

## The Kohen who has been anointed or who has been given the authority to serve in place of his father. (16:32)

The *Kohen Gadol's* son is first to succeed him, providing that he is suitable for the position. The Torah underscores the notion that he serves in place of his father. This teaches us, observes **Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita**, that the *Kohen Gadol* must deeply understand his roots and realize that he is there only *b'zchus*, in the merit of, his father. If the *Kohen Gadol* appreciates that his position is an "inheritance," that he has succeeded in achieving the apex of spiritual leadership due to *z'chus avos*, the merit of his past lineage, then he is fitting to be *Kohen Gadol* and atone for the nation.

If, however, the *Kohen Gadol* loses sight of his past, arrogating himself to believe that this is all about "him" – not "them" – then his pompousness impugns his character and will be an impediment in his efforts to advocate on behalf of *Klal Yisrael*. He must feel that others are actually more deserving than he to be in the place of distinction, to serve as *Kohen Gadol*. He is there not in his own right, but *tachas aviv*, "in place of his father."

When we follow the *mesorah*, tradition, of the holy legacy that has been preserved and transmitted throughout the generations, from father to son, *rebbe* to *talmid*, then we are able to achieve the pinnacle of observance which will affect a healthy and fortuitous future for us and our children. If, however, we break with the *mesorah*, if our every attempt to bring back those who have waned in their observance by hacking away at the age-old traditions for which our ancestors lived and died falls on deaf ears– we will have failed miserably. This is true, regardless under which banner we refer to ourselves. Adding the term Orthodoxy to any flagrant aspersion of tradition does not grant it a *hechsher*, approbation. If it breaks with the holy *mesorah*, it cannot be approved, regardless of what mask we put on it, and what name we give it. We may never disassociate ourselves from our past, because, without it, we have no future to speak of.