

Impossible Expectations or Setting the Bar High?



**ADAM
LEVINE**

Youth Director
@ South Hampstead
Synagogue

This week we read two parashiot together, Acharei Mot and Kedoshim. The first parasha gives instructions about the service to be performed in the *Mishkan* (portable Sanctuary) on Yom Kippur. The second opens with the line: "You shall be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy" (Vayikra 19:2). You might think to yourself:

I will never be as holy as God! *Ce n'est pas possible! No es posible!* There is good news: God knows you can't be as holy as Him.

One way to understand why God sets a high standard for us is to look at the men's long jump record. The first person to hold the world record was Peter O'Connor who in 1901 managed to jump 7.61 metres, but in the Tokyo Olympics in 1991, Mike Powell jumped an astonishing 8.95m.

Every athlete who competes in this sport knows the world record, and if they are trying to be the best, they

are trying to beat it. Once you are the record holder, where do you go from there? How do you know what is possible in your next jump?

This is where God comes in and tells each one of us to measure ourselves by what He does, to try to improve every day whilst trying to reach the level of God Himself, even though we know that will not be possible. No need to look over your shoulder to see what other people say you can do; God believes you can achieve greatness in mitzvot and become the best person you can be.

Parasha Quiz

1. Whose death is referred to at the beginning of parashat Acharei Mot?
2. What does 'kedoshim' mean?
3. Which people can eat grapes that fall during the harvest?
4. What happened to the goat meant for 'azazel'?
5. It is a mitzvah to eat blood: True or False?

