

פרשת
אמור
Parashat Emor

*Vayikra / Leviticus 21:1-24:23, Ezekiel 44:15-31
Matthew 26:59-66*

Transmitting Holiness to others?

This week's Torah portion, *Vayikra / Leviticus 21-22* speaks about the requirements for the priests and holiness. Chapter 23 speaks of God's Meodim (appointed times) and Chapter 24 speaks of what the people are to bring to the Tabernacle, oil, grain, the sacrifices, taking the Lord's name in vain, and the command on an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The principles that are being laid out here in the Torah portion are related to holiness and justice before God. For example, the command of "*an eye for an eye*" is given such that the punishment must fit the crime and there should be a just penalty for evil actions. What this command teaches us is justice should be equitable and excessive harshness and excessive leniency should be avoided. Studying the Bible, we are given no indication that the command of "*an eye for an eye*" was followed literally. (*There was never a case of an Israelite being maimed as a result of this command.*) Also, before this particular command was given, God had already established a judicial system to hear cases and determine penalties (see *Shemot / Exodus 18:13-26*) Capital crimes were repaid with execution in ancient Israel, on the basis of multiple witnesses (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 17:6*), most other crimes were repaid with payment in goods, for example, if one injured

a man's hand so that he could not work, he would compensate that man for his lost wages. This is what we read according to Mamionides Mishneh Torah on personal injuries and property.

Mamionides Mishneh Torah, One Who Injures a Person or Property 1:2

נִזְק כִּי־צָד. שָׂאֵם קָטַע יַד חֵבְרוֹ אוֹ רַגְלוֹ רוֹאִין אוֹתוֹ כְּאֵלוֹ
הוּא עֶבֶד גְּמָכָר בְּשׁוּק כְּמָה הָיָה יָפָה [אֶז] וְכִמָּה הוּא יָפָה
עֲתָה וּמִשְׁלָם הַפְּחָת שְׁהַפְּחִית מִדְּמִיו. שְׁנֵאָמַר (שְׁמוֹת כֹּא
כַד) (וַיִּקְרָא כַד כ) "עֵינַי תַּחַת עֵינַי". מִפִּי הַשְּׁמוּעָה לְמַדּוֹ
שְׁזָה שְׁנֵאָמַר תַּחַת לְשָׁלֵם מִמּוֹן הוּא:

How is compensation for injury determined? If one cut off a man's hand or foot, the court determines, as if he were a slave to be sold on the market, how much he was worth previously and how much he is worth now. The defendant must then pay the amount by which he decreased the value of the injured man, as it is written: "An eye for an eye" (Exodus 21:24); traditionally interpreted it means remuneration for injury sustained.

זֶה שְׁנֵאָמַר בַּתּוֹרָה (וַיִּקְרָא כַד כ) "כַּאֲשֶׁר יַתֵּן מוֹם בְּאָדָם
כֵּן יִתֵּן בוֹ" אֵינּוּ לְחַבֵּל בְּזָה כְּמוֹ שְׁחָבַל בַּחֵבְרוֹ אֲלֵא שֶׁהוּא
רְאוּי לְחַסְרוֹ אֵיבָר אוֹ לְחַבֵּל בוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וּלְפִיכֹה מִשְׁלָם
נִזְקוֹ. וְהָרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר (בַּמִּדְבָּר לֵה לֵא) "וְלֹא תִקְחוּ כֶפֶר
לְנַפְשׁ רֵצַח" לְרוֹצֵחַ בְּלִבָּד הוּא שְׂאִין בוֹ כֶּפֶר אֲבָל לְחַסְרוֹן
אֵיבָרִים אוֹ לְחַבְּלוֹת יֵשׁ בוֹ כֶּפֶר:

When the Torah says: "If a man disfigures a person, as he has done so shall it be done to him" (Leviticus 24:20), it does not mean to inflict injury on this man as he did on the other, but that the offender fittingly deserves to be deprived of a limb or wounded in the same manner as he did, and must therefore indemnify the damage he caused. Furthermore, the Torah says: "You shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer" (Numbers 35:31),

implying that only for a murderer no ransom is accepted, but compensation is taken for the loss of limbs or for injuries sustained.

