

הלכה למעשה

סאת הגאון מו"ר הרב ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
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years to the *Yovel* year, which is a *mitzvah* incumbent on the top *Beis Din* of *Klal Yisroel*. *Sefiras Haomer* is different and is a *mitzvah* incumbent upon each specific individual to fulfill. However, one could be *yotze* with somebody else just like he could be *yotze* the *Shabbos Kiddush* and *Havdala* from them. There is no definite *psak* and therefore one should do it since it might work. However, he cannot say a *beracha* since some hold that he cannot fulfill the *mitzvah* in this way.

Follow Up Question: If one did the above mentioned counting without a *beracha* and the man's tubes were later taken out, can he count for himself from then on with a *beracha*?

Answer: If one misses a full day of *sefirah*, most *Poskim* hold that he can continue to count further with a *beracha*. However, we are concerned with making a *beracha* in vain and therefore we only count further without a *beracha* (*O.C.* 489:8). If there are additional reasons to be lenient, we can even count further with a *beracha*. So, therefore, in our case of the man who had the tubes removed during *sefirah*, where many hold that the counting of the other person does actually work for him, he can count further with a *beracha* when he is able to. This is similar to the case in *halacha* (*sham*) where one is in doubt if he missed a day, and the ruling there is that *m'safeik*, he can count further with a *beracha*.

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Relevant Halachos During These Trying Times (51)

Being Motzie One Who Cannot Speak in Sefiras Haomer:
Question: My relative is in the hospital with the virus, r"l, and has tubes in his mouth which do not allow him to speak. I am able to visit him at certain hours during the night. Am I able to be *motzie* him in the *mitzvah* of *Sefiras Haomer*? If yes, can I also say a *beracha* for him?

Answer: Since this situation is actually an unresolved *Machlokes* between the *Poskim* in *halacha*, one should do it for him in case it works, but he should not say a *beracha* for him since the *mitzvah* might not be fulfilled.

Sources: The *Gemara* in *Menachos* (66a) explains the *posuk*: "You should count for yourself," - "ספרתם לכם" - each person should count *sefirah* for himself. The *Poskim* in *Shulchan Aruch* (*O.C.* 489) argue as to the intention of this *drasha*. The *Levush* and *Chok Yaakov* explain it to mean that even though there is a general rule known as "*Shomea K'oneh*" - one can say something to be *motzie* a listener - here by *Sefiras Haomer* there is an exception to the rule and one cannot be *motzie* somebody else. However, the *Magen Avraham* and the *Pri Chodosh* argue. They say that all the *Gemara* means is that *Sefiras Haomer* is not like the *mitzvah* of counting forty-nine

בין הריחים – תבלין מודף היומי – יומא דף י'

The *Mishnah* states that for the 7 days leading up to the יום כפור moved into the כהן גדול the יום כפור - "כל הלשקות במקדש לא היו להן מוזה חוץ מלשבת פרהדרין" and lived there until *Yom Kippur*. The רבנן hold (according to רבא) that a "דירה בעל כרחא", a living space where someone is staying not by choice, is still considered a *מוזה* and is *מחוייב* to have a *מוזה*. Therefore, even though the כה"ג was living in *פרהדרין* not by choice, it still required a *מוזה* אחר. *היה* holds that a "דירה בעל כרחא" is not *מחוייב* in *מוזה*, but they put one on the *פרהדרין* anyway so people shouldn't see there is no *מוזה* & assume it's a jail & the כה"ג is being kept in a prison. The *רי"ד* רפ"ג [י"ד רפ"ג] brings **בית הלל** that says a prison cell doesn't need a *mezuzah* because it's not a "דירת כבוד" (similar to a restroom or bathhouse). He disagrees with the reason of הרב ע"ש. *הגאון* says it's because it's a *דירה בעל כרחא* but ultimately does agree that a jail cell does not require a *mezuzah*.

