

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON PARSHAS KEDOSHIM - 5757

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ohr@jer1.co.il (Ohr Somayach) weekly@jer1.co.il (Highlights of the Torah weekly portion)

Insights A Friend In Need "Love your neighbor as yourself -- I am Hashem" (19:18) Once, there were two friends. Seldom was there a friendship such as this. Literally, there was nothing that one would not do for the other, so great was their love for each other. It happened one day that one of them was falsely accused of a capital offense. He was arrested and incarcerated in the dungeons of the king. Following a summary trial, he was sentenced to death. His friend spared no effort, neither by day nor night, to have him released and pardoned. He sought audiences with those of power and influence in the land. All was to no avail. The date for the execution was set. It was a gray, unforgiving morning that saw this innocent man walking sadly to the gallows. A sea of faces, some ghoulish with delight, some crying, thronged the route to the gallows. And there too stood his friend, with a look of unspeakable sadness on his face. The condemned man was already standing on the scaffold. The hangman, draped in a black hood, placed the noose around the neck and like some fiendish bespoke tailor, adjusted it to size. Eighteen inches to the right of the condemned man there was a trap-door. The hangman threw the lever to make sure that the trap-door would open efficiently under the feet of this hapless Jew. The accused man gazed into the abyss where the trapdoor had opened. This was to be his portal to the next world. Suddenly there was a disturbance in the crowd. A man was shouting "Stop the execution! Stop the execution!" It was his friend. Unable to bear it any longer, he ran up the steps of the gallows and shouted "Stop the execution! Stop the execution! You're hanging the wrong man! I am the one who's guilty! Hang me - not him!" The crowd murmured excitedly. This was much more than they had bargained for in this real-life medieval soap opera. When the accused man saw that his friend was trying to save him by sacrificing himself he started to shout "Don't listen to him! Don't listen to him! I'm the one that's guilty, not him! Hang me!" To which the other shouted back "No! It's not true! I did it! Hang me! Back and forth they shouted at the hangman "Hang me!" "No! Hang me!" The hangman was standing between them. As each of them shouted, his head turned back and forth. As the shouting escalated in speed and volume, it seemed that if the hangman turned his head any quicker, he would be the first one to lose his head! At any rate, it was clear that there would be no execution that day. A disappointed crowd slowly dispersed.

The affair reached the ears of the king and he commanded that the two should be brought in front of him. "Now, what is the truth of this matter?" demanded the king. "Why are you both so keen to 'take the drop' and hang from the gallows? If you tell me the truth, I will pardon you both." "The truth is that neither of us are guilty of the crime, your majesty. We are friends. I could not bear to see my friend go to his death. So I decided I would give my life so he would live." "The same is true for me" said the other. The king spent some moments looking from one to the other. He was obviously deeply touched by what he had heard. Then he spoke: "I will keep my word and pardon you both. But on one condition -- that you too make me your friend!" The Torah teaches us: "Love your neighbor as yourself -- I am Hashem." When a person loves his friend as much as he loves himself, then "I am Hashem" -- Hashem makes Himself a friend to them both. *Mayana shel Torah*

Sing, My Soul! Mah Yedidus- "How Beloved..." We therefore run towards you; Come, oh royal bride. *b'chayn narutz likrosaych; bo'ee chalah*

B'S'D' n'suchah When one man runs in a public thoroughfare and collides with another who is walking, the runner is held accountable for the damage he causes, because it is not the norm to run in a public place. If the running took place just before the advent of the Shabbos, however, the runner is acquitted because he is permitted to run in order to properly welcome the holy day as one would welcome a royal visitor. It was the custom of Rabbi Chanina to call out before Shabbos: "Let us go out towards the royal Shabbos bride." Rabbi Yannai would dress in his best and proclaim: "Come, oh bride; come oh bride." This is the vision of going forth to welcome the Shabbos which we express in our about-face during the last stanza of "Lecha Dodi." It is this scene that we sing about with the words "We run towards you; come oh royal bride."

mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Friday, May 09, 1997 10:19 AM Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Achary/Kedoshim

(shiur date: 5/4/76) [Note: apologies for the unavoidable delay in providing this shiur.] The Rav noted that there has to be a common theme between 2 Parshios in order that we should read them together. The Rav focused on analyzing the common theme between Achray Mos and Kedoshim. Vayikra is called Toras Kohanim. However, the major portion of the laws pertaining to the service performed by the Kohanim and their roles within the service are contained in the earlier Parshios in Vayikra, through Shemini and the consecration of the Mishkan. In the middle of Shemini, the Torah relates the prohibition of Kohanim performing the Avoda while they are intoxicated. The Torah then focuses on the theme of Maachalos Assuros, things that we are forbidden to eat. Next, the Torah tells us about Tumah, impurity, including those Tumos that require the involvement of a Kohen (e.g. Metzora, Yoledes) and other forms of Tumah as well, since they are related topics. The Torah then in Achray Mos talks about the Avodas Yom Kippur and the prohibition of bringing sacrifices outside the confines of the Mishkan and follows that with a discussion of illicit sexual relationships. The Rav explained that there is a symmetry in how the topics are presented. The prohibition for a Kohen to perform the Avoda while intoxicated means that wine is a forbidden food for a Kohen who is performing the Avoda. The Torah then continues the same theme and notes things that are forbidden to all Jews to eat, other Maachalos Assuros. The common denominator is that the Torah is stressing that Maachalos Assuros apply to all. However in some cases, there are more restrictive laws, for example wine for a Kohen. The Torah then discusses the laws of Tumah. Here again the Torah is stressing that there are aspects of Tumah that pertain specifically to the Kohen, for example Tzaraas. However there are also other types of Tumah that are given over to all of Knesses Yisrael. Again, Tumah and its definition apply to all. However in certain cases, the Kohen was given an extra responsibility by the Torah to define Tumah. The Rav analyzed the connection between the themes of Avodas Yom Kippur and the Arayos found in both Achray Mos and Kedoshim. Also, why are the Arayos repeated in the 2 Parshios?

The Rav explained that the Torah presents the Azhara, prohibition, of the Arayos in Achray Mos, and presents the punishment, usually Korays, in Kedoshim. The Rav noted that the difference in phraseology between the 2 Parshios is very important. The Rambam is of the opinion that not only are the actual relationships mentioned in the Torah forbidden, but Chibbuk Vnishuk are also prohibited by the Torah. The Rav said that the Rambam derived this by the use of the words *Lo Tikrivu Legalos Erva*. However, punishment is only mentioned in Kedoshim in relation to the forbidden sexual relationship itself, where the Torah uses the term *Shechiva*. The topic of Arayos discussed in Achray Mos and Kedoshim clearly spans both Parshios and links them together. Rashi (19:2) notes that wherever we find a *Geder Erva*, admonishments to refrain from illicit sexual relationships, we also find *Kedusha*. In fact, all the topics that follow the prohibition of a Kohen to perform the Avoda while intoxicated, fit neatly into the concept of *Kedusha*. The Torah tells us what we must refrain from in order to be considered *Kedoshim*. The concept of *Kedusha* means that we must stay away from *Maachalos Assuros*, *Arayos* and *Avoda Zara* (as the Torah

