

## פרשת קדושים

I think that it is very strange. Twice in our Parshas Kedoshim, Rashi provides us with lists that are exactly the same in contexts that seem to be related. However, despite the initial similarity between those lists and their contexts, the Torah gives us disparate points of reference. How is this to be understood?

We are going to learn two separate verses and, initially, it will very easy to draw a comparison between them and not be surprised that they have commonality. However, when we examine the two verses with more precision and insight, we will find ourselves searching to find some missing pieces.

The first verse is found at the very beginning of our Parshas Kedoshim where we read (Vayikro Perek 19/Posuk 3):

אִישׁ אָמוּ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת שַׁבְּתוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ. אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

A man shall his mother and father fear and you should observe My Shabbosos; I am Hashem your G-d.

The second verse, a little later in this Perek (Posuk 32), reads:

מִפְּנֵי שִׁיבָה תִקּוּם וְהַדְרֹת פְּנֵי זָקֵן וְיִרְאתָ מֵאֵלֶּיךָ... לִקְרֹת אֲנִי ה':

From before the elder you should rise and give glory before the wise<sup>1</sup>; you shall fear Hashem your G-d, I am Hashem.

It is not at all difficult to see the inherent connection between these two verses. The Torah wishes us to honor and respect others and translates its wishes into Mitzvos.

The connection goes further, however. Because Rashi instructs us how that honor and respect is to be conveyed.

First, he writes (d.h. *ani Hashem E...lokeichem*) in connection to the first of these two verses, the Mitzvah to fear one's parents:

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<sup>1</sup> Rashi writes:

אין זקן אלא שקנה חכמה:

The term 'Zaken' refers to one who has acquired wisdom.

איזהו מורא, לא ישב במקומו ולא ידבר במקומו ולא יסתור את דבריו. ואיזהו כבוד, מאכיל ומשקה, מלביש ומנעיל, מכניס ומוציא:

What comprises the Mitzvah of 'fear'? Do not sit in his place, do not speak instead of him, and do not contradict him.

What comprises honor? Feed him, give him drink, dress him and help him put on his shoes; help him reach his destination and help him leave it.

It certainly would seem appropriate to summarize and say that מורא, the 'fear' that we are to have, refers to that which we should not do whereas כבוד refers to the actions that we are to undertake.

That is מורא comprises prohibitions and כבוד comprises actions.

This summary is in consonance with the Mitzvah of כבוד שבת that Rambam explains in his Hilchos Shabbos. He writes there (Perek 30/Halachos 2-3) how this Mitzvah of honoring Shabbos is to be fulfilled:

איזהו כבוד זה שאמרו חכמים שמצוה על אדם לרחוץ פניו ידיו ורגליו בחמין בערב שבת מפני כבוד השבת ומתעטף בציצית ויושב בכבוד ראש מיחל להקבלת פני השבת כמו שהוא יוצא לקראת המלך...

ומכבוד השבת שילבש כסות נקיה, ולא יהיה מלבוש החול כמלבוש השבת...

What comprises the honor [that one is to give to Shabbos]? It is what the Chachamim said, 'It is a Mitzvah for a person to wash his face, hands and feet with hot water on Erev Shabbos in order to give honor to Shabbos. He puts on his cloak with Tzitzis and sits solemnly anticipating to welcome Shabbos as he would do to go and greet the king.

An aspect of *Kavod Shabbos* is to wear clean clothing and that one's Shabbos clothing should not be like one's weekday clothing.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Rambam continues there with other aspects of *Kavod Shabbos*.

Additionally, in Halachah 7, Rambam tells us the nature of *Oneg Shabbos*. He writes: איזה הוא עונג זה שאמרו חכמים שצריך לתקן תבשיל שמן ביותר ומשקה מבושם לשבת הכל לפי ממונו של אדם, וכל המרבה בהוצאת שבת ובתיקון מאכלים רבים וטובים הרי זה משובח... What comprises *Oneg Shabbos*? That is what the Chachamim said that one should prepare a particular succulent cooked for Shabbos and a spiced drink

Let us now learn Rashi on the verse of our second focus, regarding our relationship to Chachamim.

He writes:

והדרת פני זקן - איזהו הדור, לא ישב במקומו ולא ידבר במקומו ולא יסתור את דבריו.

*Give glory before the wise* – What comprises that glory? Do not sit in his place, do not speak instead of him and do not contradict his words?