R' Ephraim Oshry זת"ל [ג' תש"ז] discusses a *shaila* asked of him in the Kovna ghetto during WWII. Considering the horrible conditions & the fact that they couldn't leave the ghetto, all some *Yidden* had were a few *pasul mezuzos*. Should they put them up anyway? R' Oshry delves deeper into the *shaila* & says based on our *sugya* there shouldn't be any requirement of *mezuzah* at all. Firstly, we see the *תלמוד* exempts places whose usage is not "דרך כבוד" & considering the cramped quarters & sub-human living conditions, these dwellings aren't considering living spaces of כבוד. Furthermore, R' Oshry says, if not for the electrified barbed wire fence surrounding the ghetto, people would immediately leave, the ghetto is not considered a *קבע* & is *patur* for that reason as well. See the *sefer* inside for heartbreaking details & uplifting אמונה of *Yidden* who, in the most unimaginable conditions, where *handeling* in the *sugya* of *מוזה*.

The *רי"ד* רל"א [י"ד רל"א] was asked about people who were imprisoned in a camp, but had the freedom to choose whichever barracks they wanted to stay in. Is this considered a prison since they are confined to the campgrounds, or since they can move freely from barracks to barracks, it isn't like a prison & they would be required to place a *mezuzah* on their doors? The **Har Tzvi (R' Tzvi Pesach Frank זת"ל)** answered that since they could move around within the camp facility, he felt that they weren't so restricted and therefore did require a *mezuzah*.

הוא היה אומר ...

R' Avraham Borenstein זת"ל (Eglei Tal) would say:

The purpose of the animal offerings was to accustom the individual to self-sacrifice. However, the *Torah* tells us, if the *korbon* was offered in the wrong place, '*blood shall it be considered to that man.*' In much the same manner, sacrificing oneself on foreign altars, reveling and reasoning for the sake of foreign ideologies and ideals, is not only a waste of time, but it is a grievous sin, akin to spilling blood."

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שבת קודש פרשת אחרי מות קדושים – י"ב אייר תשפ"א Shabbos Parshas Acharei Mos Kedoshim - April 24, 2021

פלא המנחה עש"ק - 6:20 | הדלקת נרות שבת - 7:27 | זמן קריאת שמע / מ"א - 8:53 | זמן קריאת שמע / הגר"א - 9:29
סוף זמן תפילה/הגר"א - 10:38 | שקיעת החמה שבת קודש - 7:46 | מוצש"ק צאת הכוכבים - 8:36 | צאה"כ / לרבינו תם - 8:58

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הנמשך ע"י הקטורת שמעל הכפרת צריכה להיות מעודה בבחינת 'ענן ועיפול' שלא תתרבה האור יתר על המידה הרצויה, ותהיה עדיין בשילוב בחינת 'ענן'.

דיעה זו, שתכלית ביאת האדם בעולם הוא כדי להתחזק בה' גם מתוך הסתר פנים צריכה להיות חקוקה בלב כל אדם משראל, ונבאר הרינו: על האדם לדעת שהקב"ה ברא את עולמו כדי להטיב לברייתו, ואלמלא היה ביכולתו של האדם לקבל חסד חיים היה הקב"ה מטיב עמו בחינם, אמנם יודע הקב"ה שאין דעת הבריות נוחה מקבלתו של חיים, לכן הורה לאדם לעסוק בתורה ובמצוות ואז ייטיב לו בזכותם, אולם, הלא גם לימוד התורה וקיום המצוות מאידים ומשביעים את דעתו של האדם וזה בעמצן נחשבים לשכר טוב, ולולא ההסתרות והקשים לעסוק בהן שוב היה שכרו בבחינת 'נרמא דכיסופא', וע"כ התחסר הקב"ה והטביע בנפשו של האדם "צד הרע" המעורר סיבות ומידות הגורמים קשים ומניעות לקיים את חובתו בעולם וכשהאדם עומד בנסיון ומתגבר על אלו הקשים נחשב לו זה לעמל, ואז 'בדף' הוא שיטול שכרו, ועל אף שלאחד הנסיון רואה האדם שבוכות עמדתו האיתנה מול הנסיון זכה לאוצר של פו' היה תורה ומעשים טובים המשמרים ומשיבים את לבו של אדם, ככ"ז נחשב לו הדבר לעמל' מאוד שבשעת מעשה היה עליו לכופף את 'צדו ולכבושו'.

