

What does it mean to be Cut-off?

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We see in English the word translated as “cut-off”. What is the Hebrew word for this? What does that word mean? What are the implications for today? Can someone be cut-off today? What was the ancient Karaite Sages thoughts on the post-temple exile and the application of the concept of cut-off? We will look at these today.

The word in Hebrew for cut-off is karat and is a verb. It is from the stem root of Kaf-Resh-Tav. You will find this in the NEHC on pages 619-620 and in the BDB on pages 503-504. This is a interesting word because in the Kal form it is used for “to cut” which we will examine to see the basic meaning. Then we will look at the Niphal, Hiphil and Hopel forms to see the verse used to reference cut-off.

Lets start with Kal form of the verb.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 20:20

20 Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may **cut them down** (**vakarata** **וְכָרְתָּ**) for constructing siegeworks against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.

Cut a tree. Literally to cut off.

Shofetim/Judges 6:30

30 The townspeople said to Joash, “Bring out your son, for he must die: he has torn down the altar of Baal and **cut down** (**karat** **כָּרַת**) the sacred post beside it!”

Cut down the Asherah pole. Again like the tree he literally cuts it off.

Shemu’el Aleph/I Samuel 24:6 (5)

6 But afterward David reproached himself for **cutting off** (**karat** **כָּרַת**) the corner of Saul’s cloak.

Cut the cloak corner. It is being severed from the whole piece.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 10:3

3 For the laws of the nations are delusions: For it is the work of a craftsman's hands. **He cuts down (kerato כָּרַתוּ)** a tree in the forest with an ax,

One cuts down a tree. It is being severed from the roots by cutting the trunk.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 22:7

7 I will appoint destroyers against you, Each with his tools; **They shall cut down (vekar'tu וְכָרְתוּ)** your choicest cedars And make them fall into the fire.

And they cut your cedars.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 34:18

18 I will make the men who violated My covenant, who did not fulfill the terms of the covenant which **they made (kar'tu כָּרְתוּ)** before Me, the calf which **they cut (kar'tu כָּרְתוּ)** in two so as to pass between the halves:

Here Yehovah mentioned the covenant cut with him and Yisrael though speaking with Yehudah and Yerusalayim. Then talks of the calf cut in half.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 46:23

23 **They shall cut down (kar'tu כָּרְתוּ)** her forest —declares Yehovah—Though it cannot be measured; For they are more numerous than locusts, And cannot be counted.

Again the cutting down of trees.

Devaim/Deuteronomy 19:5

5 For instance, a man goes with his neighbor into a grove **to cut (lach'tov לחטב 2404)** wood; as his hand swings the ax **to cut down (lik'rot לְכַרֵּת)** a tree, the ax-head flies off the handle and strikes the other so that he dies. That man shall flee to one of these cities and live.

We also see thar chatov used for cut but it appears to be used specifically for wood/timbers where as karat is used more generally for cut.

From these we see that the word karat is “to cut”. Now lets look the other forms of this verb to see the word used in “to cut off oneself” or “to remove oneself”.

Niphal – Preterite (past perfect)

Bereshit/Genesis 17:14 (4-14)

4 “As for Me, this is My covenant with you: You shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 And you shall no longer be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I make you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fertile, and make nations of you; and kings shall come forth from you. 7 I will maintain My covenant between Me and you, and your offspring to come, as an everlasting covenant throughout the ages, to be Elohim to you and to your offspring to come. 8 I assign the land you sojourn in to you and your offspring to come, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting holding. I will be their Elohim.”

9 Elohim further said to Abraham, “As for you, you and your offspring to come throughout the ages shall keep My covenant. 10 Such shall be the covenant between Me and you and your offspring to follow which you shall keep: every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and that shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 And throughout the generations, every male among you shall be circumcised at the age of eight days. As for the homeborn slave and the one bought from an outsider who is not of your offspring, 13 they must be circumcised, homeborn, and purchased alike. Thus shall My covenant be marked in your flesh as an everlasting pact (libariyt ‘olam covenant/agreement for all time לְבְרִית עוֹלָם).