The problem is obvious. We read the description of required behaviors regarding one's parents and regarding *chachamim* and we find them to be exactly the same. However, in regards to one's parents, our adherence to those behaviors is called *מורא*, fear and in regards to *chachamim*, our adherence to those behaviors is called *הידור*, glorification. How is that to be understood?

And the problem becomes more entangled.

We read in Parshas Voeschanan (D'vorim Perek 6/Posuk 13):

אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא וְאֶתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבְשֵׁמוֹ תִשָּׁבַע:

Fear Hashem your G-d; serve Him and in His Name you shall take an oath.

We read in Masseches Pesachim (22 b):

תניא: שמעון העמסוני, ואמרי לה נחמיה העמסוני, היה דורש כל אתים שבתורה. כיון שהגיע לאת ה' א...ל'קיר תירא - פירש. אמרו לו תלמידיו: רבי, כל אתים שדרשת מה תהא עליהן? - אמר להם: כשם שקבלתי שכר על הדרישה, כך אני מקבל שכר על הפרישה. עד שבא רבי עקיבא ודרש: את ה' א...ל'קיר תירא - לרבות תלמידי חכמים.

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for Shabbos – according to one's wealth. One who spends more for Shabbos and for better foods that are abundant and better, that is praiseworthy.

That is *Oneg Shabbos* is having enjoyment on Shabbos whereas *Kavod Shabbos* is the preparations that one makes prior to Shabbos.

Obviously, the cooking that one does is done before Shabbos but its goal is to have the food for Shabbos.

The Braisa taught: Shimon the Amsoni, and some say it was Nechemia the Amsoni, would interpret the word <sup>3</sup>את each time it appears in the Torah.

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<sup>3</sup> This discussion dealing with interpreting the word את requires an introduction because it seems to contradict what we were taught when we began to learn Chumash.

When we began to learn Chumash and we came across the word *es* we were likely told ‘it isn’t translated’. Or perhaps we were told, as I was, ‘it’s understood’ – and I had no understanding at all of what ‘it is understood’ was supposed to mean.

If we had grammarians as teachers, and we were a little older, we were told that the word *es* indicates a direct object. If we were as sophisticated as the grammar-laden teacher hoped that we were, perhaps we noted the many, many times in the Torah where there was a direct object and the word את was absent.

The bottom line was the same – ‘the word *es* has no meaning’.

And all of that is incorrect, as obviously the Gemara here indicates.

So now let us gain some more understanding.

We all know if we see the word איתך, for example, that it means ‘with you’. We recognize the suffix *cha* as meaning ‘you’ or ‘yours’.

What is the basis of the first part of the word? It is את. So, if איתך comes from the word את, we see that *es* does have meaning.

In fact, let’s look at the very first verse first in the Torah (B’reishis Perek 1/Posuk 1) that reads:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים...לְקִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

In the beginning, G-d created the heavens and the earth.

And now let us learn another verse (ibid. Posuk 14) from the fourth day of Creation:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים...לְקִים יְהִי מְאֹרֹת בְּרִקְיעַ הַשָּׁמַיִם לְהַבְדִּיל בֵּין הַיּוֹם וּבֵין הַלַּיְלָה וְהָיוּ לְאֹתוֹת וּלְמוֹעֲדִים וּלְיָמִים וּשְׁנָיִם:

G-d said, “Let there be lights in the heavens to distinguish between the day and between the night; they will be for signs, and special occasions and for days and for years.

Rashi writes:

When he came to the verse *es Hashem E...lokecha tira* – you shall fear G-d, he distanced himself from explaining the word *es* any time in the Torah<sup>4</sup>.

His students said to him, ‘Rebbe, all the other interpretations of the word *es* throughout the Torah that you interpreted – what about them?’ He said to them, ‘Just like I received reward for their interpretation so will I receive reward for my distancing myself from their interpretation.

This was until Rabi Akiva came and interpreted: *es Hashem E...lokecha tira* – this comes to include Talmidei Chachamim.

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יהי מארת וגו' - מיום ראשון נבראו, וברביעי צוה עליהם להתלות ברקיע, וכן כל תולדות שמים וארץ נבראו מיום ראשון, וכל אחד ואחד נקבע ביום שנגזר עליו, הוא שכתוב את השמים, לרבות תולדותיהם, ואת הארץ, לרבות תולדותיה:

*Let there be lights* – They were created on the first day. On the fourth day Hashem commanded that they be hung in the sky. And so it was with all that came about from the heavens and the earth – they were created on the first day and all were fixed in their proper place on the day for which it was decreed. This is learned from what is written **את השמים** - this comes to include all that came *with* the heavens and from what is written **את הארץ** - to include all of that came *with* the land.