והנה, עלינו לדעת שעל אף שאמת הדבר שאין האדם זוכה לקיים תפקידו בעולם אלא מתוך הסתרים מ"מ גמל הקב"ה עמנו חסד ושתל צדיקים בכל דור ודור כדי שאידו לנו את הדרך גם בעת הנסיון, ולשבר אז את אונינו שכל החושך האופף את האדם היו רק כדי לנסותו, ובכך נתנים את הכח והעוז לעמוד בפני הצד' ולכבושו. וצדיקי הדורות בשעתם אכן האירו את הדרך לבני ישראל, וחזקו ועודדו תמיד את הבאים בצלם, ומלבד מה שדברים העיזו לשעה עשו רושם גם לדורות, מאוד שדברים נחקקו על גבי עלים וספרים, וכל החפץ יכול להתחמם גם היום לאדם וע"כ מי שגול, חסר לו בעיקר מדת האמונה והבטחון. ואם כן זהו כוונת הקרא ארחץ - שהוא מלשון רחץ, והוא לשון של בטחון. והיכן זה ניכר ונבחנו? 'בנקיון כפי', היינו דמי שמאמץ באמונה שלימה בהש"ת, אינו עוסק בדברים אסורים שסותרים עיקרי האמונה בהש"ת.

ועי' במש"כ **הדמה"ל** בדרוש הקווי שהמקור לה' [קווי הוא בטחון] הוא ענין של טהרה וזיל, 'המקור אפילו כנסס בגהינום יוצא ממנו, שנאמר: 'וקווי ה' יחליפו כח יעלו אבר', 'יקו"ק באדי' עליו, וכמה מלאכים עליונים אותו המקור וזו: 'אבר כנשרים' ומסתלקים עמו למעלה, ותקוותו היא טהרתו. 'מקור ישראל' ממש, כי הוא במדינה עליונה שאין עושה בו פגם - 'אם חטאת מה תפעל', עכ"ל. הרי מנבוא מדבריו ככל הנ"ל, שהאמונה והבטחון הוא מנקה את הדיים - ביה אנא רחמי! וא"כ אפשר ד"ל זהו הטעם מדוע הדבר הראשון שאנו עושים בכל יום הוא נטילת ידים להעביר הרוח רעה, ואפשר לומר, הרוח רעה על הדיים היא האמונה שיש כח בהדיים, ולומר 'כוחו ועוצם ידי', וע"כ בכל יום קודם כל, צריך האדם לידע שאין בידו שום כח, ומורה זה כשרוחץ את ידיו מכל הרעות שבעולם, ואפשר דורו הטעם מדוע רחץ קודם העבודה, להכין עצמו לעבוד הש"ת בלב שלם צריך להעביר על הרעות ששורה על ידיו, והיינו המחשבה שיש כח לידו לעשות, ורק צריך שרחץ ידיו, ומאמץ שאין שום כח לידיו, שיד לעבוד בעבודת הש"ת בלב שלם.

