

# THE COMMUNITY Parasha Sheet



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**THIS WEEK'S EDITION IS SPONSORED BY MICHAL AND YITZHAK ABUHATZEIRA IN HONOUR OF THEIR DAUGHTER Yael SIMCHA'S BAT MITZVAH**

## RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

**DIRECTOR  
TAL**



### KING OR QUEEN?

A cruel husband once approached his wife and told her "I'm the boss and you're nothing." She instantly replied, "Well I guess then... that makes you the boss of nothing!"

How much wisdom was captured in those few lines and wasted on a joke. The wife's response didn't deny that he was the boss - in fact, she readily agreed with him. She merely explained to him over what he was the boss. In other words, if you treat a wife like she's nothing, then you are the boss of nothing. Treat her like a person then you are the boss of a person. Treat her like a queen, and then you are the boss of a queen - that is a King. Would you like to be a king? Fine - just treat her like a queen!

In this week Parasha we read one of the most famous statements that have resounded for generations - "VeAhavta LeReacha Kamocha - you should love your neighbour like yourself". So famous is this statement that Rabbi Akiva said this is a Klal Gadol BaTorah - a great rule in the Torah.

This is a profound Mitzvah. We all love ourselves, very very much! The Torah seems to command that we take that same love and focus it on all those around us.

Yet the Ramban finds this hard to accept. How can it be that you should love your friend equally

to yourself? There is a rule in the Gemara: "Chayecha Kodmin" - Your life takes precedence.

The Gemara Bava Metzia (62a) raises a scenario of two people in the desert one of whom finds a canteen with enough water to keep only one person alive. The one who has it uses it, and is not supposed to give it to his friend but must rather tend to his own life first. It seems he must love himself more than others!

Thus, asks the Ramban, how can it be that we're instructed here to love a friend equally to our love for our self, when we know that the Torah supports a person's survival instinct and says that ultimately your own life comes first? What is the real meaning of VeAhavta LeReacha Kamocha?

The Ramban explains that the Torah is commanding us here to love our friends also, in a similar way (Kamocha) that we love ourselves. The Ramban takes the phrase Kamocha as an overstatement for emphasis. That desire that we have regarding ourselves, to live and be well, should carry over to others. The Ramban supports his view by the fact that Torah doesn't say "et reacha", rather "lereacha." LeReacha means towards your friend, but not exactly the same. We know that we cannot be expected to love the neighbour as much as we love ourselves. However, we are expected to love them in all areas, just as we love all good for ourselves. Similarly the Rambam (Mada 6:3) writes that we should speak in praise of our neighbours and be careful with the honour and the property of others - as we are with our own.

VeAhavta LeReacha Kamocha is a very hard Mitzvah to complete. It is a constant Mitzvah, and requires much self inspection before applying it to others. We meet so many people in our daily lives, and we immediately form views about them. ►

## > MAZAL TOV TO

Ariel & Rivka Cohen  
on the brit of their twins boys, Eliyahu and David

Carolyn and Isaac Steel  
on the birth of their baby boy Jacob Noam

Michal and Yitzhak Abuhatzeira  
on their daughter Yael Simcha's Bat Mitzvah

## ” THE WEEKLY QUOTE

*"I am not a product  
of my circumstances.  
I am a product of my decisions."*

## > UPCOMING EVENTS

Legendary Lag Baomer BBQ 14th May at 7.45pm, will take place in a stunning garden in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

TAL Family weekend away 19-21st May @ Basingstoke RG24 8FY (*more info online*)



### DVAR TORAH

King or Queen?  
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

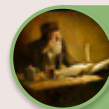
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We relate to different people differently, yet we are told with one blanket statement – treat them all with love, put yourselves in their shoes and look out for their interests just as you would for your own.

The Chida writes that this Mitzvah is most manifest between a husband and wife. In the outside world, it might be easy for us to show our kindness, after all, everyone is watching, so we need to impress. Yet when it comes to behind doors that are when we are really being put to the test. When a man comes home from work he should not expect the dinner on the table, he should not view as the woman's obligation, rather he should see it as kindness, she worked hard for it and spent quality time; he should put himself in her shoes. Similarly the wife should not take for granted the husband's work, she should view it as Chesed.

We can now understand why this Mitzvah was placed in the Parasha of Kedoshim.

What does holiness have to do with loving your neighbour? Of course by doing the Mitzvah you bring unity and happiness but does that lead to holiness? The answer is that to acquire holiness two things need to occur. The first is to love your neighbour exemplifies in Ben Adam LeChavero and the second is to do it in a manner of Kedusha?

A true Torah-observant home is certainly most conducive to the Divine Presence. However, we should remember that as important as observance of Mitzvot is, it is possible as Ramban says (19:2) for a person to be in technical compliance with every halachic requirement, and nevertheless be a vulgar person. The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 13:3)

states that the Mitzvot were given to us for no reason other than to refine our character.

