



Parsha: Kedoshim

The mitzvah to “sanctify yourselves” is a bit difficult to define. The commentaries explain that in many ways the obligation to be holy actually begins where the other mitzvahs leave off.

The mitzvahs in general were meant to elevate a person’s spiritual being by guiding his actions in accordance with G-d’s will. However, no code of specific obligations is capable of covering every detail of the human condition. There will always be “cracks” where a person’s base instinct can slip through. Ramban (Nachmanides) says that a person could technically follow all the Torah’s laws, and still remain a degenerate person, a “*naval B'rshus haTorah*.”

The Torah therefore commands the Jew to sanctify his life. “Holiness” means that one must exercise control over his physical and material desires. This does not mean that a person must practice an ascetic lifestyle, but rather that the physical and material desires must be elevated. It’s not enough that a person’s food fits the dietary kashrus specifications. *How* it is eaten must also conform to a higher standard. One must eat and drink with dignity and in

moderation. (According to some authorities, this mitzvah precludes intoxication and gluttony.) Likewise, a person’s speech must not merely be devoid of slander and other prohibited words. Even that which is permissible, should be spoken sparingly and in a dignified manner. Every action in life should be done in a manner befitting a “priestly people and a holy nation.”

Many of the business-related and interpersonal laws, such as the prohibitions to spread gossip, bear a grudge, and to act dishonestly are also discussed in this portion. Their juxtaposition to the commandment of being holy suggests another important insight into holiness. One might think that the concept of holiness is more directly related to the relationship between man and G-d. The Torah teaches that this is not so. One’s social activities also affect his level of spirituality. One who is dishonest in business cannot achieve holiness either. Treating one’s employees fairly and not spreading gossip are also a part of being holy, because they remind a person that his needs and desires do not precede those of another person.

Insights: Kedoshim

Do not favor the face of the great... (Lev 19:5) A student was asked to drive Rav Moshe Feinstein to a wedding during the yeshiva’s afternoon study session. On the way the Rosh Yeshiva explained to the student that he would not usually take off from the study session to attend weddings of people not from the yeshiva. He made an exception here, however, because he heard that the groom’s family had little money. He was concerned that people might get the impression that he would only attend celebrations of the big donors of the yeshiva and not those of people who had little money to give. He thus attended the wedding to show that he did not play favorites.

Did You Know?

One may not take revenge against another person who has wronged him. Even bearing a grudge against the person is forbidden. Some authorities limit these prohibitions to monetary matters, such as where a person refused to lend somebody an item, or if he caused financial loss. If the other person caused bodily or emotional harm, however, there is no prohibition to take revenge, though it is definitely praiseworthy to refrain. Other authorities hold that the prohibition still applies. One may respond in self-defense. Likewise, if one has been financially harmed by another he may take the case to *beis din* (Jewish court) to retrieve his loss, though he must still be careful not to bear a grudge.

Thought for the week: We make-believe and believe it. (*A Candle by Day*)

Friday, May 10

7:00 Shacharis

8:15 Candlelighting

8:20 Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, May 11

8:45 Shacharis.

*Kiddush is sponsored
by Dr. Kletter in honor
of his uncle’s yahrzeit*

7:10 Pirke Avos

8:10 Mincha

9:24 Maariv

Sunday, May 12

8:00 Shacharis

**7:30 HEBREW READING
CLASS**

10:00 Maariv

Monday, May 13

7:00 Shacharis

**The Jewish Life Cycle
part 2 of 8
will continue
NEXT WEEK
R. Nisenbaum**

10:00 Maariv

Tuesday, May 14

7:00 Shacharis

8:00 Pirke Avos (Stoll)

10:00 Maariv

Wednesday, May 15

7:00 Shacharis

**8:00 “The Prophets Still
Speak” (Stoll)**

10:00 Maariv

Thursday, May 16

7:00 Shacharis

10:00 Maariv

10:15 Parsha Class

Sponsorship

*This issue is sponsored by
Dr. and Mrs. Yitzchak Kletter
on the occasion of the
second yahrzeit of his uncle
Eliezer ben Aryeh Leib,
10 Iyar*

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