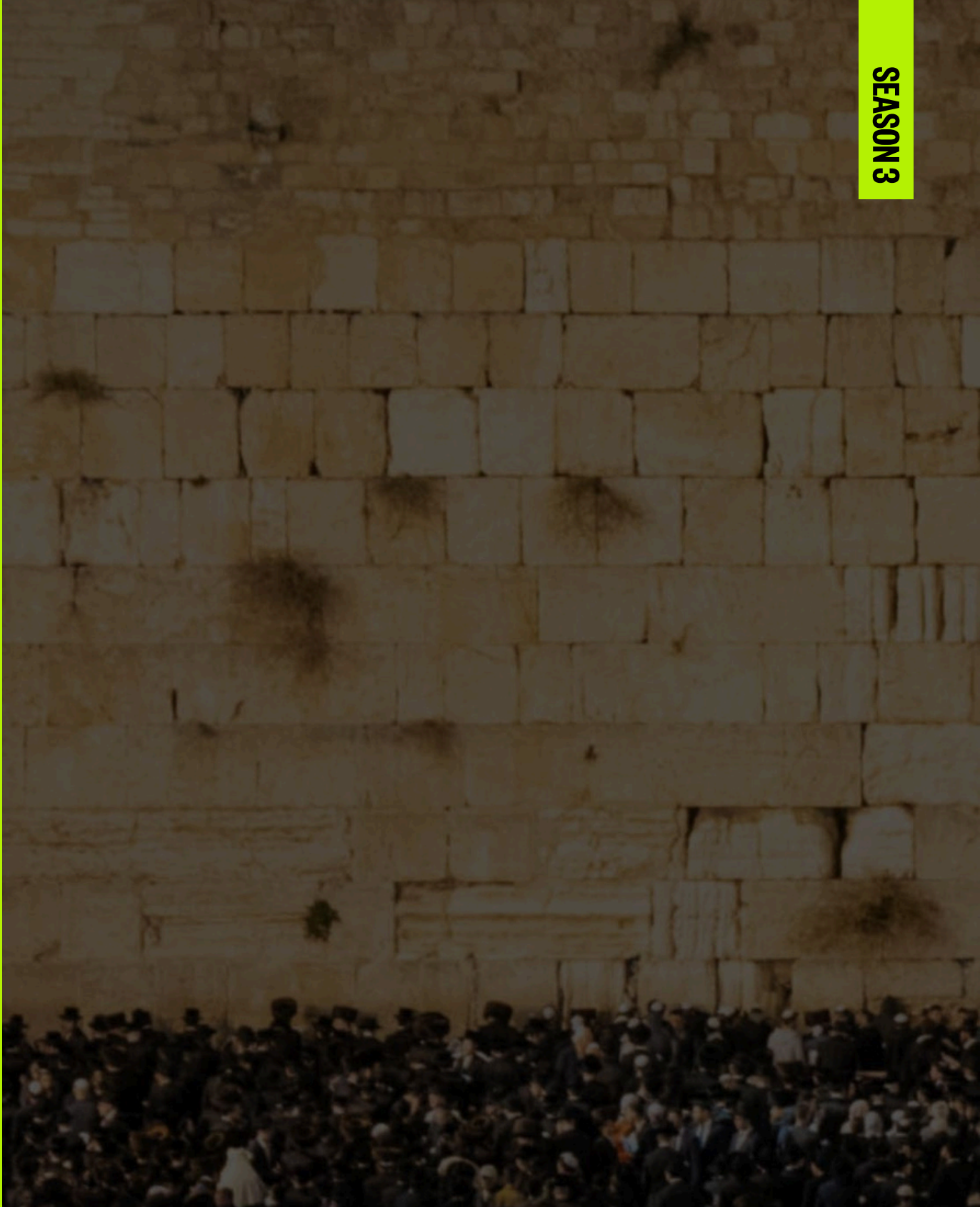


SEASON 3

OLAMI MENTORSHIP



SESSION 10: AM KADOSH

Dear Mentor and Mentee,

Congratulations on starting season three of mentorship!