14 And if any male who is uncircumcised fails to circumcise the flesh of his foreskin, that person **shall be cut off** (venikh’retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ) from his kin; he has broken My covenant.”

Here the first time a person may be cut off from his people is that they as not circumcised. Circumcision was to be the outward sign of the covenant between Yehovah and Avraham for generations to come. It was to last from generation to generation as each one was circumcised. The one who was not was cut off.

Shemot/Exodus 12:15-19

15 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread (chametz) from the first day to the seventh day, that person shall be cut off (venikh’retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ) from Israel.

16 You shall celebrate a sacred occasion on the first day, and a sacred occasion on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them; only what every person is to eat, that alone may be prepared for you. 17 You shall observe the [Feast of] Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your ranks out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day throughout the ages as an institution for all time. 18 In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-

first day of the month at evening. 19 No leaven shall be found in your houses for seven days. For whoever eats what is leavened (mach'metzet מַחֲמֶצֶת), that person shall be cut off (vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ) from the community of Israel (meadat Yisrael מֵעֵדַת יִשְׂרָאֵל), whether he is a stranger (bager בַּגֵּר) or a citizen (uv'ez'rach וּבְאֶזְרַח) of the country (ha'aretz הָאָרֶץ).

Here we see that if one eats of leavening (chametz) during the Chag of Matzot is to be cut off from the adat (community) of Yisrael. This is whether they are a sojourner or a citizen.

Shemot/Exodus 30:33, 37 (31-33,37)

31 And speak to the Israelite people, as follows: This shall be an anointing oil sacred to Me throughout the ages. 32 It must not be rubbed on any person's body, and you must not make anything like it in the same proportions; it is sacred, to be held sacred by you. 33 Whoever compounds its like, or puts any of it on a layman (zar זָר), **shall be cut off (venikh'rat וְנִכְרְתָת) from his kin (me'amayo).**

37 But when you make this incense, you must not make any in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be held by you sacred to Yehovah. Whoever makes any like it, to smell of it, **shall be cut off (vanikh'rat) from his kin (me'amayv מֵעַמָּיו).**

Here the incense and the anointing oil was for a specific purpose and not to be used for other things. It was to be used by the Priests. The using of it or possessing the like of it was enough to be cut off from his people Yisrael.

Shemot/Exodus 31:14

14 You shall keep the sabbath, for it is holy for you. **He who profanes (machal'leyha מַחֲלֵלְהָ) it shall be put to death (mot yumat מוֹת יוּמָת):** [for] whoever does work on it, that person **shall be cut off (vanikhir'tah וְנִכְרְתָהּ) from among his kin (miqerev ameyha מִקֵּרֵב עַמָּיהָ).**

To profane (chalal) something made it common. One way to do this was to work on Shabbat and thus we see that in this case cut off literally means death to the person.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 7:20,21,25,27

20 But the person who, in a state of uncleanness (uncleanness is on him), eats flesh from Yehovah's sacrifices of well-being, that person **shall be cut off (venikh'retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameyha מֵעַמִּיהָ). 21 When a person touches anything unclean, be it human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any unclean creature, and eats flesh from Yehovah's sacrifices of well-being, that person **shall be cut off (venikh'retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameyha מֵעַמִּיהָ).

25 If anyone eats the fat (chelev חֵלֶב) of animals from which offerings by fire may be made to Yehovah, the person who eats it **shall be cut off (vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameyha מֵעַמִּיהָ). 26 And you must not consume any blood, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. 27 Anyone who eats blood **shall be cut off (vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameyha מֵעַמִּיהָ).

Here we see that when one is unclean in anyway and takes of the offering which is clean they are to be cut off from the people of Yisrael who were his people. The uncleanness can be from something touched being unclean or when the uncleanness is upon them. Also, eating fat (chalev – forbidden fat) or blood is an offense to get you cut off. Theses are not death punishments if it was done unknowingly (Vayiqra chapter 4) and (Vayiqra chapter 5).