Thus, it is clear that the word **את** has a meaning even though the meaning is not always apparent. Rabi Nechemia’s interpretation was based on that premise – until he came to a place where he thought it theologically impossible to provide an explanation. What could be joined with the fear of G-d?

Rabi Akiva taught that even theologically, such an interpretation was appropriate. The fear of Talmidei Chachamim is appropriately joined with the fear of G-d!

Regarding the theological propriety of such an interpretation, see Masseches Kiddushin 32 b where we read:

נאמר איש איש אמו ואביו תיראו, ונאמר: את ה' א...ל'קיר תירא ואותו תעבוד, השוה הכתוב מוראת אב ואם למוראת המקום

It says ‘A man should fear his mother and his father’ and it says, ‘You should fear Hashem your G-d’ and you should serve Him’. The Torah compares the fear of parents to the fear of the Omnipresent.

<sup>4</sup> Rashi writes:

פירש מכולן, וחזר בו מכל ריבויין שדרש, דמדהא לאו לרבויהא אתא - כולהו נמי לאו לרבויהא אתו.  
He distanced himself from all of them. He retracted all of the interpretations that he made. [His reasoning was] that since this instance of **את** does not come to add anything, none of them come to add.

If we did not have the interpretation of Rabi Akiva, perhaps we would have attempted to find some common ground between the 'fear' that is written in regard to parents and the 'glorification' that is said in regard to Chachamim.

But now that we have a separate verse telling us to fear the Chachamim, why shouldn't the behaviors that indicate the fear of parents be described as indicating the fear of Chachamim? Why should the very behaviors that indicate fear in the context of parents indicate glorification in the context of chachamim?

Let us begin our quest for understanding by examining the wider context of each of these verses.

Regarding the verse

אִישׁ אָמוּ וְאָבִיו תִּירָאוּ וְאֶת שַׁבָּתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

A man shall fear his mother and father and you should all observe My Shabbos; I am Hashem your G-d

we note that first the Ribbono Shel Olom designates Himself as being Holy and then we are commanded to fear our parents with the Mitzvah of Shabbos following directly afterwards.

After giving the Mitzvah of Shabbos the Torah proceeds to warn us against various types of idolatry as read (Posuk 4):

אַל תִּפְנוּ אֶל הָאֱלִילִים וְאֵלֵהֶי מִסֵּכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

Do not turn to false gods and do not make molten gods for yourselves; I am Hashem your G-d.

Let us see that same wider context of the second Mitzvah we are studying. We read:

מִפְּנֵי שִׂיבָה תִקּוּם וְהַדְרַת פְּנֵי זָקֵן וְיִרְאַת מַאֲ... לִיקִירָה אֲנִי ה':

From before the elder you should rise and give glory before the wise; you shall fear Hashem your G-d, I am Hashem.

Two verses before this verse, the Torah commands us once again regarding Shabbos. We read (Posuk 30):

אֶת שַׁבָּתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ וּמִקֹּדְשֵׁי תִירָאוּ אֲנִי ה':

Observe My Shabbosos and you shall fear My Sanctuary; I am Hashem.

Then we read (Posuk 30) which focusses upon specific types of witchcraft, the Halachos of which are themselves subsumed under the category of *Avoda Zara*<sup>5</sup>:

אַל תִּפְנוּ אֶל הָאֲבֹת וְאֶל הַיִּדְעֹנִים אֶל תִּבְקְשׁוּ לְטַמְּאָהּ בָּהֶם אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

Do not turn to the *ovos* or to the *gid'o'nim*; do not seek to be defiled by them; I am Hashem your G-d<sup>6</sup>.

It would almost seem that these two sections are mirror images of one another. What do the reversed orders that they possess come to teach us?

Let's organize the differences visually:

איש אמו ואביו תיראו	והדרת פני זקן
Sanctity	Shabbos
Parents	Sanctity
Shabbos	Idolatry
Idolatry	Chachamim

As we continue, we will begin to use the term 'awe' in regards to the 'fear' that the Torah commands to have of our parents. The justification for the use of that term is found in Rambam who expands upon the Gemara in Kiddushin that we saw above.

