



אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאוצרו של
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

5779 - Parshas Kedoshim - Young Holiness

Parshas Kedoshim begins with a lofty command, "Be holy. Because I, Hashem your G-d, am holy." All the commentaries discuss and explain what this commandment entails. **In fact, it is surprisingly very achievable, even for the ordinary Jew.**

This important Parsha is not only important to read once a year, as Rashi tells us that this Parsha is read during Hakhel. Once in seven years, at the end of the shemita year, the entire Jewish population gathers in the Beis Hamikdash, and listens to the King of Israel as he reads the entire Sefer Devorim, and Parshas Kedoshim. At a time of a gathering of the entire population, there are many important mitzvos to learn and many important parshios. **Why then is Parshas Kedoshim chosen to be read at this unique moment - by the King of Israel?** Is it not too much of a lofty goal? How does this one commandment talk to every single member of the Jewish nation - men, women, and children?

My grandfather Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l once invited his father, the great gaon and Rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Torah Vadaath, Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l, to visit Yeshiva of South Shore in Hewlett. As Rav Yaakov approached a younger grade classroom, he noticed that the mezuzah incorrectly on the doorpost. Ideally, the mezuzah must be placed towards the top of the doorpost, but this mezuzah was placed low down on the doorpost.

Noticing Rav Yaakov's disapproval, the rebbe of the class explained why he placed the mezuzah that way. "When the young children walk in," he explained, "They are able to reach the mezuzah and give it a kiss, as is the accepted practice. But if the mezuzah would be high, the young boys would not be able to reach it!"

Rav Yaakov smiled. "Young boys must be taught at a young age to lift themselves up to kiss the mezuzah, and not to have the mezuzah lowered to them! Why don't you allow them to raise themselves up, by placing a small stool for them to climb onto and kiss the mezuzah?"

My grandfather Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l used to explain based upon the words of Rav Ahron Kotler zt"l. Yes it's true that there are many important parshios and laws in the Torah. **But there is one underlying theme which must play an integral part of the life of a Jew, and must drive his every action.** And that is, "Kedoshim Te'hiu - Be Holy." Every Jew, no matter what level he is on at the moment, must always strive to grow more, and be holier than he was the day before.

At the time of the gathering of all Jews, this underlying theme must be stressed to men women, and yes, even children. **Holiness is something we must constantly strive for.** Without it, we do not have a path to grow further. Kedusha must be the underlying theme in the life of every Jew - **both old and young alike.**

Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky is the Director of Advancement at Yeshiva of South Shore - בית בנימן. He is currently compiling the vast storehouse of all the Torah thoughts from his grandfather. If you have any stories to share from his grandfather, you can email him at skamenetzky@yoss.org.