R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach was accompanied by a student and before entering his home, R' Shlomo Zalman paused to brush the dust from his coat. He explained to the student, "The Talmud says that the Shechina dwells amongst man and wife. Do you think it is respectful to be in the presence of the Shechina with a dusty garment?"

If we were to approach married life with VeAhavta LeReacha KaMocha constantly on our minds, seeking the best for our partner as well as for ourselves, really understanding what they have been through that day, and infuse our relationship with Kedusha then we will ultimately become one. ■

## RABBI SHIMSHON SILKIN - DIRECTOR CHAZON UK

DVAR  
TORAH



### ACHREI KEDOSHIM

There is yet another election looming. But the prestigious and bipartisan Institute for Fiscal Studies, upon its analysis of the political parties' manifestos, concluded that the electorate was still "in the dark" as to what they were actually offering. Party leaders keep talking about what they are not going to do – waste any more money, allow immigration to keep spiralling out of control, close any more hospitals – but nobody knows how they are going to do it. And as we shall see from this week's double Parashaa with regard to far loftier ideals, abstention from the negative is only half the story.

Parashat Achrei Mot, the first of the double Parasha, lays out in clear detail all the various types of relationships that are forbidden min Hatorah. Interestingly, all these details are repeated again towards the end of Kedoshim, the second of the double Parasha. Ordinarily the repetition of a transgression in the Torah is to provide the consequential punishment to what was previously just a warning, an azhara. But that does not explain why they are separated across two Parashiyot?

Furthermore, there is an unusual element to the command at the beginning of Kedoshim, You shall be

Holy, in that it had to be delivered to the entire nation – el kol adat bnei Yisrael. Rashi explains in the name of Torat Kohanim that this Parasha was read as part of Hakhel, the once in seven year reading of the Torah at the end of Shemitta, because "rov gufei haTorah teluyin bo", most of the concepts of Torah are dependent on it. In that source, Rabi Levi explains this to mean the similarity between this Parasha and that of Maamad Har Sinai, the ultimate gathering of Klal Yisrael. All of the Aseret HaDibrot are alluded to throughout Parashat Kedoshim. But what is not clear is why this repetition was necessary nor why it is deliberately against the background of the kedusha imperative.

In order to resolve these difficulties we must try to understand what is meant by "You shall be Holy". According to Rashi, this instruction is follow-on from the previous Parashiyot which detail some of the most important mitzvot in a Torah observant life style – Kashrut and morality. Abstention from the grievous sins of treif food and illicit relationships brings about a spirit of holiness. But the Ramban disagrees. Quoting the same Torat Kohanim as Rashi, the Ramban claims that Kedusha cannot be achieved by merely abstaining from sin. Indeed there would not appear a need to create a new instruction as these behaviours had already been outlawed. Rather, kedoshim tihyu is referring to that which is permitted yet not allowed. Kosher food may be permissible but that does not mean one can indulge themselves beyond reason. The same applies to a person's interaction with their wife – or wives. According to the Ramban, Kedoshim tihyu comes to teach us to be frugal, restrained, refined. It comes to warn us away from excessive indulgence so that we do not become a "naval birshut haTorah", a degenerate with a Torah license.

It is possible that these two concepts of Kedusha are not divergent but rather referring to two stages in a process. Rashi's definition of Kedusha is the phase of prishut, abstention. This is the "sur me'ra", the removal of immorality. The Ramban, while also defining Kedusha as abstention, is nonetheless talking about a positive formation of sanctity. His message is that simply refraining from sin does not create holiness. It is only when one goes beyond the letter of the law in a positive fashion that one can fulfil what is essentially a positive mitzvah – Be Holy.

Achrei Mot is perhaps referring to the former whilst Kedoshim to the latter. And this is reflected in one key change in the text describing the forbidden relationships. Achrei Mot talks of purity which is merely the absence of tumah, impurity; Kedoshim talks of havdalah, separation, elevation, reaching for a higher level.

English table manners require tea drinkers to leave the last drops in the cup. One explanation is to show mastery over the tea; leaving the last bits indicates the drinker has not downed his tea with abandon. Those last drops are not treif, but are they necessary? So often in life the famous quip of Everest conqueror Edmund Hillary is mentioned: Why did you climb the mountain? Because it was there! Today when people are asked: Why did you eat that 16th slice of cake? they respond with the same answer. But Kedoshim tihyu reminds us that "Why not?" is not good enough; to be Holy, we need to find and define a positive objective. ■

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## OUR CHACHAMIM

**RABBI KALONYMUS KALMAN EPSTEIN**

THE AUTHOR OF MAOR VASHEMESH

Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Epstein, the author of the Torah commentary Maor VaShemesh, was among the greatest Rebbes that Chassidut has known. The main disciple of the holy Rabbi Elimelech of Lizensk and the Chozeh of Lublin, he frequented many other Rebbes, including the Maggid of Zlotchov and the holy Menachem Mendel of Rimanov.

