

Good Shabbos, everyone.

Mazel Tov to:

- Yosef and Jessica Furman on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Akiva.
- Rabbi Jonah and Mrs. Sarah Lerner on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Moshe. Mazel Tov to Moshe's grandparents, Risa and Ephraim Prince and Estelle Lerner.
- Yosef and Suzy Levenbrown on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Yehuda. Mazel Tov to Yehuda's grandparents, Esther and Irwin Levenbrown, Sharyn Rauer, and Yossi and Rachael Strimber.

Thank you to the drasha sponsors

- Eva Katznelson, in memory of Peshie Vim.
- Barry and Suri Reiner, "On the upcoming Shloshim of Suri's father, Dr. Stanley Goldstein שלום בן יהודה and with gratitude to the Rav for his sagely, compassionate and comforting advice and assistance."
- Hillel and Dena Soclof, in memory of Hillel's mother, Ada Soclof, 4 Iyar.

May the *neshamos* have an *aliya* and may the sponsors be rewarded for their support of the shul with *bracha*, *hatzlacha*, and good health.

I want to thank those who have already contributed to our Pillars of Gold 50th Anniversary Campaign, and remind everyone that the 36 hour matching campaign will begin this Sunday! If you benefit from Shomrei Emunah, your participation is greatly encouraged! [Shomrei Emunah \(causematch.com\)](http://ShomreiEmunah.causematch.com)

Our *Parsha* begins with a famous statement:

ויקרא י"ט:ב דבַר אֱלֹהִים לְעֹדֵת בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדוּשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

Speak to the whole Jewish community and say to them: You shall be holy, for I, your God, am holy.

This leaves us with some basic questions:

First: is קדושים תהיו "you shall be holy," a commandment to be performed by the Jewish people? Is it a promise to be kept by Hashem? Or is it a destiny to be achieved together?

Second: **Rashi** says אל כל עדת בני ישראל "to the entire Jewish people" means that it was taught in the presence of the entire nation בה תורה תלויין *"because most of the fundamental teachings of the Torah are dependent on it (contained in it)"*

What does he mean that most of the fundamental teachings are dependent on it? Why does this require the entire *klal's* participation?

And third, and most fundamentally: What does it mean to be *kadosh*?

The word קדוש appears in many contexts and in many places—always with a connotation of **separation** and **dedication**...

The first time the word is used is in the context of Hashem separating the seventh day from all other days of creation and giving it a special *bracha* to make it special.

בראשית ב: ג: וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יְוָם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְקַלְמֵלָאֲכָתוֹ וְאֶשְׂרֶ-בְרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: **אבן עזרא (שם):** ויקדש אותו שלא נעשתה בו מלאכה כמו חבריו.

Not surprisingly, based on the **Toras Kohanim**, the **Ramban** writes that being *kadosh* relates to self control and restraint. Separating oneself from that which is unnecessary; complete dedication to spirituality as expressed by one's *neshama* being in complete control. Mandating restraint and mastery over oneself.

אבל בתורת כהנים (פרשה א ב) ראיתי סתם פרושים תהיו וכן שנו שם (שמיני פרק יב ג) והתקדשתם והייתם קדושים כי קדוש אני כשם שאני קדוש כך אתם תהיו קדושים כשם שאני פרוש כך אתם תהיו פרושים ולפי דעתי אין הפרישות הזו לפרוש מן העריות כדברי הרב אבל הפרישות היא המזכרת בכל מקום בתלמוד שבעליה נקראים פרושים

But in the Torath Kohanim I have seen it mentioned without any qualification [i.e., without any particular reference to immorality, as Rashi expressed it], saying:⁸Torath Kohanim, at the beginning of Seder Kedoshim. "Be self-restraining." . . . And in my opinion, this abstinence does not refer only to restraint from acts of immorality, as the Rabbi [Rashi] wrote, but it is rather the self-control mentioned throughout the Talmud, which confers upon those who practice it the name of P'rushim.