Rambam writes (Hilchos Mamrim Perek 6/Halachah 1):

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<sup>5</sup> Both of these Halachos are found in Hilchos Avoda Zara of Mishneh Torah LaRambam, Perek 6/Halachah 2.

<sup>6</sup> Rashi explains:

אל תפנו אל האבת - אזהרה לבעל אוב וידעוני. בעל אוב זה פיתום המדבר משחיו. וידעוני מכניס עצם חיה ששמה ידוע לתוך פיו והעצם מדבר:

*Do not turn to the Ovos* – this is a warning regarding the prohibition of *ov* and *gid'o'ni*. The Ba'al Ov is the *pithom* who speaks from his armpit. The *Yid'o'ni* places a bone from the animal whose name is *yi'do'a* and the bone speaks.

כבוד אב ואם מצות עשה גדולה וכן מורא אב ואם שקל אותן הכתוב בכבודו ובמוראו, כתוב (שמות כ"ב<sup>7</sup>) כבד את אביך ואת אמך וכתוב (משלי ג/ט<sup>8</sup>) כבד את ה' מהונך, ובאביו ואמו כתוב איש אמו ואביו תיראו וכתוב את ה' א...ל"קיר תירא, כדרך שצוה על כבוד שמו הגדול ומוראו כך צוה על כבודם ומוראם.

Honoring one's father and mother is a great *Mitzvas Aseh*; the same is true of fearing one's father and mother. The Torah has given them the weight of the honor and fear that we give to G-d.

The Torah writes, 'Honor your father and mother' and it writes, 'Honor Hashem from your wealth'.

Regarding one's father and mother it says, 'A man shall fear his mother and father' and regarding Hashem it says, 'You shall fear Hashem your G-d'.

That is, just like the way that Hashem commanded to give honor and fear before His Great Name, in the same way Hashem commanded regarding their honor and their fear.

Rambam defines the nature of 'fear of G-d' in Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah (Perek 2/Halachah 2) and writes:

והיאך היא הדרך...ליראתו, בשעה שיתבונן האדם במעשיו וברואיו הנפלאים הגדולים ויראה מהן חכמתו שאין לה ערך ולא קץ....מיד הוא נרתע לאחוריו ויפחד ויודע שהוא בריה קטנה שפלה אפלה עומדת בדעת קלה מעוטה לפני תמים דעות, כמו שאמר דוד (תהילים ח/ה<sup>9</sup>) כי אראה שמיר מעשה אצבעותיך מה אנוש כי תזכרנו...

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<sup>7</sup> The entire verse reads:

כְּבֹד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ לְמַעַן יָאָרְכוּן יְמֵיךָ עַל הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר ה' א...ל"קיר נָתַן לָךְ:  
Honor your father and your father in order that your days on the ground that Hashem your G-d gives you will be lengthened

<sup>8</sup> The entire verse reads:

כְּבֹד אֶת ה' מֵהוֹנֶךָ וּמֵרֵאשִׁית כָּל תְּבוּאֹתֶיךָ:  
Honor G-d from your wealth and from the first of your produce.

<sup>9</sup> The entire verse reads:

מָה אָנוֹשׁ כִּי תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבֶן אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ:  
What is man that You should remember him? What is the son of man that you note him?

What is the way to come to fear Him? When a person considers His deeds and His wondrous and great creations and sees in them His Wisdom which cannot be assessed and is infinite, he immediately is frightened and steps back and is afraid and knows that he is a tiny, lowly and darkened creature who has little knowledge before Him Whose knowledge is complete.

This is like Dovid HaMelech said, 'When I see Your heavens, the acts of Your fingers...What is man that You remember him?'

Thus one is awestruck when contemplating all of Creation and viewing himself as he is: small and seemingly inconsequential in G-d's vast universe, overwhelmed by His greatness.

And, so, when speaking about מורא שמים we speak of the 'awe of G-d' that we are to have. The Rambam teaches us clearly that similarly we are to have an 'awe of parents' even though, of course, the reason for that awe is not comparable to the reason for our awe of G-d.

We will now begin to trace the steps that the Torah has put before us regarding awe of parents.

'Awe' implies being thunderstruck and overwhelmed; in its extreme awe is the recognition that the one before you is all-capable and has no limitations whatsoever.

When does a person first come to such a sense of another being having no limitations? The answer is known to us all. A child sees its parents as all-capable, without having any limits whatsoever. Of course, as we mature and become more intelligent we become aware that such an initial sense was in error.

