



## ACHREI-KEDOSHIM

This week, we read two parshiot, Achrei Mot and Kedoshim. Most of the first Parsha deals with Yom Kippur, specifically, the Avodah, or service which the Kohen Gadol performed in the Beit Hamikdash on this holiest of all days. In fact, much of it is used as the Torah reading for Yom Kippur Morning, for this very reason.

The Torah states, "my ordinances you shall do, and My statutes you shall observe, to walk with them, I am the Lord, Your God (VaYikra, 18:4)." What does the Torah mean "to walk with them?"

The Ktav Sofer, a famous Hungarian rabbi, commented that the words "to walk with them" mean that a person needs to walk from one level to the next level. That is, a person should constantly keep on growing and elevating himself. This is the source of the blessing commonly given to one another, "You should go MeChayil el Chayil," i.e. from strength to strength.

It is not enough to keep on the same level that you were on the previous day. Rather, each day should be a climb higher than the day before. When difficult tests come your way, you might not always appreciate them. You might be tempted to ask, "Why me?" But, the only way to keep on elevating yourself is to keep passing more and more of these difficult life-tests. Remember, we are taught that G-d does not give a person a test that He feels the individual cannot handle. View every difficulty as a means of improving yourself by pushing yourself just past your normal comfort level. At the end of each day, ask yourself, "What did I do today to elevate myself a little higher?"

If you cannot find an answer, ask yourself, "What can I plan to do tomorrow?" We should definitely be proud of all our past accomplishments, but we must keep looking to improve for the future as well!

Shabbat Shalom,  
Rabbi Cohen