mentions that we are forbidden from imitating the idolatrous practices of the Egyptians and the 7 nations). The Torah mentions the concept of Kedusha in all these topics. The Rav noted that the Rambam agreed with the statement of Rashi regarding the connection between Geder Erva and Kedusha. The Rav said that in Sefer Kedusha in the Yad Chazaka of the Rambam, we find Maachalos Assuros and Biyos Assuros. This fits in well with the concept that Kedusha requires that we refrain from these activities. [The Rav said that he was bothered by the fact that the Rambam did not include the laws of Avoda Zara in Sefer Kedusha, since based on the above analysis, it belongs there as a Geder. For example, the Torah uses the term Zenus when talking about Avoda Zara, so there is a direct link between them as Gidrei Kedusha.] The Rav noted that many are bothered by the question of why we read the Arayos at Mincha on Yom Kippur? The Rav said that based on the above the answer is straightforward. The Parsha in Achray Mos that details the Avodas Yom Kippur is describing the process through which Kedusha is restored to Knesses Yisrael on Yom Kippur via the Avodas Kohen Gadol. The other reading on Yom Kippur relates to the Kedushas Yisrael that can be affected by each and every Jew, by refraining from forbidden sexual relationships. Achray Mos/Kedoshim continues the format of previous Parshios: first it discusses Kedusha as influenced by the Kohen Gadol, later it mentions the Kedusha that is influenced by Knesses Yisrael. The two readings of Yom Kippur share a common theme and must both be read.

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Congregation House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel Dvar Torah: Kedoshim, 5757

by Rabbi Moshe Shulman

"Love Thy Neighbour" "24,000 Torah Sages die in a devastating plague." That would have been the headline of the Jewish newspapers during this time of the year, 1800 years ago. So great was this tragedy of the death of the students of Rabbi Akiva, that Jews today commemorate it by observing a period of mourning during this time of the Omer (untill Lag Ba'omer). Why did they die? The Talmud (Yevamot 62b) records that they were punished because of the sin of "not acting out of respect for one another". They evidently failed to observe one very important Mitzvah: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Ironic it is that it was Rabbi Akiva himself who taught zeh klal gadol ba'torah, "This is a most important principle of Torah." (Sifra, Kedoshim, 2:4)

It was this principle that Hillel taught to the convert (Talmud, tractate Shabbat, 31a) who wanted to learn "all of Judaism on one foot: "de'alach sani le'chavercha al ta'aved," "What you don't want done to you don't do to your fellow Jew. This is the essence of all of Torah. The rest is commentary."

Fundamental to many concepts in Judaism, Maimonides writes that this Mitzvah acts as the basis of an entire spectrum of Jewish practices known as gemilut chessed, acts of loving-kindness: "It is a positive commandment... to visit the sick, comfort the mourner, bury the dead, provide for the bride, escort the guests, and to provide all the needs of burial including carrying the casket, walking before it, eulogising, and digging and filling the grave, to rejoice with a bride and groom, to provide them with food; these are acts of 'loving-kindness' that have no limit and no measure. They are all included in the general commandment "Love thy neighbour as thyself!" (Maimonides, Code of Jewish Law, Laws of Mourning, 14:1)

The Midrash (Sifra, ibid) records a fascinating debate between Rabbi Akiva and Ben Azai over what is the most important rule in the Torah. Rabbi Akiva as mentioned above, taught that it was "Love thy neighbour as thyself". Ben Azai taught that it was the verse: "ze sefer toldot adam," "This is the history of man." Rabbi Akiva's position is at least justifiable. What possible rational could there be for Ben Azai's position? Ben Azai agreed in principle with Rabbi Akiva. "Love your neighbour" is the foundation stone for the Torah's entire moral code, the most magnificent code of ethics documented in the world: "Don't bear a grudge... don't take revenge... don't oppress your neighbour, the weak, the widow or the orphan... don't delay in paying your

workers... respect the elders of the community... don't tattle-bear against your neighbour... don't stand by the blood of your neighbour... All climaxed by the statement: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." But, says Ben Azai, this verse can only be understood when placed next to another: "This is the history of mankind created in the image of G-d!" Indeed, the foundation of Torah is to love every person, but not because of selfish self-interest, "don't be bad to them or they will be bad to you." It is much more than just "don't do unto others..." Rather, says Ben Azai, it is the fundamental belief that every human being carries within her/herself a spark of the Almighty, a spark of the Holy and the Eternal!

"You shall be Holy because I am Holy!" You shall respect and care and love every human being because every human being is of infinite value, created in the Image of G-d, carrying the essence of all that is good and pure and Holy!

Hillel says to the convert: Start slow, start with a simple definition: "Don't do unto others..." But that same Hillel understood only too well that this is only the beginning. The goal is: "ehov et ha'briyot" "love all of creation" (Ethics of our Fathers 1:12) because all of creation is Sanctified!

These Mitzvot of "loving-kindness" are in fact the most profound expression of religiosity! They are, says the Talmud, what the book of Genesis calls: "Walking before G-d!", imitating G-d: "Just as G-d clothed the naked so should we." "Just as G-d visited the sick so should we." "Just as G-d provides for the poor so should we." "Just as G-d is merciful so should we be!" (Talmud, Sota 14a) This is what, unfortunately, the students of Rabbi Akiva failed to understand. How we treat each other is much more than simply a reflection of how we treat ourselves. It is a reflection of how we treat the spark of the Divine that lives within the soul of every human being. "Love thy neighbour as Thyself", for "Mankind is created in the Spirit of G-dliness" Shabbat Shalom.

ravfrand@torah.org Rabbi Yissochar Frand Parshas Kedoshim
Why Is this Portion Different From All Other Portions?

"And G-d spoke to Moses saying: 'Speak to the entire Community of Israel and tell them You must be Holy, for I the L-rd your G-d am Holy.'" [Vayikra 19:1-2] The Medrash comments on this verse, that it was said "be'Hakhel," namely, it was said to all the Jewish people together. In contrast, most of the Torah was taught to Moshe, who taught it to Aharon who taught to his sons, who taught to the Elders, etc., etc. This portion, however, Moshe taught in everyone's presence. Why is this parsha different? The Medrash answers because most of the fundamentals of Torah are dependent on this portion, called "Kedoshim Teheyu -- You shall be Holy." The simple interpretation of this Medrash is that since there are so many important laws that are contained in this section, it was said in the presence of everyone. Perhaps, however, the Medrash means something else. Perhaps it means that the specific command 'You shall be Holy' is so important, and has so many of the fundamentals of Torah dependent upon it, that this Mitzvah itself was given publicly. According to the Ramba"n, this Mitzvah is that one which tells us how to live and act as Jews. As the Ramba"n explains, if it would not be for this command, a person could conceivably be a "naval b'irshus haTorah," meaning, he could be an observant Jew, and simultaneously a glutton. He could live an obscene life within the parameters of the Torah. He could eat as much as he wants; he could indulge in all the physical pleasures of life; and it might all be 'glatt kosher.' If not for this mitzvah, such a person could be called a Tzadik [righteous person]. However, the Torah tells us, "You shall be Holy" -- you have to abstain. You have to act with abstinence, with restraint, with holiness. Don't indulge. Don't be a glutton. That is what the mitzvah of Kedoshim Teheyu is all about. It is so vital that it had to be said to the entire nation together. The Shemen HaTov explains that a person cannot be Holy unto himself. Even though the mitzvah is a mitzvah on the individual, the individual needs society's help. If one lives in a society which is indulgent, it becomes very difficult for that