The interpretation of *Vayikra / Leviticus 24:20*, כַּשֶׁר תַּחַת שְׁפָר עֵין, *24:20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has injured a man, so it shall be inflicted on him. (NASB)* is this does not mean to inflict injury on a man as he did to the other. Mamionides states that a ransom may be paid instead of taking a literal interpretation of this verse (*except in the case of a capital crime*). Now the interesting thing about the Talmud is the Talmud contains varying opinions with the rabbis sometimes having differing opinions. Both the Talmud and the Mishnah state the following:

Talmud Bavli Bava Kamma 83b

גמ' אמאי (שמות כא, כד) עין תחת עין אמר רחמנא אימא
עין ממש

GEMARA: The Gemara asks: Why does the mishna take for granted the fact that one who caused injury is liable to pay compensation to the injured party? The Merciful One states in the Torah: “An eye for an eye” (Exodus 21:24). You might say that this means that the one who caused injury shall lose an actual eye rather than pay money.

Mishnah Bava Kamma 8:1

If one injures his neighbor, he is liable for five things: nezek (injury), tza'ar (distress), ripui (healing), sheveth (layoff), and shame (bosheth). “Nezek” — How (is it assessed)? If he blinded his eye, or cut off his hand, or broke his leg, he (the injured one) is perceived as a bondsman being sold in the marketplace, and it is estimated how much he would have been worth (without the injury) and how much he is worth (with it)...

The rabbis say the “*eye for an eye*” command is to be understood as paying compensation rather than literally cutting off an hand or putting out an eye. The reason for this interpretation is given by *Sforno on Shemot / Exodus 21:24*, saying, “עין תחת עין; *this is what ought to be the judgment against the offender, if we were to apply the principle of the punishment fitting the crime in all its severity. However, according to tradition only financial compensation is exacted as we cannot accurately measure how to apply the principle of “an eye for an eye” literally.*” Sforno comments about how it is difficult to measure accurately how to apply the principle of an eye for an eye. The reason being, there is always more to the story than what we know, or the situation is more complicated than a simple “*cut and gut*” type of response. In the Apostolic Writings, we learn that this particular text was taken by some to be applied to every day personal relationships. This allowed one to be able to seek revenge on a personal level. (*i.e. If someone punched you, you could punch him back; if someone insulted you, he was fair game for your insults, etc.*) The religious leaders of Yeshua’s day played games with the judicial basis of the giving of the command “*an eye for an eye.*” In the Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua counters the common teaching of personal retaliation saying the following: “*You have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That you resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.*” (*Matthew 5:38–39*) Here Yeshua raises the bar by the interpretation of the command “*eye for an eye*” to be merciful towards those who wrongfully treat us. Note, this is the one who has intentions of doing evil towards another. This is different than someone by accident harming another. Nevertheless, even in the context of willful sin that is committed against us, we are to offer mercy and turn the other cheek.

The Scriptures we are studying for this week are from the Torah Portion are *Vayikra / Leviticus 24:1-23* and from the Haftarah Portion is *Ezekiel 44:15-19*.

Vayikra / Leviticus 24:1-23

24:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24:2 ‘Command the sons of Israel that they bring to you clear oil from beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn

continually. 24:3 'Outside the veil of testimony in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the Lord continually; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations. 24:4 'He shall keep the lamps in order on the pure gold lampstand before the Lord continually. 24:5 'Then you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. 24:6 'you shall set them in two rows, six to a row, on the pure gold table before the Lord. 24:7 'You shall put pure frankincense on each row that it may be a memorial portion for the bread, even an offering by fire to the Lord. 24:8 'Every sabbath day he shall set it in order before the Lord continually; it is an everlasting covenant for the sons of Israel. 24:9 'It shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the Lord's offerings by fire, his portion forever.' 24:10 Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp. 24:11 The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) 24:12 They put him in custody so that the command of the Lord might be made clear to them. 24:13 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 24:14 'Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let all the congregation stone him. 24:15 'You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear his sin. 24:16 'Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death. 24:17 'If a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death. 24:18 'The one who

takes the life of an animal shall make it good, life for life. 24:19 'If a man injures his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him: 24:20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has injured a man, so it shall be inflicted on him. 24:21 'Thus the one who kills an animal shall make it good, but the one who kills a man shall be put to death. 24:22 'There shall be one standard for you; it shall be for the stranger as well as the native, for I am the Lord your God.' ' 24:23 Then Moses spoke to the sons of Israel, and they brought the one who had cursed outside the camp and stoned him with stones. Thus the sons of Israel did, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. (NASB)

