

## **I will be sanctified through those that are nearest to me, thus I will be honored before the entire people. (10:3)**

This *pasuk* expresses the entire concept. Hashem expects and demands more from those who are close to Him. Those who serve as an example must live up to the values which they represent. This idea is regrettably foreign to those outside of *Torah* circles. It has become the accepted norm that social and intellectual accomplishment grants one license to pursue whatever moral transgressions his heart desires. We have only to look at the secular leadership of modern society to recognize this unfortunate truth. Not so our *Torah* leadership; they must be the paragon of moral purity, the model of dignity and integrity, and the symbol of humility and caring for others. Indeed, they set the standard for the entire nation.

Responsibility, however, is an an integral part of the package. Hashem imposes strict justice on those closest to him. Unfortunately, the *hamon am*, common Jew, does not always accept or understand this. **Horav Yosef Shaul Nattenson, z"l, the baal Shoel U'meishiv**, identifies a contrast in the *pasuk*. The root word of "*achabeid*" is *kavod*, which usually is translated as "honor". It also means "heavy". In this context, the *pasuk* can be interpreted as telling us that Hashem becomes sanctified in the eyes of His *kerovim*, close ones. *Bnei Yisroel* understand that decrees must be issued. These decrees can be unusually harsh and devastating. Yet, these devotees understand that every *gezeirah* emanates from Hashem, thereby increasing their faith in Him. Conversely, those who have not had the opportunity to develop their faith, have a difficult time accepting Hashem's decree. It hangs "heavy" on their minds.

At times, the same decree that generates faith among the "*keruvim*" also creates a weakness of spirit and trust among the "*kol ha'am*", the common Jew, whose *emunah* has not been tempered through *Torah* and *avodah*. The most propitious advice would be to observe the leaders in order to discern how they accept Hashem's decrees. They have the resources to handle what Hashem metes out to them. To consider them "trusting and simple" is to malign them. This has always been the flimsy excuse embraced by those who would rather denigrate than venerate the *ben Torah* who believes in Hashem with an unequivocal faith. If they would exhibit greater "honor" for *Torah* leadership, the decrees would not seem as "heavy".