

## Parshas Acharei-Kedoshim

### in a Nutshell

(Leviticus 16:1–20:27)

#### Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

#### Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

#### Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

### Shabbos Schedule

#### Erev Shabbos – Apr 28 / Iyar 7

Candle Lighting .....7:32 pm

Mincha .....7:30 pm

#### Shabbos Day – Apr 29 / Iyar 8

Shacharis .....10:00 am\*

Torah Reading .....11:00 am

Kiddush .....12:10 pm

Mincha .....7:35 pm

Pirkei Avos/Rabbi's Drasha ...7:55 pm

Shabbos Ends .....8:35 pm

*\*Latest morning Shema is now 9:23 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

#### Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

##### Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) .....6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) ..... 9:00 am

Mincha (Sun-Thurs) .....1:45 pm

Maariv (Sun-Thurs) .....9:15 pm

### Bulletin

*This week's Bulletin  
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Following the deaths of Nadav and Avihu, G-d warns against unauthorized entry "into the holy." Only one person, the kohen gadol ("high priest"), may, but once a year, on Yom Kippur, enter the innermost chamber in the Sanctuary to offer the sacred ketoret to G-d.

Another feature of the Day of Atonement service is the casting of lots over two goats, to determine which should be offered to G-d and which should be dispatched to carry off the sins of Israel to the wilderness.

The Parshah of Acharei also warns against bringing korbanot (animal or meal offerings) anywhere but in the Holy Temple, forbids the consumption of blood, and details the laws prohibiting incest and other deviant sexual relations.

The Parshah of Kedoshim begins with the statement: "You shall be holy, for I, the L-rd your G-d, am holy." This is followed by dozens of mitzvot (divine commandments) through which the Jew sanctifies him- or herself and relates to the holiness of G-d.

*(continued next column)*



Spirituality is not an added dimension, separate from our everyday experience, but a medium through which we elevate our ordinary lives. By fusing our material and spiritual realities, we refine the world, infuse it with holiness, and transform it into a dwelling for G-d's presence. -- The Rebbe

These include: the prohibition against idolatry, the mitzvah of charity, the principle of equality before the law, Shabbat, sexual morality, honesty in business, honor and awe of one's parents, and the sacredness of life.

Also in Kedoshim is the dictum which the great sage Rabbi Akiva called a cardinal principle of Torah, and of which Hillel said, "This is the entire Torah, the rest is commentary"—"Love your fellow as yourself." ❖



**Join us each weekday  
morning Mon-Fri as we  
delve into the mysteries  
of Chassidic concepts.  
5:55 am,  
followed immediately  
by Shacharis.**

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### Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, Apr 29, 2023

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis.....4:55 AM  
Latest Morning Shema .....9:23 AM  
Earliest Mincha (Gedola).. 1:30 PM  
Plag Hamincha..... 6:28 PM  
Earliest Evening Shema .... 8:21 PM

## Chassidic Masters

### A History of Love

*Based on the teachings of  
the Lubavitcher Rebbe  
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

Man, by nature, is a selfish creature. Even in his relationships with others he tends to focus primarily on himself or, at most, on his self-colored perception of his fellow. “Love” is the endeavor to transcend this intrinsic selfishness and truly relate to one’s fellow, to be sensitive to and devoted to his or her needs as an individual distinct from oneself and one’s own stake in the relationship.

And yet, when the Torah speaks of the mitzvah (divine commandment) to “love your fellow as yourself,” it does so in the context of man’s duty to influence, and even change, the behavior and nature of his fellow man. In Leviticus 19 (verses 18–19), the Torah commands:

*Do not hate your brother in your heart; repeatedly rebuke your fellow, and do not attribute sin to him. Do not take revenge, or harbor hatred toward your people, and love your fellow as yourself; I am G-d.*

As the commentaries explain, there are two possible reactions a person can have toward a fellow who has wronged him, or whom he sees behaving in a morally deficient manner: 1) he can despise him in his heart, regarding him as a “sinner,” and perhaps even persecute him for his “sins”; 2) he can rebuke him in an effort to convince him of the folly of his ways and seek to influence him to change them.

The path of love, says the Torah, is not to “hate your brother in your heart,” but to “repeatedly rebuke” him and seek to better him.

