

**“WHO IS THE REAL TZADDIK?”**

In the previous parshiyot the Torah has been teaching the halachot of Tum’ah and Ta’hara and now we turn our focus upon the halachot of Kedusha and Kedoshim.

The Seforno makes a distinction between characteristics of Tum’ah and halachot discussed in parashat Kedoshim. The halachot of Tum’ah are primarily titles or labels that people receive and do not reflect their actions or deeds. A level of Tum’ah is usually achieved simply through circumstances, such as a natural bodily function or encountering a dead body. These things do not reflect us as people but rather reflect the circumstances in which we are put.

The halachot presented in our parasha are fundamentally different. Kedoshim describes rules of *bein adam le’chaveiro* (between man and his fellow human being) such as giving gifts to the poor (19:9-10), dealing honestly with others (19:11-15), loving every Jew, *Ve’ahavta Le’rei’acha Ka’mocha* (19:18). Even such sensitive issues as “holding a grudge” can be a Biblical violation. In the very same pasuk (19:18) the Torah prohibits us from taking revenge- *Lo Tikom veLo Titor*. The Gemara Yoma (23a) explains the two terms. Revenge consists of retaliating against someone who had displeased us, by attempting to do him harm, or by refusing to do him a favor that we would have normally done. Even if someone does not retaliate, it is forbidden to bear a grudge, *Lo Titor*, by saying, for example, “I will lend you the tool you need even though you refused me when I needed something from you.” That is forbidden! HaShem wants us to purge the insult or misdeed from our hearts. Imagine, lending him the item and still getting a sin of a Grudge, by expressing words like “I’m not like you”.

Ask anyone to describe a holy person, a very religious person, a tzaddik, and they will probably tell you it’s a person who davens (prays) sincerely, who keeps all the stringencies of Shabbat, or one who deprives himself of worldly matters. Notice- all manifestations of *bein adam LaMakom* (Between man and G-d). But our parasha teaches-“*Kedoshim Ti’hiyou*”, You shall be holy- how? By observing mitzvot of ***bein adam le’chaveiro***.

The Rambam was never one to label people but he breaks his rule on one occasion. He labels Ya’akov Avinu with the title “Tzaddik”.(Hilchot Sechirot 13:7) Rambam bestows the title Tzaddik on Yaakov because of the way he conducted himself as a worker for Lavan. As a paid employee he never took a minute break for personal reasons, and he worked with all his energy and devotion. This, the Rambam states is the paradigm for every employee, and that is what gives one the credentials of being called a “Tzaddik”

Parashat Kedoshim teaches all of us to be holy, meaning, being honest, compassionate, having integrity- and being a decent human being. Seems simple, yet most people don’t

get it. Just see how many “religious” Jewish people are in prison for dishonest business practices, cheating the government, violence against spouses or other human beings, yet-they insist on receiving Glatt Kosher food in prison.

We are honored and proud to be called by HaKadosh Baruch Hu, a “Mamlechet Kohanim V’ goy Kaddosh”, a holy and priestly nation and He charges us in our Parasha-Kedoshim Ti’hiyu, you can indeed become just that.. Gd has confidence in us. Let each of us strive to live up to our name

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim,

**Rabbi Aharon Ziegler.**

**THIS WEEKS QUESTIONS:**

If we see a person is in danger but instead of helping or calling for help, we Ignore the situation and just walk away

1-What Lo Ta’aseh (negative) mitzvah in this week’s parasha have we violated?

2-The Torah juxtaposes “Do not w”ithhold your workers salary over night,” (19:13), “Do not curse another person”, and “Before a blind person-do not place an obstacle”(19:14).

What is the connection between these three?

3-The Torah also juxtaposes the commandment of “Do not go about gossiping among your people, and Do not stand over the blood of your friend” (19:15). What is the connection between these two?