individual to remain a 'Kadosh' [holy person]. In order to achieve "You shall be holy," the cooperation of one's family, of one's city and one's nation is required. The parsha had to be given to everyone together. When everyone is involved in conspicuous indulgence it becomes almost impossible for the individual to act with restraint. We see this very clearly in the society we live in today. The rampant hedonism that we see today -- gratifying their every whim and wish instantly -- surrounds us. We live in a society that doesn't know what kedusha [holiness] is about. The only way we can personally achieve this mitzvah of "You shall be holy," is if we not only work on ourselves, but we elevate and try to live among people who also share the ideal of Kedoshim Teheyu. But it must begin with the individual. As the Chassidic Rebbe, Reb Bunim is quoted as having said, when he was young he thought he could change the world. As he got older, he saw he could not change the entire world, but at least he could change his city. As time went on he saw that even that was beyond his grasp, but he said "I'll at least change my neighborhood." When he saw that that was not working, he said "I'll at least try to change my family." When he saw that that failed, he said, "I'll have to try to only change myself."

But once he succeeded in changing himself, then he saw that his family was different, his neighborhood was different, his city was different, and in a sense the entire world was different. That is how it is with this mitzvah of "Kedoshim Tiheyu." We cannot go it alone. We have to work on ourselves, and then our families, and then our neighborhoods, and then our societies.

Making Gods Out of Gold and Silver

The verse says [Vayikra 19:4] "Do not turn toward idols; nor should you make a graven god for yourselves". Rabbi Yeruchum Levovitz, zt"l, the Mir Mashgiach, pointed out an inconsistency in this verse. The verse begins by speaking of idols (elilim), which are worthless pieces of stone or metal or rock. Then in the same verse, the Torah continues and calls, that which, just moments ago, was a worthless inanimate object, a graven god (Elohei Masecha). How does a worthless stone become a Deity? On the verse "You should have no other gods (Elohim Acherim) before Me" [Shmos 20:3], the Medrash says 'Does that imply there are other gods? Rather, it means others (Acherim) make them into gods (Elohim).'

This Chaza"l is telling us an unbelievable thing: We can take and make a god out of anything. That which yesterday we created out of our own hands and was merely an idol (Elil), if we glorify it and praise it and give it honor, then we have made it into a god. Don't turn to the Elilim -- because once you stray and give prominence to even the Elil [idol], that Elil turns into an Eloha [God]. It can be Deified. Our own actions can turn even the lowest of objects into gods. Two or three thousand years ago, when people were primitive, they believed in such nonsense. They took items out of stone, out of metal, out of gold, and out of silver and they turned them into gods. They were stupid, backward and ignorant. But we are modern men!

We are just like them. We also take gold and we take silver, and turn them into gods! Except, instead of turning the gold into a god in the form of a little man or a little eagle, we turn the gold into a god, in the shape of a coin. We also Deify inanimate objects. That which was an Elil yesterday, becomes an Eloha today. Recently, when I was out of town, on my way home from shul, I noticed a fellow washing his car. But this fellow was not merely washing his car -- he was scrubbing the tires! He was sitting on his knees, with the brush and the water and the soap, scrubbing -- not the car, but the tires! Two minutes after he starts driving the car, what are those tires going to roll over? What will they look like? But you can make a god out of a tire.

The next day, which was Shabbos, I took a walk around Lake Washington, where I saw the pleasure boats in the water. (Pardon me. Calling them boats is not doing them justice.) There was a fellow sitting on his yacht, enjoying Olam HaZeh [the pleasures of this world]. What was he doing? Polishing his chrome. It was a hot day and he was making sure that the metal shined. This fellow has his tires. This fellow has his yacht. Have we at all changed? Have we advanced any further from the "gods of metal you shall not make for yourself?" It is the same gold. It is the same silver. It is the same inanimate

objects that we know are just inanimate pieces of wood and metal and rubber. But unfortunately, we have the power of turning them into our gods.

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

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weekly-halacha@torah.org Parshas Kedoshim: Magic Shows
By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

Do not Se'onenu (Lev. 19:26)

MAGIC SHOWS: ARE THEY PERMITTED? The word "se'onenu" in the verse cited above can be a derivation of the root onah (time season) or of the root ayin (eye). Consequently, two different prohibitions are based on this verse. One, quoted by Rashi on the verse, is the prohibition against "calculating times and hours." It is forbidden to employ astrological(1) calculations in order to determine when to engage in or refrain from a certain activity. One may not, rules the Shulchan Aruch(2), make statements like, "This is a good day (according to the astrological signs) to begin a certain task", or "this hour is a bad hour for traveling."

The second prohibition mentioned in the Talmud(3) and quoted in the Shulchan Aruch(4) - which is based on the second interpretation of "se'onenu" - is the prohibition against performing acts of achizas einayim, literally, "seizing the eyes." Rashi explains that achizas einayim means "creating the illusion of performing an impossible act, while in fact he does nothing." Rashi does not, however, explain how the "impossible act" is performed. The poskim offer three different explanations as to how the achizas einayim is accomplished: 1. By means of witchcraft(5) or demons(6). 2. By means of a "magical illusion" which does not affect the substance itself yet defies scientific analysis(7). 3. By means of quick, adroit, stunning movements that are incredibly skillful(8). These are the products of natural talent which - though extremely rare - is not perceived as supernatural(9).

According to this last opinion, which defines achizas einayim as a display of rare but natural talent, today's magic shows would be Biblically forbidden. Indeed, the Rambam - when describing achizas einayim - gives a vivid description of what a magic show consisted of in his day and age: "He [the magician] does wondrous acts through trickery, through quickness and lightness of movement, as we see that they take a rope and put it underneath their garment and then pull out a snake, or they toss a ring in the air and then remove it from the mouth of a person in the audience." According to the first two opinions, however, a modern-day magic show would be permitted, since witchcraft or acts which cannot be grasped by the rational mind are not employed.

What is the practical halachah? Does this prohibition apply in our times? Chochmas Adam(10) writes, "...those badchanim (merrymakers) who perform achizas einayim at weddings are transgressing a prohibition of the Torah. One who bids them to do so transgresses the prohibition of lifnei eveir (causing one's fellow man to sin). Anyone who can object to this practice is obligated to do so, and certainly it is prohibited to watch their tricks, since one is aiding transgressors(11)." The Chochmas Adam's(12) ruling is quoted by many other poskim and none mention that the prohibition may no longer apply in our times. It seems, therefore, that all the authorities agree that achizas einayim performed by means of incredibly skillful and stunning movements is forbidden(13).