א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ב צו אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיִּקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ שְׁמֹן זֵית זָךְ כִּתִּית לְמֵאֹר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד:
ג מִחוּץ לְפָרֶכֶת הָעֵדוּת בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד יַעֲרֹךְ אֹתוֹ אֶהְרֹן
מִמַּעַרְב עַד-בִּקְרָה לְפָנַי יְהוָה תָּמִיד חֲקַת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם:
ד עַל הַמִּנְרָה הַטְּהַרָה יַעֲרֹךְ אֶת-הַנִּירוֹת לְפָנַי יְהוָה תָּמִיד:
ה וְלִקְחָתָּ סֶלֶת וְאֶפֶיֶת אֲתָהּ שְׁתִּימַם עֲשֶׂהָ חֲלוֹת שְׁנֵי
עֶשְׂרִינָיִם יִהְיֶה הַחֻלָּה הָאֶחָת: ו וְשִׁמְתָּ אוֹתָם שְׁתִּימַם מִעַרְב־
כּוֹת שֵׁשׁ הַמַּעֲרָכֶת עַל הַשְּׁלֶחָן הַטְּהַר לְפָנַי יְהוָה: ז וְנָתַתָּ
עַל-הַמַּעֲרָכֶת לְבִנְיָה זָכָה וְהִיתָה לְלֶחֶם לְאִזְכָּרָה אִשָּׁה לִיהוָה:
ח בַּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת בַּיּוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת יַעֲרֹכְנֻוּ לְפָנַי יְהוָה תָּמִיד מֵאֵת
בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם: ט וְהִיתָה לְאֶהְרֹן וּלְבָנָיו וְאָכְלֶהּ
בְּמִקּוֹם קֹדֶשׁ כִּי קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים הוּא לוֹ מֵאִשֵּׁי יְהוָה חֶק-עוֹלָם:
ס י וַיֵּצֵא בֶן-אִשָּׁה יִשְׂרָאֵלִית וְהוּא בֶן-אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם בְּתוֹךְ
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּנָּצוּ בַּמַּחֲנֶה בֶן הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית וְאִישׁ הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי:
י א וַיִּקַּב בֶּן-הָאִשָּׁה הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִית אֶת-הַשֵּׁם וַיִּקְלַל וַיִּבְיֵאוּ
אֹתוֹ אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְשֵׁם אָמוֹ שְׁלֹמִית בֵּת-דָּבָרִי לְמִטָּה-דָּן: יב
וַיִּנְיָחֻהוּ בַּמִּשְׁמֶר לְפָרֶשׁ לָהֶם עַל-פִּי יְהוָה: פ יג וַיְדַבֵּר
יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: יד הוֹצֵא אֶת-הַמִּקְלָל אֶל-מִחוּץ
לְמַחֲנֶה וְסָמְכוּ כָל-הַשְּׂמָעִים אֶת-יְדֵיהֶם עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ וְרָגְמוּ אֹתוֹ
כָּל-הָעֵדָה: טו וְאֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל תְּדַבֵּר לֵאמֹר אִישׁ אִישׁ

כִּי-יִקְלַל אֱלֹהֵיו וְנִשְׂא חֶטְאוֹ: טז וְנִקְב שֵׁם-יְהוָה מוֹת יוֹמֵת
 רְגוֹם יִרְגְּמוּ-בוּ כָּל-הָעֵדָה כַּגֵּר כַּאֲזָרַח בְּנִקְבוֹ-שֵׁם יוֹמֵת: יז
 וְאִישׁ כִּי יִכֶּה כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ אָדָם מוֹת יוֹמֵת: יח וּמִכֶּה נֶפֶשׁ-בֶּהֱ-
 מָה יִשְׁלַמְנָה נֶפֶשׁ תַּחַת נֶפֶשׁ: יט וְאִישׁ כִּי-יִתֵּן מוֹם בַּעֲמִיתוֹ
 כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה לוֹ: כ שָׂבַר תַּחַת שָׂבַר עֵינַי תַּחַת עֵינַי
 שֵׁן תַּחַת שֵׁן כַּאֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן מוֹם בְּאָדָם כֵּן יִנָּתֵן לוֹ: [מִפְטִיר]
 כא וּמִכֶּה בְּהֵמָה יִשְׁלַמְנָה וּמִכֶּה אָדָם יוֹמֵת: כב מִשְׁפָּט
 אֶחָד יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כַּגֵּר כַּאֲזָרַח יִהְיֶה כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: כג
 וַיְדַבֵּר מִשָּׁה אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּצִיאוּ אֶת-הַמְּקִלָּל אֶל-מַחוּץ
 לַמַּחֲנֶה וַיִּרְגְּמוּ אֹתוֹ אֶבֶן וּבִנְי-יִשְׂרָאֵל עָשׂוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
 אֶת-מִשָּׁה:

Ezekiel 44:15-19

44:15 'But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,' declares the Lord God. 44:16 'They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge. 44:17 'It shall be that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court and in the house. 44:18 'Linen turbans shall be on their heads and linen undergarments shall be on their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything which makes them sweat. 44:19 'When they go out into the outer court, into the outer court to the people, they shall put off their garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers; then they shall put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments. (NASB)

טו וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי צְדוֹק אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְרוּ אֶת-מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ

מִקְדָּשֵׁי בְּתֻעוֹת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַלֵּי הַמָּה יִקְרְבוּ אֵלַי לְשָׂרְתַנִּי
וְעָמְדוּ לְפָנַי לְהִקְרִיב לִי חֵלֶב וְדָם נָאֻם אֲדַבֵּר יְהוָה: טז הַמָּה
יָבֹאוּ אֶל-מִקְדָּשֵׁי וְהַמָּה יִקְרְבוּ אֶל-שְׂלֹחַנֵי לְשָׂרְתַנִּי וְשָׁמְרוּ
אֶת-מִשְׁמֶרְתִּי: יז וְהָיָה כְּבוֹאָם אֶל-שְׂעָרֵי הַחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִית
בְּגָדֵי פְשָׁתִים יִלְבָּשׁוּ וְלֹא-יַעֲלֶה עֲלֵיהֶם צָמָר בְּשָׂרְתָם בְּשֵׁ-
עָרֵי הַחֲצָר הַפְּנִימִית וּבֵיתָהּ: יח פְּאָרֵי פְשָׁתִים יִהְיוּ עַל-
רֹאשָׁם וּמְכַנְסֵי פְשָׁתִים יִהְיוּ עַל-מַתְּנֵיהֶם לֹא יִחַגְרוּ בִּיזְעָ: יט
וּבְצִאתָם אֶל-הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה אֶל-הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה אֶל-הָעָם
יִפְשְׁטוּ אֶת-בְּגָדֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר-הֵמָּה מְשַׁרְתָּם בָּם וְהִנִּיחוּ אוֹתָם
בְּלִשְׁכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְלָבְשׁוּ בְּגָדִים אֲחֵרִים וְלֹא-יִקְדָּשׁוּ אֶת-הָעָם
בְּבְגָדֵיהֶם:

Reading the Torah Portion and then the Haftarah Portion, there is something that is very interesting we read about according to *Ezekiel 44:19*, וּבְצִאתָם אֶל-הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה אֶל-הַחֲצָר הַחִיצוֹנָה אֶל-הָעָם יִפְשְׁטוּ טו אֶת-בְּגָדֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר-הֵמָּה מְשַׁרְתָּם בָּם וְהִנִּיחוּ אוֹתָם בְּלִשְׁכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְלָבְשׁוּ טו אֶת-בְּגָדֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר-הֵמָּה מְשַׁרְתָּם בָּם וְהִנִּיחוּ אוֹתָם בְּלִשְׁכַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְלָבְשׁוּ: *44:19 'When they go out into the outer court, into the outer court to the people, they shall put off their garments in which they have been ministering and lay them in the holy chambers; then they shall put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments. (NASB)* What we find here in the book of Ezekiel is a command taken from *Vayikra / Leviticus 16:23* *Then Aaron shall come into the tent of meeting and take off the linen garments which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. (NASB)* Moshe commands Aaron what to do concerning making atonement on Yom Kippur, and he tells Aaron to leave the holy garments in the Tabernacle, those garments that he wore while going before God to make atonement. The point that is so interesting is how *Ezekiel 44:19* speaks about leaving the garment in the Temple so that holiness is not transmitted to the people through the garments. This is an interesting comment by reason of what we read according to *Vayikra / Leviticus 15* on the transmittance of uncleanness. Based upon the Torah, we generally do not think in terms of the transmittance of holiness as opposed to the transmittance of uncleanness. The Masoretic Text on *Vayikra / Leviticus 15* describes what