טיב התבלין

סאת הוציא רבי גמליאל חסד רבפיץ שליט"א, ר"י שיער השמים ירושלים נעדין

ודבר ה' אל משה אחרי מות שני בני אהרן בקרבנם לפני ה' וימתו (ו-א)
פ"ש: מה ת"ל, היה רבי אלעזר בן עזריה משלול משל לחולה שנכנס אצלו רופא אמר לו אל תאכל צונן ואל תשכב בטחב. בא אוד ואמר לו אל תאכל צונן ואל תשכב בטחב שלא תמות כדרך שכתב פלוני. זה דרוו יותר מן הראשון, לכך נאמר אחרי מות שני בני אהרן, זהו הנה המאמר בא להוודד את אהרן שלא יעשה כדרך שעשו בניו, שהקדיבו קטורת אשר לא נצטוו בה, כנאמר (י, א) 'יִקְרְבוּ אִישׁ וְדָה אִשׁר לֹא זוּה אֹתָם'. צדיקים אלו נתכוונו ליש"ש, כי רצו לעודד בכך תוספת אורה לשראל, אולם מעשרם לא היו לרצון ה', וכאמור שזיהו זה 'אש זרה' אשר לא צוה אותם, וכיין שכן קודש הקב"ה את שמו במיתת קרוביו, היה אלו הצדיקים כנאמר שם ועל כן תיכף לאורד מכן הוודד הקב"ה את אהרן בזה הציווי שלא יבוא בכל עת אל הקודש להקטיד קטורת כדרך שעשו בניו, והוסיף טעם לכך: 'כי בענן אראה על הכפרת', ופשוטו של מקרא הוא שהקב"ה שורה באותו מקום קדוש, ועי' הבטח במראה השכינה עלול לבוא ליד מיתה ר"ל.

אולם יש לפשר עוד, שכיוון דכתוב לרמוז בזה על טעם נוסף לאיסור הבאת הקטורת בכל עת, כי כאמור ביקשו בני אהרן להמשיך אורה לישראל בעבודתם, ועל כך אמר הקב"ה 'כי בענן אראה על הכפרת' כלומר, אמת הדבר שמכח עבודת הקודש במקדש נמשך אורה לישראל, ומועיל להם זאת להתרצות בבוראם ועבודתו, אולם הדבר צריך שיעור התגבלה, כי א"א להמשיך ריבוי אור בלי גבול, כי אז לא תהיה לישראל שום נסיון בענין התגברות על הצד' המפתה להרע ולא להטיב ח"ו. ותכלית ביאת האדם לעולם הזה הוא להתגבר על הצדים השליליים, כי רק עי' התגברות על פיתוי הצד' זוכה האדם לעודד נחת רוח במדומים, וזה כוונת דכתוב 'כי בענן אראה על הכפרת', שגם האורה

עדותיך אתבונן

לשורם סאת הרב אברהם זמל אבסוף שליט"א, מגינס שוח אברהם

כתנת בד קדש ילבש ... בגדי קדש הם ורחץ במים את כשרו ולבשם וגו' (ו-ד) - בענין טעם נטילת ידים

פ"ש: וז"ל, 'ורחץ במים, אותו היום טעון טבילה בכל חליפתיו. וחמש פעמים היה מוחלף מעבודת פנים לעבודת חוץ ומחוץ לפנים, ומשנה מבגדי זהב לבגדי לבן ומבגדי לבן לבגדי זהב, ובכל חליפה טעון טבילה ושני קדושי ידים ורגלים מן הכיור', עכ"ל. הנה אחד מן הטעמים שמיד כשקם כל אחד ואחד בבוקר נוטלין ידים, כתב **הרשב"א** שכל אחד ואחד הוא כמו כהן גדול, שעובד עבודת הש"ת, וע"כ בעי ידים נקיות כמו כהן גדול. ויש עוד טעם לנטילת ידים, והיינו להעביר הרוח רעה ששורה עליהם, ונראה לענ"ד דיש להוסיף עוד על זה, דהנה איתא בספרים הקדושים שלשון רחץ הוא מלשון רחצנא שהוא לשון של בטחון, כמו שאנו אומרים (בכרך שמחה): 'ביה אנא רחץ' [בהש"ת אנו בוטחים], וכתוב (תהלים כו, ו): 'ארחץ בנקיון כפי' ואסבבה את מוכחי ה'", וביאור המפרשים (מיסוד על דברי המדרש) שכוננת 'נקיון כפי' - היינו שריון נקיות מאיסור גול, והכוונה בזה נראה, ששרש השרשים בחטא של גול מיסוד על חסרון אמונה ובטחון בהש"ת, שאילו היה מאמין באמונה שלימה בהש"ת, שהוא הוון ומפרנס לכל, אין שום מקום לעשות דברים אסורים להשיג פרנסתו.