Harav Moshe Feinstein(14) was asked whether he had ever permitted the performance of magic shows. Rav Moshe responded with a lengthy analysis of the entire subject. He wonders how - contrary to the third opinion listed above - the Torah can prohibit something which comes naturally to a person. "...It is puzzling that it should be prohibited for one who is naturally quick to act in accordance with his quickness; didn't the brothers dispatch Naftali to Egypt to bring a bill of sale from Eisav to Yaakov... so we find that it is permissible; also Shimshon was permitted to

use his extraordinary strength, which is not normally found in people and was surely puzzling to people, and yet we do not find that he was prohibited from using his strength so as not to appear as if he were performing witchcraft... So why is quickness of movement any different?" It is because of this difficulty, says Rav Moshe, that the other two opinions [listed above] do not agree with the third view.

Rav Moshe's concluding remarks are noteworthy: "I have previously said all this while studying this subject, but this has not been construed by me as a halachic ruling, since in any case if the magician lies and says that he can do supernatural acts, then we ought to prohibit it, since he can easily lead people to believe that he is a person of wondrous powers... and even if he does not lie, saying only that Hashem gave him a talent that is uncommon, nevertheless it should be shown to people only in such a manner that they can clearly distinguish that it is done through swiftness of motion and not in such a manner where they cannot fathom what he is doing.... Yet it is possible to permit this for the badchanim that perform achizos einayim at weddings in a manner which is apparent and clear that it is due to swiftness of motion... But it seems that the Chochmas Adam prohibits even this since he follows the thinking of the Bach... But it is only possible to forbid this to the badchanim if they say that they are using magic... But if they state that they are employing natural means, and it is well known that it is so, then I do not see any grounds for prohibition. But nevertheless, I have not been asked with respect to an actual instance and, therefore, I have never actually permitted it, and I have never heard that this is performed at weddings even where there is a badchan present, and therefore this was never rendered by me as a ruling, although I have no doubt in respect to this halachah, and if such a question were to arise, I would attempt to evade the issue in deference to the Sages(15) who prohibit this; and if I were unable to evade the question, then I would have ruled that in a natural manner, and where it is well known that it is performed through natural means, that it is permitted(16)."

FOOTNOTES: 1 Rambam Hilchos Avodas Kochavim 11:8. 2 YD 179:3 and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 167:3. See Darkei Teshuvah 22-23 for some guidelines and exceptions. 3 Sanhedrin 65b. 4 YD 179:15. 5 Smag, quoted by Bach YD 179. 6 Radvaz (Metzudos Dovid 61). 7 Rama and Maharshah, as understood by Igros Moshe YD 4:13. 8 Rambam (Sefer Hamitzvos, Lo Saaseh 32) as understood by the Bach and Shach YD 179. 9 Explanation of Igros Moshe YD 4:13. 10 89:6. 11 It is permitted, however, to watch a non-Jew perform magic tricks. Maharam Shick (quoted in Darkei Teshuvah 179:37) also agrees that when a non-Jewish magician performs tricks through quickness of movement one is permitted to watch. 12 Pischei Teshuvah YD 179:7; Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 176:4; Darkei Teshuvah YD 179:37 quoting Mishnas Chachomim. See also Yad Haktanah 2:273 and Zivchei Tzedek YD 179 who concur that magic shows based on quickness of movement are prohibited. 13 Yabia Omer YD 5:14 and Yechave Daas 3:68. 14 Igros Moshe YD 4:13. 15 Bach, Shach, and Chochmas Adam mentioned above. 16 See also Sefer Yavin Daas YD 119 (quoted in Yabia Omer YD 5:13) who holds that when the magician announces clearly to the audience that he is just fooling them, it is permitted. ***Sponsored by Jonathan and Edina Heifetz ***on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of their son ***Shlomo Pesach, n"y May they shep much Nachas from him and their other children. ***Mazel Tov to the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Morton Heifetz of Eretz Yisroel and Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Davidowitz of Cleveland, Ohio.

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YOM HA-ATZMA'UT SICHAN OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT" A Adapted from a sicha delivered on Yom HaAtzma'ut 5754 (1994) Summarized by Aviad Hacoen Translated by Kaeren Fish

"This Day God Has Made - Let Us Rejoice and Be Glad in It"

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand because of his old age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. Thus says the Lord of hosts: If it will be wondrous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those days, it will also be wondrous in my eyes, says the Lord of hosts." [Zekharia 8:4-6]

In this description by the prophet Zekharia, no exceptional or supernatural phenomenon is mentioned. There is no unique event, nor any description of awesome strength. All we have here, in effect, is a simple, pastoral description of normal life. The grandfather and grandmother are sitting in Jerusalem, walking-sticks in hand, and the grandchildren are playing in the streets. Can it be that it is this very scene that, according to the prophet, will be "wondrous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation?" Is it possible that such a natural scene prompts God to add, "it will also be wondrous in my eyes?" Zekharia prophesied great and inspiring events, but it is specifically here that "wondrousness" is mentioned. Moreover, Rabbi Akiva, the great Tanna, was able to look clearly, to smile and to laugh at the very destruction of the Temple when he was reminded of this prophecy. The gemara (Makkot 24b) recounts the story of Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya and Rabbi Yehoshua who were walking towards Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple:

"When they reached Mt. Scopus they tore their clothes. When they reached the Temple Mount, they saw a fox coming out of the place of the Holy of Holies. They began to cry, and Rabbi Akiva began to laugh. They said to him, 'Why do you laugh?' He answered, 'Why do you cry?' They said to him, 'The place of which it is said [Bamidbar 1], 'And the stranger who comes near will die' now has foxes walking in it; shall we not cry?' He said to them, 'For that reason I laugh. For it is written [Yeshayahu 8], 'I appoint for Myself faithful witnesses - Uriah Ha-Kohen and Zekharia ben Yevarekhyahu.' What connection can there be between Uriah and Zekharia? After all, Uriah lived during the time of the First Temple, while Zekharia lived during the Second. But God made Zekharia's prophecy dependent on that of Uriah. Of Uriah it is written [Mikha 3], 'Therefore because of you Zion shall be ploughed like a field,' while in Zekharia we learn, 'Old men and old women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem.' Until the prophecy of Uriah was fulfilled, I was afraid that Zekharia's prophecy would never come true. Now that Uriah's prophecy has been fulfilled, Zekharia's prophecy will certainly be fulfilled as well.'

With that they said to him, 'Akiva, you have comforted us; Akiva, you have comforted us.'" But why did Rabbi Akiva mention specifically this prophecy of Zekharia? Was this all that he prophesied? Did he not prophesy greater things than this? Was it not Zekharia who said, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for I come and I will dwell in the midst of you... and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you" [ibid. 2:14-15]? Why is this prophecy not mentioned? Did Zekharia's prophecies involve only boys and girls, old men and women? Did he not speak [ibid. 12:7-8] of God "giving victory to the tents of Yehuda first... On that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the feeblest among them shall be like David; and the house of David shall be like a divine being, like the angel of the Lord at their head?" We could bring many other examples. What is it, then, that makes this prophecy of "old men and women in Jerusalem, their sticks in their hands" and of "boys and girls playing in the streets," so special? Why is it this prophecy that brings comfort?