occurs following one having the uncleanness of a discharge from the body. Based upon the Torah study from Parashat Metzora, we learned how the idea of uncleanness is connected to sin, and how the rabbis interpret Metzora as *“hamotzi ra”* the wellspring of evil, those things which come from the heart. According to the command in the book of Leviticus, we read whatever a man with a discharge touches becomes unclean (15:7), everything on which he sits becomes unclean (15:4), anyone who touches his bed becomes unclean (15:5), whoever sits on the thing that he sat upon becomes unclean (15:6), if the unclean person spits upon someone else, he becomes unclean (15:8), the text repeats what he sits upon and everything he touches as being unclean and those who touch those things also become unclean (15:9-11). The text goes on to say clay vessels that were touched are to be broken because they are unclean (15:12), and when a person is cleansed from the discharge, he is to wait seven days for his cleansing to be complete, and he is to wash his cloths and body in running water (יִשְׁטֹף בַּמַּיִם). The text describes the transmittance of uncleanness to objects and to others. In the *Talmud Bavli Niddah 54* the rabbis describe the menstruating woman as a more stringent case than what is referred to here in *Vayikra / Leviticus 15* on the one with a discharge. In the case of a woman the menstrual blood confers uncleanness when either wet or dry, whereas the one with a discharge confers uncleanness only when wet. Also, a menstruating woman causes impurity as soon as she has spotted blood the first time, whereas the blood of a person afflicted with זִבַּח transmits impurity only after several sightings or sightings on consecutive days respectively. What these things describe for us are how every aspect of our lives, even what we touch, is spiritual. We have a spiritual impact upon everything in our lives, persons, places, and things. This is definitely food for thought in regards to how we are to live our lives!

Rashi states the following concerning *Ezekiel 44:19*.

Rashi on Ezekiel 44:19 Part 2

והניחו אותם בלשכות הקודש. כמו שאמר מרע"ה (ויקרא ט"ז:כ"ג) ופשט את בגדי הבד אשר לבש והניחם שם:
and place them in chambers belonging to the Sanctuary: as stated by our master Moses, may he rest in peace (Lev. 16:23): “after that, he shall take off the linen gar-

ments which he had put on, etc., and he shall leave them there.”

Rashi on Ezekiel 44:19 Part 3

ולא יקדשו את העם. ת“י ולא יתערבון עם עמא בלבו-
שיהון כלומר לא יגעו אל העם בבגדיהם הקדושים שאין
בגדי חול טהורין אצל בגדי הקודש:

and they shall not sanctify the people: [Heb. יִקְדְּשׁוּ אֶלֶן יְקָתְהֶם, lit. they shall not sanctify the people.] Jonathan renders: and they shall not mingle with the people in their garments, [i.e.] they shall not touch the people with their holy garments, for ordinary garments are not ritually clean as regards [contaminating] holy garments.

Rashi takes the same approach as we do intuitively that unclean garments would contaminate the clean garments. It is interesting how the text is written saying, *ולא יקדשו את העם בבגדיהם*, “*and not sanctify the people in their garments*” with the NASB writing “*not transmitting holiness to the people in the garments.*” In *Ezekiel 46:20* we are given another statement saying something similar in regards to the whole burnt offering and sin offering, *46:20 He said to me, “This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order that they may not bring them out into the outer court to transmit holiness to the people.”* (NASB) This was specified by God here in the vision to Ezekiel for the purpose of maintaining order in the priesthood and providing a dividing line in the community of Israel in the system of worship. According to this text (from Ezekiel) any person, even if they were not a member of the tribe of Levi, who came into the presence of the sanctified offerings would, as a result, become “*holy.*” Note that this is not in the sense of being sinless, but of being “*set apart*” or consecrated for the specific duties that only the priests could perform. This would present a problem for those who are not from the Tribe of Levi. Note also how the NLT translation clarifies this verse by adding the word “*endangering*” the people by coming into contact with the sacred garments or the

sacrificial offerings (compared to the NIV and NASB).