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch defines *kedusha* based on this Ramban and Toras Kohanim:

קדושה - להיות מוכן ומזומן לכל מעשה טוב; ואין אדם מגיע למידה זו, אלא אם כן נפשו חזרה מוסריות צרופה; ונמצא, שהיפוכו של הטוב - הנטייה אל הרע - שוב אין לו מקום בנפשו. . יש לאמן את כוח הרצון המוסרי לשלוט בנטיות הלב... יתגבר על נטיות מותרות, הקרובות לאסורות; כך יקנה את כוח השליטה בעצמו; ישעבד לעצמו את כל כוחותיו וכשרונותיו לעשות בהם את רצון ה'
"to strive for moral perfection." To be ready and willing to perform all that is good; a person cannot attain this virtue unless his whole being is so steeped in morality that the opposite of the good, viz., the inclination to evil, no longer has a place within his being."

קדושה is attained through mastery over all of one's powers and faculties and over all the temptations amid inclinations associated with them—to be ready and willing to do God's will."

And that would explain the connection of our *kedusha* to Hashem's—'ה' כי קדוש אני ה'. He is the ultimate in mastery and control—and to the extent possible—we should be as well.

As **Rav Hirsch** writes:

כי קדוש אני ה' אלהיכם: אתם יכולים וחייבים להיות קדושים - כי קדוש אני ה' אלהיכם. הקדושה שעליכם לשאוף אליה היא, באמיתה המוחלטת, התואר של הווייתי; ובשמי ה' נפחתי בכם נשמה משלי וחלקתי לכם מהירותי; ובכל עת אני מאמץ את כוחכם ומסייע לכם לעשות את הטוב. הואיל ו"קדוש אני ה'" - הנכם מוכשרים לקדושה
You can and must be holy because ה' אלקיכם—because I, who am קדוש אני ה', am קדוש. The קדושה to which you must aspire is, in its absolute true sense, an attribute of My essence; and, as ה', I have breathed into you of My breath and endowed you with a share of My freedom, and I continually strengthen you and assist you to do what is good.

But I would like to share with you this morning an explanation by the great **Rav Shimon Shkop**, Rosh Yeshiva of Telshe and Shaar HaTorah in Grodno. He says, in his introduction to his magnum opus *Shaarei Yosher*, that קדושה is about dedicating oneself to the needs of others...

שערי ישר הקדמה

לכן נלענ"ד, שבמצוה זו כלול כל יסוד ושורש מגמת תכלית חיינו, שיהיו כל עבודתנו ועמלנו תמיד מוקדשים לטובת הכלל, שלא נשתמש בשום מעשה ותנועה, הנאה ותענוג שלא יהיה בזה איזה ענין לטובת זולתנו, וכמובן בכל הקדשות שהוא התייחדות למטרה נכבדה. והנה כשהאדם מישר הליכותיו ושואף שתמיד יהיו דרכי חיינו מוקדשים להכלל, אז כל מה שעושה גם לעצמו להבראת גופו ונפשו הוא מתייחס ג"כ אל מצות קדושה, שעני"ז יטיב גם לרבים, שבטובתו לעצמו הוא מטיב עם הרבים הצריכים לו,
And so, it appears that this mitzvah includes the entire foundation and root of the purpose of our lives. *Allof our work and effort should constantly be sanctified to benefiting the community. We should not use any act, movement, or get benefit or enjoyment that doesn't have in it some element of helping another. And as understood, all holiness is being set apart for an honorable purpose. Behold, when a person straightens his path and strives constantly to make his lifestyle dedicated to the community, then anything he does--even for himself, for the health of his body and soul--he also associates to the mitzvah of being holy. For through this he can also benefit the masses. Through the good he does for himself he can benefit the many who rely on him.*

Rav Shimon says this explanation leads to the same conclusion as the Ramban—self-mastery and control—because a person who is dedicated to others avoids that which is indulgent and unnecessary—because his entire focus is to help others....

