

"An eternal covenant of salt." (18:19)

How is Hashem's gift of the priestly blessings to Aharon and his sons to be compared to a covenant of salt? *Rashi* presents an analogy. Just as salt does not rot-- and even acts as a preserving agent for many things -- so, too, this covenant maintains its virility in order to preserve Aharon's dynasty forever.

Horav D. Feinstein, Shlita, derives a powerful implication from this *pasuk*. Even if some *Kohanim* deviate from the prescribed path of service to Hashem, some will always stalwartly uphold the covenant. Thus, just as salt never rots, maintaining its ability to preserve foods, so, too, the covenant will safeguard Aharon's priestly family. Thus, the covenant will ensure *Bnei Yisrael's* continued holiness throughout ensuing generations.

We may wonder why it is that some *Kohanim* and other individuals who hold positions of spiritual leadership tend to deviate from the path of *Torah* and "burn out." Perhaps the analogy to salt can resolve our question. As salt is a preservative, so, too, are our spiritual leaders. Their prime function is to promulgate the legacy of *Torah*, to conserve and perpetuate our heritage. They must view themselves as responsible for the continuity of *Klal Yisrael*. When this vision becomes distorted as a result of vested self-interests and personal prejudice, the leaders leave themselves vulnerable to the blandishments of the *yetzer hora*. Only by viewing themselves as a preserving agent will our leaders maintain the ability to safeguard the precious legacy of our heritage.