Vayiqra/Leviticus 17:4, 9 (3-4, 8-9)

3 if anyone of the house of Israel slaughters an ox or sheep or goat in the camp, or does so outside the camp, 4 and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to present it as an offering to Yehovah, before Yehovah's Tabernacle, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man: he has shed blood; that man **shall be cut off (venikh'rat וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from among his people (miqarav amu מִקְרֵב עַמּוֹ).

8 Say to them further: If anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers (ger) who reside among them offers a burnt offering or a sacrifice, 9 and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer it to Yehovah, that person **shall be cut off (venikh'rat וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his people (ma'amayv מֵעַמּוֹ).

Here we see that if a person from the House of Yisrael or the Gers with them does not bring the offering to the Tent of Meeting that the blood is splashed upon the altar the person is cut off from the people of Yisrael. Again, it does not indicate death in this matter only separation.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 18:29 (29-30)

29 All who do any of those abhorrent things—such persons **shall be cut off (venikh'retu וְנִכְרְתוּ)** from their people (miqrev amam **מִקְרֵב עַמָּם**). 30 You shall keep My charge not to engage in any of the abhorrent practices that were carried on before you, and you shall not defile yourselves through them: I Yehovah am Eloheykha.

Here we see that chapter 18 shows practices, which were not to be done by Yisrael, and doing any of them meant they were to be separated from the people. Verse 28 tells them they will be spewed out from the land and thus this would be considered exile from the land as a people too.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 19:8 (5-8)

5 When you sacrifice an offering of well-being to Yehovah, sacrifice it so that it may be accepted on your behalf. 6 It shall be eaten on the day you sacrifice it, or on the day following; but what is left by the third day must be consumed in fire. 7 If it should be eaten on the third day, it is an offensive thing, it will not be acceptable. 8 And he who eats of it shall bear his guilt, for he has profaned (chilel) what is sacred (qodesh) to Yehovah; that person **shall be cut off (venikh'retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameyha **מֵעַמֶּיהָ**).

Here we see that when one eats of an offering of well being on the third day it is pigul or offensive/stinks and makes the offering unacceptable. The person doing this will be cut-off from his people. Again this is a separation not death.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 20:17-18

17 If a man marries his sister, the daughter of either his father or his mother, so that he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace; they **shall be excommunicated (venikh'retu וְנִכְרְתוּ)** in the sight (the eyes – eyney **לְעֵינַי**) of their kinsfolk (benei amam / sons of peoples **בְּנֵי עַמָּם**). He has uncovered the nakedness of his sister, he shall bear his guilt. 18 If a man lies with a woman in her infirmity and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow and she has exposed her blood flow; both of them **shall be cut off (venikh'retu וְנִכְרְתוּ)** from among their people.

Here we see a specific example of cut off being removed from the sight of the people. The eyes of the people or in public in that they will both witness this cutting off being done and there is other examples of cut off as being death in this chapter.

Verse 2-3 offering to Molech – stoning

Verse 4 executions for those seeing it and not stoning them.

Verse 9 cursing his father or mother – death

Verse 10 adultery – death
Verse 11 lying with your fathers wife – death
Verse 12 lying with daughter in law – death
Verse 13 male lying with male – death
Verse 14 man takes both mother and daughter – burning
Verse 15-16 lying with animals – death
Verse 27 A medium or fortune teller - death

Vayiqra/Leviticus 22:8

8 He shall not eat anything that died or was torn by beasts, thereby becoming unclean: I am Yehovah. 9 They shall keep My charge, lest they incur guilt (chet sin חֵטָא) thereby and die for it (umetu וּמֵתוּ), **having committed profanation (yechaleluhu יַחֲלִלְהוּ):** I Yehovah consecrate them.