Prophecies concerning supernatural events that will take place in the future are understandable. The suffering was extraordinary, exile was extraordinary - the entire country was emptied of its inhabitants, all being led away into captivity, young and old alike. An extraordinary phenomenon. But the prophet announces publicly: Life will return to its usual path, life will be normal again! "Old men and old women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem..." A profound idea is contained herein. Someone who lacks a historical awareness, someone who sees only the present and is cut off from the past, is incapable of seeing the future, and perceives even the present in a distorted way. Rabbi Akiva was someone with historical perspective.

"Remember the days of old, understand the years of ages past. Ask your father and he shall expound to you, your elders - and they shall tell you" [Devarim 32:7]. Very recently, on the Seder night, we discussed the story of the Exodus from Egypt. We started with "Originally our fathers were idol-worshippers, and now God has brought us near to His service, as it is written: 'And Joshua said to the nation: Your forefathers dwelt on the other side of the Jordan; Terach, the father of Avraham and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods. And I took your father, Avraham, and I led him throughout the land of Canaan....'" How is this connected to the exodus from Egypt? The answer is that one event cannot be analyzed in isolation. The background to any event is broad. The exodus from Egypt cannot be understood without first understanding "Terach, the father of Avraham..."

Someone who does not understand the meaning of an entire nation being

exiled from its land, cannot understand the historical significance of its return. Eretz Yisrael was entirely emptied of all her inhabitants. Has such a thing ever happened in history? A nation that was exiled from its land, and returns to it? The prophet says, "Old men and old women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem." Once again there will be "boys and girls playing in its streets." Simple, normal life. Only someone with a deep historical awareness can understand the significance of such a scene. Miracles are one-time events. But Jews living a normal life in Eretz Yisrael, after seventy years (of the Babylonian exile) during which the country was empty and desolate - someone looking with historical perspective can only be astonished. Of him the prophet says, "If it will be wondrous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those days, it will also be wondrous in my eyes, says the Lord of hosts."

Normal life, that which other nations accept as a natural phenomenon, is perceived by us as a meta-historical one, a manifestation of the Divine. For them everything is "smooth" - "And Esav continued on his way to Se'ir;" such is the way of the world. But "Yaakov and his sons went down to Egypt." For us, every natural phenomenon becomes a supernatural one. For us, everything is always different. After two thousand years, children play in the streets of Israel, in the squares of Jerusalem! Can this be a natural phenomenon, after two thousand years? For us, everything is always different.

The connection between the nation of Israel and their land was created differently from that of any other nation. In the natural course of events, the connection between a nation and its land is created after people have lived in a certain area for a long time, have fought for it, have lived through shared experiences and troubles. For us, everything is different. Our connection to our land was created before the first Jew had set foot on it! "And God said to Avram, 'Go out of your country, from your birthplace, from your father's house, to the land which I shall show you' [Bereishit 12:1]. It was then that the connection was formed. "The covenant which He made with Avraham, and His oath to Yitzchak, and confirmed it to Yaakov as a law, and to Israel as an everlasting covenant, saying: To you I will give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; when they were few in number, a mere handful sojourning there..." [Tehillim 105:9-12]. This was a unique event; it has no parallel in history.

Just as the connection between the nation of Israel and its land did not follow the natural order, so the connection between the nation and the State was formed before the Jewish nation was in the land. Along came a Jew from an assimilated household, lacking any background in Judaism, lacking any familiarity with Jewish culture, and - using "Jewish intuition" alone - revealed what Chazal had long before understood: that Zion is the birthplace of all Jews, "both those actually born there as well as those who yearn to see it." Herzl understood, purely through intuition, that although there were almost no Jews living in Eretz Yisrael, nevertheless this would become the Jewish State. Is it generally acceptable for a nation to choose a place, go there, and create a state? Isn't a state usually created for people who already live there, and not for the sake of those who will flock to it after it is created?

At the time of the Balfour Declaration, in 1917, how many Jews were there in this country? A few tens of thousands? Nevertheless, the Declaration stated that "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." A strange phenomenon. So too later, when Britain betrayed the Jewish nation by refusing to allow the survivors of Auschwitz and Majdanek entry into the land. The mighty Britain closed the doors. Certain of her policy, Britain made every effort to prevent the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael, and transferred the decision into the hands of the United Nations, fully confident that this body would leave control of the region in Britain's hands. And then the unbelievable happened. A committee was formed and its recommendation was to create two states in Eretz Yisrael; a Jewish state and an Arab state. In order for such a resolution to be passed, a two-thirds majority of the UN was required. And the UN was clearly divided, with a cold war between East and West. Whatever one side supported, the other would reject. And even if the countries of the East and West would agree, what would be the position of Uruguay, Paraguay, and all the other little countries - how would they vote?

The family history of every ambassador from Uruguay and Paraguay was carefully investigated in the hope of finding a grandmother, a third-cousin, anyone who served as a connection to Judaism. One of the delegates, Dr. Leo Cohen, told me that throughout the day of the UN vote he walked around with a book of Tehillim in his hand. "Only a miracle could save us." To obtain a two-thirds majority...! I remember it well. On the 29th of November I was at Kibbutz Be'erot Yitzchak. We all listened intently to the voting on the radio: "Yes. No. Yes. No." And the miracle happened: two thirds! An unprecedented event.

But what happened after that? Today we live in a "now" generation: Peace now, Mashiach now, Terrorism now, Quiet now - everything must be now. We are incapable of imagining what tomorrow might bring. Everything is measured by the yardstick of what is happening today. Today is quiet - tomorrow will be too. Today there is terrorism - tomorrow it will continue. Today there is peace - tomorrow there will be peace. It is a generation with an impaired sense of history. There is no awareness of the past, and none of the future. Only a sense of today, of now.

In 1948, it was a different generation, one with historical perspective. Recently we have suffered terrible terrorist attacks. Let me tell you something: During those few months, between the UN vote on the 29th of November and the Declaration of Statehood on the 5th of Iyyar, there were seven car bombs here. One of them, on Ben-Yehuda Street, killed fifty Jews. And this in addition to the victims killed by marauders on the roads and by snipers in the yishuvim. I won't mention too much, I won't detail everything that happened here in Gush Etzion. All within five months. The Convoy of 35 fell, the Nebi Daniel force lost fifteen victims, an attack on the high ground here brought another twelve to their deaths, and an attack on another convoy making its way to the Gush cost another ten lives. And do you know how many victims fell here in Gush Etzion on the 3rd and 4th of Iyyar, 5708? More than a hundred and fifty. Just two days before the declaration of the State!

Two hundred and forty victims fell during those five months. And despite it all, the establishment of the State was declared, and the next day everyone recited Hallel with great excitement. People danced in the streets. Had they gone mad?

