

PHILOTORAH

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו וא' להי אבותינו שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפצועי המלחמה, ולנפגעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות בישראל ובכל מקום שהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers and the hostages; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel, may He end this war with total success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever they are.



אֲחָרֵי־קֳדָשִׁים



YERUSHALAYIM times for ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM

י"ב אייר ה'תשפ"ה • May 9-10, '25

 **6:50PM** PLAG **6:00PM** •  **8:06PM** R' Tam **8:38PM**

Use the Z'MANIM link for other locales and other times

REMEMBER TO COUNT THE OMER

Even if you haven't counted all the days until now,
and even if you are not saying a bracha,
there is still a mitzva to count the Omer every day.



ACHAREI K'DOSHIM



	Ach	K'do	AK
of 54 sedras	29th	30th	-
of 10 in Vayikra	6th	7th	-
lines	154	109	263
rank	44th	49th	-
Parshiyot	15	4	19
P'tuchot	3	3	6
S'tumot	12	1	13
P'sukim	80	64	144
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	45/6	49/9	-
Words	1170	868	2038
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	43/6	49/9	-
Letters	4294	3229	7523
rank (Torah/Vayik.)	45/6	49/9	-
Mitzvot (pos/prohib)	2+26	13+38	15+64

MITZVOT

K'doshim's 51 mitzvot give it 5th place on the mitzvot/sedra list, following Ki Teitzei's 74, Emor's 63, R'ei's 55, and Mishpatim's 53.

However, on the Mitzva-density list, K'doshim is number 1. If we create a new statistic of mitzvot per 1000 p'sukim, K'doshim heads the list with a MD of 797 ($51/64 * 1000 = 796.875$). Ki Teitzei has a MD of 673. Emor, 508. R'ei, 436½. Mishpatim, 449. Just for comparison purposes, Acharei's MD is $28/80 * 1000 = 350$.

The 17 sedras without mitzvot have MDs of 0. The 1-mitzva sedras vary in MD depending on number of p'sukim.

Aliya-by-Aliya Sedra Summary

[P> X:Y (Z)] and [S> X:Y (Z)] indicate start of a parsha p'tucha or s'tuma. X:Y is Perek:Pasuk of the beginning of the parsha; (Z) is the number of p'sukim in the parsha.

Numbers in [square brackets] are the Mitzva-count of Sefer HaChinuch AND Rambam's Sefer HaMitzvot. A=ASEI; L=LAV (prohibition). X:Y is the perek & pasuk from which the mitzva comes.

Kohen - First Aliya - 17+7=24 p'sukim - 16:1-24

[P> 16:1 (34)] The first part of Parshat Acharei (Mot) deals with the Yom Kippur service in the Beit HaMikdash - Seder HaAvoda. An emotional element is introduced when the Torah tells us that G-d gave these commands "after the deaths of Aharon's two sons". We cannot help but be struck by the combination of the Kohen Gadol performing the loftiest of spiritual tasks with the background of his personal grief. These feelings are especially powerful as we hear this reading on Yom Kippur morning.

Before the Service is described, kohanim in general are warned not to enter the Beit HaMikdash other than when they have tasks to perform there [184, L68 16:2].

It is hard to miss the additional connection to Nadav and Avihu, who entered the Mikdash for the performance of an "improper" task.

The entire Yom Kippur service, with all of its details, constitutes one mitzva [185, A49 16:3]. Aharon is to take a bull as a sin-offering and a ram as a burnt-offering. He is to wear his special garments (the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur alternates between his full set of eight garments and a special set of four pure white garments which he wore when he entered the Kodshei HaKodashim).

The Kohen Gadol washes his hands and feet ten times throughout the day and immerses in a mikveh five times.

"From the People", Aharon takes two goats for sin-offerings and a ram as an Olah. The bull is an atonement for Aharon and the kohanim. Lots were cast to determine which of the two (identical) goats was to be offered as a korban and which was taken out into the wilderness as the scapegoat.

SDT There are two very different styles of sin - rejecting what G-d says and distancing oneself from the Divine, on the one hand, and violating His commands in an attempt to get closer to Him, on the other. Most sins are of the former type; that of Nadav and Avihu was of the latter kind. Correspondingly, we have two special offerings on Yom Kippur - one that was offered inside the Beit HaMik-

dash, its blood actually being brought into the Kodshei Kodashim, and the other being sent completely away from the Beit HaMikdash. Two opposite destinations for the atonements of two opposite types of sin. Note, however, that both goats were identical. (Based on a long-time-ago shiur by RYMKO z"l)

The Kohen Gadol performs all of the duties of the Day, with minimal assistance from other kohanim. The Holy of Holies filled with smoke from the incense offering when the Kohen Gadol entered. The service of Yom Kippur is complex; it is detailed in the repetition of the Musaf Amida on Yom Kippur as well as in the Torah reading.

This next portion continues to describe the complex service of Yom Kippur. Among the many tasks of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, is VIDUI on behalf of all the people of Israel.

His confession of sin must be accompanied by t'shuva and vidui of each Jew, if complete atonement is to be achieved. Rambam says that there is "communal forgiveness" for "minor" offenses, but major sins require that the individual do his own T'shuva. Even when there is "communal forgiveness", an individual still has to be part of the community in order to benefit from it. He who distances himself from the community does not receive the benefits of communal prayer, repentance, and atonement. Over-simplified, to be sure, but there is a point here.

Levi - Second Aliya - 10+7 p'sukim - 16:34-17:7

The Torah continues detailing the Yom Kippur service. It concludes with a reiteration of the rules of Yom Kippur for each of us, and the statement that the Day of Yom Kippur helps bring atonement to the People. It is thus the Day itself, the Temple service, communal prayer, AND our individual prayer, T'shuva, confession and fasting that combine to attain true forgiveness for ourselves and all of Israel.

[P> 17:1 (16)] It is forbidden to slaughter an animal that is to be offered as a korban, outside the area of the Beit HaMikdash [186, L90 17:3].

MITZVAnotes

It is similarly forbidden to slaughter an animal for personal use within the precincts of the Temple. A korban slaughtered outside is invalid and must be burned; "personal" meat inside is likewise forbidden. Both are wasteful, hence sinful, acts which the Torah implies are akin to "bloodshed". In other words, G-d allows us to kill animals for acceptable purposes, but not to 'waste' the life of any creature.

Shlishi - Third Aliya - 14+16 p'sukim - 17:8-18:21

The Torah reiterates the prohibition of slaughtering korbanot "outside" and states emphatically that it is forbidden to eat blood. Blood symbolizes life.