אבל אם הוא נהנה הנאה מן סוג המותריות, שאינן דרושות להבראת גופו ונפשו, הנאה זו היא נגד הקדושה, שבזה הוא מטיב לעצמו לרגע לפי דמיונו, ולזולתו אין שום תועלת. ועל פי דרך זה ענין מצוה של פרישות הוא תמצית מיסוד מצות קדושה, הניכרת בפועל בדרכי ההנהגה של האדם, אבל ברעיון ושאיפת הרוח מתרחבת מצוה זו גם על כל מפעליו ומעשיו של האדם גם בינו לבין המקום,

וביחס זה מתדמה ענין קדושה זו לקדושת הבורא יתברך באיזה דמיון קצת, שכמו שבמעשה של הקדוש ברוך הוא בהבריאה כולה, וכן בכל רגע ורגע שהוא מקיים את העולם, כל מעשיו הם מוקדשים לטובת זולתו, כן רצונו יתברך שיהיו מעשינו תמיד מוקדשים לטובת הכלל ולא להנאת עצמו.

But if he derives benefit from some kind of permissible thing that isn't needed for the health of his body and soul, that benefit is in opposition to holiness. For with this he benefits himself, as he imagines at that moment, but to no one else does it have any value And, based on what we have explained, the thesis of the mitzvah of avoidance is essentially the same as the underlying basis of the mitzvah of holiness, which is practically recognizable in the ways a person acts. But with insight and the calling of spirituality, this mitzvah broadens to include everything a person causes or does, even between him and the Omnipresent. In relation to this, this holiness is comparable to the Holiness of the Creator in whatever small resemblance. Just as the Act of the Holy One in all of Creation, and in each and every moment that He continues to cause the universe to exist; all His actions are sanctified to the good of others, so too it is His Will that our actions be constantly sanctified to the good of the community, and not personal benefit

Rav Shimon writes that Hashem, in His relationship with the world, is totally and completely on the side of giving—and He expects us to model our lives after Him in this respect... 'ה' קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני ה'. He expects us to strive to be like Him.

I believe this explanation is supported by the *Pasuk* immediately after *קדושים תהיו*... קדושים תהיו... *אִישׁ אָמוֹ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאִמּוֹ תִּשְׁמְרוּ* *You shall each revere your mother and your father, and keep My sabbaths: I am your God.*

Parents--in their creation and nurture of their children, and *lehavdil*, Hashem in His creation of the world—are models of what it means to be a giver—dedicated to others.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach was one of the great *Poskim* and *Tzadikim* of Yerushalayim of the last generation. He passed away in 1995, and at long last, an in-depth 1,000-page biography was just published, called *Gaon Yisrael*. One story (on page 787) caught my attention.

A philanthropist once complained to Rav Shlomo Zalman that he felt his kindness was being exploited. To which Rav Shlomo Zalman responded:

העולם מתחלק לשני סוגי אנשים יש מקבלים ויש נותנים, ואוכל להעיד על עצמי שתמיד חיפשתי להיות מהנותנים ולא מהמקבלים...

The world is divided into two types of people, there are receivers and there are givers, and I can attest to myself that I was always looking to be one of the givers and not the recipients

Rav Dessler in his famous *Kuntres Hachessed* (32 עמ' ח"א) writes

כאשר ברא אלקים את האדם, עשהו לנותן ונוטל. כה הנתינה הוא כה עליון ממדות יוצר הכל ברוך הוא, שהוא מרחם ומטיב ונותן, מבלי קבל דבר בתמורה... וככה עשה את האדם ככתוב "בצלם אלקים עשה את האדם." כי יוכל לרחם ולהטיב וליתן... אבל כה המטלה, הוא אשר יתאוה האדם למשוך אליו את כל הבא בתחומו, כה זה הוא אשר יקראהו בני האדם "אהבת עצמו" והוא שורש כל הרעות.

When God created man, he gave him the capacity to be a giver or a taker. The power of giving is a higher Godly power, just as Hashem pities and benefits and gives, without receiving anything in return ... And He made man "In the image of God." That gave man the ability to also pity and benefit and give... But man also has the capacity to favor taking; to grab hold of all that is within reach; it is this power that is the root of all evils.

It is the character of giving, of nurturing each other, and dedication and commitment to one another upon which Judaism is built. From Avraham Avinu and Sarah Imenu—who were legendary *machnisei orchim*, to Moshe Rabbeinu, who left the comfort of Paraoth's palace to help his beleaguered brothers and sisters—this is who we are as Jews. When the Gemara in **Yevamos 79a** says, שלשה סימנים יש באומה זו: הרחמנים, והביישנים, וגומלי חסדים; the essence of the Jewish people is to be merciful, modest, and giving, it means

people who see themselves as part of a greater community—and who dedicate themselves to the betterment of the Jewish community.

