

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT ASSEMBLY

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TORAH LAW EDUCATIONAL COURSE

The 613 Mitzvot of Yahweh

Bereishit • Shemot • Vayikra • Bamidbar • Devarim | The Tanakh Writings

LESSON 10

Negative Law #170

Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:19 — Not to Approach a Woman
During Her Menstrual Period

וְאֶל-אִשָּׁה בְּנִדַּת טִמְאַתָּהּ לֹא תִקְרַב

*Ve'el-ishah be'niddat tum'atah lo tikrav***"And to a woman in her menstrual impurity you shall not draw near."***Niddah: The Covenant Rhythm of Separation and Return — and the Mercy of Yahweh*

Four Spheres: Individual • Community • Nation • World

Authority: The Tanakh — The Word of Yahweh Alone

Standard: Devarim 19:15 — Two or Three Witnesses

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SECTION I — THE HEBREW TEXT

Vayikra (Leviticus) 18:19: *"And to a woman in her menstrual impurity you shall not draw near to uncover her nakedness."* The Sexuality Household Study (Section 35) documents this in the arayot list: "V. 19 — A woman in niddah: You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness during her period of menstrual uncleanness."

Context in the 613 Laws: Law #170 sits within the covenant holiness cluster (Laws #159-175). Unlike the surrounding laws that address permanently forbidden relationships, Law #170 addresses a temporally restricted situation — sexual approach during a specific period of the monthly cycle. The restriction applies during the period; after the period and the required cleansing, the covenant right of *onah* (Lesson 03) is fully restored.

A. Lexical Analysis — Key Terms

נִדָּה (niddah, H5079): BDB: "impurity; menstrual impurity; the state of being removed or set apart." HALOT: "impurity; menstrual impurity." Gesenius: "separation, removal; impurity; specifically the menstrual impurity of a woman." From the root **נָדַד (nadad, H5074)** — BDB: "to wander, flee, be removed, be set apart." The *niddah* period is not a designation of the woman as morally shameful or permanently impure. It is a covenant time of **separation and renewal** — a deliberate rhythm of withdrawal and return that **Yahweh** builds into the marriage covenant.

לֹא תִקְרַב (lo tikrav): "You shall not draw near" — the Qal imperfect of **קָרַב (karav, H7126)** — BDB: "to draw near, approach." The verb used for drawing near to **Yahweh** in worship (Vayikra 9:5; 10:3; 16:1) and for approaching a prohibited person sexually (Vayikra 18:6,14,19). The parallelism is covenant-significant: to draw near to **Yahweh** requires holiness; to draw near to one's wife requires covenant timing. Both involve the same vocabulary of covenant approach.

טִמְאָתָהּ (tum'atah, H2932): "Her impurity" — from **טָמֵא (tame', H2930)** — BDB: "to be unclean." Ritual impurity does not indicate moral failure — it indicates a state that requires the covenant process of cleansing before the normal covenant activities resume. The woman in niddah is not morally deficient; she is in a covenant state of separation that **Yahweh** built into the female body as part of the covenant rhythm.

B. The Niddah Framework — Vayikra 15

The fuller framework of the niddah law is established in Vayikra 15:19-28. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 35) identifies this verse (18:19) as the arayot prohibition flowing from that framework. Vayikra 15 establishes:

- Seven days of separation from the onset of menstruation (Vayikra 15:19)
- Everything she touches during this period enters a state of impurity (Vayikra 15:20-23)
- Anyone who touches her during this period becomes impure until evening (Vayikra 15:24)
- After seven days, she counts seven additional days and on the eighth day offers two birds for cleansing (Vayikra 15:28-30 — for longer abnormal bleeding)

The Sexuality Household Study (Section 35) establishes this within the covenant holiness framework: *"The arayot are not merely personal moral failures — they are covenant violations with land-level consequences."* The niddah law is the covenant rhythm that maintains the holiness of the marriage relationship within the cycle of separation and return.

C. The Covenant Rhythm — Separation and Return

The **niddah** law creates a deliberate covenant rhythm within the marriage — periods of sexual approach and periods of intentional separation. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 42) establishes: *"Every act of sexual intercourse between husband and wife releases the chemistry of bonding — not symbolically but biochemically. Yahweh built covenant faithfulness into the body's neurochemistry."* The **niddah** separation creates intentional renewal — restoring the covenant approach as a deliberate, chosen act rather than a routine. The husband who honors his wife's niddah honors the covenant rhythm **Yahweh** built into the marriage.