Obviously, the desire to influence is consistent with the idea of love. No one would stand by as a loved one suffers hunger or is threatened by violence; no less so, if one sees someone he loves suffering from spiritual malnutrition or moral blindness, he will make every effort to reach out to him, to enlighten him, to offer guidance and assistance. But this aspect of loving behavior carries an inherent paradox. On the one hand, the endeavor to influence and change implies a departure from self and a concern with the wellbeing of the other. On the other hand, it implies a seemingly selfish view of the other: a rejection of the other as he is, and a desire to impose upon him one’s own perception of what is good for him.

#### Four Biblical Prototypes

An exploration of the history of humanity, as recounted in the Torah, reveals four figures who personified four different points of reference on the relationship between self and fellow.

Each of these individuals was considered the most righteous of his generation. Thus, their lives can be seen to reflect four stages in the spiritual development of humanity—four stages in the movement from an instinctive selfhood toward the complete abnegation of self and self-interest in relating to others. Our examination of this process will also shed light on the acceptance/nonacceptance dilemma inherent in the love relationship.

The first of these four outstanding individuals was Enoch, a great-great-great-great-grandson of Adam, who was born in the year 622 from creation (3139 BCE). By his time, humanity had abandoned the one G-d of their fathers, and had succumbed to idolatry and pagan perversity. Only Enoch still “walked with G-d.”

But Enoch’s righteousness was wholly selfish: he was preoccupied only with the refinement and perfection of his own spiritual self. The Midrash even relates that for many years he disassociated himself from his corrupt generation and secluded himself in a cave.

Not only did Enoch fail to have a lasting impact on his society, but he was ultimately in danger of being influenced by their corrupt behavior. This is why Enoch died at the “tender young age” of 365 (compared with the 800- to 900-year lifespans of his contemporaries): “G-d took him to Himself” before his time, lest the only righteous man of the generation also be lost.

For such is the relationship of an individual with his environment: there is no sustained equilibrium. Where there is contact there is a flow, in one direction or the other; one either influences his society or is influenced by it.

#### The 120-Year Failure

Several generations later, we encounter another righteous man in a corrupt generation: Noah, builder of the ark and regenerator of humanity after the Flood.

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In Noah, we find the first stirrings of a departure from self to improve and rehabilitate one's fallen fellow. In the year 1536 from creation (2225 BCE) G-d told Noah that "the end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence," and that He therefore intends to "bring a deluge of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh" and start anew with Noah and his family. Noah is instructed to build an ark so that they could survive the Flood. Our sages relate that Noah worked on the ark's construction a full one hundred and twenty years; all this time, he called out to his generation to mend its ways and avoid catastrophe.

However, the Zohar criticizes Noah for the fact that, despite his efforts, he did not pray for the salvation of his generation, unlike Abraham and Moses, who pleaded with G-d to spare the wicked. This implies that, ultimately, it did not matter to Noah what became of them. Had he truly cared, he would not have sufficed with doing his best to bring them to repent, but would have implored the Almighty to repeal His decree of destruction—just as one who is personally threatened would never say, "Well, I did my best to save myself" and leave it at that, but would beseech G-d to help him.

In other words, Noah's involvement with others was limited to his sense of what he ought to do for them, as opposed to a true concern for their wellbeing. His "self" had sufficiently broadened to include the imperative to act for the sake of another, recognizing that the lack of a "social conscience" is a defect in one's own character; but he fell short of transcending the self to care for others beyond the consideration of his own righteousness.

This also explains a curious aspect of Noah's efforts to reach out to his generation. When the Flood came, Noah and his family entered the ark—alone. His 120-year campaign yielded not a single baal teshuvah (repentant)! Perhaps public relations was never Noah's strong point, but how are we to explain the fact that, in all this time, he failed to win over a single individual?

But in order to influence others, one's motives must be pure; in the words of our sages, "Words that come from the heart enter the heart." Deep down, a person will always sense whether you truly have his interests at heart, or whether you're filling a need of your own by seeking to change him.

If your work to enlighten your fellow stems from a desire to "do the right thing"—to observe the mitzvot to "love your fellow as yourself" and "rebuke your fellow"—but without really caring about the result, your call will be met with scant response. The echo of personal motive, be it the most laudable of personal motives, will be sensed, if only subconsciously, by the object of your efforts, and will ultimately put him off.

### **The Departure from Self**

Ten generations later was born an individual who raised the concept of man's devotion to the welfare of his neighbor to new and selfless heights. This man was Abraham, the first Jew.

Abraham, too, faced a corrupt and pagan world; indeed, his title, "the Hebrew," is associated with the fact that "the entire world stood on one side, and he stood on the other." After coming to recognize the Creator, he devoted his life to bringing the belief and ethos of a one G-d to his generation. Wherever he went, he "caused G-d's name to be known in the world." Abraham also concerned himself with the more mundane needs of his fellows, offering his tent as an open house of refreshment and lodging for all desert wayfarers, regardless of spiritual station.

