

Awaken to Holiness

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Parshat Kedoshim

The Eternal spoke to Moses and told him to instruct the whole Israelite community, “You shall be holy, as I, your Eternal G*d, am holy.” (Leviticus 19:1-2)

What a lofty goal! Certainly, this is only a goal to be aimed at, not a level which we are expected to attain. Or is it? Can it be that G*d gives us instructions which we are not expected to fulfill? But the Torah tells us explicitly (Deuteronomy 30:11-13) that **it is not too difficult nor too far off, . . . not in heaven . . . nor beyond the sea.** So, somehow, some way, we are to be holy as G*d is holy!

Rebbe Moshe Hayyim Ephraim of Sudilkov, grandson of the Baal Shem Tov and uncle of Rebbe Nahman of Breslov, in his *Degel Mahaneh Ephraim*, declares, “Each person can indeed be as holy as G*d, for the soul is the G*dly part of each individual, and a part can be extended to encompass the whole. In fact, the ultimate goal of Creation,” Rebbe Moshe Hayyim Ephraim concludes, “is for each human being to become G*d-like.”

When we attune our consciousness to the Divine spark which is our soul, we can bring ourselves to a level of holiness where we will fulfill this mandate. Indeed, on a spiritual level, we are already there, and all we really need do is awaken to the reality of our own holiness.

The Buddha was once asked by a disciple, “Are you a master?”

“No,” the Buddha replied.

“Are you enlightened?” the disciple continued.

“No,” the Buddha replied.

“Are you a teacher, a guru, a sage?”

“No, no, no.”

Finally, the disciple blurted out, “Well, then, what are you?”

“I am awake!” the Buddha exclaimed.

May we all soon awaken to our holiness.

Shabbat Shalom.