

"And you will be to Me a kingdom of Kohanim (priests) and a holy nation." (19:6)

A *Kohen* is one whose life is devoted to the service of Hashem. The title *Kohen* also implies "scholar". As it is written in *Shmuel II 8:18* - *uhv ohbv f sus hbcuw* which means that they were *Torah* scholars. Hence, the prime pursuit of *Am Yisrael* is the study of *Torah*.

Horav Avigdor Miller, Shlita, observes that this *pasuk* does not merely state Hashem's promise of *Am Yisrael's* future reward. It is an aspect of Hashem's covenant with us which responds to our acceptance of the *Torah*. When we responded with the *gnabu vagb*, "*We will do and we will hear*," we thereby obligated ourselves to be a kingdom of *Kohanim* and a holy nation. Every *Ben Yisrael* was to become a "*Kohen*" in regard to his obligation to study *Torah* and live a life of holiness. Although many people have gone on to other pursuits, the study of *Torah* has remained a lifelong goal. Indeed, throughout our history we have always distinguished parts of the day, week, month, or year for *Torah* study and scholarship, reflecting the fact that this endeavor is our lifelong occupation.

The second aspect of this tribute is *kedushah*, holiness. The quality of "*kedushah*" is not perceived simply as an aspect of our relationship with Hashem, the source of all *kedushah*. It is actually a component, emanating from Hashem, which is imbued in the object of this *kedushah*. Thus, the term "holy people" signifies a unique meta-physical distinction, albeit invisible, in the person. An object charged with electricity is physically different, even though its appearance has not been transformed. Similarly, various inconspicuous physical changes may exist within an object. When *Bnei Yisrael* execute Hashem's mandate, they are transformed into different beings, even though their superficial physical appearance has apparently not been altered.