

You shall hallow yourselves and be holy...For I am Hashem Who took you up from the land of Egypt to be your G-d, you shall be holy for I am holy. (11:44)

This *pasuk*, which concludes the *parshah*, comes at the end of the Jewish dietary laws. *Kashrus* is one of the areas in which the Jew distinguishes himself from the rest of the world. The message of this *pasuk* reveals the significance of this distinctiveness. **Horav Moshe Swift, zl**, notes the words, "*For I am Hashem Who took you up from the land of Egypt.*" Elsewhere in the *Torah* and in our *tefillos*, prayers, we say, "*Who brought you out of the land of Egypt.*" The *Torah* emphasizes here that we were brought up--elevated--to a higher level, so that Hashem would be our G-d, that He should be seen in us. We are to be holy because He is holy. We are to reflect His presence in our total demeanor. The Jew is to be distinct from the nations of the world. This distinctiveness is the symbol of his inherent *kedushah*, which should be his source of pride.

We must view our distinctiveness as a source of pride and honor. It raises us up; it consecrates our lives, as it sanctifies us. The Jew who is ashamed of his Jewishness, probably has many other sources of shame.