

"He shall remain holy to you, for holy am I, who sanctifies you." (21:8)

The *Kohen* is to be held in the highest esteem. He is to have the primary role in matters of holiness. What is the significance of emphasizing the *Kohen's* superiority in holiness? **Horav Elyakim Schlesinger, Shlita**, recounts an incident that occurred with the **Chazon Ish, zl**, and the **Brisker Rav's, zl**, analysis of the episode. It happened that a noted *talmid chacham*, *Torah* scholar, became embroiled in a *halachic* dispute with the *Chazon Ish*. Upon hearing of this debate, the *Brisker Rav* commented that the *Torah* scholar was not really a scholar; rather, he was an *am ha'aretz*, illiterate. He rationalized his statement by explaining that one who is not able to appreciate the scholarship of one who is greater than he indicates his own academic deficiency. One who himself is erudite can and will appreciate the vast *Torah* knowledge of another Jew. One who is illiterate will not value the academic excellence of his peers.

The *Torah*, therefore, charges us with the *mitzvah* to respect the *Kohen*. We are to reflect upon and value his esteemed position. We have been consecrated by Hashem to be a "*kingdom of priests and a holy nation*." We have been availed the opportunity to appreciate *kedushah*, holiness, by virtue of the fact that we have been sanctified by Hashem. This unique consecration should enable us to appreciate one who is holier than we are, since we now understand the essence of *kedushah*.