1. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
2. Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel, and say to them, You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy.
3. You shall revere every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths; I am the Lord your God.
4. Turn you not to idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods; I am the Lord your God.
5. And if you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the Lord, you shall offer it of your own will.
6. It shall be eaten the same day you offer it, and on the next day; and if anything remains until the third day, it shall be burned in the fire.
7. And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is abominable; it shall not be accepted.
8. Therefore every one who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned the consecrated thing of the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.
9. And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.
10. And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and stranger; I am the Lord your God.
11. You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie one to another.
12. And you shall not swear by my name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God; I am the Lord.
13. You shall not defraud your neighbor, nor rob him; the wages of he who is hired shall not remain with you all night until the morning.
14. You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God; I am the Lord.
15. You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; you shall not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.
16. You shall not go up and down as a slanderer among your people; nor shall you stand against the blood of your neighbor; I am the Lord.
17. You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall reason with your neighbor, and not allow sin on his account.
18. You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord.
19. You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with mixed seed; nor shall a garment mixed of linen and woollen come upon you.
20. And whoever lies carnally with a woman, who is a slave betrothed to a man, and not wholly redeemed, nor freedom given her; inquiry shall be made; they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.
21. And he shall bring his guilt offering to the Lord, to the door of the Tent of Meeting, a ram for a guilt offering.
22. And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the Lord for his sin which he has done; and the sin which he has done shall be forgiven him.
23. And when you shall come into the land, and shall have planted all kinds of trees for food, then you shall count its fruit as uncircumcised; three years shall it be uncircumcised to you; it shall not be eaten.
24. But in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy for praise giving to the Lord.
25. And in the fifth year shall you eat of its fruit, that it may yield to you its produce; I am the Lord your God.
26. You shall not eat any thing with the blood; nor shall you use enchantment, nor observe times.
27. You shall not round the corners of your heads, nor shall you mar the corners of your beard.
28. You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord.
29. Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot; lest the land fall to harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.
30. You shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord.
31. Regard not those who are mediums, nor seek after wizards, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God.
32. You shall rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear your God; I am the Lord.
33. And if a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not wrong him.
34. But the stranger who dwells with you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.
35. You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in measures of length, of weight, or quantity.
36. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall you have; I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.
37. Therefore shall you observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them; I am the Lord.

YOUR TORAH NAVIGATOR
1. Is being “Holy” a separate commandment, or do all the commandments that follow constitute a definition for what being “Holy” is?
2. Why are we given this list of do’s and don’ts if the last verse in the chapter states that we should “observe all my statutes...”? What’s special about the commandments elucidated in Leviticus 19?

Rashi on Leviticus 19:2

Speak to all of the community of the children of Israel: This is to teach that this chapter was said in front of the whole community, because most of the body of the Torah hinges upon it. (Midrash Leviticus Rabba 24:5)

You shall be holy: You should keep distant from sin and licentiousness, for wherever you find decrees against sexual misconduct you find holiness. (Ibid 24:6)

Nachmanides on Leviticus 19:2

כְּדַבַּר הַלַּאֹלֶּל, יִקְרָא בְּכָל תַּכּוֹת הַנִּקְרָא בִּכְלֵי הַנִּקְרָא (ר' מָכִית מַקְרֵי הַנִּקְרָא בִּכְלֵי הַנִּקְרָא) אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱл
“You should keep distant from sin and licentiousness, for wherever you find decrees against sexual misconduct you find holiness.” (Rashi) However, the Midrash in Torat Kohanim (Parsha 1:2) says that “You should keep yourself distant.” Similarly (Torat Kohanim 12:3) it says, “And you should make yourselves holy, and you will be holy, for I am holy...” Just as I am holy, so you shall be holy, just as I separate myself, so you should separate yourselves:

In my opinion, the separation being discussed here is not to separate oneself from licentious behavior as Rashi maintains, but rather this separation is the one referred to throughout the Talmud. Thus the rabbis are always referred to as “Prushim”, those who separate themselves.

The issue is that the Torah forbade certain sexual conduct, and prohibited certain foods and drink. It also permitted intercourse between husband and wife, and the consumption of meat and wine. This might allow a person to act licentiously with his wife, or his many wives, and to be a glutton for meat and drink, and speak vulgarly as his heart desires. For the Torah does not forbid any of these things, and he would be allowed to be a vile disgusting person with the Torah’s permission.

YOUR TORAH COMMENTATOR NAVIGATOR
1. Why does Nachmanides disagree with Rashi?
2. When you read the first two verses of Leviticus 19 in the greater context of the whole chapter, which commentator makes more sense Rashi or Nachmanides? Why?