We just celebrated Yom Hazikaron and Yom Haatzmaut. Yom Hazikaron commemorates more than 24,000 fallen soldiers and 4,000 victims of terror, who gave their lives for the Jewish people and the Jewish State. Yom Haatzmaut commemorates the miracle of the founding of the Jewish State 74 years ago, and the idea that was brought forth by the hopes and dreams, will, determination, and faith of the Jewish community. Led by people who dedicated themselves to the Klal.

I want to share a moving story published by Aish.com on Yom Hazikaron. **Rav Yisrael Zev Gustman** was one of the great *Talmidei Chachamim* of Europe before the war. He was the youngest member of Rav Chaim Ozer's *Beis Din*. After the Holocaust, he moved to Israel and set up a small Yeshiva in Yerushalayim. In addition, he gave a weekly shiur which was attended by many illustrious community members. One regular participant was a professor at the Hebrew University, Robert J. (Yisrael) Aumann, who would later win the Nobel Prize in Economics.

The year was 1982. Once again, Israel was at war. Soldiers were mobilized, reserve units activated. Among those called to duty was a Reserves soldier, a university student who made his living as a high school teacher: Shlomo Aumann, Professor Yisrael Aumann's son. On the eve of the 19th of Sivan, in particularly fierce combat, Shlomo fell in battle.

Rav Gustman mobilized his yeshiva: All of his students joined him in performing the mitzvah of burying the dead. At the cemetery, Rav Gustman was agitated: He surveyed the rows of graves of the young men, soldiers who died defending the Land. On the way back from the cemetery, Rav Gustman turned to another passenger in the car and said, "They are all holy." Another passenger questioned the rabbi: "Even the non-religious soldiers?" Rav Gustman replied: "Every single one of them." He then turned to the driver and said, "Take me to Professor Aumann's home."

The family had just returned from the cemetery and would now begin the week of shiva -- mourning for their son, brother, husband and father. (Shlomo was married and had one child. His widow, Shlomit, gave birth to their second daughter shortly after he was killed.)

Rav Gustman entered and asked to sit next to Professor Aumann, who said: "Rabbi, I so appreciate your coming to the cemetery, but now is time for you to return to your Yeshiva." Rav Gustman spoke, first in Yiddish and then in Hebrew, so that all those assembled would understand:

"I am sure that you don't know this, but I had a son named Meir. He was a beautiful child. He was taken from my arms and executed. I escaped. I later bartered my child's shoes so that we would have food, but I was never able to eat the food -- I gave it away to others. My Meir is a kadosh -- he is holy -- he and all the six million who perished are holy."

Rav Gustman then added: "I will tell you what is transpiring now in the World of Truth in Gan Eden -- in Heaven. My Meir is welcoming your Shlomo into the minyan and is saying to him 'I died because I am a Jew -- but I wasn't able to save anyone else. But you, Shlomo, you died defending the Jewish People and the Land of Israel.' My Meir is a kadosh, he is holy -- but your Shlomo is a Shaliach Zibbur -- a Cantor in that holy, heavenly minyan." Rav Gustman continued: "I never had the opportunity to sit shiva for my Meir; let me sit here with you just a little longer." Professor Aumann replied, "I thought I could never be comforted, but Rebbi, you have comforted me."

This is an example of *kedusha*—dedication to the *Klal*. As a nation, it is our mandate, it is our destiny, but also a promise--that we will be holy; that we will be a light unto the nations. The Jewish people have always impacted the world. This sense of commitment to one another, this *kedusha* is extraordinary. And--since 1948--the Jewish State of Israel has filled this role on an enormous scale. May we all be inspired to be holy—to dedicate ourselves to others—our family; our shul; our community; our beloved State of Israel...and may we all be *zoche* together to see the day when the beginning stages of *geula*, which we are witnessing today, will lead us to the *geula shleima...bimhera viyamenu...amen*.