



## *Parshas Kedoshim 2022, In our heart*

**The Parsha Perspective is in honor of Eretz Yisroel. May G-d protect our brave soldiers. May G-d return all the hostages in Gaza immediately.**

*The Parsha Perspective is in honor of the Refuah Shlema of HaRav Amitai Ben Shoshanna and those who need to experience a speedy and complete recovery with G-d's help.*

*The Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Hinda Bas Udl, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.*

Our Parsha begins with the statement: **"You shall be holy, for I, the L-rd your G-d, am holy."** This is followed by the commandment of many laws, including the Mitzvah of charity and equality before the law. Shabbat, morality, honesty in business, honor, awe of one's parents, and the sacredness of life.

We also have the commandment of **"Love your fellow as yourself."** According to Rabbi Akiva, this is a cardinal principle of the Torah. The great Hillel once said, **"this commandment is the entire Torah, and the rest is just commentary."**

However, a question comes to mind: Just before the essential Mitzvah of loving your fellow as yourself, the Pasuk writes (19:17) *"you shall not hate your brother in your heart."* But why does Torah add this Mitzvah if loving your fellow as yourself seemingly encompasses that feeling?

The Ibn Ezra (*Rav Avraham Ben Meir Ibn Ezra, a leading commentary from the Middle Ages*) answers this question by explaining the significance of loving a fellow Jew. He writes that the second Beis Hamikdash was destroyed in 70 CE because of the hate between Jews.

**Unity** is fundamental and necessary for the Jewish experience; hence the Torah mandates it from both sides. (19:17-18) "***You shall not hate your brother in your heart.- You shall love your fellow as yourself.***"

However, the Ramban (*Rav Moshe Ben Nachman, a leading scholar, philosopher, and Kabbalist*) gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He writes that the Torah is teaching us the best path to seeing the value and beauty of every Jewish soul.

The Torah begins by clarifying that even if a Jew is actively sinning and going against the Torah, we are not allowed to hate them. Rather, we must do what the Pasuk says (19:17) "*You shall surely rebuke your fellow, but not bear a sin on their account.*" Meaning, that if we think they will listen, we should rebuke and reprimand them for their sinful actions.

But if it's understood that our words will fall on deaf ears, we must hold our tongue and not rebuke. Because they will come to resent us for speaking out against their actions. But worse yet, gradually, we might resent them for their disregard of our words. Hence, the next step (19:17-18) "*Do not bear a sin on their account. Do not take revenge or bear a grudge against members of your people.*"

The Ramban continues that if we have no good reason to love this person, the Pasuk ends off "*love your fellow as yourself because I am G-d.*" These last words teach us that we must find within our souls the capacity to see the value of G-d's creation. Although they may seem or even be extremely different, at their core, they are the same as us, an essential part of G-d's design.

Unfortunately, we know the outcome when these steps are not followed, as we are in a mourning period. The Talmud in Yevamos (67b) details the horrific tragedy that happened to Rabbi Akiva's students.

All except for five of the **24,000** students died during the period between Pesach and Shavous for one reason. They did not have respect for each other despite their teacher declaring that it is the most fundamental to Judaism.

In our daily life, we must realize that a major aspect of being truly happy is not allowing hate to **stay** in our hearts. Whether right or wrong, deeply resenting or hating someone primary affects our happiness and well-being. For we begin to live off that dark energy and do things we never thought we would.

However, suppose we do not allow hate and animosity to seep into our hearts, we begin to realize that real happiness is a choice. In fact, the harder it is not to hate, the more experience G-d's love despite **our** many imperfections.

***“G-d does not prove His love for some by hating others. Neither, if we follow Him, may we.”***

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,  
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*