When one commits sin and if found out they will be put to death. This is the restriction we have to not eat anything dies on its own or be torn and we cannot make ourselves unclean by it. Thereby eating of the sacrifice in an unclean state knowingly. Some sins don't have a means to resolving.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:29

26 Yehovah spoke to Moses, saying: 27 Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering by fire to Yehovah; 28 you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before Yehovah Eloheykha. 29 Indeed, any person who does not practice self-denial throughout that day **shall be cut off (venikh'retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameiha מֵעַמִּיהָ); 30 and whoever does any work throughout that day, **I will cause that person to perish (vaha'avad'tiy וְהָאֲבִדְתִּי)** from among his people.

Just not fasting on that day gets you separated from his people, however, if you work on that day you will die. Thus, if you keep the wrong day and work on it you are guilty of death.

Bamidbar/Numbers 9:13

13 But if a man who is clean and not on a journey refrains from offering the passover sacrifice, that person **shall be cut off (vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ)** from his kin (me'ameiha מֵעַמִּיהָ), for he did not present Yehovah's offering at its set time; that man shall bear his guilt (sin).

14 And when a stranger who resides with you would offer a passover sacrifice to Yehovah, he must offer it in accordance with the rules and rites of the passover sacrifice. There shall be one law for you, whether stranger or citizen of the country.

If one is clean and not on a long journey and does not keep the Pesach that person sins and if cut off from the people. Again here is a separation not necessarily death.

Bamidbar/Numbers 15:30 (27-31)

27 In case it is an individual who has sinned unwittingly, he shall offer a she-goat in its first year as a sin offering. 28 The priest shall make expiation before Yehovah on behalf of the person who erred, for he sinned unwittingly, making such expiation for him that he may be forgiven. 29 For the citizen among the Israelites and for the stranger who resides among them—you shall have one ritual for anyone who acts in error.30 But the person, be he citizen or stranger, who acts defiantly reviles Yehovah; that person **shall be cut off** (**vanikh'retah וְנִכְרְתָהּ**) from among his people. 31 Because he has spurned the word of Yehovah and violated His commandment, that person **shall [utterly] be cut off** (**hikaret tikhret הִכַּרְתָּ תִּכְרֹתָ**)—he bears his guilt (iniquity).

Here we see that one who sins but does in unaware/unknowing or not knowing then there is a sacrifice for them. If done on purpose/knowing it is sin then they are cut off from his people. Yet in the last verse using the karat twice, which may also be a metaphor for the ultimate cut off which is death.

Bamidbar/Numbers 19:13, 20 (11-13, 20-21)

11 He who touches the corpse of any human being shall be unclean for seven days. 12 He shall cleanse himself with it on the third day and on the seventh day, and then be clean; if he fails to cleanse himself on the third and seventh days, he shall not be clean. 13 Whoever touches a corpse, the body of a person who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles Yehovah's Tabernacle; that person **shall be cut off** (**vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ**) from Israel (miYisrael מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל). Since the water of lustration was not dashed on him, he remains unclean; his uncleanness is still upon him.

20 If anyone who has become unclean fails to cleanse himself, that person **shall be cut off** (**vanikh'ratah וְנִכְרְתָהּ**) from the congregation (mitokh haqahal מִתּוֹךְ הַקְּהָל) for he has defiled Yehovah's sanctuary. The water of lustration was not dashed on him: he is unclean.

21 That shall be for them a law for all time (lechuqqat 'olam לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם). Further, he who sprinkled the water of lustration shall wash his clothes; and whoever touches the water of lustration shall be unclean until evening.

Here we see that when one touches the corpse of a man (adam) he is unclean. If they have access to the water of nidah (impurity) and don't cleanse themselves then they defile the mish'kan and they are cut off of Yisrael or the assembly. They are separated.

Niphil – infinitive (past tense)

Bamidbar/Numbers 15:31 (29-31)

29 For the citizen among the Israelites and for the stranger who resides among them—you shall have one ritual for anyone who acts in error. 30 But the person, be he citizen or stranger, who acts defiantly reviles the LORD; that person shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he has spurned the word of Yehovah and violated His commandment, that person **shall [utterly] be cut off (hikaret tikhret הַכִּרֶת תִּכְרֶת)**—he bears his guilt (iniquity).