But, we may ask, since such is a natural part of human development, part of Hashem's Creation, why did He Yisborach have us begin our lives with such an illusion?<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> I assume that all of our readers are aware that when we ask 'Why did Hashem do something?' we do not mean to presume that we understand His ways. We are doing our best, though, to get insight into the understandings that He wants us to have through our study of the Torah that He gave us.

Sefer HaChinuch (Parshas Yisro Mitzvah 33) provides us with an approach to answer this question as we read about the Mitzvah of Kibbud Av Va'em:

משרשי מצוה זו, שראוי לו לאדם שיכיר ויגמול חסד למי שעשה עמו טובה, ולא יהיה נבל ומתנכר וכפוי טובה, שזו מידה רעה ומאוסה בתכלית לפני אלקים ואנשים. ושיתן אל לבו כי האב והאם הם סיבת היותו בעולם, ועל כן באמת ראוי לו לעשות להם כל כבוד וכל תועלת שיוכל, כי הם הביאוהו לעולם, גם יגעו בו כמה יגיעות בקטנותו. וכשיקבע זאת המדה בנפשו יעלה ממנה להכיר טובת הא...ל ברוך הוא, שהוא סיבתו וסיבת כל אבותיו עד אדם הראשון, ושהוציאו לאויר העולם וסיפק צרכו כל ימיו, והעמידו על מתכונתו ושלימות אבריו, ונתן בו נפש יודעת ומשכלת, שאלולי הנפש שחננו האל יהיה כסוס כפרד אין הבין, ויערוך במחשבתו כמה וכמה ראוי לו להזהר בעבודתו ברוך הוא.

Among the roots of this Mitzvah is that it is appropriate for a person to recognize and to deal kindly with one who did good for him. One should not be despicable and deny the good that he received. Such is a completely bad and disgusting trait whether in relationship to G-d or to man. One should attend to the fact that a father and mother are the cause of his existence in the world and therefore it is truly proper for him to give them honor and help them as much as he can. His parents brought him into this world and they worked hard for his benefit when he was small.

When a person affixes this trait into his soul he will then be able to acknowledge the good he receives from G-d. G-d is the cause for his existence and that of his fathers all the way back until Odom HoRishon. G-d brings the person out from the mother's womb into the air of the world and provides him with all of his needs for his entire life. G-d brought him to be a health-bodied person and gave completion to his body. G-d gave him his soul which is intelligent and thinking because were it not that G-d has favored man with a soul, man would be like the horse and the mule that have no understanding. Therefore a person should arrange his thoughts to know how much he must be careful in the service of G-d.

Of course the Mitzvah of honoring and being in awe of one's parents and honoring and being in awe of Hashem are only applicable when a person reaches the age of Mitzvos. But, there is a natural progression, Sefer HaChinuch teaches, from our relationship with our parents to our relationship with G-d.

Our relationship with parents is the natural way that we come to appreciate HaKodosh Boruch Hu. A child doesn't need to be told that he is dependent on his parents. That is axiomatic. There is no other way to see it.

And as that axiom becomes engrained within us we are prepared to recognize the Providence of G-d which goes far beyond the providence of our parents, quantitatively and qualitatively.

That Divine Providence, G-d's *Hashgacha P'ratis*, is also natural. It is built-in to the system. As Avraham Ovinu said and Hashem responded (Midrash B'reishis Rabba Parshata 39/1):

שהיה אבינו אברהם אומר תאמר שהעולם הזה בלא מנהיג, היציץ עליו הקדוש ברוך  
הוא ואמר לו אני הוא בעל העולם:

Avraham Ovinu said, 'Can you say that this world is without a Leader?'  
Hashem looked at him and said to him, 'I am the Master of the world.'

The progression begins with the earliest and most primitive level of awareness and then grows in sophistication until it can recognize G-d's majesty.

Once that majesty is recognized, then G-d's mastery over time is understood. That mastery is expressed with the Mitzvah of Shabbos that is totally independent of man's intervention.

Yom Tovim, our *Moadim*, require human intervention to be realized. Beis Din decides, based on the parameters that the Torah sets for it, when the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nissan will be to celebrate the Yom Tov of Pesach and to fulfil the Mitzvah of Matzah and to be liable for the punishment of *koreis* for eating Chometz.

But Shabbos Kodesh is independent of mankind. It is part of the nature that Hashem imbued in the world and thus Shabbos is part and parcel of *Maaseh B'reishis*. In fact, when we recite the words:

ברוך עושה בראשית

Blessed is He Who made 'the Beginning,

the Vilna Gaon teaches that phrase refers to the creation of time.