When one slaughters a bird or a "wild" animal (e.g. deer, wild goat - as opposed to the domesticated farm animal for which this mitzva does not apply), he is required to cover the first amount of blood with "dust" (sand, sawdust, etc.) [187, A147 17:13]. The prohibitions relating to blood are repeated and stressed. Blood of korbanot goes on the Altar as an atonement; blood of animals that are not eligible for korbanot must be covered.

CLARIFICATION... Mammals divide into two categories: B'HEIMA and CHAYA. The three types of kosher B'HEIMOT - cow, goat, and sheep - are "fit for the Altar". They are not included in the mitzva of KISUI DAM, covering the blood. Their blood is "atoning" (because of their eligibility to be korbanot*). No CHAYA is fit for the Mizbei'ach. Among the birds, only two types - the dove and the turtle-dove - can be korbanot. All other birds are unfit for the altar. Therefore, the rule for birds follows the majority, and covering the blood applies to birds (including doves).

In our "everyday" experience, when a cow is slaughtered for food, the blood of the Sh'chita is not covered. When chickens are slaughtered, the additional mitzva of covering the blood (additional to the mitzva of Sh'chita) applies. It is forbidden to slaughter a chicken without covering the first gush of blood with sand or sawdust.

* Go back up a bit and see where the asterisk is and then come back here and read on...

Not every breed of cow nor other animals in the cow family are fit for the altar. Same for goat. Same for sheep. And this has ramifications in halacha. On this particular issue of KISUI DAM, all kosher B'HEIMOT would not require covering the blood and all CHAYOT would. And if there is a question as to which category a particular animal belongs, then KISUI DAM should be done without a bracha, just to play it safe. Some of the other ramifications are more 'interesting', but we'll save those for another time. Bottom line, the fact that there are probably many types of animals in the cow, goat, or sheep family that are not fit for the altar, doesn't change the fact that the official altar-fit animals are (generically) cow, goat, and sheep - and that is - according to the Sefer HaChinuch (the Torah itself doesn't give a reason) - the reason for KISUI DAM not applying to B'HEIMOT.

[P> 18:1 (5)] Chapter 18 contains the many forbidden sexual relationships. First there is a general warning against copying the negative practices of Egypt (from where we came) and those of the peoples of Canaan (to where we are going).

We have only to follow the laws and statutes of G-d and live by them.

SDT From the term V'CHAI BAHAM, "and live by them", we are taught two important concepts. Judaism is not just a religion; it is a way of life. Furthermore, this pasuk is (one of) the source(s) of the concept that mitzvot (in general) are to LIVE by, not to die by, in other words, that for most mitzvot - with very important exceptions - we may violate them if it means saving a life.

[S> 18:6 (1)] It is prohibited to be intimate with any of the forbidden relations [188, L353 18:6].

[S> 18:7 (1)] Homosexual relations are forbidden with one's father [189, L351 18:7] (in addition to the general prohibition of homosexual conduct). One may not have sexual relations with his mother [190, L330 18:7].

[S> 18:8 (1)] his father's wife (even if she is not his mother) [191, L331 18:8]

[S> 18:9 (1)] his sister (from same father or mother or both) [192, L332 18:9]

[S> 18:10 (1)] his granddaughter from a

son [193, L334 18:10] or from a daughter [194, L335 18:10], his daughter [195, L336 18:10]

This last prohibition is derived by KAL VACHOMER, the logical reasoning that if a man is forbidden to have relations with his granddaughter, how much more so is he forbidden to his daughter. It further is taught by other Talmudic principles, since a Kal VaChomer by itself is subject to weaknesses. This is significant by being a full-fledged prohibition in the Torah that has no direct wording to point to, but is taught to us as part of the Oral Law. It is as if G-d commanded this mitzva specifically this way, rather than spelling out the prohibition, as all the others are, in order to teach us that this prohibition is in no way less than all the others.

[S> 18:11 (1)] The Torah singles out the daughter of one's father's wife and forbids relations with her [196, L333 18:10] although she is his sister, already being forbidden to him by mitzva #192. There are different opinions as to the significance and ramifications of this "seemingly" extraneous prohibition. This prohibition is definitely not a father's wife's daughter that is not a child of the father, what in today's terminology is called a step-sister, because there is no prohibition in that case.

[S> 18:12 (1)] One may not have relations with his paternal aunt [197, L340 18:12],

[S> 18:13 (1)] nor his maternal aunt [198, L341 18:13],

[S> 18:14 (1)] nor may a man have homosexual relations with his uncle [199, L352 18:14] nor may he have relations with his uncle's wife [200, L342 18:14].

[S> 18:15 (1)] One may not have relations with his daughter-in-law [201, L343 18:15],

[S> 18:16 (1)] his brother's wife [202, L344 18:16] (except for the unique circumstances of the mitzva of YIBUM).

[S> 18:17 (14)] A man is forbidden to have relations with his wife's mother or daughter [203, L337 18:17], or her grandmother or granddaughter from son or daughter [204,205; L338,339 18:17]

A man may not have relations with his wife's sister, during the wife's lifetime - even if he divorced his wife first [206, L345 18:18].

Relations with a woman in a state of NIDA is forbidden [207, L346 18:19].

Relations with a married woman is forbidden. (This prohibition is counted elsewhere, but restated here with all the other forbidden relationships.)

It is forbidden to give one's child to the pagan rituals of Molech [208, L7 18:21].

R'vi'i - Fourth Aliya - 9+19 p'sukim - 18:22-19:14

*The fourth Aliya is always the bridge
Aliya between two combine sedras*

Homosexual acts are forbidden [209, L350 18:22]. Sexual behavior with animals is forbidden for men, women [210,211; L348,349 18:23]

We must not defile ourselves by doing any of the above. These abominable practices defile the Land and result in expulsion therefrom. We must scrupulously shun these practices.

NOTE: In addition to the Torah's prohibitions, there are many other relations that the Sages forbid in the spirit of the Torah's prohibitions.

[S> 19:1 (22)] K'DOSHIM TIHYU! BE HOLY! - HOW? In light of the exceptionally large number of mitzvot in this sedra (K'doshim), one can fairly assume that the answer to that question is - by the observance of mitzvot. This means more than "just going through the motions". It means a Torah way of life, mitzvot for the right motives and with the right enthusiasm, and performance of mitzvot motivated by AHAVAT HASHEM, love of G-d (not just YIR'AT HASHEM, fear of G-d).

One must revere his parents [212, A211 19:3], yet keep the Shabbat, meaning (among other things) that if

one's parents tell him to violate the Shabbat (or any other mitzva - Torah ordained or rabbinic), he may not listen to them. (Neither may he be disrespectful in his refusal to obey.) Parents and their children are all commanded by G-d to keep the Shabbat (and all mitzvot).

