

UNEDITED INTERNET VERSION
2019

Kedoshim

**Mixed Up
with the
Mixed
Multitude**

Mixed Up by the Mixed Multitude

The Holiness of the Jewish Nation: Apart From The Other Nations

וְקֹדְשִׁים בְּכָל יוֹם יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה – “And the holy ones praise You every say, selah.”

The Jewish people are called *kedoshim*, “holy ones.” We are an *am kadosh*, a holy nation. We stood at Har Sinai, where we were made to be apart from the nations of the world. Holiness is in our entire makeup, in all our actions.

All Mixed Up

As the generations continue and we are further from Har Sinai, our separation from the nations of the world is less apparent. We become more and more mixed with the nations, and our holiness weakens with this. It is hard to tell these days how a Jew is that different from a non-Jew. It seems as if a Jew’s holiness is a long forgotten thing of the past.

We don’t know when the redemption will come. We aren’t allowed to know the end. Our Rabbis gave us some signs, but we cannot know the exact time. We also don’t know the depths of their words, so we don’t even know with clarity if the signs are showing. But one thing we know for sure. The further we are from Har Sinai, the more mixed we are with the nations.

Chazal say that at Har Sinai, hatred for the Jews entered the non-Jewish nations, because they realized that we are apart from them. It was clear then that we were apart from them. These days, when we are so mixed with the nations, it doesn’t seem to appear to us that Jews are really apart from the nations as they are meant to be.

‘Erev Rav’: The Great Confusion That Has Entered Our Generation

The members of “*Erev Rav*” (“Mixed Multitude”) were also at Har Sinai, but the Ramban says that they were standing apart from the Jewish people. By the Golden Calf, the *Erev Rav* joined us, but at Har Sinai, they were standing in a different corner, away from us. As the generations go on, we are further from the level of Har Sinai – in other words, although the *Erev Rav* wasn’t mixed with us at Har Sinai, now when we are so ‘far’ from the level of standing at Har Sinai, they are mixed with us. Their souls are very mixed with us.

Some say that the word “*rav*”, which means “teacher”, implies that the evil souls of *Erev Rav* have become like a “teacher” to us in our times, in that people are so influenced by them. Others even say that the word “*rav*”, “most”, implies that most of the ‘Jewish people’ now are really souls of the *Erev Rav* [as they become more and mixed with us, which is the situation of the final days].¹ There are very few true Jewish souls, in comparison to the many souls of the *Erev Rav*, who are the majority. (On a more subtle note, there is also the rule of “becoming nullified as a “sixtieth”...) It is not clear today who is really Jewish and who is from *Erev Rav*.

Searching For Truth

If someone searches for the truth, this shows he stood at Har Sinai to accept the Torah [thus he is really Jewish]. If someone doesn’t search for truth, it shows that he did not want the Torah at Har Sinai [which was the *Erev Rav*].

¹ See the words of the Vilna Gaon in *sefer Even Shelaimah*, 11: 6-8. The *Rov* has mentioned the *Erev Rav* a number of times in *Tefillah* #085-*Erev Rav Today*, *Chanukah* #048-*Greek Exile Today*, and *Tefillah* #76-*Protection From Illness*.

This does not just mean to search for Torah, tefillah, and mitzvos. It is to search for a truthful kind of Torah, a *Toras Emes*, which Moshe Rabbeinu gave us, who is the paradigm of *emes*\truth.

Confusing Times

As the generations increase, our struggles increase. We have struggles with our *yetzer hora* (Evil inclination) and with our *middos*. But in the later generations – especially in the last couple of years – we have entered a new kind of struggle: We do not know anymore what is true and what is false.

People are searching and they aren't finding what they search for. The generation in which Moshiach will come will be a generation which is very confused, Chazal say. There is tremendous confusion going on today. If someone lives with even a little bit of feeling, with even a drop of purity, he can see this clearly, that there is little truth to be found these days.

We are confused from all that we see. We see and hear about things going on in the world outside Torah, and this confuses us. We are confused as well by those who keep Torah and mitzvos, because we do not see enough pure and genuine Torah going on.

If someone doesn't care about truth, than he feels fine as long as he learns Gemara, but if he searches for truth, he won't be satisfied with being superficial, and it bothers him greatly that there is a lack of truth going on.

People have a hard time knowing what the truth is as they try to raise their children in the right way. People want to know what truth is, what way to go in, but they are very confused; they don't know what is good and what is not good, what is true and what is false.