It was the strong sense of history that prompted this. That generation knew and understood the significance of Jewish independence in Eretz Yisrael after two thousand years. A State meant not for the six hundred thousand Jews living there then, but for millions of Jews. Each person understood that he was fighting for the millions who would come. What were the borders of that State? They did not include the Kotel. Nahariya was not ours, nor were Nazareth, Lod, Ramle, Ashkelon, Be'er Sheva. Jerusalem was an international city. What were they saying Hallel for?

They said Hallel for the sovereignty that had returned to Israel. They remembered the words of the Rambam in Hilkhos Channuka, where he teaches that in the merit of the Chashmona'im, "Sovereignty returned to Israel for two hundred years." They understood the significance of that sovereignty. There was a strong belief that "It was not by their sword that they took the land, nor their might that saved them, but rather Your right hand and Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, for You favored them" [Tehillim 44:4]. Without "You favored them," there is nothing.

I'm not even discussing the fact that the next day I had to rush to finish reciting Hallel because I had been drafted. They began to invade from all sides: from Egypt, from Syria, from Jordan, from Lebanon. Units from Iraq. How were we supposed to stand up to them, after the British had forbidden us to stockpile arms? All in all we were six hundred thousand Jews.

If, in Zekharia's time, normal life in Israel after seventy years was considered wondrous, should we consider it natural after two thousand years? Three books of Nevi'im - Chagai, Zekharia and Mal'akhi - and two from Ketuvim - Ezra and Nechemia - deal with a total of forty thousand Jews in Eretz Yisrael. Those were all that remained. Forty thousand. And today, thanks to the grace of God, we have merited to see over four million Jews in Israel!

Someone who cannot see the past will also be incapable of seeing the future, and of perceiving God's hand, "when God redeems the captivity of His nation." Can a nation rising out of the ashes of the Sho'ah allow itself to ignore this? True, you are all young. You never saw all of this. You were born, as it were, to a life of freedom. You never experienced Jews living in bunkers, longing for any type of freedom, praying for the day when they could walk in the streets and look around without fear. Only someone who looks at the entire two thousand years and sees Jews being led into exile by Titus, sees the Crusades and pogroms - only someone who sees all of this understands the meaning of Jewish independence after two thousand years.

And "it is not by their sword that they took the land." No such thing ever happened before. It is no wonder that the Arabs cannot understand it - along come the Jews after two thousand years and claim their ownership of Eretz Yisrael. "What are you doing here? How long did you live in Eretz Yisrael, anyway?" If you do the calculations, you'll see that Jews lived in Yemen for longer. Is it possible not to see the great hand of God? Someone who sees only today, now, is disturbed by problems and questions. But someone with a feel for history knows, like Rabbi Akiva who saw a fox coming out of the place of the Kodesh Kodashim, that "old men and women shall yet again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem."

The prophet Yirmiyahu [33:10-12] says, "Thus says the Lord: Again there shall be heard in this place - which you say is desolate, empty of man and of beast; in the cities of Yehuda and in the streets of Jerusalem which are deserted and without man, without inhabitant, and without animal - the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say, 'Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for His kindness is forever' when they bring thanksgiving offerings to God's house. For I shall return the captivity of the land as in former times, says the Lord." For our many sins, we have yet to merit seeing the "bringing of thanksgiving offerings to God's house." But the Anshei Knesset Ha-Gedola, when they composed the blessing recited at weddings, left out the end of the verse and changed it to read: "Again there shall be heard in the cities of Yehuda and in the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the joyous voice of bridegrooms emanating from the chuppa and that of the young men coming from their celebration." What are the "young men" here celebrating? Are they holding a "siyum?" Or simply

wasting time?

They are, in fact, the representatives of "normal life."

A normal state of affairs involves young people coming out of parties, and it was them to whom the Anshei Knesset Ha-Gedola referred. Are we blind to the fulfillment of this prophecy? Have we not participated in the joy of bridegrooms and brides in Jerusalem? Have we not danced in its streets? Have we not been witness to the joyous sounds of wedding parties emanating from the chuppa?

I have much in my heart that is waiting to be said. But for now let me just note three matters which require special emphasis in light of current events: 1. The need for a striving towards unity. God does not punish the community so long as it functions as a "community." A midrash aggada in the Talmud Yerushalmi (Pe'a 1:1, folio 16a) asks: "How is it possible that in the generation of King David, where everyone - even the children - knew Torah, when they went out to war there were casualties, while in the days of King Achav, a generation of idol-worshippers, when they went out to war they were always victorious?" The gemara explains, "In the days of King David there was causeless hatred and informing. In the days of Achav, despite the fact that they were idol-worshippers, they were united among themselves, and hence they were victorious in war." Unity is the first basic requirement, and we must guard it carefully. 2. The need to strengthen our appreciation of Jewish sovereignty. 3. The need to strengthen the moral foundation of our nation, to fight materialism, and to raise the moral, religious, Torah and cultural level of the nation. We cannot focus all our energies on the fight for land and ignore these issues.

We have prevailed in worse times and we shall prevail now. But we have to know that without a strong sense of history we shall not be able to understand what is happening here. If we fail to take our past into account, we will not understand the future, and even our appreciation of the present will be perverted. Today let us all say, "I have faith in your loving-kindness, my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I shall sing to the Lord for He has rendered me good" [Tehillim 13:6], and "God has given me suffering - but has not left me to die!" [118:18].

"Open for me the gates of righteousness, I shall enter them and praise God... I praise You for You have answered me, and have been my salvation. The stone which the builders despised has become the chief cornerstone. This is God's doing - it is wondrous in our eyes."

"This day God has made - let us be joyful and glad in it!" [Tehillim 118:19-24]

NCYI This Week's Parsha -Kedoshim Guest Rabbi: Rabbi Yehuda Yaakov Schwartz
Young Israel of Oceanside, New York

Who Are the Real Kedoshim?

Classically, Parshat Kedoshim is twinned with Parshat Acharei Mot. This year, due to it being a leap year, we are privileged to focus our ideas on the issues of Kedoshim as an entity unto itself.

Grasping the Terms The notion of Kedoshim is a difficult one to translate and even more difficult to frame in relevant terms. What does it mean to be a Kadosh? What sort of Kedushah are the Jewish people asked to develop? Why is this national directive, so central to our people, appear well after the experience of the Exodus and the giving of the Torah? And who, indeed, are to be called true Kedoshim? The Ibn Ezra interprets Kedoshim Tihyu as a message directed to the newest Jews who, through conversion, were now making their place among K'lal Yisrael. This is why, he explains, Moshe was asked to speak to Kol Adat Yisrael to educate them that they too were asked to keep a high standard of sexual morality regardless of their previous experiences. To the Ibn Ezra, the goal was to equate new Jews with the Jews whose sanctity and modesty had a history of generations. This mitzvah then demonstrates that each individual, no matter what their history, could achieve equally pristine levels of sanctity in marriage as defined by Halachic practice. The Ibn Ezra makes a second equation. He explains that the juxtaposition of Parshat Kedoshim to the end of Acharei Mot, which outlines appropriate marriage and sexuality, is meant to underscore that the key to a lasting link to Eretz Yisrael, the Holy Land, would require more than abstaining from certain immoral acts. Rather, it would require a holistic, "across-the-board" commitment to the complete range of mitzvot. Particularly, a fidelity toward HaShem was required over any other form of religious expression. If these mitzvot would not be accepted to the same extent as the basic principles governing relationships, then the relationship with HaShem and Eretz Yisrael was also not guaranteed.

