

## Bring to near to yourself Aharon, your brother, and his sons with him... to minister to Me. (28:1)

The *Midrash* teaches that Moshe *Rabbeinu* wanted to be *Kohen Gadol*, despite his position as facilitator of the Torah to *Klal Yisrael*. Imagine being the conduit through which our nation received the Torah. Yet, Moshe apparently wanted more; he sought the *Kehunah Gedolah*, High Priesthood. Hashem told Moshe, "I gave you the Torah. It was mine, and I gave it to you." This was supposed to placate Moshe. How? Moshe did not deny his lofty plateau as the nation's quintessential *Rebbe*; he wanted the *Kehunah Gedolah* – also!

In his *Shemen HaTov*, **Horav Zev Weinberger, Shlita**, quotes the *Talmud* in *Sotah* 21a, which cites the *pasuk* in *Mishlei* 6:23, *Ki ner mitzvah v'Torah or*, "For candle is a *mitzvah* and Torah is light." Apparently, the light of Torah is more powerful than the light emanating from a *mitzvah*. The *Talmud* observes that an *aveirah*, sin, has the power to extinguish the light created by a *mitzvah*. Torah, however, cannot be extinguished by an *aveirah*. Furthermore, a *mitzvah* serves as protection for a person only while he is performing the *mitzvah*. Torah has the power to protect the individual even when one is not studying.

We derive from this that the spiritual plateau achieved by one who studies Torah is more exalted than one who performs a *mitzvah*. Torah study is pre-eminent and greater than any other

spiritual endeavor. Moshe represented Torah since, after all, Hashem gave the Torah to the Jewish People via the medium of Moshe. Aharon represents the light of a *mitzvah*. Moshe argued that if he were to be *Kohen Gadol* and the *Rabban shel kol Yisrael*, *Rebbe* of the entire nation, the level of *Kehunah* would be so exalted that no sin would have the power to abrogate it. Indeed, in his commentary to *Parashas Pikudei*, **Sforno** writes that the reason the *Mishkan*, unlike Shlomo *Hamelech's Bais Hamikdash*, never fell into the hands of our enemies is that Moshe constructed the *Mishkan*. Moshe's edifice would endure forever. Had he been the *Kohen Gadol*, however, that institution would have survived the test of time and the vicissitudes of life.

*Rav* Weinberger observes that the *Mishkan* and *Bigdei Kehunah*, Priestly Vestments, were all one step removed from Moshe and *Klal Yisrael* following the Giving of the Torah. This is very much like the comparison the *Midrash* makes to a king who became angry with his queen. Despite divorcing her, he continued to send her jewelry and trinkets with which to adorn and beautify herself. Otherwise, there was very little chance that she would once again find favor in his eyes. After their committing the sin of the Golden Calf, Hashem instructed them to construct the *Mishkan*, *Mizbayach*, *Bigdei Kehunah* – all in order to return to Hashem's favor once again. Moshe's spiritual level transcends even this. The sin of the Golden Calf had no effect on his level. Thus, he argued for the *Kehunah Gedolah*, so that the effects of the *chet ha'eigel*, sin of the Golden Calf, would be limited.

In his commentary to the beginning of the *parsha*, the **Baal HaTurim** notes that this *parsha* is the only *parshah* in the Torah, since Moshe's birth, in which his name is not mentioned. He attributes this to Moshe's declaration, *Mecheini na miSifrecha*, "Erase me (my name) from Your Book." *Parashas Tetzaveh* most often falls out around the seventh of *Adar*, which is Moshe's *yahrtzeit*. Since he demanded his name be erased, and the words of a *tzaddik*, righteous person, may not be ignored, Moshe's name was "erased" from one *parsha*. What more appropriate *parsha* than the one which coincides with his *yahrtzeit*?

Applying the above distinction between Torah and *mitzvah*, Moshe was alluding to Hashem, "If You will 'carry' their sin [Golden Calf] – (which means that Hashem would expunge the sin as if it did not occur), then I can continue to be their leader. If not (if the sin of the Golden Calf remains in its glaring reality; if the Jewish People will thus descend from the spiritual level acquired during the Giving of the Torah), then I can no longer be their leader. Erase me from Your Book." They were no longer on the *madregah*, spiritual level, of Torah; they were now on the level of *mitzvah*, which was reserved for Aharon. Moshe's name no longer applies in *Parashas Tetzaveh*, since this *parsha* addresses the function of Aharon and the *Kohanim*.

Rav Weinberger takes this idea one step further, as he delineates between the function of *Kohen* and *Navi*, Prophet. Indeed, we find nowhere a set of vestments specifically endemic to the *Navi*; the *Kohen*, however, does have special holy vestments. Another distinction applies to each individual mission. The *Kohen* is involved in today – addressing the needs of the nation in the "here" and "now." The *Navi* speaks to the future, foreshadowing what will be, what the nation should do to circumvent what might occur as a consequence of the present behavior. In other words, the *Kohen* is limited in his spiritual venue; the *Navi* is not. The common denominator between them is the *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar.

*Chacham adif m'Navi*, "The Torah scholar is greater than the prophet." On the one hand, the Torah scholar is limited; on the other hand, he is capable of arousing himself to an elevated and expanded spiritual realm which indicates unlimited potential. After all is said and done, we observe a clear distinction between Moshe and Aharon, with each representing two different facets of service to Hashem. Moshe personifies Torah; he is the one who brought the Torah down from Heaven to earth. Aharon personifies *mitzvah* observance, which, in effect, elevates earth, bringing it up to Heaven. Each served as a conduit, a connection between Heaven and earth. Moshe brought Heaven down; Aharon sanctified and elevated earth.