This is not a burden imposed on the wife. It is a covenant gift to both husband and wife. The separation creates anticipation and renewal. The return from niddah creates a monthly covenant renewal of the marriage relationship — a rhythm that mirrors **Yahweh's** own patterns of covenant drawing-near and withdrawal with Yisra'el throughout the Tanakh.

D. Medical Evidence — The Torah Confirmed by Independent Science

The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) documents the medical confirmation specifically: *"Intercourse during niddah period: The cervix is more open during menstruation and menstrual blood carries bacteria; medical research documents elevated risk of pelvic inflammatory disease for women who have intercourse during menstruation."* This is the Two/Three Witness standard (Devarim 19:15) applied to biology: the Written Torah and modern medical research arrive at the same conclusion from completely different directions. **Yahweh** built protection into the covenant through the niddah law — medical science has confirmed it two thousand years after Sinai.

The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) further establishes the general principle: *"The Torah's sexual framework is, among other things, a comprehensive public health*

system that modern medicine has spent two centuries independently confirming." The niddah law is one of the clearest examples of this principle — a covenant law that modern medicine has confirmed as medically protective for the wife.

E. The Penalty for Violation

Vayikra 20:18: ***"If a man lies with a woman having her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from among their people."*** The penalty is karet — covenant cutting-off — for both parties. This confirms that the niddah law is not a minor ritual regulation but a covenant law carrying a significant covenant consequence for willful violation.

D. The Covenant Mercy of Yahweh — Sincere Repentance

Even where the Torah states the judgment of death, the covenant mercy of **Yahweh** is always extended to a person who sincerely repents. This is not a contradiction of the law — it is a covenant truth that runs through the entire Tanakh and must be stated plainly in every study.

Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:21-23 establishes this directly: ***"But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he shall live. Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked,' declares the Lord Yahweh, 'rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?"***

This is the covenant position of **Yahweh** Himself — not a weakening of the law, but the full covenant framework. The death penalty is the Torah's declaration of the **gravity** of the sin. Yahweh's mercy through genuine repentance is the Torah's declaration of His **covenant character**. Both are true simultaneously. The Hoshea narrative is the clearest demonstration: **Yahweh** pursued covenant restoration with Yisra'el after centuries of spiritual adultery — not because the sin was less serious, but because His covenant love is greater than His judgment, for those who genuinely return.

The Sexuality Household Study (Section 46) states: *"Yahweh's covenant with Yisra'el did not end when Yisra'el committed adultery against Him — spiritually, repeatedly, across centuries. Yahweh pursued covenant restoration through every prophet He sent. The word to every person in covenant community who has violated the niddah violation is the same word Yahweh gave through Hoshea: return. The door of covenant restoration is the same door that stands open before Yisra'el in every prophetic book. What Yahweh requires is not performance — it is the sincere turning of the heart, the genuine abandonment of the covenant violation, and the humble return to the covenant structure He designed."* That is **Yahweh's** covenant: judgment is real, mercy is greater, and repentance is the bridge between the two.

Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:23 — JPS 1985

"Is it My desire that a wicked person shall die? — says the Lord Yahweh. It is rather that he shall turn back from his ways and live."

Witness: Yahweh's own stated desire — not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn and live. The judgment of the law establishes the gravity. The mercy of Yahweh through repentance establishes the covenant character. Both stand together in every lesson of this course.

SECTION II — TWO/THREE WITNESS CORROBORATION

Reference	Teaching / Witness
Vayikra (Lev.) 18:19	Primary prohibition — lo tikrav (do not draw near) during niddah. First witness.
Vayikra (Lev.) 15:19-28	Full niddah framework — seven days of separation, ritual washing, the complete Torah framework. Second witness establishing the scope and process of the niddah law.
Vayikra (Lev.) 20:18	"If a man lies with a woman having her sickness... both of them shall be cut off from among their people." Karet for both parties. Third witness establishing the covenant gravity of the law.
Yechezkel (Ez.) 18:5-6	The righteous man is described as one who "does not approach a woman during her menstrual impurity." Niddah observance is listed among the markers of covenant righteousness. Corroborating prophetic witness.
Shemot (Ex.) 21:10	She'er, kesut, onah — the wife's conjugal rights (Lesson 03). The niddah law does not eliminate the onah right — it establishes a covenant rhythm within which the onah right is honored. Corroborating covenant-relational witness.
Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41	"Intercourse during niddah period: The cervix is more open during menstruation and menstrual blood carries bacteria; medical research documents elevated risk of pelvic inflammatory disease." Independent scientific witness confirming the Torah's designation.