The Ramban had an entirely different emphasis. He takes odds with Rashi's explanation that Kedoshim Tihyu means refraining from improper liaisons. The Ramban here, based on the Torat Kohanim, takes a more global view. He maintains that what is meant here is a command to be prushim (separate). As G-d is separate from our world, so, too, we are asked beyond the realm of the normal Halacha to separate ourselves somewhat from the world around us. For as the Ramban explains, the Torah forbids many things and permits many others. Therefore, someone dedicated to his passions could easily indulge them gratuitously to the point of complete hedonism and still be technically within the boundaries of what the Torah permits. He would be a naval b'rshut HaTorah, leaving no appetite unsatisfied. It is to this issue that the Ramban feels the Torah is now directing its energy. As opposed to the Ibn Ezra who saw this

mitzvah as the great equalizer investing Kedusha in the sum total of all mitzvot and their participants, the Ramban is describing the development of a unique, Kadosh personality. Kadesh et Atzmcha Bmah Shemutar Lach To the Ramban, Kedoshim Tihyu is describing a mitzvah to work on curbing one's natural drives to create a dignified and elevated persona free from compulsive and often mindless pursuit of instant gratification. The synapse of mental "space" necessary to hold back the urgings of the yetzer from gaining control of our conscious activities is the space within which Kedusha lies. Although no actual methods are described to achieve this goal, the plethora of ethical imperatives in the Parsha chisels the image of set principles that form the bedrock of the Kadosh personality.

Kedoshim - A Second 10 Commandments?

The Midrash Tanchuma also underscores the point that Kedoshim is not really a reinforcement of the previous mitzvot but actually creates a set of "uppercase" commandments corresponding to the Aseret HaDibrot (10 Commandments) which form the foundation of our faith. The Midrash asks why it was that this Parsha had to be said with the entire Jewish people in assembly. The Midrash answers that just like the 10 Commandments were received with all Jews in attendance, so, too, Kedoshim would be since it would encompass all the Dibrot. It goes on to demonstrate that each of the 10 Commandments has a refractory command paralleling it in our Parsha. If it says there "Z'chor et Yom HaShabbat", then here it says "Et Shabotai Tishmoru" and so on.

The Midrash traces each of the 10 Commandments as cloaked within the protective garb of our Parsha. This seems to go beyond the Ramban's description of Kedoshim as the Holy and somewhat ascetic Torah personality. What is the meaning of this profound idea that finds each of the 10 Commandments hidden in Parshat Kedoshim?

Kedoshim and the Category of the Ethical

Professor Shalom Carmy (Tradition Magazine, Summer 1996) raises the intriguing question of whether ethics exists outside the realm of Halacha. He points out "Nowadays that when some action is right or wrong on both halachic and moral (ethical) grounds, someone is sure to point out this apparent redundancy: halachic means ethical, and vice versa. Upon further reflection, however, the equivalence becomes less straightforward. Actions may accord with the letter of Halakha, which are nevertheless reprehensible because our moral judgement condemns them: the recent resurrection of kiddushei ketanna is a spectacular and, one hopes, indisputable example. There are circumstances where to act in accordance with Halakha entails violating firmly held, and justified moral institutions: e.g. the tragedy of an intractable case of mamzerut or agunah."

He presents three approaches to answer the issue he raises: 1) The identity theory that Halacha and ethics are truly identical. Halacha is not limited to intellectual horizons of ethical outlooks which are not rooted in revelations. When ethical intuitions conflict with formal religious obligations, the latter would nullify the former. The identity theory explains that the Halacha being the Will of G-d is by definition the ethical. As Rabbi Dr. Walter Wurtzburger explained, "Abraham's readiness to sacrifice Isaac cannot be evoked as a paragon of the ethical. On the contrary, it was a perfectly moral act. Abraham does not cringe before absolute power but rather obeys the command of the Supreme moral authority". 2) The second approach is described as the hierarchical theory which maintains that the ethical and the religious, in spite of their broad overlap, denote distinct realms. In Dr. Carmy's words, "at the same time halacha, the revealed expression of G-d's Will for man occupies a higher rung on the normative ladder than the ethical." The subtle difference between these two interpretations is that the hierarchical view grants reality to the ethical as a category unto itself, albeit "a category inferior to the religious sphere that is identical with the Divine Command".

3) Dr. Carmy's description of Rav Soloveitchik's, ZT"L, approach to this question describes a dialectic morality in which the complexity of moral and religious existence is in ongoing tension between the religious and the ethical. This dialectic enriches both spheres and creates an endless challenge for the Torah Jews to be constantly diligent in seeing that their religious expressions are also implicitly charged with ethos. Perhaps the Ramban along with the Midrash Tanchuma are describing such a dialectic. The Aseret HaDibrot and all the commandments attached to them must be performed while keeping in mind the driving agenda of a overarching goal of being Kedoshim. On a practical level, we must be careful not to allow our mitzvah performance to deteriorate to the point of containing little or no intentionality. It is not that we daven or learn, or speak to one another but how we daven, learn and speak about one another that ultimately determines whether our mitzvot inhere Kedusha. Parshat Kedoshim cloaks the Aseret HaDibrot and invests in it an additional dimension by asking the question- if we are not, as the Ramban put it, all in all, still in some sense minuvul b'rshut HaTorah.

Finally, on ...Yom HaShoah which marks the passing of true Kedoshim -- the six million who perished in the Nazi Holocaust -- let us remember that their common fate united them as one people to us and to the entire world. Ultimately, unity and love among K'lal Yisrael is the greatest manifestation that we are truly Holy.

ohr@jer1.co.il (Ohr Somayach) parasha-qa@jer1.co.il In-depth questions on Parshat HaShavua w/ Rashi Parshas Kedoshim

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Parsha Questions 1. Why was Parshas Kedoshim said in front of all the Jewish People? 2. Why does the Torah mention the duty to honor one's father before it mentions the duty to honor one's mother? 3. Why is the command to fear one's parents followed by the command to keep Shabbos? 4. Why does Shabbos observance supersede honoring parents? 5. What is "leket?" 6. In Shemos 20:13, the Torah commands "Do not steal." What does the Torah add when it commands in Vayikra 19:11 "Do not steal?" 7. "Do not do wrong to your neighbor" (19:13). To what 'wrong' is the Torah referring? 8. By when must you pay someone who worked for you during the day? 9. How does Rashi explain the prohibition "Don't put a stumbling block before a sightless person?" 10. In a monetary case involving a poor person and a rich person, a judge is likely to wrongly favor the poor person. What rationale does Rashi give for this? 11. When rebuking someone, what sin must one be careful to avoid? 12. It's forbidden to bear a grudge. What example does Rashi give of this? 13. The Torah forbids tattooing. How is a tattoo made? 14. How does one fulfill the mitzvah of "hadarta p'nei zaken?" 15. What punishment will never come to the entire Jewish People? 16. What penalty does the Torah state for cursing one's parents? 17. When the Torah states a death penalty but doesn't define it precisely, to which penalty is it referring? 18. What will result if the Jewish People ignore the laws of forbidden relationships? 19. Which of the forbidden relationships listed in this week's Parsha were practiced by the Canaanites? 20. Is it proper for a Jew to say "I would enjoy eating ham?"

