

"By those that are near Me I shall become sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified." (10:3)

Secular leaders may posit the view that those who are especially talented or highly placed have total freedom to use their gifts. To the contrary, the *Torah* teaches us "*B'krovai A'kadesh*," by those that are near to Me I shall become sanctified. The greater a man's position, the closer he is to the spiritual core, the stricter is the standard by which he is judged. Thus, the consequences of an individual's guilt are greater if he is deficient in living up to this standard.

Horav Avigdor Miller, Shlita opines that this principle is the underlying rationale for the accusations and retributions meted out against *Klal Yisrael* throughout history. Their special level of spiritual purity, their unique relationship with Hashem, singles them out for "special" reproof and punishment. Hashem expects perfection from those that are His chosen people. Regrettably, we do not always "see" it this way. Consequently, we tend to criticize the ways of Hashem because we simply do not want to face the truth.

Horav Miller asks an interesting question. How did Korach react when he saw Aharon's two sons die? We know that he was extremely upset when Aharon and his sons were designated as the *Kohanim*. Did he now rejoice at the tragedy? *Horav* Miller suggests that without any shadow of a doubt, Korach mourned together with *Klal Yisrael*. Had he been a less devoted servant of Hashem, he would not have been redeemed from Egypt. Korach accepted the *Torah* and proclaimed "*Naase V'nishma*" together with the rest of *Klal Yisrael*. When Moshe issued his famous call, "Who is for Hashem (come) to me!" Korach surely joined *Bnei Levi* in defending the character of Judaism against incursion from the worshippers of the Golden Calf. We must, therefore, conclude that Korach grieved together with *Klal Yisrael* upon witnessing the terrible tragedy of the passing of Aharon's two sons.

So, where did he go wrong? His error was in defining the tragedy. the tragic passing of Nadav and Avihu was a test which Hashem provided for *Bnei Levi*. Korach mourned their deaths, but erred in interpreting the tragedy. He injected his own perspective in his attempt to come to terms with the tragedy. His error in judgement encouraged him to dispute the appropriateness of the rightful heirs to the *Kehunah*.