As we saw earlier that this is most likely a metaphor for utterly separated or death.

Tehillim/Psalms 37:34

34 Look to Yehovah and keep to His way, and He will raise you high that you may inherit the land; **when** the wicked **are cut off (bahikaret בְּהִכָּרֶת)**, you shall see it.

In keeping his ways we inherit the land but the wicked/guilty ones we will see them being cut off. They will be separated.

Niphil – Future

Bereshit/Genesis 9:11

9 “I now establish My covenant with you and your offspring to come, 10 and with every living thing that is with you—birds, cattle, and every wild beast as well—all that have come out of the ark, every living thing on earth. 11 I will maintain My covenant with you: **never again** shall all flesh **be cut off (velo yikaret וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת)** by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

12 Elohim further said, “This is the sign that I set for the covenant between Me and you, and every living creature with you, for all ages to come. 13 I have set My bow in the clouds, and it shall serve as a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember My covenant between Me and you and every living creature among all flesh, so that the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

We know that all flesh was destroyed in the flood so in this case cut off was literally death.

Bereshit/Genesis 41:36 (34-36)

34 And let Pharaoh take steps to appoint overseers over the land, and organize the land of Egypt in the seven years of plenty. 35 Let all the food of these good years that are coming be gathered, and let the grain be collected under Pharaoh's authority as food to be stored in the cities. 36 Let that food be a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will come upon the land of Egypt, so that the land **may not perish** (**velo tikaraet ולא־תִכָּרֵת**) in the famine.”

The land being cut off would be that the land of Egypt no longer exist. Thus, the people would cease or be scattered. The land will literally still be there but it would not support people.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 17:14

14 For the life of all flesh—its blood is its life. Therefore I say to the Israelite people: You shall not partake of the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Anyone who partakes of it **shall be cut off** (**yikaret יִכָּרֵת**).

Eating of blood was a separation offense.

Bamidbar/Numbers 11:33

33 The meat was still between their teeth, **nor yet chewed** (**yikaret יִכָּרֵת**), when the anger of Yehovah blazed forth against the people and Yehovah struck the people with a very severe plague. 34 That place was named Kibroth-hattaavah, because the people who had the craving were buried there.

Here the people lusting after the flesh were put to death while the meat was not yet separated from their teeth.

Rut/Ruth 4:10

10 I am also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, as my wife, so as to perpetuate the name of the deceased upon his estate, that the name of the deceased **may not disappear** (**velo yikaret ולא־יִכָּרֵת**) from among his kinsmen and from the gate of his home town. You are witnesses today.”

When one dies you are separated from the people here we see that in redeeming Ruth and her mothers's land the name of Naomi's husband and her son goes on. They are not separated from the people.

Shemuel Bet/2 Samuel 3:29

29 May [the guilt] fall upon the head of Joab and all his father's house. May the house of Joab **never be without** (velo yikaret לֹא-יִכָּרֵת) someone suffering from a discharge or an eruption, or a male who handles the spindle, or one slain by the sword, or one lacking bread.”

Here karat is shown as a family not being cut off literally but from the curse put upon him.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 2:4

4 Then Yehovah will fulfill the promise that He made concerning me: ‘If your descendants are scrupulous in their conduct, and walk before Me faithfully, with all their heart and soul, **your line on the throne of Israel shall never end (not shall be cut off to you a man from on throne Yisrael – lo-yikaret lakha ish me'al kise Yisrael** לֹא-יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל

If David descendants were faithful then a man would not be cut-off (separated) from his throne.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 8:25

25 And now, Yehovah Elohey of Israel, keep the further promise that You made to Your servant, my father David: ‘**Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end (lo-yikaret lakha ish mil'fanei yeshev al-kise Yisrael** לֹא-יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מִלְּפָנַי יָשֵׁב עַל-כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל), if only your descendants will look to their way and walk before Me as you have walked before Me.’

