



From the desk of  
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## Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad \* Batei Hora'ah \* Religious Services \* Marriage Licensing \* Kashrut \* Mikvaot \* Eiruvim

### TORAT

### Parashat Kedoshim

### HAMELECH

#### How to Be Holy

“Speak to the entire congregation of Bnei Yisrael and tell them to be holy for I am holy.”

Yes, we are a holy people and each one of us, not only the great ones but each one of us is asked to make himself even more holy and elevated.

How do we do this? Should we fast for forty consecutive days? Should we abstain from delicacies or minimize basic necessities?

Rashi explains that we are to abstain from incest. Ramban explains that we are not to overindulge in pleasures, even physical ones.

Abaye teaches (Yevamot 20a) that whenever we listen to the words of the Sages and abide by them, we become more holy.

The truth that fulfilling any mitzvah imbues us with holiness. That is why we say in the *brachah* before doing a mitzvah, *asher kidishanu bemitzvotav*. Whether it is washing the hands in the morning or before eating, putting on Talit and Tefillin, sitting in a Suka, eating matzah and maror, counting the omer or any of the other many mitzvot we do, each one infuses us with yet another dose of *kedushah* and we acknowledge that and express our appreciation for that as we utter the *brachah*.

We see in the third paragraph of our daily *Shema* another recipe for *kedushah*. “Do not stray after your hearts and after your eyes, and be holy unto your Almighty.” Yes, keeping our hearts focused on the truth and keeping our eyes focused on holy sites only – that is a great way to acquire holiness.

*Kedushah* is not only for *Kohanim*, says Tanna d'vei Eliyahu (chap. 15). *Kedushah* is for all Jews, and we see it in Parshas Kedoshim where the entire congregation was addressed and instructed to be holy.

#### What Kedushah is Not

Abstinence is not necessarily an act of *kedushah* nor does it necessarily lead to *kedushah*. Rambam (De'ot 3:1) advises against going to extremities in abstinence. He mentions that a person, after hearing how bad the traits of jealousy, lust and the pursuit of prestige are, may be inclined to run in the other direction. He may choose to abstain from ingesting meat and imbibing wine, marrying, living in a nice home, wearing presentable clothing, etc. Rambam opposes such an approach. He calls it bad and prohibited and sinful.

Instead, he explains that we are not to add prohibitions and vows, we are not to fast



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frequently or inflict pain upon ourselves. "Do not be such a great *tsaddik*; why make yourself desolate?"

Rather, a person is to live a life of a human being and do all of his physical activities for the sake of Heaven. That, according to Avot de R' Natan, is called living a life of *kedushah*. Partake and partake, but for the right sake.

### The Pesach Home

The Bobover Rebbe once visited the mansion of the philanthropist R' Shimon Rothschild. Mr. Rothschild showed the Rebbe many of his beautiful rooms and treasures. He also boasted that he had a special Pesach home in which *chametz* was never given entry. Come Pesach, the entire mansion is sold to the gentile and the Rothschild family moves into the Pesach home.

The Rebbe was not impressed. He said, "My grandfather, Reb Chaim Zanter, was not a wealthy man. But he kept every *chumra* in the book. If it would have been a *hidur* to have a Pesach home, he would have had one, too. But he didn't. Why not? Because we are not just to run away from *chametz*. We are to search for it and destroy it. That teaches us to eradicate the *yetzer horah* from our midst.

Torah and mitzvot do not teach us to run away from challenges, but to meet them head on and deal with them.

### A Good Environment

How can we add *kedushah* to our lives? Wash the children's hands in the morning, even when they are babies.

R' Yehoshua ben Chananya's mother went to 24 Batei Medrash each day, before he was born, asking the Talmidei Chachamim to pray that her child-to-be will be a Talmid Chacham. After he was born, she put his cradle in the Beit Medrash so that only words of Torah would enter his ears.

R' Yochanan ben Zakai would praise R' Yehoshua, saying: Happy is his mother. She gets credit for his accomplishments.

A person is influenced by his surroundings, even at a tender age, even if he does not understand the words being said. That is why children are brought to *hakhel*, and that is why women attend *hakhel*. Says the Ben Yehoyada (Chagiga 3b and Eiruvim 18b): A man should learn Torah at night in the home. This will be a great influence of *kedushah* upon his wife, even if she does not understand and even if she is sleeping. Zohar P' Shelach speaks of a special chamber in Heaven where women study Torah with Batya who raised Moshe Rabbeinu. How do women study Torah? Because they heard it in this world, even without



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understanding. In this world, they do not have a mitzva to study Torah, only the halachot and hashkafot which are pertinent to them. They are discouraged from delving deep.

But in the world-to-come, those who helped their husbands and children study Torah and overheard words of Torah studied in their homes will have a *chelek* in *eisek haTorah* as well.

### It's Good for the Children

The Chafetz Chaim (Shaar Hatziyun 560:25) brings from Shla"h HaKadosh that we must make sure that our children only hear good things. Never put them to sleep by singing songs which include words or tunes culled from outside sources.

The earliest *chadorim*, Torah schools for boys, were intentionally located in Yerushalayim Ir HaKodesh, so that the boys would see Avodat Hamikdash and be infused with *kedushah*. (Tosafot to Bava Batra 21a).

Isha Kimchit merited seven successful sons due to her meticulousness in matters of *tzniut*. She saw to it that the beams of her home never saw her hair even braided; nor did they see the inner hem of her clothing, and certainly not any of her flesh, even her toes (Bavli and Yerushalmi Yoma). Beit Shaul are praised for their *tzniut*, stressing the aspect of their heels and big toe never showing (Yerushalmi Suka 5:4).

### Holy Beasts

When a *tsaddik* leads a life of *kedushah*, this even produces a profound effect upon his livestock. Avraham Avinu's camels would not step foot into Lavan's house until the television (idols) were removed. (Avot R' Natan 8:8)

The donkey of R' Pinchus ben Yair would not eat fodder until it had been tithed (Hullin 7a). The donkey of R' Chanina ben Dosa would not return to its owner, after having been rented out, unless the exact amount of rental fee was placed on its back and all personal belongings of the renter were removed. (Ta'anit 24a)

So we have mentioned a number of things which bring *kedushah* into our lives. Let us not forget that the Parsha opens with this directive to be holy, and continues to list all types of mitzvot, including many mitzvot between man and his fellow. These, as well, infuse our lives with *kedushah*. Avoid taking revenge, for example, and you will be a holier person.

The road to *kedushah* is lengthy and mostly uphill. But do not worry. Just take the first step and Divine assistance will take you very far (Yoma 39a).

**Shabbat Shalom Umevorach,**  
**Mordechai Malka**