It is both humbling and thrilling at the same time, that the two of you have found value in getting to know one another, and that you continue to benefit from your regular meetings. In conjunction with Sinai50, we are pleased to present you with amazing resources for season three.

We are grateful to Rabbi Raphael Butler; the mastermind of Sinai50; an initiative that is ensuring that Jews around the world have an opportunity to reclaim Torah wisdom and knowledge, and make it their own. The great news is that these resources are but a small component of the 50 sessions that Rabbi Butler and Sinai50 have curated. We would be thrilled to provide additional resources when you have completed these initial sessions.

You know, when you purchase a new car, typically there is an owner's manual in the glove compartment. If you are a savvy and responsible automobile owner, you will take the time to familiarize yourself with the content of the manual to ensure maximum output and productivity for your new vehicle.

And while an owner's manual for a new car is imperative in getting to understand the complexities of your ride, isn't life not infinitely more complex than a four-wheeled machine? If so, shouldn't life come with an owner's manual for life?!

The good news is that it 'does'. The manual is called the Torah, and through its retelling of our history, its many directives for moral living, and our studying and following the Torah, we can ensure optimal performance and elevated living.

In this season, through Sinai50, we endeavor to provide you with a "top 10" list of the Torah's wisdom for living, in an effort to share the beauty and richness of the Torah's narratives and experiences.

You will have an opportunity to examine the age-old issue of anti-Semitism from the conflict of Jacob and Esau, analyze dealing with trials - and then triumph - from Abraham, understand our unique mission as Jews, and so much more!

Mentorship that includes Torah wisdom and inspiration is taking mentorship to a whole new level, as studying and analyzing Torah together connects the soul of two Jews.

It is our hope that through this journey of practical Torah wisdom, the two of you will continue to thrive alongside one another and further enhance the special relationship that you have begun.

We are honored to provide personal guidance or assistance if necessary. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us directly. To reach the Director of Community Mentorship, Rabbi Shlomo Landau, please call 908.770.0056 or email slandau@olami.org. To reach the Associate Director of Community Mentorship, Jordana Baruchov, please call 973.370.0414 or email jbarucho@olami.org.

Wishing you the best of luck on this journey! The OLM Team

AM KADOSH - A HOLY NATION

The designation of the Jewish people as an Am Kadosh –a holy nation– reflects their unique relationship with God. This concept is grounded in divine election and the covenant established at Mount Sinai. It underscores the foundational narrative of the Jewish people’s identity and their distinct role in history.

THE STORY

In the ancient land of Canaan, a significant chapter in human history unfolded. It began with Abraham, who received a profound call from the Divine. Promised that his descendants would become a great nation, chosen for a sacred purpose, Abraham embarked on a transformative journey. Through generations, his descendants, known as the Israelites, faced numerous trials and triumphs that shaped their destiny.

From the depths of slavery in Egypt, the Israelites witnessed miraculous events and experienced the liberation brought by divine intervention. Guided by the leadership of Moses, they embarked on a journey towards freedom. Their path led them to Mount Sinai, where a momentous encounter with the Divine awaited them.

Gathered at the foot of the mountain, the Israelites were bestowed with the Torah, a profound covenant between God and the Jewish people. This covenant forged their identity as an Am Kadosh, a holy nation. The Torah laid out a framework of ethics, laws, and principles that became the cornerstone of their existence.



Midrash Tanchuma, Ki Tisa 9: This Midrash discusses the meaning of the term “Am Kadosh” and explores the idea that the Jewish people were chosen to be a holy nation. It delves into the significance of the Jewish people’s role in bringing holiness into the world.

Midrash Rabbah, Exodus 19:6:
This Midrash expands on the
verse, “And you shall be to Me a
kingdom of priests and a holy
nation.”