Recommended Reading List Ramban 19:2 Be Holy 19:14 Who May Not Be Cursed 19:17 Love and Rebuke 19:18 Love Your Neighbor 19:30 Shabbos 19:32 Honoring the Elderly Sefer Hachinuch 227 Swearing Falsely 236 Tale Bearing 237 Standing Idly 238 Hatred 239 Rebuke

Answers to this Week's Questions All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated 1. 19:2 - Because the fundamental teachings of the Torah are contained in this Parsha. 2. 19:3 - Since it is more natural to honor one's mother, the Torah stresses the obligation to honor one's father. 3. 19:3 - To teach that one must not violate Torah law even at the command of one's parents. 4. 19:3 - Because the parents are also commanded by Hashem to observe Shabbos. Parents deserve great honor, but not at the 'expense' of Hashem's honor. 5. 19:9 - "Leket" is one or two stalks of grain that are accidentally dropped while harvesting. They must be left for the poor. 6. 19:11 - The Torah in Vayikra prohibits monetary theft. In Shemos it prohibits kidnapping. 7. 19:13 - Withholding wages from a worker. 8. 19:13 - Before the following dawn. 9. 19:13 - Don't give improper advice to a person who is unaware in a matter. For example, don't advise someone to sell his field, when in reality you yourself wish to buy it. 10. 19:15 - The judge might think: "This rich person is obligated to give charity to this poor person regardless of the outcome of this court case. Therefore, I'll rule in favor of the poor person. That way, he'll receive the financial support he needs without feeling bad about taking charity. 11. 19:17 - Causing public embarrassment. 12. 19:18 - Person A asks person B: "Can I borrow your shovel?" Person B says: "No." The next day, B says to A: "Can I borrow your scythe?" A replies: "Sure, I'm not stingy like you are." 13. 19:28 - Ink is injected into the skin with a needle. 14. 19:32 - By not sitting in the seat of elderly people, and by not contradicting their statements. 15. 20:3 - "Kares" -- the entire Jewish People will never be "cut off." 16. 20:9 - Death by stoning. 17. 20:10 - Chenek (strangulation). 18. 20:22 - The land of Israel will 'spit them out.' 19. 20:23 - All of them. 20. 20:26 - Yes.

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drasha@torah.org DRASHA PARSHAS KEDOSHIM -- BURDEN OF REPROOF by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

This week, the Torah not only teaches us the basics of getting along with one's neighbor, it also codifies the elementary rules of behavior that set a moral standard for social etiquette. You shall not be a gossipmonger; you shall not stand idly by your brother's blood; you shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall not take revenge. (Leviticus 19:16-18). In one matter, however, the Torah also exhorts us to act in a way that many may believe would lead our neighbors to distance themselves from us. The Torah tells us to reprove our fellow-Jew. Obviously, the concept of "live and let live" is foreign to Judaism. In fact, the mitzvah of reproof is put right next to the verse, "you shall not stand idly by your brother's blood." Spiritual distress in the Torah's view is equivalent to physical distress. Just as we cannot stand idly by when someone is drowning, so, too, when someone is drowning spiritually we must also act. But the Torah does more than just tell us to admonish - it tells us how. "You shall not hate your

brother in your heart; reprove you shall surely reprove him and do not bear a sin upon him." The last part of the charge is difficult to understand. What does the Torah mean, "and do not bear a sin upon him"? Rashi explains that the Torah does not want you to sin while reproofing your fellow - "do not embarrass him publicly." The actual text, however, seems to read to not bear a sin upon him, the sinner. How can we understand that?

As the Chofetz Chaim traveled around Poland and Russia to sell his works, he entered an inn in Vilna and beheld a disturbing sight. A burly young man was about to devour a hen that lay on his plate roasted and stuffed. A tall stein stood next to the succulent fowl, its rim flowing with cold brew. All of a sudden the man picked up the entire hen and stuffed it into his mouth. He washed down his meal with a giant gulp of beer, leaving the stein nearly empty. The Chofetz Chaim had never seen a Jewish person eat like that, let alone with out a bracha (blessing before food)! He turned to the innkeeper and inquired, "Tell me a little about this man, I'd like to talk to him." "Oh!" smirked the host while waving his hand in disgust. "There's nobody to talk to. This young man never learned a day in his life. The cantonists captured him when he was eleven and he served in the Russian army for 15 years. He hardly observes any mitzvos. It's amazing that he even eats kosher!" Then he smiled. "But I'm sure I can count on him for a three-course meal every Thursday night!" The Chofetz Chaim was neither shocked nor amused. He simply walked over to the former soldier and shook, his greasy hand warmly. After a warm greeting the Chofetz Chaim introduced himself and spoke. "I heard that you actually survived the cruel Russian army of Czar Nikolai and you never were raised amongst your people. I am sure that many times the terrible officers tried to convert you or at least force you to eat non-kosher. Yet you remained a steadfast Jew!" Tears welled in the Chofetz Chaim's eyes as he continued talking. "I only wish that I that I would be guaranteed a place in the World-to-Come as you will be. What strength! What fortitude! You have withstood harsher tests than sages of old." The soldier looked up from his plate and tears welled in his eyes too. He leaned over and kissed the hand of the elderly sage. Then the Chofetz Chaim continued. "I am sure that if you get yourself a teacher and continue your life as a true Torah-observant Jew, there will be no one in this world who is as fortunate as you!" According to the biographer of the Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi M. M. Yasher, the soldier became a pupil of the Chofetz Chaim, and eventually became an outstanding tzadik (righteous Jew).

Perhaps with the words, "do not bear on him the sin," the verse is telling us much more. It tells us not to focus on the action of sin alone when admonishing someone. The Torah wants us to find a positive aspect that will raise the holy soul from murky depths. It is easy to enumerate your friend's misdeeds - and perhaps even easier to tell him off. But, that is not the goal. The Book of Mishlei tells us: "He who acclaims evildoers as righteous, will be cursed. But those who admonish will be blessed." (Proverbs:24:24-25) Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz (c.1505 - c.1584) of Sefad explains that the two verses work in tandem. They teach us that though false flattery is abhorrent, when used to admonish by finding the good in those who have strayed, it is to be commended. The Torah wants us to build a person, and elevate him instead of thrusting the burden of his sins upon him. In that manner, you won't bully him, you will build him. For when finding faults in others, we bear a great responsibility. Not only do we bear the difficult and sensitive burden of proof, we bear an equally difficult and sensitive burden of reproof. Good Shabbos

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