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מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ושמרתם את חקתי ואת משפטי אשר יעשה אתם האדם ודו' כהם אני ה' ... (פסוקי)

A remarkable story is retold by a *talmid* of the great *Posek Hador*, **R' Yisroel Belsky ז"ל**, which shows us how great a *Yid* is when compared to a non-Jew, even the “cream of the crop” of gentiles. Whether in *shiur* or on one of his legendary nature walks, Rav Belsky would mention the story from time to time, although he did try to hide his role in it, probably due to his tremendous humility and because he didn't feel it was something to be proud of. However, because the lessons of the story are so valuable and important, he would hint at it here and there. Here are the facts of the story we merited to learn:

Many years ago, there were thirteen Catholic cardinals (and bishops) who were engaged in a fact-finding world tour mission, for the purpose of ascertaining how other faiths manage to inspire their youth. Apparently, due to attrition in their ranks, they were intent on discovering the secret of how other faith communities succeeded in this regard. Someone suggested that they meet with Rabbi Belsky, the dean of one of the largest *yeshivos* in New York and the contingent agreed. They reached out to him directly and upon further thought, Rav Belsky agreed to meet them on two conditions. Firstly, he would not go to them; rather, they must come to him. Secondly, the visit must be completely confidential and secret. The group agreed and they made up to meet in the rabbi's house on the day of the *Siyum Hashas*, when few people were around.

Upon their arrival and after exchanging pleasantries, the Catholic spokesperson asked the rabbi, “Tell us, please, what is the attitude in the Jewish schools towards Christianity?” This question came from a deep-seated belief that the Jewish schools preached hate and anger towards Christianity. As far as they knew, Jews hated Christians for hundreds of years.

Rav Belsky answered that they have a complete misconception of what goes on in a Jewish school. “Our schooling starts from the youngest age and continues until after they get married. That is about 25 consecutive years of schooling. Throughout all those years, I would be surprised if even 2 minutes are spent on Christianity. We don't have any interest in downgrading other religions. If they are sincere and honest, let them do their own thing. What does it have to do with us?”

Rav Belsky then related a well-known story about **R' Boruch Ber Leibowitz ז"ל** to illustrate his point. R' Boruch Ber was once being transported by a non-Jewish wagon driver. After they passed a church and the driver did not cross himself, R' Boruch Ber told the person accompanying him, “Pay him and let's leave. A *goy* who does not observe his religion could be a murderer.”

“From here we see,” said Rav Belsky with great conviction, “that a person without his religion is akin to a murderer!” Spontaneously, all thirteen cardinals and bishops stood up as one, and gave him a rousing ovation.

They then asked him, “Well, how do you attract your youth? After all, you spend most of your time learning ancient tomes. How do the kids get involved?” With great feeling, Rav Belsky responded, “To us, these are not ancient tomes. They are laws and ideas as relevant to our lives today as they were when they were written. We live this every day of our lives!”

“Rabbi,” they exclaimed with sincere emotion, “teach us how to make ancient things relevant to our youth today!”

Rav Belsky shook his head. “I am sorry. That is not for me to do,” he said, and they seemed to understand why.

But they were still not finished. “Well, at least tell us how do you get your people to shy away from the materialism in the world that has taken over the minds and hearts of entire nations?”

“The answer,” said Rav Belsky, “is that we have always been confronted with materialism in every generation, but when people are involved and study the *Torah* with great depth, it brings much more into their lives than all the materialism in the world. Look, we don't reject food, but rather, we say you can eat anything as long as it is kosher. And before eating, we make a *beracha*, a blessing, on the food. This makes the materialistic food alive and connected to our *Torah*.”