It explores the deeper meanings
of being a holy nation and
discusses the unique spiritual
status and mission of the Jewish
people.

Embracing this divine teaching, the Jewish people were called to exemplify righteousness, compassion, and justice among the nations. The Torah served as their guide, providing wisdom, guidance, and a vision of how to live in harmony with the Divine and with one another.

Throughout the tumultuous course of history, the Jewish people faced myriad challenges. They endured exiles, persecution, and the destruction of their sacred Temple in Jerusalem. Yet, their commitment to the divine mission of being an Am Kadosh remained unyielding.

Preserving their traditions and teachings, the Jewish people continued to uphold their identity as the Am Kadosh. They forged a resilient spirit, carrying with them the light of holiness through the ages. Their devotion to God’s commandments and the pursuit of righteousness became the bedrock of their existence.

Today, the Jewish people stand as a testament to the enduring legacy of the Am Kadosh. They strive to embody the teachings of the Torah in their daily lives, infusing their actions with kindness, justice, and compassion. Rooted in their rich heritage, they cherish the values that have sustained them for generations.

As the Am Kadosh, the Jewish people embrace the responsibility of Tikkun Olam, dedicating themselves to the repair and betterment of the world. They seek to mirror God’s holiness by spreading goodness, promoting social justice, and extending a helping hand to those in need.

This is the narrative of the Jewish nation as the Am Kadosh—a people bound by a sacred covenant, entrusted with the mission of embodying holiness, and striving to make the world a more righteous and compassionate place.

WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE OF THIS STORY ON OUR LIVES?

ETHICAL CONDUCT AND MORAL VIRTUES:

Mirroring God's holiness involves cultivating ethical conduct and embodying moral virtues. This includes acts of kindness, justice, compassion, honesty, humility, and integrity. By aligning one's actions and character with these virtues, individuals reflect the divine attributes and mirror God's holiness.



Midrash Tanchuma, Haazinu 3: This Midrash reflects on the verse, "Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations" (Deuteronomy 32:7). It discusses the continuous existence and holiness of the Jewish people throughout history, highlighting their enduring commitment to the divine mission.

EMBRACING DIVINE VALUES:

Reflecting God's holiness also entails embracing and embodying the values that God holds dear, such as love, mercy, forgiveness, and righteousness. By internalizing and living according to these values, individuals mirror God's holiness in their attitudes, behaviors, and relationships.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND CONNECTION:

Am Kadosh involves nurturing one's spiritual growth and deepening their connection with the divine. This can be achieved through prayer, meditation, study of sacred texts, and engaging in acts of worship and devotion. By seeking to align one's thoughts, intentions, and consciousness with the divine, individuals reflect God's holiness in their spiritual pursuits.

PURSUIT OF JUSTICE AND TIKKUN OLAM:

Mirroring God's holiness extends to engaging in acts of justice and participating in the repair of the world (Tikkun Olam). By working to alleviate suffering, promoting social justice, and advocating for the well-being of others, individuals mirror God's holiness by actively participating in the divine mission of bringing harmony, compassion, and righteousness to the world.

LESSONS LEARNED:

DIVINE PURPOSE:

God's choice of the Jewish people as a holy nation demonstrates that every individual and community has a unique purpose in the divine plan. It teaches us that each person's life has inherent value and a role to play in fulfilling a greater mission.

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Being an Am Kadosh comes with moral responsibilities. The Jewish people's appointment reminds us of the importance of upholding ethical values, pursuing justice, and embodying compassion in our interactions with others. It emphasizes the duty to make the world a better place and seek Tikkun Olam, repairing and improving the world around us.

COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP:

The appointment of the Jewish people as an Am Kadosh highlights the idea of a covenantal relationship between God and humanity. It underscores the reciprocal nature of this bond, where God bestows blessings and guidance while expecting adherence to His commandments and principles. This relationship serves as a reminder of the importance of mutual commitment and fidelity in our connections with the divine and with one another.

