

## "And the flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten." (7:19)

The *Kotzker Rebbe z.l.* questions the unclean object's ability to contaminate that with which it comes in contact. Why should not the clean object "cleanse" and purify the unclean one? He answers that a *davar tamei*, unclean object, is clearly *tamei*. On the other hand, who can be certain that the clean object is pure? Perhaps we can derive from his words that, in order for a "clean object" to transform something unclean, it is essential that the clean object be totally clean. Otherwise, it might recoil and itself become contaminated.

The *Baal Ha'Tanya* suggests a similar idea. In this *pasuk*, the *Torah* here discusses the concept of contact with an unclean object. We find that the *Torah* discusses contact with *kedusha*, holiness, in the beginning of this *parsha* (6:20), saying, *aseh tny kfc gdh rat kf "Whatever shall touch its flesh shall be holy."* There is a distinct disparity between these two types of contact. In order for a clean object to contact impurity, it merely has to touch the unclean object.

Regarding contact with holy objects, *Chazal* state, the initial contact must be so intense that the *kedusha* is absorbed. We may derive from here that one must strive to cling to holiness to the extent that it becomes suffused in one's essence. In contrast, one must distance himself from *tumah* and evil to the extent that even a seemingly innocuous touch can be detrimental to his spiritual health.