This is really all because the *Erev Rav* has mixed up the world so much that we can't tell apart truth from falsity. In our generation, the *Erev Rav* is stuck to us 'like a dog licking its food'. They are so embedded in

us that it is very hard for us to sift out good from evil, even for those who try to gain clarity in their life.

The amount of confusion and lack of clarity going on in the world today bothers any person who searches for truth.

So what should we do? Chazal say to have a *Rebbi*, and that will save us from doubts. But what do you do if you're still even doubt even after that?

People don't even know what to do anymore, what to ask about; they don't feel like they have the heads to try to understand what's going on behind a problem, and therefore they don't even know what to ask about. They figure that matters should just be left to Rabbonim to be solved, as we do not have the heads to think properly. Even after asking, people have a hard time understanding what Rabbis are saying today. By the time he hears what the Rabbi said, so many different versions of what the Rabbi said have already mixed him up that he doesn't understand what the Rabbi is really saying.

People are saying today that they don't feel what holiness is, or what purity is. The breaches in modesty today are appalling and it dulls a person's mind when he sees it. All kinds of foods today have a *hecsher* (Kosher certification), technology has a *hecsher*...but that doesn't make it really kosher.

The '*Erev Rav*' wants to uproot the little Torah that we do have. But we should know that the main war is not taking place in the outside world. The main war is taking place *within* the world of Torah - that *we* have become confused, and we don't know what the truth is.

The Only Hope

This world we live in today is like walking "in the shadow of the valley of death". To anyone who lives a truthful life and who isn't satisfied with superficiality, this world feels like walking through death's valley. We have only one solution: even as we walk through death's valley, the possuk finishes by saying, "*I do not*

fear evil, for You are with me". Hashem is always with us.

Chazal state that Hashem saw that there would be few *tzaddikim* so He has spread out the *tzaddikim* throughout the generations. If we reflect deeply, we can realize that we have nothing to do with this world. Deep in our soul, the main "*mikveh*" we have to immerse ourselves in, is to realize that we are not part of this world. We are like strangers here.

(If anyone in this generation has yearnings for Hashem, he's basically a *tzaddik* in this generation...)

The city that you live in, the community you live in – you should feel like a stranger towards it. It is not your real place. Your *neshamah* came from above, from Heaven; it is a piece of Hashem. Realize that you have nothing whatsoever to do with this world! The "*tzibbur*" (congregation) today is not either your real place.

So if we are not connected to this world, to where *are* we connected to? Our connection exists with Hashem, to His Torah, to His mitzvos, and to love others Jews – but ***in a true way***.

What Bothers Us?

We are living in very, very hard times. I am not referring to the wars that go on in the world today. I am talking about the indifference to spirituality that is going on. All connection to spirituality is being cooled off today; it is being uprooted. What do people yearn for these days as they experience some moments of holiness? Does a person have yearnings for Hashem? Does he talk to Hashem and cry to him when he's alone? Or does he wonder who he is, like if he's of Yemenite descent or if he's just plain different, because he's so confused about who he really is...?

Returning To The Ways of Old

The simple feeling we need to feel, first of all, is to feel all the time that we are 'strangers' to this

generation. You are a stranger to the place you live in. We need to return somewhat to the life which our Avos lived – each person on his own level, as much as he can do.

We must disconnect ourselves from this lifestyle, even from things that have "*hechsberim*." We must search for those individuals who are truthful. We must daven for Moshiach and believe that he will come, but in the time being, before he comes, we have to feel like we are strangers to this world – even if we live in Eretz Yisrael. Avraham Avinu also said he's a stranger to this world. As long as we live in a world in which our holiness is concealed from us, we need to feel like we are a stranger to this world, [and thus it applies to Eretz Yisrael as well, in which Erev Rav tries to uproot all holiness].

In our generation, anyone who truly searches for Hashem is like a rare individual.

Not everything that has a *hechsber* do we need to have. It doesn't matter which community we are from – we all need to separate from the lifestyle of this generation.

Making This Practical: The Daily Hisbodedus

To actually do this, and you connect to an inner kind of life in which you feel solitude in your soul, apart from this world – every day, make a deep *hisbodedus* (meditation) and connect yourself deeply to Hashem, to His Torah, and to His mitzvos.

In Conclusion

We do not know what will be. But it is clear that we are living in a time of darkness. May we merit to see the light of Hashem, the light of Torah, the light of our *neshamah* – and may we all merit to see the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our days.

Translated from original Hebrew shiur:

תפילה 048 וקדושים בכל יום