We may not "turn towards" idolatry in thought or words [213, L10 19:4] nor may we make idols [214, L3 19:4]. This specifically prohibits making idols for others. Both these mitzvot are among the many that are designed to keep the Jew far away from idolatry.

Korbanot must be offered in the Beit HaMikdash in a proper and pleasing manner. Specifically, one must keep to the time limits presented for eating sacred meat [215, L131 19:8]. Violation carries a death penalty from heaven.

Watch this next set of mitzvot: Leave the corner of your field uncut, so that poor people might come and find grain to reap [216, A120 19:10]; do not reap your entire field [217, A210 19:9]. A positive mitzva and a prohibition that basically say the same thing. Here's another pair: Leave the gleanings of the field for the poor [218, A121 19:10]; do not take the gleanings [219, L211 19:9]. And then these two pairs of mitzvot are doubled again - each pair of mitzvot is counted separately as applied to a vineyard [220-223; A123-124, L212-213 19:9-10].

This is one of many examples of the

statement made by Rabi Chananya ben Akashya in the last mishna of Masechet Makot, the mishna chosen to conclude the reading/learning of each perek of Pirkei Avot. The mishna used to conclude many shiurim - Kaddish d'Rabbanan usually follows. He said: G-d wanted to merit the People of Israel, therefore he 'heaped' upon them Torah and Mitzvot. Note that it doesn't say that He merely gave us mitzvot - but rather, he heaped them upon us. This suggests multiple merit for proper observance (but multiple demerits for violations - it is a double-edged sword).

Stealing [224, L244 19:11], denying holding that which belongs to someone else [225, L248 19:11], and swearing to that effect [226, L249 19:11] are all forbidden. Swearing falsely [227, L61 19:12] is forbidden.

That the Torah says one who swears falsely disgraces G-d's name, is echoed by Rambam when he distinguishes between "serious" sins and "light" sins. Rambam puts into the serious category all sins that carry a death penalty... and swearing falsely. So destructive are false and vain oaths to the underpinnings of society, that it is placed with the capital offenses.

Withholding someone's property [228, L247 19:13], robbery [229, L245 19:13], and delaying payment of a laborer

[230, L238 19:13] are prohibited. Most people would probably rationalize the situation and not consider delaying payment as a form of theft. The Torah implies that one is (can be?) as serious as the other.

There are many everyday situations for which the prohibition of delaying wages apply: hair-dresser or barber, taxi driver, babysitter... In most cases, people pay for services rendered when they are expected to. We all pay a cab driver at the conclusion of a ride. No one says to the driver, "Sorry, I haven't got the money for the fare; I'll pay you tomorrow." But the mitzvot still apply.

It is suggested that one has KAVANA for the mitzva of paying wages on time, when one pays for a taxi ride or a visit to the hair dresser...

Now take this example: Your regular cleaning lady finishes a few hours of work and you are supposed to pay her, let's say, 150nis. You don't have change. Only a 200nis note. If you tell her that you don't have change and that you'll pay her the next time she comes, you are in possible violation of mitzva 230, above, and in non-fulfillment of the positive command to pay a laborer on time (counted elsewhere). If the worker freely agrees, without any hard feelings, to wait for payment - then the isur was not violated, but the positive command

was not fulfilled either. And if the worker only half-heartedly agrees to the delay - because she is, perhaps, embarrassed to tell you that she needs the money now, then the prohibition is also violated. Rather, take steps to get the change, or give her the 200nis and ask her to bring you change the next time she comes. No violation on your part and a mitzva has been performed by your hand.

It is forbidden to curse a fellow Jew [231, L317 19:14]; and one may not place a stumbling block before the blind [232, L299 19:14], meaning [not exclusively] that one may not mislead or entrap others. Care must be taken not to mislead anyone, even inadvertently. This can include stretching the truth or saying something that is not actually a lie, but it will convey to others that which is not really so. (Helping someone do the wrong thing is part of this prohibition - even if the other knows what he's doing and wants to do it.)

Chamishi -5th Aliya - 8+10 p'sukim - 19:15-32

Do not pervert justice [233, L273 19:15], nor show honor to a prominent person during a trial [234, L275 19:15]. We must always carry out true justice [235, A177 19:15]. Once again, notice that we have a positive mitzva which, in essence, is the "flip side" of several prohibitions, the violation of which

results in distorting and perverting justice.

Even though these mitzvot are directed to judges and the courts, each individual Jew must draw from these mitzvot the importance of being fair and apply some of these rules on an informal basis, to everyday life.

Neither gossip nor slander (regardless of whether what you say is true or false) [236, L301 19:16];

Even plain gossip is prohibited - it's called R'CHILUT. Malicious gossip is worse - it's called LASHON HARA. The prohibition is from the same words in the Torah - LO TEILEICH RACHIL B'AMECHA. An even worse level of the same prohibition is spreading a lie to defame someone - this is called MOTZI SHEIM RA. None of it is good.

Do not stand by while your fellow is in danger of life, limb, or property [237, L297 19:16]. Do not hate your fellow Jew in your heart [238, L302 19:17]; reproach your fellow SENSITIVELY [239, A205 19:17] being careful to avoid embarrassing him [240, L303 19:17] (even while reproaching).

Do not take revenge [241, L304 19:18] nor bear a grudge [242, L305 19:18]; "Love thy neighbor..." [243, A206 19:18] Notice the constant reminder: "I am G-d" or words to that effect. Being nice to others is not just nice; it is part

of Torah and the fulfillment of G-d's commandments.

It is forbidden to cross-breed animals of different species [244, L217 19:19], to sow mixed seeds [245, L215 19:19], and to wear Shaatnez, mixtures of wool and linen in a garment. Note that in this one pasuk, there is a forbidden animal-animal mix, a plant-plant mix, and an animal-plant mix, making the point (among others) that G-d allows us a dominance over nature but has imposed restrictions and limits.

Next we find the complicated issue of the atonement for improper relations with a maidservant who is partially freed and partially still a slave.

[P> 19:23 (10)] Fruits of the first three years of a tree's life are forbidden, i.e. they are ORLA [246, L192 19:23]. The 4th year's yield is sacred [247, A119 19:24] and must be eaten only in Yerushalayim, or redeemed and the money used for food and drink in Yerushalayim. From the fifth year on, the fruits are permitted. One may not eat gluttonously [248, L195 19:26]. One may not consult and rely on omens, divination, conjuring, or some aspects of astrology [249,250; L32,33 19:26]. Shaving the temple area of the head is forbidden [251, L43 19:27] as is shaving the face with a razor [252, L44 19:27].