Since in this progression I recognize the inherent superiority of G-d over all of mankind, even over our parents, I understand quite well the teaching that our

Chachamim learned from the Torah's joining the Mitzvos of awe of parents and Shabbos observance. Rashi explains that *limmud*:

ואת שבתתי תשמרו - סמך שמירת שבת למורא אב, לומר אף על פי שהזהרתך על מורא אב, אם יאמר לך חלל את השבת אל תשמע לו, וכן בשאר כל המצות:

אני ה' א...ל"קיכם - אתה ואביך חייבים בכבודי, לפיכך לא תשמע לו לבטל את דברי.

*Observe My Shabbosos* – The Torah juxtaposed Shabbos observance with awe of parents to teach that even though Hashem warned you regarding the awe you are to have before your parents, if your parent says to you, 'violate Shabbos' - do not listen to your parent. And it is the same with all of the other Mitzvos.

*I am Hashem your G-d* – You and your father are obligated to honor Me. Therefore do not listen to your father to nullify My Word.

This progression through the path of evidentiary nature concludes with the prohibition of idolatry.

We note that the Torah chooses a unique way to connote idolatry in the verse:

אַל תִּפְנוּ אֶל הָאֱלִילִים וְאֵלֵהֶי מִסֶּכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם אֲנִי ה' אֶל...ל"קיכם:

Do not turn to false gods and do not make molten gods for yourselves; I am Hashem your G-d.

Why does the Torah use the term *אלילים* to indicate false gods? The Torah has other terminology to denote *Avoda Zarah*. Rashi explains:

אל תפנו אל האלילים -...אלילים לשון אל, כלא הוא חשוב:

*Do not turn to false gods* – *Elilim* is an expression of *al* – 'no'. They are *not* important.

The choice of the term *אלילים* in the context of the progression that we are studying was deliberate and comes to fit in with the context.

Once, through one's parents, we become ready to recognize G-d's total and all-encompassing reign, over our lives and over our time, it is evident and without need for elaboration to say that idolatry is an absolute non-entity. Once we have

witnessed the results of parental providence and then Divine Providence, idols are truly 'nothing'.

This entire progression is true when we see the world through the developmental nature of mankind, beginning with birth and tracing the various stages that the Torah enumerates, one after the other.

However, there is an additional way that people develop when they come to realizations and awareness on their own. The end result is the same as when the progression is natural but the means to reaching that result is quite different when the progression is not elicited from the nature of all humans but from the exercise of one's intellectual capacities.

In the second approach that the Torah gives us connecting us to the glorification of the Chachamim, Shabbos is the starting point, followed immediately by the concept of holiness as symbolized by the Mishkan and the Beis HaMikdosh.

We read:

אֶת שַׁבְּתוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וּמִקְדָּשִׁי תִירָאוּ אֲנִי ה' :

Observe My Shabbosos and you shall fear My Sanctuary; I am Hashem.

When the starting point is Shabbos observance, the psychology is very different than when it is the result of later stages.

Shabbos is restrictive. For the uninitiated, in particular, it may seem like a prison with its many prohibitions.

But then a thinking person will try to understand - what could the point of all of those restrictions and prohibitions be? Why is it necessary that once a week my lifestyle has to undergo a drastic change?

And at that point the thinking person will come to examine the meaning and implications of *Kedusha* – sanctity. The thinking person will see the Ramban that opens our Parshas Kedoshim.

Ramban is commenting of the verse (Vayikro Perek 19/Posuk 2):

דַּבֵּר אֶל כָּל עַדְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם קְדָשִׁים תִּהְיוּ כִּי קְדוֹשׁ אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

Speak to the entire congregation of B'nei Yisroel and you shall say to them,  
'You shall be holy because I Hashem your G-d am holy.

Ramban writes:

בא הכתוב, אחרי שפרט האיסורים שאסר אותם לגמרי, וצוה בדבר כללי שנהיה  
פרושים מן המותרות.

The verse comes, following the specification of prohibitions in previous Parshos where some matters were forbidden entirely, and commands here a general Mitzvah – we should separate ourselves from excessiveness.

The thinking person will understand that Shabbos is holy<sup>11</sup> because it separates us from some of the excesses of our weekday lives.