DIVINE GUIDANCE:

God's appointment of the Jewish people as a holy nation signifies His ongoing guidance and involvement in human affairs. It teaches us that God remains present and active in our lives, offering direction, protection, and opportunities for growth. It encourages us to seek divine guidance and to remain attuned to the spiritual dimension of our existence.

Midrash Rabbah, Exodus 19:5: This Midrash focuses on the verse, "Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine." It elaborates on the responsibilities and privileges bestowed upon the Jewish people as a chosen nation.

PERSISTENCE AND RESILIENCE:

The history of the Jewish people as the Am Kadosh reflects their resilience and persistence in the face of challenges. Despite persecution, exile, and adversity, they have maintained their faith and commitment to their identity. This resilience serves as a lesson for all, reminding us of the importance of tenacity, adaptability, and perseverance in the face of trials.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE:

While the Jewish people were chosen as a specific nation, the concept of being an Am Kadosh carries a universal message. It reminds us that the pursuit of holiness, ethical living, and connection with the divine are values that extend beyond any particular group. It invites individuals from all backgrounds to embrace the call to be a holy nation in their own unique ways.

These lessons gleaned from God's appointment of the Jews as the Am Kadosh offer guidance and inspiration for individuals and communities of all backgrounds. They encourage us to embrace our inherent worth, uphold ethical values, seek a meaningful relationship with the divine, and persist in the pursuit of righteousness and justice.



Moral Responsibility: Being an Am Kadosh comes with moral responsibilities. The Jewish people's appointment reminds us of the importance of upholding ethical values, pursuing justice, and embodying compassion in our interactions with others.

POINTS TO PONDER

THE MEANING OF HOLINESS:

What does it mean for a nation to be called “holy”?

How does holiness manifest in different aspects of life?

How can individuals and communities strive to embody holiness in their daily lives and interactions?

Reflecting on personal experiences, what are some moments or encounters that have made you feel a sense of holiness?

How does holiness manifest in different aspects of life?

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HOLY NATION:

What are the moral and ethical responsibilities that come with being an Am Kadosh? How can these responsibilities be fulfilled in contemporary society?

In what ways can the Jewish people, as a holy nation, contribute to Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) and promoting social justice?

How can the concept of being an Am Kadosh inspire individuals to engage in acts of kindness, compassion, and justice?

CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLES:

Throughout history, the Jewish people have faced numerous challenges and adversities.

How have they managed to maintain their holiness in the face of difficult circumstances?

Reflecting on personal experiences or historical events, discuss instances where maintaining holiness and upholding ethical values may have been particularly challenging. How can individuals and communities support each other in navigating challenges and remaining steadfast in their commitment to holiness?

PERSONAL CONNECTION AND REFLECTION:

What does being part of the Am Kadosh mean to you on a personal level? How does it shape your identity and sense of purpose?

How can individuals cultivate a deeper connection with the divine and nurture their own spiritual growth as part of the holy nation?

Share personal stories or examples where you have witnessed or experienced the holiness of the Jewish people or individuals within the community.

What does being part of the Am Kadosh mean to you on a personal level? How does it shape your identity and sense of purpose?

SINAI 50

50 VITAL JEWISH TEXTS THAT EVERY JEW SHOULD KNOW

THIS SINAI50 VOLUME IS DEDICATED IN GRATITUDE TO

STEPHEN AND CHERYLE LEVINE

CHAMPIONS OF CHESED

SINAI50

The Sinai50 Project comprises a collection of 50 vital Jewish texts that every Jew should know and that are of immense significance for our daily lives. These texts have been carefully selected to provide clarity and understanding to all those who read them. With the texts being made accessible both online and offline, this project ensures that these invaluable resources are readily available to Jews worldwide, fostering a deeper connection to their heritage and offering relevant insights for navigating everyday challenges.

In cooperation with

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