Permanent tattooing is forbidden [253, L41 19:28]. Protect your daughters from loose behavior. Keep the Shabbat and respect the place of the Mikdash

(even when no Beit HaMikdash stands there) [254, A21 19:30].

[There is a dispute as to whether the Torah-level sanctity of the place of the Mikdash applies when no Mikdash stands. Some say it is d'Rabanan in our time; others say it remains Torah law.]

Ov and Yid'oni (mediums and wizards) are forbidden [255,256; L8,9 19:31]. One must rise and otherwise respect the elderly and Torah scholars [257, A209 19:32].

Shishi - Sixth Aliya - 5+7 p'sukim - 19:33-20:7

[S> 19:33 (5)] One must not take advantage of the newcomer to the Land (convert and/or stranger). The convert shall be treated with love; we must learn from our Egyptian experience. It is forbidden to cheat with any false measures [258, L271 19:35]; one must be honest in weights and measures [259, A208 19:36]. Keep all of G-d's statutes and laws.

[P> 20:1 (27)] The punishment for Molech (a perverse idolatrous practice involving child-sacrifice) is death by stoning. G-d will cut off the one who serves Molech. If society does not punish the violator, G-d will. So too for the practice of Ov and Yid'oni.

Sanctify yourself and be holy.

As the sedra started with the command to Be Holy, the major

section of mitzvot in Parshat K'doshim concludes with the same command (different wording).

Sh'VII - Seventh Aliya - 15+5 p'sukim - 20:8-27

Preserve the statutes and do them, for G-d sanctifies us because of our deeds.

Cursing one's parents, even after their deaths, is forbidden [260, L318 20:9], and is a capital offense.

The Torah reiterates the forbidden relationships that were presented at the end of Acharei. They are all capital offenses. The specific methods of execution vary, but it is in this context that Rambam learns the command to Sanhedrin to carry out the punishment of "internal burning" when called for [261, A208 20:14].

Again, the Torah commands us to preserve all of the mitzvot, thus preventing the Land (of Israel) from expelling us.

It is forbidden to follow the practices of the nations amongst whom we find ourselves [262, L30 20:23]. This ISUR applies to idolatrous practices, immoral acts, and that which has no apparent reason. There is no prohibition of following a non-Jewish practice that is reasonable and constructive.

In order to inherit the land of Israel, we must not behave in the abominable ways of nations that preceded us. We must distinguish between kosher and

non-kosher animals (and life-styles); we must be holy and distinct from others. We are not automatically different from anyone else. Torah makes us different. Torah gives us our unique identities.

Every Jew must play a dual role. We are each individuals and we are part of Klal Yisrael. We are exhorted to keep the Torah as individuals, but we are also "advised" to be faithful to G-d so that tragedies will not happen to the People of Israel as a whole.

Ov & Yid'oni are punished by stoning.

Maftir is the final 3 p'sukim. They make a powerful summary of all the mitzvot of Acharei and K'doshim. There is a repeat of the command to be holy, and the reason: that G-d is holy. And we find G-d's promise that He will keep us apart from the other nations, to be His.

Haftara - 9 p'sukim - Amos 9:7-15 short haftara

The haftara basically clarifies the "deal part" of the command to be holy. Amos stresses that we will be just like all other of G-d's children on Earth, no different from the Ethiopians, the Philistines, etc. That is, of course, if we don't remain faithful to G-d. Because if we do, and keep the mitzvot sincerely, then the promises of the Torah will be realized and we will be unique among the nations. It's really up to us. That's our challenge.

An interesting Haftara situation:

The regular haftara of Acharei is from the book of Yechezkeil. The regular haftara of K'doshim is from Amos - HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM. In all one-Adar years, Acharei and K'doshim are combined and HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM is the haftara. **As it is this year.**

In two-Adar years, the sedras are read separately, but...

Sometimes, K'doshim is Rosh Chodesh. In which case, K'doshim gets the R"Ch haftara and Acharei gets HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM.

Sometimes, Acharei is Shabbat HaGadol and gets the special haftara for HaGadol, and K'doshim gets HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM.

Sometimes, in Israel, K'doshim is Machar Chodesh and gets a special haftara. For Acharei, in those years, the haftara is HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM.

In those same years, in Chutz LaAretz, Acharei is Machar Chodesh and K'doshim gets its HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM.

And, finally, there is one year-type when Acharei and K'doshim are read separately and neither is a special Shabbat. In such case, Acharei finally gets its haftara from Yechezkeil and K'doshim gets its HALO CHIVNEI

CHUSHIYIM.

EXCEPT IN YERUSHALAYIM, where there is a minhag to read HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM for Acharei and K'doshim, resulting in the Yechekeil haftara of Acharei NEVER being read. The reason given for this Jerusalem custom is that the haftara of Acharei is very negative towards Yerushalayim and so it was decided to skip it, in favor of HALO CHIVNEI CHUSHIYIM, reading it two weeks in a row.

(Question: When else is the same haftara read on consecutive Shabbatot in Yerushalayim?)

From A Candle by Day by Rabbi Shraga Silverstein z"l

We must take care that our reaction to one extreme is not so violent as to thrust us to the other.

"Unquestioning faith" is sometimes nothing more than an aversion to the mental effort that questioning requires.

Bringing the Prophets to Life

**Weekly insights into the Haftara
by Rabbi Nachman (Neil) Winkler**

Author of Bringing the Prophets to Life (Gefen Publ.)

**ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM - 9 p'sukim
- Amos 9:7-15 - very short haftara**

**ASHER BACHAR BANU MIKOL
HA'AMIM...**

Whenever one is honored with an Aliya to the Torah, that person stands before the scroll and, after opening the Sefer Torah, recites the bracha, thanking Hashem for having chosen the nation of Israel above other nations. This blessing is offered each morning, allowing us to articulate words of Torah that day. This 'choice' of Israel was established by G-d Himself at Har Sinai when He promised that Israel would be a GOY KADOSH, a holy nation for Him. Furthermore, this guarantee is found in many places throughout the Tanach, including in the Torah [see D'varim 7:6; 14:2], Sifrei Nevi'im [see Yishayahu 44:1-2 and elsewhere], as well as in the Ketuvim [see T'hilim 33:12; 135:4].

It is for this very reason that we are taken aback upon hearing the very first words of this week's haftara: HALO CHIV'NEI CHUSHIYIM ATEM LI... - "Behold you are no different to me than the nation of Cush..." - in

other words, in Hashem's eyes, we are the same as other nations. And so, we wonder: What happened to the 'chosenness' we were promised from G-d? What about the guarantee ASHER BACHAR BANU MIKOL HA'AMIM? And what, therefore, is the import of the bracha at all?

