

"You shall sanctify him for the bread of your G-d he offers, he shall be holy unto you." (21:8)

Horav Elyakim Schlesinger, Shlita, cites the **Chazon Ish** who once commented regarding a certain *Torah* scholar. This man had disagreed with him regarding a *halachic* matter. He said that the scholar was actually an *am ha'aretz*, illiterate. The *Chazon Ish* explained that the degree of one's erudition is consistent with his ability to appreciate another person's *gadlus*, superiority, in *Torah* learning.

One who has himself achieved literacy in *Torah*, recognizes its profundity. He will, consequently, defer to another's academic attainment in *Torah*. One who is truly illiterate, and whose arrogance denies him the ability to perceive his own deficits, will often denigrate others. A true *talmid chacham* gives honor where it is due. An *am ha'aretz* lowers himself when he speaks disparagingly of others.

This is the *pasuk's* message: "*You shall sanctify him*," for it is a *mitzvah* to dignify the *Kohen* who has been chosen to serve Hashem and offer your *korbanos*. Hashem has adjured us to appreciate the *kedushah*, distinct holiness, of the *Kohen*, and act accordingly. If we do not act properly toward the *Kohen*, it is a result of our own inability to recognize and appreciate *kedushah*.

This concept applies to the *talmid chacham*, *Torah* scholar, as well. It is incumbent upon us to exhibit the proper reverence to one who embodies *Torah*. Regrettably, there are individuals who, simply because they have spent some time learning *Torah* in a *yeshivah*, feel that they have license to disparage anyone who is unfortunate enough to disagree with them. They feel that the command to show respect does not apply to them. After all, they know how to learn! The *Chazon Ish* enlightens us. One who does not exhibit proper respect for a *Torah* scholar demonstrates his own deficiency.