Rav Belsky lived these concepts his entire life. And he taught his *talmidim* what he lived. The *Torah* is alive, it is vibrant, and his *talmidim* were swept up in his enthusiasm and love for *Torah* and how the entire universe is connected to it.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות

While the *Parsha* warns *Klal Yisroel* not to engage in abhorrent behavior, the *Haftorah* discusses the punishments for one who does indeed commit these sins. Through *Amos HaNavi*, *Hashem* declares, “*To Me, you (Klal Yisroel) are just like the Ethiopians.*” The *Navi* explains that *Hashem* brought many nations out of peril – including the *Pelishtim* from Kaftor and the *Arameans* from Kir. Therefore, if *Klal Yisroel* were to act no differently than those nations, for what reason should *Hashem* not move on and find another nation to be his chosen people? Such statements are shocking and completely unflattering for the nation of *Hashem*.

As such, how do we understand that despite the many sins *Klal Yisroel* have indeed committed over the years, *Hashem*

still holds us near and dear to him?
R' Baruch HaLevi Epstein ז"ל (Torah Temima) explains in his commentary on *Shir HaShirim* (1:5) that the difference between a Jew and a gentile is not what appears on the outside, but what really lies deep within his heart. *Shlomo Hamelech* writes “שחורה אני ונאורה” – “*(Klal Yisroel) am dark, but comely*” which illustrates this point beautifully. Since although *Klal Yisroel* may (at times) be tainted with the darkness of sin, their inherent beauty is still there.
Therefore, Amos is careful to use the word “כבני כשיים” to show that *Klal Yisroel* were only acting **like** the gentiles, but that their very essence is indeed good, and they are in fact nothing similar to any other nation in the world.

A PENETRATING ANALYSIS OF THE WEEKLY
HAFTORAH BY R' TZVI HIRSCH HOFFMAN

הלוא כבני כשיים אתם לי בני ישראל (קמס ב-ו)

מפני שיבת תקום וחדרת פני זקן
ויראת מאלקוד אני ה' ... (ש-לב)

This *posuk* is the source for the famous dictum: “Respect your elders.” **Rabbeinu Saadya Gaon ז"ל** adds one word to better understand this maxim. He adds the word “בעל”. In other words, one must stand up for a *שיבה*. Seemingly, he was bothered by the literal reading of the *posuk*, “Before old get up”. He therefore explains it as one who has “acquired” old age.

It struck me then that maybe the *Torah* is alluding to something else. The **Zohar** says a person shouldn't wait until he's old, to grow and *shteig*. Even in his youth he must utilize every opportunity to lead a spiritual life. Thus, says the *posuk* quite literally, “before you get old, - *before* you get old, “תקום” - get up and create a life for yourself. Make yourself an *eved Hashem* from early on.

I once saw a beautiful thought from **R' Meir Shapiro ז"ל** which suitably compliments this *machshava*. In the *Mishna* of “במה מדליקין” which some say Friday night before *Maariv*, we find three things which a person must say *erev Shabbos im chasheicha*, before dark: “עשרתם- ערבתם- הדליקו את הנר”. He explains it in the following novel way: There are three things a person must remind himself *erev Shabbos* - meaning in this world, before it gets dark, before his passing on to the next world.

“עשרתם” - Did you give *maaser*, a tenth of your money or a tenth of your time learning *Torah* with others?
“ערבתם” - Did you do actions that were ערב - sweet with people? Did you take care of your family and friends and try to assist them in the best possible manner, because after all, “*Kol Yisroel Areivim Zeh lazeh.*”

“הדליקו את הנר” - Did you light the fire in your *neshamah* through *Limud HaTorah* and doing the *mitzvos* of *Hashem*?

If a person will take these matters to heart before he gets old - “מפני שיבה” - while he is still young and fresh, it will surely enable him, his children and his family later in life, to lead and build strong and proper *Yiddishe* homes *b'siyata d'shmaya*.

