner in creating life. Since we are children of Hashem, we too are holy. By not mutilating the body that Hashem has given us and by not defiling the body with *tameh* – usually predatory – creatures, we recognize that we are holy because we are created by Hashem in His image.

In the ten commandments honoring parents comes after the Sabbath law because honoring parents borders on a **בין אדם להבירו** law and should be adjacent to the second five commandments. However, the expansion of commandment five precedes that of commandment four which will come later. This is because once honoring parents is applied to honoring Hashem, it loses its **בין אדם להבירו** quality and therefore should be close to the first three commandments.

Besides the connection to the fifth commandment, the list of kosher and tameh animals may connect back to 12:20-28 which discussed eating meat outside the Bet Mikdash. Once the possibility of eating meat without bringing a sacrifice is brought up, we then need to know which animals we are allowed to eat – since that list includes some animals that may not be sacrificed.