The harsh condemnation of Israel by the prophet Amos seems to erase the special and unique relationship Hashem promised to establish with His people and is, therefore, particularly difficult for us to understand. Which is why we must look back to the book's opening chapters that help us better understand the prophet's message. It is in those opening chapters that we find Amos berating the evil and the vice of Israel's neighboring states, decrying their immoral behavior and deeds that has G-d refusing to ignore. But the navi goes on to include the corruption of Samaria as well, comparing them to their sinful neighbors. And, in doing so, Amos declares G-d's determination to punish Israel as well, stating: "I have singled out you alone of all the families of the earth - That is why I will call you to account for all your iniquities!" Yes! Hashem's choice of His nation does not free us from any reprimand for disobedience but condemns us to punishment and chastisement for any corrupt ways - even more than he might castigate the 'non-chosen' nations.

How powerfully does Rav Yissachar Ya'akovson contend how the opening of our haftara was meant to be a "wake up call", urging each Israelite to understand that the special choice granted to our nation places additional responsibility on each member to harken to G-d's opening words of the (second) parasha: K'DOSHIM TIH-YU. HKB"H expects every individual to attain, and retain, the state of kedusha - sanctity - a state that depends upon more than following ritual practice or retaining a state of purity. Those mitzvot that follow G-d's call of K'DOSHIM TIH-YU are replete in commands of how to treat the poor, how to care for the unfortunate and, essentially, how to build an ethical and moral society.

Painfully, perhaps, Hashem might reluctantly be "forced" to regard us no differently than he does other peoples. But that is precisely why He reminds us K'DOSHIM TIH-YU! And that is also why BACHAR BANU MIKOL HA'AMIM, we alone were charged with the responsibility to act and model K'dusha. ✨



The fun way to go over the weekly sedra with your children, grandchildren, Shabbat guests

ACHAREI - K'DOSHIM



Kohen Gadol does almost all of Avodat Yom HaKippurim • Below the KG are two identical goats, upon which he drew lots... (see Sedra Summary) • The rest of the PPix relates to K'doshim: Shabbat candles are reminder to keep the Shabbat, which is attached to Reverence for parents and to Reverence for the Mikdash • B'samim is for Havdala, not our regular havdala, but between kosher and non-kosher animals and between us and other nations -

mentioned at the end of the sedra. [Some hold that this IS the source of the mitzva of havdala on Motza"Sh] • Mickey Mouse as the Sorcerer's Apprentice represents the prohibitions of divination, omens, and other "black arts" • and so does the crystal ball • heart in the Torah is a pictogram for Love thy fellow being a great Torah rule • Lifesaver is for the mitzva not to stand by idly while someone is in danger • Grapes and wheat refer to many agricultural mitzvot in the sedra - PE'AH, LEKET, and others • Thief is various prohibitions related to stealing • the zonkey is a reminder of the prohibition of cross breeding animals • Scale is weighing a 1 kilo weight against another 1 kilo weight, and they don't balance. Either the weights are off or the scale is off, or both. ASUR to use false weights and measures or even to possess them • Razor - prohibited to shave one's face with one • First 3 trees with fruit stand for the three years of ORLA, then the 4th year is marked KODESH - the fruit is KADOSH. 5th year's fruit is to eat • Photo of actor who played the character Tattoo on Fantasy Island, reminding us of the prohibition of tattooing • the stamp is of Helen Keller, who was both deaf and blind, which we find in a figurative sense in the pasuk that prohibits cursing the deaf and placing a stumbling block before the blind • On Sukkot we add into Birkat

HaMazon a petition to G-d, that He should restore the fallen SUKKAT DAVID. The Sukka of David is the Beit HaMikdash. The origin of this mini-prayer for Sukkot is found in the haftara this week • passenger paying cab driver for the ride - double fulfillment of the mitzva to pay someone you hired on time and the prohibition of delaying payment (the second of which is in K'doshim) • Issur of ELOHEI MASEICHA (play on words, obviously) • The haftara of Acharei-K'doshim begins with the word HALO. There is a picture of gold rods. The solid ones are marked NO and the hollow ones are marked YES. Corny, but resist groaning • The cartoon character is the Hollow Knight.

Message from the Haftara

*Rabbi Katriel (Kenneth) Brander
President and Rosh Hal'eshiva of
Ohr Torah Stone*

Amos's Vision Unfolding Before Our Eyes

ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM

There are moments when we feel as though the words of the prophets are unfolding all around us. Now is one of those times.

In this week's Haftara, the prophet Amos (9:11) dreams of a future day when the Jewish people will be

restored from exile. “On that day, I will set up again the fallen booth of David: I will mend its breaches and set up its ruins anew. I will build it firmly, as in the days of old”.

In Israel today we see building, road work and other construction projects all around us. As the running joke goes here, the new national bird is the (building) crane! When else in Jewish history have we witnessed such a restoration and rebuilding of the Jewish people as we are experiencing today?

The prophet envisions: “A time is coming, declares God, when the plower shall meet the reaper, and the treader of grapes, the one who holds the [bag of] seed; When the mountains shall drip wine and all the hills shall wave [with grain]. I will restore My people Israel. They shall rebuild ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine; they shall till gardens and eat their fruits” (9:13-14).

We live at a time when fine wines are produced in Israel, when once-ruined cities are full of life.

What was once only a wish has become the reality that we live and breathe every day.

As the Talmud in Sanhedrin (98a) shares, there is no more explicit manifestation of the Messianic era than the abundance of produce in the

Land. Israel, a land that less than a hundred years ago could not sustain its paltry population, can now sustain a population of over ten million.

“And I will plant them upon their soil, never again to be uprooted from the soil I have given them” (9:15).


All of these verses took on even more meaning for me last month, when we accompanied our son to the Bakum, the IDF Induction Center near Tel Aviv. All around us were yeshiva students, young talmidei chachamim, beginning their military service in song, in recognition of the role they are playing in bringing Amos’s words to complete fruition.

Each yeshiva gathered its students for a Siyum on a Masechet of Gemara, marking the moment with spiritual significance.

Of course, the prophecies of consolation have not yet been fully actualized. Amos speaks of our people being firmly planted on the Land – yet entire communities in Israel’s North and South remain displaced, struggling to regain emotional and economic stability. And just last week, thousands of acres of our Land were consumed by fire.

And perhaps most painfully, the Haftara, as interpreted by Metzudat David (on 9:13), foretells the tranquility for Israel’s returned captives - yet

our brothers and sisters still cry out to us from their captivity in Gaza, and our sons and daughters continue to fight and fall in the longest war this country has known.