We find many statements in our *Mesorah* that express this inherent nature of *Kedushah*. Two of the pithiest ones among them are expressed by Radak in Sefer Yeshaya (Perek 56/Posuk 2) and Rabbenu Bachaye in our Parshas Kedoshim (Perek 19/Posuk 2).

The former writes:

כל לשון קדושה הוא ענין הבדלו מאחר במעלה

Every expression of *kedushah* deals how one thing is distinguished from another in terms of their level.

The latter writes:

לשון קדושה הוא ענין פרישות והבדל

The word *Kedushah* implies separation and distinction.

What seems first to be restricting, limiting and punishing is eventually understood to be an act of freedom, releasing a person from the bonds to which he is tied from the habituations of everyday life and allowing for a fresh and new perspective, a perspective that is meant to enhance life greatly.

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<sup>11</sup> We read in Parshas B'reishis (Perek 2/Posuk 3):

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים... לְקִיּוֹם אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּו שְׁבִעַת מְכַל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים... לְעִשׂוֹת:  
Hashem blessed the Seventh Day and He sanctified it because on it He stopped from all of His *melacha* that G-d created to do.

That fresh perspective allows one to see G-d in a different light and to understand that His ultimate and unmatched sanctity is the ultimate freedom to do what is correct, unencumbered by outside pressures and influences that may cause a person to veer away from that which is correct and proper.

When the nature of sanctity becomes understood, then the individual is able to progress to the next level of understanding and comprehension which leads to the all-inclusive ban on any type of idolatry and its appurtenances.

What is the sanctity-based realization that will bring the individual who pursues truth to fully accept and endorse the ban against idolatry? The answer is found in Masseches Sanhedrin (63 b) where we learn:

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: יודעין היו ישראל בעבודה זרה שאין בה ממש, ולא עבדו  
עבודה זרה אלא להתיר להם עריות בפרהסיא

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: Israel knew that idol worship had no substance to it; they only practiced idolatry to permit for themselves public immorality and promiscuity<sup>12</sup>.

What does Rashi explain at the beginning of our Parshas Kedoshim regarding the implication of

קדושים תהיו

You shall be holy?

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<sup>12</sup> Rashi writes there:

אלא להתיר להם עריות בפרהסיא - שהיה יצרן תקפן על עריות, אמרו: נפרוק כל עול תורה מעלינו  
ואל יוכיחונו על העריות, אבל על עבודה זרה לא תקפן יצרן.

*Only to permit for themselves public immorality and promiscuity* – They had a strong *yetzer ha'ra* for promiscuity. They said, 'Let us remove the yoke of Torah from upon ourselves and then they will not rebuke us for promiscuity. However, they did not have a strong *yetzer ha'ra* for idolatry.

However, see Masseches Yoma 69 b where it seems that there is an opposing approach which holds that during the epoch of the First Beis HaMikdash there was a strong *yetzer ha'ra* for idolatry.

קדשים תהיו - הוו פרושים מן העריות ומן העבירה, שכל מקום שאתה מוצא גדר ערוה אתה מוצא קדושה, אשה זונה וחללה וגו' אני ה' מקדשכם, (ויקרא כא/ז-ח<sup>13</sup>) ולא יחלל זרעו אני ה' מקדשו (ויקרא כא/טו<sup>14</sup>) קדושים יהיו אשה זונה וחללה וגו' (ויקרא כא/ו-ז):

*You shall be holy* – You shall be separated from promiscuity and from sin. Wherever you find a separation from promiscuity, you find sanctity. The Torah writes, 'A Kohen shall not marry a promiscuous woman or one born from a forbidden relationship' and it says, 'I am Hashem Who sanctifies you'. It says, 'Do no profane your seed, I am Hashem Who sanctifies him'. 'They shall be holy' and 'A promiscuous woman and one born from a forbidden relationship etc.'

And now we come to this final stage of the development of the thinking and contemplative individual.

One wonders: who revealed these truths to me? From where did I learn not only the behavioral statutes but also their underlying meaning and message? From where did I get incontrovertible understanding about sanctity and the freedom that it brings? What source gave me the strength to turn my back on false beliefs together with the behaviors that accompanied them? What brought me to undergo

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<sup>13</sup> These verses, and the one that will be cited later, read in their entirety:

קדשים יהיו לא...ל'קיהם ולא יחללו שם א...ל'קיהם כי את אשי ה' ל'חם א...ל'קיהם הם מקריבם  
והיו קדש: אשה זנה וחללה לא יקחו ואשה גרושה מאישה לא יקחו כי קדש הוא לא...ל'קיו: וקדשתו  
כי את ל'חם א...ל'קיהם הוא מקריב קדש יהיה לך כי קדוש אני ה' מקדשכם:

The Kohanim shall be holy to their G-d and should not profane the Name of their G-d because they offer the burnt-offerings of G-d, the bread of their G-d they offer and they should be holy. They should not marry a promiscuous woman nor one born from a forbidden relationship; they should not marry a woman divorced from her husband because the Kohen is holy to his G-d. The Kohen should be sanctified because he offers the bread of your G-d; he shall be holy to you because I Hashem sanctify you.

