

Messianic Rabbi: When G-D Asks Us to Do the Impossible

Sometimes God commands His people to do something we don't feel we can accomplish. We find ourselves saying, "That's impossible."

I am not talking about giving up coffee and chocolate. I am talking about something that is so far beyond your ability that it truly is impossible. I recently had that experience, and it began to bother me.

After all, how can G-D command His people to do something that is impossible to accomplish, especially when you consider the repercussions of disobeying Him?

The verse in question is Leviticus 19:2 (TLV):

"Speak to all the congregation of Bnei-Yisrael and tell them: You shall be kedoshim, for I, Adonai your God, am holy."

Here we read G-D commanding Moses to command the children of Israel to be holy ones. Not just run-of-the-mill holy ones, they were to be holy as G-D is holy.

Think about that for a moment. G-D, who is perfect in holiness, was commanding His people to be holy as He is. This seems totally impossible on the surface, until we look a little deeper into the definition of holiness.

Holiness is not equal to righteousness. Holiness is not the same as being perfect. Holiness is being different or separate. Holiness is a word of comparison.

So, then, in order to understand the statement, "be holy or be different as I am different," we need to understand a little about how G-D is holy or different. Not only as compared to you and I, but also as compared to the false gods of the

peoples that G-D just finished telling Israel to be different from: the Egyptians and the Canaanites.

One difference is that all of the false gods expected those who served them to first do something for them, like making and offering a sacrifice. The false god would then respond by doing something for them. However, the G-D of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob first does something for His people and then asks them to serve Him.

Think about this: When Israel was in Egypt, G-D first delivered them, and then He asked them to obey His Torah. G-D spoke of this relationship order when He said, "I will be your G-D, and you will be My people." This pattern is seen not only in the *Tanakh* or Old Testament, but we also find it in the *Brit Chadasha* or New testament. We see this in Romans 5:8: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us."

With this difference in mind, when we think of being holy as G-D is holy, we should follow His example and serve people while they are still sinners. After all, G-D didn't wait for you and I to offer ourselves to Him until after He offered Himself for us. Maybe this is what Yeshua had in mind when He answered the lawyer's question about which is the greatest commandment in Matthew 22. Yeshua responded: "'You shall love Adonai your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' The entire Torah and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

If we want to be holy as G-D is Holy, we have to be different as G-D is different. It isn't enough that we just love G-D; we must also love people.

We need to love people by serving them before they earn our love, just as G-D did for us. Maybe being holy as G-D is holy

isn't impossible after all. {eoa}

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