But we have witnessed the fulfillment of many of the prophecies and, as the saying goes, “The people of Israel are not afraid of the long road”, as we continue toward the eventual fulfillment of the others. May it be soon that all the hopes and aspirations passed down to us from the prophets come to full fruition, with the restoration of peace, safety and well-being for all the Jewish people. 

Walk through the Parsha

with **Rabbi David Walk**



ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM

Unlike Any People

Towards the end of this week's first Torah reading, we begin a section of the Torah called the Holiness Code, at least that's what Bible critics call it. Even though I totally reject their 'criticism' of our Torah, I really like that epithet for chapters 18-23 of Vayikra (BTW they use that name for chapters 17-26). For me, these six chapters really delineate what we mean when we refer to the Jewish People as the Holy Nation.

To be 'holy' - KADOSH - is described

by some rabbinic authorities as to abstain from illicit sexual behavior (Rashi); to others it implies even curtailing permitted behavior to practice moderation in all ways (Ramban); while still others suggest that it demands that we imitate God (Rashbam). While all those answers have merit, I personally refrain from such a concise explanation. I think that one must read these chapters over and over again to achieve a sense of this great purpose and obligation.

However, right at the beginning of this Torah mandated project to be 'holy', we begin with a clear obligation to be different. At the outset, the Torah demands: Do not follow the practices of the land of Egypt, where you used to live, or follow the practices of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. You must not follow their customs (Vayikra 18:3). Be different!

Although there are a plethora of explanations for this double exhortation, I believe that the most straightforward approach is to demand that we not follow the sexual laxity of Egypt nor the idolatrous behavior of the Canaanites. But since we have the perspective of millennia of Jewish wanderings, I believe that we could legitimately claim that our verse demands that we don't keep up customs we found in our last home

nor adopt the conventions of the newest abode.

Okay, enough theory. In practical terms: What can we do and what can't we do? Must we somehow still look and behave like the Jews who left Egypt? Of course not! After all, I'm writing this on a computer and not chiselling it out in stone. Thank God!

The Code of Jewish Law (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Dei'ah 178:1) gives a relatively clear outline: One should not follow the customs of non-Jews (nor should one try to resemble them). One should not wear clothing that is particular to them [or their culture]; ...one should not build buildings - like the non-Jews' temples - so that large groups of people will enter them, like non-Jews do.

The Rama (Reb Moshe Isserles, who describes Ashkenazic practice) adds: Rather, one should be distinct from them in one's manner of dress and in all of one's actions. But all of these restrictions apply only to things that non-Jews do for the sake of sexual innuendo. These restrictions also apply to things that they do because of a custom or rule that does not have a logical reason, out of concern that these are "ways of the Amorites", and may come from idol worship or superstitions inherited from their ancestors. But things that they are accustomed to doing for a logical

purpose - such as their custom for expert doctors to wear particular clothing so that the doctors will be recognized as specialists - one is permitted to wear such clothing.

Okay! Religious or superstitious acts are a NO NO. However, well reasoned, logical behavior is fine.

Got it! We can put sirens on ambulances and police cars, but no crosses on shuls and it's fine if a black cat crosses your path (but don't walk under ladders, please, that's just stupid!).

But can I wear a necktie? We know that there are Chasidim who don't wear ties, but I think that since it has become a non-offensive way of showing that we are getting dressed up, it should be fine, and Rav Moshe Feinstein wrote: There is no necessity to wear clothing different from the Gentiles unless their dress is immodest (1953).

Can Americans celebrate Thanksgiving? Now, Thanksgiving is an interesting issue. According to Rav Herschel Schechter, Rav Soloveitchik ate a Thanksgiving meal with turkey. But I had a Rebbe in YU back in 1971, who demanded that we come to SHIUR on Thanksgiving. I was one of four who showed up, which angered my family, which was wrong of me, but I was a BAAL TESHUVA who didn't know better.

The Pachad Yitzchak (Rav Yitzchak Hutner) wrote that it was wrong to celebrate Thanksgiving, but Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, who was head of Ezras Torah (before Rav Moshe) had Thanksgiving on their calendar of MINHAGIM. Plus, to this very day the annual Agudas Yisrael convention is held on Thanksgiving weekend, and turkey is served. I lived in Atlantic City for a couple years when the Aguda convention was there, and later I lived in Stamford CT when it was held there. I guess they just followed me.

This brings me to the issue of sirens for Yom HaShoah & Yom HaZikaron. I grew up, of course, with 'moments of silence' (in the US, 'moments of silence' at sporting events are 20 seconds long). Here in Eretz Yisrael, for me the standing for the siren is a proper sign of memorial and respect for those who died AL KIDDUSH HASHEM, and whom we pledge to never forget.

However, every year we see videos of Chareidim ignoring the sirens and going about their business, because they see it as copying the greater Gentile world. Over the years, the established MINHAG is for the various religious communities to argue about it.

Forever we will ask if Herzl's dream of 'being a state like all states'

contradicts Yeshayahu's vision of the Jewish people being 'a light unto the nations' (Yeshayahu 42:6)? For me, I sincerely believe that they can be compatible, but may the debate continue until Mashiach Ben David comes, BIM-HEIRA B'YAMEINU! 🙏

Rav Kook Torah

by Rabbi

Chanan Morrison • www.ravkooktorah.com



Holiness in Physical Pleasure

“For three years the fruit shall be Orla, and may not be eaten. In the fourth year, all of the fruit shall be holy, for praising God” (Vayikra 19:23-24).

The Talmud in B'rachot 35a quotes this verse as the source for reciting a blessing over food: “Holy, for praising God – this teaches that [fruit and other foods] require a blessing before and after eating.”

The key word, Rav Kook noted, is KODESH – holiness. Even when we eat, even as we partake of worldly pleasures, we should be able to uncover holiness.

Holiness from physical pleasure?! How is that possible?

An Opportunity for Holiness

What is a b'racha? When we recite a blessing, we express our recognition that God is the ultimate Source of all pleasure. But there is a joy that is far greater than the sensory pleasures experienced when consuming food.

Eating is more than just nourishing our bodies. It is a chance to connect with our Creator and deepen our feelings of gratitude and appreciation. We should feel an inner joy when we realize that every form of physical pleasure provides us with an opportunity to uplift our spirits and bring holiness into our lives.

A blessing over food is not just about giving thanks for the physical pleasure we are about to enjoy. Each blessing should make us aware of a far greater gift: that even material pleasures can be a source of holiness!

In this way, the piece of fruit that we eat becomes KODESH HILULIM – “holy, for praising God.”