No separated from you a male from faces sitting on Throne of Yisreal. Thus the part missing here and assumed is “if they observe Yehovah's ways”.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 9:5

5 then I will establish your throne of kingship over Israel forever, as I promised your father David, saying, ‘**Your line on the throne of Israel shall never end(not shall be cut off to you a man from on throne Yisrael – lo-yikaret lakha ish me'al kise Yisrael** לֹא-יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ מֵעַל כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל).’ 6 [But] if you and your descendants turn away from Me and do not keep the commandments [and] the laws which I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will sweep Israel off the land which I gave them; I will reject the House which I have consecrated to My name; and Israel shall become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

The same promise repeated but verses 6 and 7 says the conditions to do this.

Divrei Ha Yamim Bet/2 Chronicles 6:16

16 And now, Yehovah Elohey of Israel, keep that promise that You made to Your servant, my father David, ‘**You shall never lack a descendant (lo-yikaret lakha ish לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ)** in My sight sitting on the throne of Israel if only your children will look to their way and walk in the [path] of My teachings as you have walked before Me.’

You will not lack (have cut-off) a descendant/male.

Divrei Ha Yamim Bet/2 Chronicles 7:18

17 As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked before Me, doing all that I have commanded you, keeping My laws and rules, 18 then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, in accordance with the Covenant I made with your father David, saying, ‘**You shall never lack a descendant (lo-yikaret lakha ish לֹא־יִכָּרֵת לְךָ אִישׁ)** ruling over Israel.’

You will not lack (have cut-off) a descendant/male.

Mish’lei/Proverbs 2:22

21 For the upright will inhabit the earth, The blameless will remain in it. 22 While the wicked **will vanish (yikaretu יִכָּרְתוּ)** from the land And the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

The wicked are cut-off or separated from the land.

Mish’lei/Proverbs 10:31

31 The mouth of the righteous produces wisdom, But the treacherous tongue **shall be cut off (tikaret תִּכָּרֵת)**.

Metaphorically, cut-off is used here to show the voice of the wicked is not to be listened to.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 33:17, 18

15 In those days and at that time, I will raise up a true branch of David’s line, and he shall do what is just and right in the land. 16 In those days Judah shall be delivered and Israel

shall dwell secure. And this is what she shall be called: “Yehovah is our Vindicator.” 17 For thus said Yehovah: **There shall never be an end to men of David’s line (lo-yikaret leDavid ish לְאִי־יִכָּרֵת לְדָוִד אִישׁ)** who sit upon the throne of the House of Israel.

18 **Nor shall there ever be an end to the line of the levitical priests before Me (velakohenim halevi'im lo-yikaret ish milefanai וְלִפְנֵי הַלְוִיִּם לְאִי־יִכָּרֵת אִישׁ מִלְּפָנַי)**, of those who present burnt offerings and turn the meal offering to smoke and perform sacrifices.

Again repeating the promise made to David and later to Solomon. Nor is an end to be (cut-off) the Levitical Priests who offer offering before his face. A descendant to David there will always be and a descendant to Zadok.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 35:19

17 Assuredly, thus said Yehovah, the Elohim of Hosts, the Elohim of Israel: I am going to bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster with which I have threatened them; for I spoke to them, but they would not listen; I called to them, but they would not respond.” 18 And to the family of the Rechabites Jeremiah said: “Thus said Yehovah of Hosts, the Elohim of Israel: Because you have obeyed the charge of your ancestor Jonadab and kept all his commandments, and done all that he enjoined upon you, 19 assuredly, thus said Yehovah of Hosts, the Elohim of Israel: **There shall never cease to be a man of the line of (lo-yikaret ish לְאִי־יִכָּרֵת אִישׁ)** Jonadab son of Rechab standing before Me.”

Never, will Yonadav family cease because they kept Yonadav’s commandments. They are an example to us of they obedience.