משל למה הדבר דומה

והתקדשתם ודייתם קדשים בני אני ה' אלקיכם ... (ב-ו)

משל: When the members of the *Mir Yeshiva* fled Europe due to the Holocaust ending up in Shanghai, China, they were treated well by the local Chinese citizenry. Yet, there was a group of Chinese people who tried to impress their Japanese overlords and plotted against the newly arrived Jews in order to cause them harm. They secretly arranged to kill the students of the *Mir Yeshiva*. However, one Chinese man, who had an affinity for the Jews, found out and informed the local authorities, resulting in a foiled plot. Unfortunately, the man was discovered by the nasty gang who planned the attack and in retribution, they had him killed.

When the entire incident was revealed, it troubled the *bochurim* in the *yeshiva* immensely because this Chinese man was a kind soul, who saved many Jews from a horrific death, not for his honor or money but because it was the

right thing to do. So why did *Hashem* punish him like this?

They took their question to the *Mashgiach* of the *yeshiva* and spiritual leader, **R' Chatzkel Levenstein ז"ל**.

When they approached the door to his office, however, they heard him crying, “*Hashem*, this non-Jew was a wonderful man but he was not Jewish. This was the only time he helped boys in the *yeshiva*, and yet You gave him a gift - to die *Al Kiddush Hashem*. I, Chatzkel, have served You faithfully my entire life and have helped boys many times. Why didn't You give me this present to be *mekadesh Shem Shamayim* like this Chinese person?”

משל: *Chazal* teach us: “*A person is brought to this world only for the purpose of sanctifying the Name of Hashem.*”

Every living moment is a chance to be *mekadesh Hashem* and when one dies, his memory, achievements, offspring and accomplishments continue to spread glory to His holy Name.

May we all be *zoche* - in life and death - to sanctify *Hashem*.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON MIDDOS TOVOS FROM
THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

דרגה יתירה

“*Kedoshim Tihiyu*” is a commandment, but it is also a declaration. **R' Abraham J. Twerski ז"ל** explains that inasmuch as we are commanded to be holy - separate and different from the nations of the world - we must realize that this is in our spiritual makeup, it is our DNA. We are holy, we are different than the *goyim*. So why are we trying so hard to be like them? Why do we need to copy their styles, their fashions, their way of life? **R' Shimon Schwab ז"ל** says that “*Kedoshim Tihiyu*” means Jewish defiance. We have not learned from the mistakes of our past - trying to be like the *goyim* does not get us very far. It causes more anti-Semitism and it only frustrates a Jew who loses his identity, causing him to forget who he is and what he is made of.

Just as a tree is in a completely different league than a rock, and an animal is a completely different species than a man, so too, a Jew is a completely different creation than a non-Jew. We have different needs, different yearnings. When we ignore the holiness that we contain, we lower ourselves to the status of a completely different species. These two words KEDOSHIM TIHIYU are to remind us who we are. Wouldn't you cringe if a grown man would start acting like an animal, crawling on all fours and barking like a dog? Send him to an insane asylum! We too have gone insane to a certain degree trying to live like the rest of the world!

In *Parshas Acharei Mos*, we are commanded with the prerequisite to “*Kedoshim Tihiyu.*” We are told, “V'CHAI BAHEM” - Live through them! The only real life in this world and the next, is a life of *Torah*, a life committed to not only the letter of the law but the spirit of the law, as well. *Am Yisroel* is an incredible, one-of-a-kind creation. We must never forget who we are and what we are living for. This world is truly exciting and it is sometimes difficult to overcome the temptations of *Olam Haze*. But all we have to do is look inside of ourselves and inside the *neshamah* of our fellow Jews, and remember ...”KEDOSHIM TIHIYU” - You ARE holy. Let us never forget who we are and may all of our actions reflect the holiness of a Jew.