The selflessness of Abraham's concern for his fellow is demonstrated by his daring intervention on behalf of the five sinful cities of the Sodom valley. G-d had decided to destroy these cities for their wicked ways. Abraham petitioned G-d on their behalf, using the strongest terms to demand of G-d that he spare these cities for the sake of the few righteous individuals they might contain. "It behooves You not to do such a thing," he challenged G-d, "to slay the righteous with the wicked . . . Shall the judge of the universe not act justly?!" Abraham put his own spiritual integrity at risk for the sake of the most corrupt of sinners; he was prepared to incur G-d's wrath upon himself, giving precedence to their physical lives over his own relationship with the Almighty.

And because people sensed that he had their own good—and only their own good—at heart, they responded. When Abraham and Sarah left Charan for the Holy Land, they were joined by the "souls which they had made in Charan"—the community of men and women who had rallied to their cause.

***(Continued next page)***

Sixty-five years later, he was able to say to his servant Eliezer: “When G-d summoned me from the house of my father, He was G-d of the heavens but not of the earth: the inhabitants of the earth did not recognize Him, and His name was not referred to in the land. But now that I have made His name familiar in the mouths of His creatures, He is G-d in both heaven and earth.”

### **No Strings Attached**

But even Abraham’s love is still not the ultimate. It took another four centuries for the epitome of selfless devotion to one’s fellow to emerge, in the person of Moses.

Abraham’s virtue over Noah was that his objective in relating to others lay not in realizing the potential of his social self (as was the case with Noah), but in achieving the desired result: to transform their behavior and character, bringing to light their good and perfect essence. But therein also lies the limitation of Abraham’s love: ultimately, Abraham’s kindness had an ulterior motive. True, it was not a personal motive; true, it was a motive that spells the recipient’s ultimate good, and is consistent with the recipient’s true self; but it was an ulterior motive nonetheless.

Our sages describe how Abraham’s hospitality was but a means to achieve his goal of converting his guests to a belief in G-d. The same is true of Abraham’s valiant prayer on behalf of the Sodomites. He beseeched G-d to spare them because of the righteous in their midst—as long as righteous individuals remain in a city, there is hope for the wicked as well. On a deeper level, he was referring to the “righteous one” within the wicked person, his inner potential for good; spare them, Abraham was saying, because perhaps the good in them will triumph yet. As soon as he became aware that the wicked of Sodom were beyond hope, he ceased his prayers.

Such love and concern—for the sake of the potential good that one sees in another—is a love that is tainted, however minutely, with selfishness: one is relating to one’s fellow not as one’s fellow sees himself, but with an eye to one’s own vision of him. This allows for a reaction on his part (expressed, unexpressed, or even unconscious) that “you don’t care for me as I am, only for what you wish to make of me.

So you don’t really care about me at all.” True, one’s only desire is to reveal the other’s essential self; but this is a deeper, still unrealized, self. One’s love fails to address the other as he now expressly is, focusing instead on one’s knowledge of what he latently is, and on what he can and ought to make of himself.

In contrast, Moses’ love for his people was utterly selfless. His was an unconditional love, one that is unassuming of what they ought to be or what they are on a deeper, yet unrealized level. He loved them as they were, and did everything in his power to satisfy their needs, both material and spiritual.

When Moses pleaded with G-d on behalf of the worshippers of the Golden Calf, he did not say, “Forgive them because they will repent,” or “Forgive them for they carry great potential,” only, “Forgive them. And if You won’t, erase me from Your Torah.” Either You accept the sinner as he is, or put together a nation and a Torah without me.

The difference between Moses and his predecessors is also reflected in the extent of their influence on their fellows. Enoch, with his wholly self-directed righteousness, had no influence, and was himself susceptible to influence. Noah—who extended himself to his fellows, but only because he recognized that concern for one’s fellow is an integral part of a perfect self—was not influenceable, but did not influence. Abraham’s teaching and instruction, free of such personal bias, was embraced by multitudes of followers; but since even Abraham’s efforts fell short of the pure definition of selflessness, his influence was correspondingly limited. Today, we have no traceable heirs to Abraham’s disciples. (What, indeed, ever became of the “souls they had made in Charan”?) But the effects of Moses’ utterly selfless love are eternal: his guidance and leadership of his people yielded a nation whose endurance and unbroken continuity, to this very day, defies all laws of history.