<sup>14</sup> This verse reads in its entirety:

ולא יחלל זרעו בעמיו כי אני ה' מקדשו:

The Kohen shall not profane his seed among his people because I G-d sanctify him.

a thoughtful personal change, one that was internal, and not only a change of my outward behavior?

And I know the answer.

The Talmidei Chachamim, some greater and some less great, some universally acknowledged and others whose reputation was confined to the classroom in which they taught - they were the ones who brought me to the place that I have reached.

And since I am eternally grateful for the indelible lessons with which they provided me and for the guidance, intellectually and behaviorally which they bestowed upon me and the support that they offered as I found my own particular path, can I imagine not glorifying them?

My appreciation knows no bounds and when I read that the Torah commands:

וְהִדַּרְתָּ פָנָי זָקֵן

Give glory before the wise

I find it so simple to identify with that commandment. It is natural for me to glorify them as I come to the realization that without their accompaniment and guidance I would not have reached the place to where I have arrived.

And now the question that I have is, 'What is the best way to express that *hiddur*, that glorification?'

I contemplate all sorts of ideas. Do I give them money or make a celebration for them. Do I dedicate buildings in their honor if I have the means? Certainly all of those options and more are honor-giving.

But before making my own decisions, I remember what these *Z'keinim* have always taught me: If you want to know what Hashem wants from you, look in the Torah; it is all there. That is what the Mishnah (Masseches Ovos Perek 5/Mishnah 22) teaches us:

בן בג בג אומר הפוך בה והפוך בה דכולה בה:

Ben Bag Bag says, 'Turn it over and over, look at the Torah from all of its aspects; everything that you need to know is in it.'

So let us look once more at the Posuk in question and see a larger section of it:

וְהִדַּרְתָּ פָנֶיךָ זָקֵן וְיִרְאַתְךָ מֵאֵל...לִיקִירָה אֲנִי ה':

Give glory before the wise; you shall fear Hashem your G-d, I am Hashem.

What does the Torah teach us with the concluding phrase of this verse that commands us to glorify Talmidei Chachamim, our teachers and mentors who have shown us the path to follow?

וְיִרְאַתְךָ מֵאֵל...לִיקִירָה אֲנִי ה':

You shall fear Hashem your G-d, I am Hashem.

The appreciation that I am to show to my teachers and mentors goes far beyond my personal musings of how to honor them.

The appreciation that I am to show to my teachers and mentors is that they will see that the message of *Yiras Shomayim* which they attempted to inculcate me has been successfully internalized.

My teachers and mentors brought me to the place where I have awe for the Ribbono Shel Olom.

And, as we learned above:

בא רבי עקיבא ודרש: את ה' א...ל'יקיר תירא - לרבות תלמידי חכמים.

Rabi Akiva came and interpreted: *es Hashem E...lokecha tira* – this comes to include Talmidei Chachamim.

The glorification of the Talmid Chacham is accomplished when I share my awe of G-d in my relationship with him. The Torah has taught us how to express awe to those people from whom such a relationship is appropriate:

איזהו מורא, לא ישב במקומו ולא ידבר במקומו ולא יסתור את דבריו. ואיזהו כבוד, מאכיל ומשקה, מלביש ומנעיל, מכניס ומוציא:

What comprises the Mitzvah of awe? Do not sit in his place, do not speak instead of him, and do not contradict him.

What better way is there to show our appreciation, to glorify the one who has taught us to accept G-d's Torah than by placing him in the shadow of the Ribbono

Shel Olom – sharing our awe for the Divine with the one who has shown us the way to perceive the Divine!

May we truly aspire to the sanctity that the Torah teaches us in our Parshas Kedoshim, the Parsha of Sanctity as we give tribute to HaKodosh Boruch Hu and his faithful who do His bidding.

Shabbat Shalom

Chodesh Tov

Rabbi Pollock

