

# The Ups and Downs in Life

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This week's parshah, Emor, begins by expressing the laws of the priesthood as well as several specifications as to which blemishes invalidate both priests from serving in the Temple and the animals that may be sacrificed. These are lessons about maintaining purity and sanctity, laws of sanctity when eating, and other pertinent rules.

The idea behind these laws is that we should be aware that not

everything in this world is pure, not everything can be sanctified, and that blemishes do exist. What are we to do? The answer is really simple: recognize. Recognize that purity is attainable. Recognize that there are impurities and that blemishes exist. Awareness is the name of the game. The concept of awareness is absolutely necessary not only to live but also to move forward in life!

Yes, there are problems, blemishes, and insecurities that abound in this world. One of the verses states (Leviticus 22:7), "And the sun will set, and he will be pure, and then he can partake of the sanctified." Rebbe Nachman explains that a person's life is laden with ups and downs: "We win some, we lose some." A friend describes life as an EKG machine. As long as the lines go up and down, we are alive. Once the lines go flat, we are dead.

When we recognize the fluctuations throughout life as the means to keep us focused on living right, then we are aware of what is right and proper and what we should avoid. We can recognize those things that lead to blemishes, those ideas that can mislead a person to errors, mistakes, and much worse.

But, teaches Rebbe Nachman, we should also be aware that the pitfalls in life can help purify us. Thus, "the sun will set, and he will be pure, and then he can partake of the sanctified." Because, after all, the person was focused on the ultimate good. No matter that he had his failings. Eventually, since he wanted the good, his sun will set, and he will be pure. He will go to his reward and be able to partake of the sanctified and wonderful life in the after-world.

Have a great Shabbos.