Adapted from Ein Eyah vol. II, p. 171



by Rabbi Dr Raymond Apple z"l

What to Bring to Shule

This could be a plea to congregants and visitors not to bring mobile phones to shule.

Not only does it break the laws of Shabbat, but can't you live without your mobile? Are you afraid that the world will come to an end if you can't remain in touch?

As I say, this could have been a plea to leave mobiles at home. But that is not quite the point I want to make.

Instead I want to comment on a verse in the sidra. "With this shall Aharon come into the sanctuary", says the Torah (Vayikra 16:3).

The Hebrew B'ZOT - "with this" - has an interesting gimatriya; the letters of ZOT add up to 408, which in turn is the total of three other words, TZOM, KOL, MAMON - "fasting, prayer and charity", each of which adds up to 136.

Those who worked this out had a message for the people of Aharon in every generation, that what they should bring to the sanctuary was a sincere, repentant and generous heart (not a word about phones!).

Very interesting. You cannot come to shule empty-handed.

But it is not material things you should bring. What you should bring is genuine spiritual preparation.

"Prepare to meet your God, O Israel", says Amos (4:12). Every special occasion requires preparation - Shabbat, Pesach, Rosh HaShana, Bar-Mitzva, marriage, death... and so does prayer.

The Psalmist asks (T'hilim 24), "Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord and who may stand in His holy place? He that has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not set his desire upon vanity or sworn deceitfully".

But what do you do if you have a mountain of mistakes on your back and are not sure God will accept your prayers?

Pray... that you may be able to pray, and that God may hearken to and help you.

The Holy Community

Synagogues often have names which tell you where the synagogue is located.

Perhaps illogically, the original name is sometimes maintained even when the synagogue has moved somewhere else.

Other synagogue names tell you the ideals which motivated the founders.

Examples are "Holy Congregation of Ohavei Shalom (Lovers of Peace)", "Holy Congregation of Emet V'Emunah (Truth and Faith)".

Note the opening phrase - K'HILA K'DOSHA, "Holy Congregation". Every synagogue incorporates these words in its name. It is not the synagogue building that is regarded as holy, but the congregation.

What makes a congregation holy? Its shared ethos, its values, its commitments, its hopes... above all, its unity.

When the Torah reading for this week says, V'AHAVTA L'REI'ACHA KAMOTHA, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18), it doesn't just have in mind the person who lives next to you, but your family and friends and certainly the members of your shule.

The moment that dissension breaks out in the congregation, it can hardly be a holy congregation any more.

The guardian of the congregational holiness is the rabbi, and his constant concern must be the harmony of the human beings who make up his congregation. -OZ

Y'HI ZICHRO BARUCH

Sedra Highlight

- Dr Jacob Solomon

ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM

You shall not hate your brother in your heart: (instead) you should reprove (him)... You must not take revenge or bear a grudge... you must love your neighbour as yourself (19:17-18).

Rabbi Akiva says that loving one's neighbour is a great principle of the Torah (Midrash Torat Kohanim 4:12). So why is the commandment of loving one's neighbour placed at the end, rather than at the beginning of the above list? Surely a person who genuinely loves someone as himself will not violate the previous mitzvot?

One possible approach is to look at the effects of hatred on the hater. As is well-known, there are individuals who go round with hefty files of people they "don't talk to". Others, given the slightest opportunity, will show you how they are "burnt up" with what so-and-so did to them, even many years after that person died. Another type specializes in "getting even" - what can I do to get my own back on the person who, for example, didn't invite me to the wedding, or who squeaked past me in the race for promotion at work.

These people have the following in common: they are damaging themselves at the same time as they plan

to hurt others. They are prisoners of their own hatred. They don't count their blessings: thanking the Almighty for all the things they do have - for example their health, home, family, and job. They don't even find out why they weren't invited or didn't get the pay rise. Instead they often become self-centered bundles of grumbles, incensed that the world is not devoted to advancing their needs and wants.

Such people have a basic personality problem. They are pre-occupied with their petty (and sometimes not so petty) grievances. They suffer sleepless nights, and cannot enjoy "small" everyday pleasures, such as the beauty of a sunset or the genuine smile of a small child. Many end up with stomach ulcers and high blood pressure. Such people are in fact hating their very selves! They cannot reasonably be expected to love others as themselves if they actively abuse their own lives to such a degree.

Therefore the Torah requires the individual to love himself or herself first. In the long run this will not be achieved by buying the latest car or by wearing the latest fashions. The Torah requires the individual to remove anger from your heart (Kohelet 11:12) - which includes hatred and the desire to get even. This is done by observing those "previous mitzvot": you should reprove: where

possible correct the situation assertively while allowing the individual to maintain his self-respect (see Rashi ad loc). And if unfortunately that person is of such evil character and behavior that he cannot come of the heading of 'your neighbour' (Rashbam), then keep out of his or her way. At any rate if nothing can be done, write off the loss - see it as water under the bridge. Don't throw away your health, wealth, and reputation on the high cost of getting even: namely planning revenge or bearing a grudge.

Only then one really loves oneself!
Only by loving oneself can one aspire to love others as oneself! 🏴‍☠️

The Weekly 'Hi All' by Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld

ACHAREI-K'DOSHIM 5783

Rav Shimon Shkop zt"l, one of our great rabbinic luminaries of the past century, raises an interesting question in the introduction to his masterful magnum opus on Choshen Mishpat, Sha'arei Yosher. On pasuk 19:2, "You shall be holy. For holy am I, HaShem, your Gd", the Midrash states (Vayikra Rabba 24:9) "Can you be holy like Me? This is why it continues, 'For I am Holy', to teach that My Sanctity is above yours." Given this declaration, how are we to understand the Biblical mandate of

"... and you shall walk in His Ways?" (D'varim 28:9). How is it possible to emulate Gd in His transcend holiness if the Almighty Himself asserts that His K'dusha is infinitely beyond ours? Indeed, how can we reconcile these diametrically opposed demands?

The Sha'arei Yosher offers a brilliant solution.

The entire "I" of a coarse and lowly person is restricted only to his substance and body. Above him is someone who feels that his "I" is a synthesis of body and soul. And above him is someone who can include in his "I" all of his household and family. Someone who walks according to the way of the Torah, his "I" includes the whole Jewish people... And there are more levels in this of a person who is whole, who can connect his soul to feel that all of the world and worlds are his "I", and he himself is only one small limb in all of creation. Then, his self-love helps him love ... all of creation.