SECTION III — FOUR-SPHERE APPLICATION

Level	Sphere	Application	Torah Witness
INDIVIDUAL	Honor the Covenant Rhythm	The husband honors his wife's niddah by observing the separation. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) establishes that honoring niddah protects his wife's physical health. The husband who honors niddah is fulfilling his covenant obligation to provide kesut — covering and protection — for his wife's body.	Vayikra 18:19; 15:19-28; Shemot 21:10
INDIVIDUAL	The Wife's Covenant Status During Niddah	The niddah law does not make the woman a lesser covenant person during her menstrual period. Her covenant status is unchanged. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 45) states: 'You have the right to your husband's presence, his provision, his protection, and his sexual faithfulness.' The niddah separation is covenant wisdom — not a declaration of the wife's inferiority or shame.	Shemot 21:10; Vayikra 15:19-28
INDIVIDUAL	The Medical Protection is a Covenant Gift	The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) establishes: 'The Torah's sexual framework is, among other things, a comprehensive public health system.' The	Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41

		niddah law protects the wife's physical health at the most vulnerable point in her monthly cycle. A husband who honors niddah is protecting his wife's body as well as honoring the covenant framework.	
INDIVIDUAL	Sincere Repentance — The Covenant Mercy	Even where the niddah law has been violated — and the covenant consequence of karet is the Torah's designation — Yahweh's covenant mercy is extended to sincere repentance (Yechezkel 18:21-23). The covenant rhythm is restored to those who genuinely return to it.	Yechezkel 18:21-23; Vayikra 20:18
COMMUNITY	Covenant Assembly Teaching	Covenant assemblies must teach the niddah law as Written Torah — clearly, honestly, and with covenant dignity. It is not a subject to be embarrassed by or hidden. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) establishes that this is a covenant public health framework confirmed by modern medicine.	Vayikra 18:19; Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41
COMMUNITY	Protect the Wife's Covenant Rights During Niddah	The covenant community must recognize that a husband who demands sexual access from his wife during niddah — overriding her covenant right to the separation period — is violating both Law #170 and the spirit of the onah right	Vayikra 18:19; 20:18

		(Lesson 03). The wife's covenant rights during niddah must be protected.	
COMMUNITY	Pastoral Care — Teaching the Covenant Rhythm	Where covenant community members have not been taught the niddah framework, the assembly has a pastoral responsibility to teach it — not as religious ritual but as covenant wisdom confirmed by modern medicine.	Vayikra 15:19-28
NATION	Public Health Parallel	Nations whose public health systems promote abstinence during menstruation as a health measure are — often unknowingly — implementing a principle the Torah established at Sinai. The covenant foundation gives this principle its ultimate authority.	Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41
NATION	Women's Health Protection	National medical standards that advise against intercourse during menstruation for health reasons are aligning with the Torah's niddah framework from a medical rather than covenant direction. The convergence of medical and Torah authority on this point is itself a national witness to the Torah's wisdom.	Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41
WORLD	Universal Biological Wisdom	The biological reality of elevated infection risk during menstruation is the same for every woman in every culture. The Torah's niddah law	Vayikra 18:19; Bereishit 1:27

		applies universally — not because it is given to Yisra'el alone, but because it reflects Yahweh's design of the female body for all humanity (Bereishit 1:27).	
WORLD	The Sexuality Household Study Confirmation	The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) establishes: 'The Torah's sexual framework is confirmed independently by modern medicine, psychology, and the parallel teachings of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam at their best.' The niddah law is among the clearest examples of this world-level confirmation.	Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41

SECTION IV — THREE-RELIGION AUDIT

Judaism

Upholds Torah: The niddah laws are among the most fully developed areas of Jewish observance. The complete framework of Vayikra 15 and 18:19 is maintained in halakhic practice (taharat hamishpacha — family purity laws). Observant Jewish communities have the most detailed and consistent practice of this law of any of the three traditions.

Departs from Torah: Where rabbinic law has extended the niddah period beyond the Written Torah's seven-day framework through additional rabbinic-derived days (the "five clean days" added by the Geonic period), this represents a rabbinic addition to the Written Torah. Miqdash Bethel follows the Written Torah standard — Vayikra 15:19-28.

