



WORDS TO THE WISE

Rabbi Aryeh Dachs

Kedoshim 5784

Everyday Sanctity

Parshas Kedoshim begins with an unusual event. Sometime after the revelation at Sinai, Moshe specifically gathered all the Jewish people together to teach them the laws found at the beginning of *Kedoshim*. This was a unique experience. The first teaching in this gathering was “*Kedoshim tihyu*” the obligation to sanctify ourselves, to make ourselves *kadosh*- holy.

The famed mashgiach of Slobadka R’ Avraham Grodzinski, (1883-1944, tragically murdered in Kovno by the Nazis Y”s Hy”d), in his work *Toras Avraham*, points out that at first glance, this law of personal sanctity would not seem to be appropriate for the masses. There are many Jewish laws that are relevant for the breadth of the Jewish community, such as Shabbos, or honoring parents. Genuine *kedusha*, sanctity, however, would seem to be only attainable for the select *tzaddikim* in the generation. Can sanctity be relevant for the masses, the men, the women and the children? Yet, as Moshe gathers the entire nation, the first item he teaches at this gathering in the desert was “*Kedoshim tihyu*”, be holy.

The *Toras Avraham* explains, every Jew has a *neshama* that is inherently *kadosh*. It follows that every Jew is therefore able to access the highest *kedusha* - holiness. When a Jew observes the Torah and adheres to its values, he unveils a bit more of his inner sanctity. It was (and is!) essential for every single Jewish man, woman and child, to hear from Moshe directly that as a Jew, no matter the stage one is in, the effort and work he puts in to advance spiritually connects him to Hashem and is therefore saintly and holy, a genuine *kedusha*. Sanctity is not reserved or limited to the especially righteous. We, as Jews, sanctify ourselves everyday through whatever work we do to develop our unique connection to Hashem and the Torah.

“Words to the Wise” is dedicated as a zechus for the safe return of the hostages in Gaza and as a zechus for refua sheleima for Yeshaya ben Rochel Freida.

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