

## It was on the eighth day, Moshe summoned Aharon and his sons, and the elders of Yisrael. (9:1)

The command to bring the offerings was for Aharon *HaKohen* alone. Why were the *Zekeinim*, Elders, included in the summons? *Rashi* explains that Moshe *Rabbeinu* wanted the Elders to hear for themselves that Hashem had elevated Aharon to the position of *Kohen Gadol*, High Priest. They should not suspect that Aharon had seized it for himself, or that Moshe had played favorites and given it to his older brother. Partiality, especially toward close relatives, has a way of raising people's ire. To assuage the situation and clear the air, Moshe stated that it was Hashem's command. It is certainly true that people love to talk, and Moshe rightfully ameliorated their concerns. Why, then, was it necessary for Moshe to repeat himself? In *Parashas Tzav* (8:5), Moshe says to the congregation, "This is the thing that Hashem commanded to be done." *Rashi* (to *Parashas Tzav*) explains that Moshe is actually saying, "You will see that everything that I do before you is upon the directive and command of Hashem and not for my honor or for the honor of my brother." Why does Moshe repeat himself (*Parashas Shemini*), in asserting that neither nepotism nor personal agenda was involved?

*Horav Moshe Feinstein, zl*, maintains that a *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar, who also guides a community or functions as a mentor to people, must – exclusive of his abstract knowledge and scholarship – also be versed in practical, applied hands – on *halachah*. In other words, knowing the *halachah*, but lacking the awareness and sensitivity of how and when to apply and present it in the most lucid manner, is not practical. While it certainly does not make one any less of a scholar, it does limit his accessibility to – and acceptance by – the very people he seeks to guide and reach. Imagine that an individual knows all of the laws of *kashrus* concerning an animal, but has never had the practical knowledge of seeing the animal and its anatomy. How can he possibly know how to recognize what is and is not kosher? Sensitivity in presenting the *halachah* to certain people is just as prudent as knowing the *halachah*.

Thus, the first time Moshe informed the nation that Aharon was Hashem's choice for the position of *Kohen Gadol*, he conveyed to them that Aharon possessed the erudition, personal sanctity and ethical/moral character crucial for the role of *Kohen Gadol*. This, however, is not all a *Kohen Gadol* requires if he is to navigate the labyrinth of personalities, emotions and ideologies of the nation successfully. As the *Kohen Gadol*, he is the spiritual vanguard, exemplar guiding spirit, and mentor of the nation. Erudition alone is not sufficient. He requires utilitarian common sensical knowledge as well. After observing Aharon during the seven-day Inauguration period, Moshe told the people that Aharon was highly qualified to execute the functions of *Kehunah Gedolah*. This meant that not only was he spiritually fit and scholarly erudite, he was also a sensitive and pragmatic leader, capable of: communicating their spiritual obligations to the people; and dealing with each Jew's spiritual challenge. He would be the perfect leader for the nation