Christianity

Christianity has largely treated the niddah law as part of the "ceremonial law" deemed abolished through the antinomian framework. Where Christian communities have taught abstinence during menstruation on secular health grounds, they have done so without the Torah's covenant authority. The Written Torah's framework — including the covenant rhythm of separation and return — is absent from Christian practice. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) confirms that the medical evidence independently validates the Torah's wisdom on this point, which Christianity has abandoned.

Islam

Upholds Torah: Al-Baqarah 2:222 explicitly prohibits sexual intercourse during menstruation — a direct parallel to Vayikra 18:19: *"They ask you about menstruation. Say: it is a harm, so keep away from women during menstruation and do not approach them until they are cleansed."* The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) confirms that Islam's framework, when followed, produces the same STD-protective outcomes confirming the Torah's wisdom. All four major schools of Islamic jurisprudence uphold this prohibition. On this specific question, Islam upholds the Torah clearly and without notable departure.

STUDY REVIEW & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Individual Level

1. The Hebrew root of **נָדָה (niddah)** is **נָדַד (nadad)** — "to wander, flee, be set apart." What does this root meaning communicate about the nature of the niddah period? Is it primarily about the woman's impurity, or about something else?
2. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 42) establishes that sexual intercourse releases bonding chemistry biochemically. How does the niddah separation — creating a monthly rhythm of withdrawal and return — function as a covenant gift to both husband and wife, rather than merely a restriction?
3. Vayikra 20:18 assigns karet (covenant cutting-off) to both parties who violate the niddah law. How does the karet designation confirm that the niddah law is a covenant law of serious weight — not merely a ritual hygiene regulation?
4. The verb **לֹא תִקְרַב (lo tikrav)** — "you shall not draw near" — is used both for approaching **Yahweh** in worship and for approaching a prohibited person sexually. What does this lexical parallelism reveal about the covenant nature of the marriage relationship and the niddah law?

Community Level

5. A woman reports to covenant community leadership that her husband demands sexual access during her niddah period against her will, claiming his conjugal rights from Shemot 21:10 (Lesson 03). Using the niddah framework of Vayikra 18:19 and 20:18, and the onah framework of Lesson 03, what is the community's covenant response?
6. The covenant assembly has never taught the niddah framework to its members. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) establishes that this is a covenant public health framework confirmed by modern medicine. What is the assembly's pastoral responsibility in this situation — and how should this teaching be delivered?

National Level

7. The Sexuality Household Study (Section 41) confirms that medical research documents elevated risk of pelvic inflammatory disease for intercourse during menstruation. How does this independently confirmed medical wisdom function as a national-level witness to the Torah's authority — even for nations that have never received the Torah?

World Level

8. Islam's Al-Baqarah 2:222 directly parallels Vayikra 18:19. Judaism's taharat hamishpacha framework develops the Written Torah's niddah law in extensive detail. Christianity largely abandoned the niddah framework. Using the Sexuality

Household Study (Section 41) as the third independent witness (medical science), how does this three-source convergence — Torah, Islam, and medicine — establish the world-level covenant force of Law #170?

SCRIPTURE INDEX — LESSON 10

Reference	Teaching / Witness
Bereishit (Gen.) 1:27	Humanity created in the image of Yahweh — the female body is Yahweh's covenant design.
Shemot (Ex.) 21:10	She'er, kesut, onah — the wife's conjugal rights. The niddah law establishes a covenant rhythm within which the onah right is honored, not eliminated.
Vayikra (Lev.) 15:19-28	Full niddah framework — seven days of separation, ritual washing, the complete Torah process.
Vayikra (Lev.) 18:19	Law #170 — primary text. Lo tikrav during niddah.
Vayikra (Lev.) 20:18	Karet for both parties who violate the niddah law — confirms covenant gravity.
Yechezkel (Ez.) 18:5-6	The righteous man does not approach a woman during her menstrual impurity — niddah observance as a marker of covenant righteousness.
Yechezkel (Ez.) 18:21-23	Yahweh's covenant mercy — the door of sincere repentance is always open.
Sexuality Household Study Sec. 41	Medical confirmation: elevated risk of pelvic inflammatory disease for intercourse during menstruation. Independent scientific witness confirming the Torah's designation.

“Is it My desire that a wicked person shall die? — says the Lord Yahweh. It is rather that he shall turn back from his ways and live.”

Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:23

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Next: Lesson 11 — Laws #171 & #172 — Vayikra 18:22-23 — Forbidden Sexual Acts