### **“Outreach” Redefined**

In order to truly influence a fellow, we must devote ourselves to him or her without regard to whether he or she will be influenced or not.

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He is a fellow human being who needs your help. So help him. If she lacks something material, help her. If she is spiritually lost, help her. Many can see the point of influencing a fellow Jew to do a good deed, a mitzvah—to put on tefillin, to perform a single act of charity, to avoid a moral transgression—if this leads to a greater involvement, and ultimately, a complete transformation. But when confronted with a “lost case,” they feel it’s a

waste of time. Why bother?

Why bother? Because you care about him, not only about what he ought to be, what he will be, or what you see in him. He lacks something now, and you are privileged to be of assistance. If you care for him because you expect to influence him, then chances are he won’t respond. But if you care for him whether he responds or not, then he will respond. ❖

## **From Our Sages – Acharei-Kedoshim**

***Said Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: You shall be holy... (Leviticus 19:2)***

*The easiest thing is to hide from the world and its follies, seclude oneself in a room, and be a holy hermit. What the Torah desires, however, is that a person should be part and parcel of "all the congregation of the children of Israel"--and be holy.*

*(Alshich)*

***Every man shall fear his mother and his father (Leviticus 19:3)***

*And in Exodus 20:12 it says, "Honor your father and your mother." For it is revealed and known to G-d that a person adores his mother more than his father, and that he fears his father more than his mother. G-d therefore set the honor of one's father first, and the fear of one's mother first, to emphasize that one must honor and fear them both equally.*

*(Talmud, Kiddushin 31a)*

***You shall not stand by your fellow's blood (Leviticus 19:16)***

*From where do we know that if one sees his fellow drowning in a river, being dragged off by a wild animal or attacked by robbers, that one is obligated to save him? From the verse, "You shall not stand by your fellow's blood."*

*(Talmud, Sanhedrin 73a)*

***Rebuke, rebuke your fellow (Leviticus 19:17)***

*On one occasion, Rabbi Aaron of Belz was informed that one of the town's residents had desecrated the Shabbat. He immediately ordered both the informer and the Shabbat violator to appear before him.*

*"I order you to donate two pounds of candles to the synagogue," said Rabbi Aaron to the informer, "in order to atone for the fact that you spoke negatively of a fellow Jew."*

*"And you," said the Rebbe to the second man, "I fine one pound of candles, for being the cause of your fellow Jews speaking negatively of another Jew."*

***Love your fellow as yourself (Leviticus 19:18)***

*A soul might descend to earth and live seventy or eighty years for the sole purpose of doing a favor for another—a spiritual favor, or even a material favor.*

*(Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov)*

*When two people meet, something positive must result for a third.*

*(Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch) ❖*

## Haftorah for Acharei-Kedoshim in a nutshell

Amos 9:7-15

This week's haftorah foretells the exiles and punishments that will befall the Jews because they strayed after the ways of the heathens — behavior that this week's Torah reading proscribes.

The prophet Amos delivers G-d's message, reminding the people of G-d's kindness to them — taking them out of Egypt and singling them out as His chosen nation. Nevertheless, because of their misdeeds, G-d will destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel; but will not completely destroy the house of Jacob. The Jews will be scattered amongst the nations, but eventually they will return to their land — on the day of the redemption. G-d will then reinstall the House of David to its former glory and there shall be peace and abundance upon the land.

The haftorah ends with G-d's promise: "And I will return the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall rebuild desolate cities and inhabit [them], and they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their produce. And I will plant them on their land, and they shall no longer be uprooted from upon their land, that I have given them, said the L-rd your G-d." ❖

### **The Paterson Shul @Seniors Tower of Paterson (510 E. 27th Street/Paterson) will have the following Minyanim:**

1. SHABBAT MAY 6 – PARSHAT EMOR– 9:00 a.m.
2. SHAVUOT/ SHABBAT, MAY 27 – (SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOT) - 9:00 a.m.  
(Yizkor will be approximately 10:30a.m. led by the great Chazzan Mitch.)

Also, there will be a speaker on V-Day (May 9) commemorating the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in 1945.

If you don't like long speeches, long walks, or long Shabbosim, this is the place for you.

We have Machzorim and Talaisim.

For more information, please email: [JerrySchranz@Gmail.com](mailto:JerrySchranz@Gmail.com) or visit Facebook: "The Paterson Shul"



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**Good Shabbos to all!**