Ezekiel 44:19

*When they return to the outer courtyard where the people are, they must take off the clothes they wear while ministering to me. They must leave them in the sacred rooms and put on other clothes so they do not **endanger** anyone by transmitting holiness to them through this clothing. (NLT)*

Ezekiel 46:20

*He explained, “This is where the priests will cook the meat from the guilt offerings and sin offerings and bake the flour from the grain offerings into bread. They will do it here to avoid carrying the sacrifices through the outer courtyard and **endangering** the people by transmitting holiness to them.” (NLT)*

By being consecrated in this way one would be set apart from the normal duties that are common to the people of Israel apart from the temple services. This is commanded for the purpose of preventing confusion of the religious duties of the Levi (priest) with the normal duties of the common man (*i.e. confusion between the religious and non-religious lives of the people*). Note also however, we find in the Torah the words “*and unto Me you shall be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation*” (*Shemot / Exodus 19:6*). The Apostolic Writings also have similar verbiage regarding those who believe in Yeshua the Messiah and become a part of the family of God. This provides some tension in the sense of each and every person sanctifying his or her life before God. What this command does is to help recognize the specific context of the consecration or sanctification process as the priests are the one’s who were authorized by God to carry out these duties. This also reminds us as non-Levites how we should be living and sanctifying our lives before God! There is a very important point here that appears to be drawn out per what we are reading in these biblical texts. Yeshua points out something that is related to what we read in both the Torah and the Haftarah portion for this week as this is related to the command

“an eye for an eye” and to this command of transmitting holiness to the people. In the command of *“an eye for an eye”* we are given the opportunity to be merciful regardless how we are being treated. Yeshua says do not resist evil but turn the other cheek. The idea here that Yeshua is teaching us is related to both mercy and righteousness having the opportunity to touch the unrighteous person who is sinning. Under the idea of *“transmitting holiness”* by turning the other cheek, the unrighteous may see the mercy and love of God demonstrated in the life of the child of God. This action then may have a property of drawing the unrighteous person to faith in the God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua. When this happens, being confounded by *“love your enemy”* the unrighteous person *“may”* come to his senses and repent and seek the God of Israel, and turn from his wicked ways, and then the Lord God Almighty will cause his heart to change and seek the righteousness and holiness of both our Father in heaven and of His Son Yeshua! This is analogous to transmitting holiness to such a person so that his life is changed, transformed, and begins to be conformed unto the likeness of God’s Son Yeshua the Messiah. One cannot obey the commandments that are not properly understood. The Sermon on the mount teaches us an approach to living based upon a fresh and insightful interpretation of the Torah and the commandments. The interpretation is Jewish to the core, and best understood in the context of ancient Judaism. The concept added to the text in *Mishley / Proverbs 25:21-22* (feeding your enemy), by way of the rabbinic commentary, is that God Himself will work to establish peace between enemies. (See *2 Kings 6* for further study) Because the would be victim shows kindness in obedience to the Scriptures, the Lord God will cause one’s enemies to be at peace, thus turning one’s would be murderer (hate = murder) into a friend. Wining over an enemy is a sign of great moral strength and the Talmud praises the attitude of humility and long suffering when an individual has to endure personal insult. Those who are reviled and do not respond likewise rejoice in the teaching *“but they who love him are as the sun when it goes forth in its might”* (*Judges 5:31*). Turning the other cheek is not a sign of weakness but it demonstrates an inner strength that transforms the disciple in the midst of suffering and possesses the power to transform the aggressor who may decide to change and seek God. (*Talmud Bavli Shabbat 88b*) By being touched with righteous-

ness and mercy, one's life may be drawn to seeking the Lord God of Israel, His Messiah Yeshua, and bringing glory to the Name of God by living for Him, showing mercy and love towards one another just as the Scriptures say! For the person who does this, salvation has come. When we study God's Word from the beginning of the Bible (the Torah) to the end (Revelation) we can see how the OT (Old Testament) is not "*Old*" in the sense of the division that it is forced upon us by the Bible translators and years of replacement theology (i.e. old vs. new). There is much practical application for us today in the Tanach (Torah, Prophets, Writings). In many churches (every one of them pretty much) put the OT in opposition to the NT in the sense of one being more important than the other. This is a very bad exegetical technique of pitting the "*old*" parts of the bible against the "*new*" parts of the bible per say. I have heard this taught as truth, and it is a great tragedy in the testimony of the church today! This is due to the replacement theologies that were established from early on in Church history and the seminaries that continue to teach it. I like to ask the question, "*do you know the difference between teaching a theology as opposed to teaching what the Scriptures truly say?*" What is clear based upon this study is how the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings (Tanach, תנ"ך) are complimentary to the NT and help us to more properly understand what Yeshua and the disciples are teaching us. The Tanach is the foundation stone upon which the NT is established! This is why the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings (the Tanach, תנ"ך) go hand in hand with the Gospel Message!