Obadyah/Obadiah 1:9

9 Your warriors shall lose heart, O Teman, And not a man on Esau’s mount **shall survive the slaughter (yikaret ish יִכָּרֵת-אִישׁ)**.

Here the Men of Esau’s mount will be cut off or killed in this case.

Zekhar’yah/Zechariah 13:8

8 Throughout the land—declares Yehovah—Two-thirds **shall perish (yikar’tu יִכָּרְתוּ)**, shall die, And one-third of it shall survive.

Two thirds will be cut-off and die.

Zekhar’yah/Zechariah 14:2

2 For I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for war: The city shall be captured, the houses plundered, and the women violated; and a part (half) of the city shall go into exile. But the rest of the population shall **not be uprooted** (**lo-yikaret** לֹא יִכָּרֵת) from the city.

Yikaret /Cut Off here is used with lo designate those who would not be separated.

Hiphil – Preterite (Past Prefect)

Vayiqra/Leviticus 17:10

10 And if anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers who reside among them partakes of any blood, I will set My face against the person who partakes of the blood, **and I will cut** (**vehikh'ratiy** וְהִכְרַתִּי) him off from among his kin.

Here as earlier we see that eating blood would cut off or separate one from the people.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 20:3,5,6

2 Say further to the Israelite people: Anyone among the Israelites, or among the strangers residing in Israel, who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall be put to death; the people of the land shall pelt him with stones. 3 And I will set My face against that man **and will cut him off** (**vehik'ratiy** וְהִכְרַתִּי) from among his people, because he gave of his offspring to Molech and so defiled My sanctuary and profaned My holy name. 4 And if the people of the land should shut their eyes to that man when he gives of his offspring to Molech, and should not put him to death, 5 I Myself will set My face against that man and his kin, **and will cut off** (**vehik'ratiy** וְהִכְרַתִּי) from among their people both him and all who follow him in going astray after Molech. 6 And if any person turns to ghosts and familiar spirits and goes astray after them, I will set My face against that person **and cut him off** (**vehik'ratiy** וְהִכְרַתִּי) from among his people.

Here we see that death is the punishment as well as cut-off from his people. Worshipping other Elohim was a punishable by death. Seeking out Spirits or channeling spirits is also punishment by death also.

Yehoshuah/Joshua 23:4

4 See, I have allotted to you, by your tribes, [the territory of] these nations that still remain, and that of all the nations **that I have destroyed** (**hikh'ratiy** הִכְרַתִּי), from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

He cut off these nations that were to be removed from the land by death.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 9:7

7 **then I will sweep** (vehikh'ratiy וְהִכַּרְתִּי) Israel off the land which I gave them; I will reject the House which I have consecrated to My name; and Israel shall become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.

He will remove them from the land.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 11:16

15 When David was in Edom, Joab the army commander went up to bury the slain, and he killed every male in Edom; 16 for Joab and all Israel stayed there for six months **until he had killed off** (ad-hikh'rit עַד־הִכְרִית) every male in Edom. 17 But Hadad, together with some Edomite men, servants of his father, escaped and headed for Egypt; Hadad was then a young boy.

They cut off or killed every male.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 14:10

10 Therefore I will bring disaster upon the House of Jeroboam **and will cut off** (vehikh'ratiy וְהִכַּרְתִּי) from Jeroboam every male, bond and free, in Israel. I will sweep away the House of Jeroboam utterly, as dung is swept away. 11 Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the town shall be devoured by dogs; and anyone who dies in the open country shall be eaten by the birds of the air; for Yehovah has spoken.

Here we see that every male of the house of Jeroboam was to be killed.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 21:21

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "So you have found me, my enemy?" "Yes, I have found you," he replied. "Because you have committed yourself to doing what is evil in the sight of Yehovah, 21 I will bring disaster upon you. I will make a clean sweep of you, **I will cut off** (vehikh'ratiy וְהִכַּרְתִּי) from Israel every male belonging to Ahab, bond and free.

22 And I will make your house like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the House of Baasha son of Ahijah, because of the provocation you have caused by leading Israel to sin.