In a word, as absurd as this may sound, our egos can actually teach us how to love. A selfish person can learn how to love by seeing himself as interconnected with everyone around them. For many of us, we experience this feeling with family. Rav Shimon Shkop reminds us that we can take this idea further and embrace an even larger definition of what "I" means; we can learn to identify ourselves

completely with the Jewish people, all of humanity, and even all living beings. This oceanic feeling that we are a part of a larger whole allows us to redefine ourselves. As such, the imperative to love others ("Love your neighbor...") becomes a magnificent command to rethink - reevaluate - who we really are.

Let us see how this profound insight plays out in the affairs of man.

The Arizal taught that before davening, one should say, "I accept upon myself the mitzva to love my fellow man like myself." The Tanya (ch. 32) writes that when man's primary joy is his neshama (and not his body), it is a straight and easy path towards fulfilling the mitzva V'AHAVTA L'REI'ACHA KAMOCHA, to love every Jewish soul, from the greatest to the smallest because the concept of neshama reminds us that all of our souls are rooted in HaShem. Our bodies may separate us, but in essence, we are all brothers!

Rav Eliezer Biderman, in his Torah Wellsprings (Acharei-K'doshim 5783), tells the following story. Reb Daniel Frish zt'l, was once in Belgium and saw that before Shacharit, Rebbe Yankele of Antwerp zt'l, (later to become the Pshevorsker Rebbe) went around to all the guests in the Beit Medrash, asking whether he could serve them a coffee or help them in some another way. When he

came to Reb Daniel Frish, Reb Daniel rebuked him and said, "It is improper to speak before Shacharit!" Reb Yankele replied, "Yungerman, do you think that when the poskim say one should say HAR-EINI M'KABEIL ALAI... before davening, it is merely a mantra? It means you should keep this mitzva literally!" Years later, Reb Daniel Frish commented that this conversation changed his entire outlook. For although it is an excellent practice not to speak before Shacharit, as that helps one daven with kavana, this shouldn't stop us from assisting a fellow Jew in need. Rebbe Eliezer Mendel of Lelov zt'l, said, "Helping your wife get the children dressed and ready for cheder is the best preparation for Shacharit." This great moral teaching to love your fellow Jew and overlook his faults is movingly captured in this event told by Rav Soloveitchik about Rav Kook. In the Rav's only trip to Israel in 1935, he visited the secular kibbutz, Kinneret, and was offered some fruit. He politely refused, assuming that the required ma'asrot had not been taken. He was then informed that the local rav takes care of this mitzva and that, in addition, the kitchen was also strictly kosher. Eager for some explanation, the Rav was told that some years back, Rav Kook visited the kibbutz over a Shabbat. He brought with him some wine and challa. Upon arrival and asking if a

minyan could be arranged for Shabbat, he was told that everyone would be working and would not be available. During Shabbat, the members of the kibbutz did not observe Shabbat at all. At the communal meals, Rav Kook joined with the kibbutz, made kiddush alone and ate his challa while all around the Shabbat laws were being violated. He did not say a word. The next morning, the situation was the same. Still, no word of rebuke from Rav Kook.

After Shabbat, when the kibbutz members joined for song and merriment, Rav Kook happily participated and danced with them. Soon, he found himself surrounded by crowds listening intently as he told them of his family and recounted his many experiences. The next morning, upon leaving, everyone came out to bid the Rav farewell. Rav Kook responded and said, L'HIT-RA'OT, See you soon, and may we eat one meal together." The next morning, all the kitchen dishes were thrown out and the kitchen was made kosher. The sincere and passionate love that Rav Kook had for every Jew was so palpable and evident that without even uttering a single word of disapproval, the members of this Shomer HaTza'ir kibbutz elected to ensure that their kitchen would become completely kosher.

As the Sha'arei Yosher taught. when a

Jew can expand his/her "I" to genuinely embrace the "Thou" and become a "we", good things can happen - even miracles! And it can all begin when, at the start of each day, we remember the Arizal's exhortation to recite, HAR-EINI M'KABEL ALAI the mitzva of V'AHAVTA L'REI-ACHA KAMOCHA - and mean it!

To conclude with one final story.

A wagon driver saw the renowned Slonimer chassid, Reb Moshe Minder zt'l, walking along the roadside, and offered him a ride. Reb Moshe replied that he wanted to walk. However, the driver insisted he comes on the wagon, so Reb Moshe acquiesced. On the wagon, Reb Moshe asked, "Why was it so important for you that I ride with you?" The wagon driver pointed to his ears and said, "These ears heard from Rebbe Moshe Kobriner that a day upon which you do not do chesed is a geshtorbiner tug, a dead day. The day is almost over, and I haven't yet done chesed. That's why I wanted you to ride with me." He didn't want the day to pass without doing chesed.

And neither should we! 🙌

K'DOSHIM

GM Vayikra 19:30 in K'doshim and Vayikra 26:2, the last pasuk in B'har, are identical p'sukim -

אֶת־שַׁבְּתֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וּבִקְדָשִׁי תִירָאוּ
אֲנִי ה' :

"Keep My Sabbaths and revere My sanctuary. I am God."

The gimatriya of each (3623) matches Chayei Sara's opening pasuk (B'reishit 23:1) -

וַיְהִי וַיֵּי שָׂרָה מֵאָה שָׁנָה וְעֶשְׂרִים
שָׁנָה וַיָּשָׁבַע שָׁנִים שְׁנֵי וַיֵּי שָׂרָה :

"Sara had lived to be 100+20+7 (127) years old.

[These were] the years of Sarah's life."

Let's take a look at a Rashi quoting the Midrash B'reishit Rabba that describes Sara Imeinu's special life. That Rashi is on the pasuk at the end of perek 24, when Yitzchak brings Rivka into his mother's tent, and the Midrash says that when Sara died, the specialness of her tent disappeared; but when Rivka came there, they returned.

...שָׁכַל זְמַן שֶׁשָּׂרָה קִיּוּמָה הָיָה נֵר דְלוּק מִמְעַרְבַּ שַׁבָּת
לְעַרְבַּ שַׁבָּת וּבְרָכָה מְלוּיָהּ צִטְטָה וְעַנְן קָשׁוּר עַל
הַחֶבֶל...

"...For while Sara was living, a light had been burning in the tent from one Shabbat eve to the next, there was

always a blessing in the dough (a miraculous increase) and a cloud was always hanging over the tent (as a divine protection)..."

That's a pretty nice summary of Sara's life, with the association with Shabbat and the Mikdash - Shabbat atmosphere, tent, cloud, light (Menora), special bread (Lechem HaPanim).

The life of SARA IMEINU was a prototype for both Shabbat and Mikdash - which brings us back to the pasuk from our sedra (and B'har).