Rabbi Kalonymus was an exceptional individual, a man educated in Torah and Kabbalah, one whose words pierced the Heavens as he poured out his soul in prayer. He lived in Krakow, which during his time was largely opposed to Chassidut. However a turning point was eventually reached, and he was able to introduce many noteworthy individuals to Chassidut. He prayed in the Beit Midrash of the gaon Rabbi Nathan Neta Shapira (the Av Beit Din of Krakow and author of Megale Amukot), and many people from other synagogues came to hear him pray. Although this created opponents for him, he was eventually able to spread Chassidut throughout the city. Rabbi Kalonymus ended up becoming famous in the Diaspora for his Torah commentary Maor VaShemesh, a work that was accepted as authoritative throughout the Jewish world. In fact after a few years, it was printed at the same time as chumashim. On Tammuz 1, 5587 the soul of Rabbi Kalonymus ascended to Heaven, and his body was laid to rest in Krakow's newer cemetery (not the older one, in which the Rema and others are buried). In accordance with his wishes, no tombstone was raised over his gravesite, and today it is a gathering place for many, as people come to express their troubles and request aid both for individuals and the community. May his merit protect us all. ■



## HALACHOT

**RABBI ELI MANSOUR**

### SENDING MAIL BEFORE SHABBAT

**Is it permissible to drop a letter in the mailbox on the way to synagogue just before Shabbat? Since it is almost guaranteed that the postman will collect the mail from the mailbox and begin the delivery process at some point during Shabbat, would this be forbidden?**

In truth, Halacha permits leaving a letter in a mailbox just prior to the onset of Shabbat, despite the likelihood of the delivery process beginning on Shabbat. For one thing, sending letters via regular mail entails a fixed cost of postage; the mail carrier does not get paid any more if he delivers the mail the next day. Hence, we do not consider the postman to be acting as the sender's direct Shalia'h (messenger), and thus no prohibition is involved. Furthermore, in this case one does not hand the letter directly to the postman, but rather places it in a box, and this is yet another reason why we need not view the carrier as working directly at the sender's behest.

A more complex issue relates to express mail sent specifically with a request for Saturday delivery. Hacham Bension Abba Shaul (Israel, 1923-1998), in his work Or Le'sion (vol. 2, p. 152), forbids sending express mail for Saturday delivery, even if one sends it as early as Wednesday. Nevertheless, Rav Shemuel Pinhasi (contemporary), in his work Daber Davar (1:16), writes that under extenuating circumstances there is room for leniency in this regard. Firstly, the person delivering the package invariably carries with him many other packages, as well, and by adding an additional item one does not actually cause him to perform activity forbidden for Jews on Shabbat. Secondly, when one brings the package for delivery, he does not hand it directly to the person who will deliver it to its destination on Shabbat. This is therefore a case of "Amira Le'amira" – instructing a gentile to instruct another gentile to perform Melacha (activity forbidden for Jews on Shabbat) – which Halacha treats more leniently. And if one sends the package with the governmental postal agency, then we certainly do not look upon the delivery personnel as messengers acting on the sender's behalf. Hence, in situations of dire necessity, one should consult with his Rabbi to determine if whether he may send a parcel for delivery on Shabbat.

If a person in the U.S. wishes to send a telegram or some other form of correspondence to somebody in Israel, he must not do so on Friday afternoon, once Shabbat has already begun in Israel. Since it is likely that a Jew will be processing the correspondence from the U.S., one may not initiate such correspondence once Shabbat has begun in Israel, as he would then be causing other Jews to violate Shabbat. (Rav Pinhasi codifies this ruling on p. 70; listen to audio recording for precise citation.)

It is permissible to leave a letter in one's personal mailbox outside his home before Shabbat, so that the postman will take it for delivery on Shabbat morning. There is no concern of "Mar'it Ayin," namely, that onlookers will suspect the person of violating Shabbat.

**Summary:** It is permissible to put a letter in a mailbox just prior to Shabbat, or to leave a letter for the postman in the mailbox outside one's home before Shabbat. One should not send packages for Saturday delivery; in situations of great necessity, one should consult a Rabbi for guidance, as in some cases there is room for leniency. ■

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## TEST YOURSELF - Q&A

- ❶ What is the punishment for a kohen gadol who inappropriately enters the kodesh kodashim?
- ❷ How long did the first Beit Hamikdash stand?
- ❸ What did the kohen gadol wear when he entered the kodesh kodashim?
- ❹ How many times did the kohen gadol change his clothing and immerse in the mikveh on Yom Kippur?

### Answer

- ❶ 16:4 - Five times.  
 ❷ 16:4 - Only the four linen garments worn by an ordinary kohen.  
 ❸ 16:2 - Death. ❹ 16:3 - 410 years.

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