

For a crown, the oil of his G-d's annointment is upon him, I am G-d. (21:12)

Bnei Yisrael would come to the *Bais Hamikdash* to see the *Kohanim* performing the *avodah*, service, accompanied by the *Leviim*, chanting their melodies and Psalms. Only one *shevet*, tribe, had access to the internal workings of the *Bais Hamikdash*. It must have troubled the average Jew that this unique group of people were selected over everyone to become Hashem's legion, His faithful servants. They must have questioned this phenomenon. What is really the reason that only the *Kohanim* and *Leviim* could act as agents for the people to offer *korbanos*. What trait rendered them so special?

Horav Y.A. Hirshovitz, zl, attributes their distinction to their grandfather, Aharon *Hakohen*. He stood up against those who would raise a hand against *Toras Hashem*, against those who chose to substitute divinity for a golden calf. *Bnei Yisrael* erred by making the Golden Calf. They compounded their sin by flaunting it, dancing and reveling before it. Aharon made a *mizbayach*, an altar, proclaiming, "*There will be a holiday for Hashem tomorrow.*" *Bnei Yisrael* thought in different terms than Aharon. They thought that they would celebrate the worship of their man-made idol. Aharon referred to the following day when the Golden Calf would be ground to dust and the perpetrators who clung to it would be executed. There truly was a festival for Hashem - the Almighty's Name would be affirmed and sanctified.

Aharon created and represented the *mercaz*, central point, where people who feared and believed in Hashem would rally together. Yes, Aharon withstood the onslaught of rebellion. He stemmed the tide of assimilation. Those that created the incursion, who incited the people to idol-worship, were put to death. Aharon's *mercaz*, his sanctuary of *kedushah*, endured to serve as a bastion of inspiration to the people.

Whenever our people have been faced with spiritual and physical challenge, the *Torah* has infused them with strength to triumph over adversity. We have been guided by the memory of that first *Kohen* who stood his ground and encouraged the people with "*Chag Hashem Machar*," "There will be a holiday for Hashem tomorrow". Keep the faith and remain strong, for tomorrow we will celebrate as we triumph over those who would defeat us. Let us look to the *Kohen* of our generation, the spiritual giants who guide us, to inspire us to develop the courage to overcome both the internal and external challenges which face us.