Here we see the same cut-off as death to the House of Ahav.

Melekhim Bet/2 Kings 9:8

6 So [Jehu] arose and went inside; and [the disciple] poured the oil on his head, and said to him, “Thus said Yehovah, the Elohim of Israel: I anoint you king over the people of Yehovah, over Israel. 7 You shall strike down the House of Ahab your master; thus will I avenge on Jezebel the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of the other servants of Yehovah. 8 The whole House of Ahab shall perish, **and I will cut off** (vahikh’ratiy **וְהִכַּרְתִּי**) every male belonging to Ahab, bond and free in Israel. 9 I will make the House of Ahab like the House of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the House of Baasha son of Ahijah.

Here is the one who will fulfill the words of Eliyahu. He will have Yehu cut-off /kill all the males of the house of Ahav.

Hiphil – infinitive (past tense)

Shemot/Exodus 8:9(5)

5 And Moses said to Pharaoh, “You may have this triumph over me: for what time shall I plead in behalf of you and your courtiers and your people, that the frogs **be cut off** (lahakh’rit **לְהִכַּרְתִּי**) from you and your houses, to remain only in the Nile?” 6 “For tomorrow,” he replied. And [Moses] said, “As you say—that you may know that there is none like Yehovah Eloheynu; 7 the frogs shall retreat from you and your courtiers and your people; they shall remain only in the Nile.” 8 Then Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh’s presence, and Moses cried out to Yehovah in the matter of the frogs which He had inflicted upon Pharaoh. 9 And Yehovah did as Moses asked; the frogs died out in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields.

The frog were cut off and died.

Hophel – Preterite (past perfect)

Yoel/Joel 1:9

9 Offering and libation **have ceased** (hakh’rat **הִכַּרְתֶּם**) From the House of Yehovah; The priests must mourn Who minister to Yehovah.

Here the offerings and libations are cut-off /separated from the House of Yehovah. Thus, they are not seen being done.

What we have seen in this study is that one may be cut-off from the people (Yisrael) and that they will not be seen by others of the Adat (community) or Qahal (assembly). That may be temporary in the some cases but in those cases where death is stated as

punishment they are to be cut-off permanently. So how do we do this today since we can't put people to death?

Anan Ben David

From the Book of Precept, section II Criminal Law.

“1. Since we no longer issue death sentences when someone commits a sin requiring capital punishment, we must separate ourselves from him. If it is a man, we must separate his wife from him; if it is a woman, we must separate her husband from her. We must not converse with the culprit or let him dwell with us or engage in doing business with him; neither borrow anything from him nor lend anything to him; neither accept charity nor show pity towards him. In short we must treat him as if he were dead” (Karaite Anthology, page 13)

He goes on to describe various levels of crimes and their punishment.

“7. He who commits one of the afore mentioned offenses which we can no longer judge, or he upon whom sentence is passed and who refuses to submit to it, must be ostracized in the same way as the person subject to capital punishment, since in as much as he has committed one of the acts against his fellow man or has not submitted to his sentence he has become a malefactor, as it is written: *Wherefore does the wicked contemn Elohim? (Ps. 10:13)* And as much as he has become wicked, he does not separate himself from him thereby associates himself with him in his wickedness, as it is written: *Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men...Lest ye be swept away in all their sins (num. 16:26)*” (Karaite Anthology, page 14)

“8. If a person subject to capital punishment repents of his evil deeds, we do not accept his repentance. On the other hand, he who commits any of those other offenses against a fellow man, if he makes restitution to the injured part, we may accept his repentance...” (Karaite Anthology, Page 15)

Here we see that Anan Ben David understood the miqra as stating that a death sentence was to be just that death. Other lesser crimes required restitution and repentance. Thus cut off (karat) would mean today as separation in all counts but that were death was not prescribed then that means they must make right what they did and pray for forgiveness. Were death is prescribed then they become dead to us and are permanently separated from us without chance or rejoining even if they repented.