



BE A MENTSCH

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Honoring our Kohanim!

פְּרִשֵׁת אָמֹר

In this week's Parsha, אָמֹר, the Torah commands us to **honor** כַּהֲנִים. Ever since Hashem chose the כַּהֲנִים after the חֲטָא הָעֵגֶל, we have a mitzvah to make them קְדוֹשׁ. The pasuk says: וְקִדְשָׁתוּ כִּי אֵת לֶחֶם אֱלֹקֶיךָ הוּא מִקְרִיב קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָּךְ. We recognize that the Kohanim do all the work in the בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ and that's why we give them **honor**, even if the בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ is not standing. Since they had a special feeling for Hashem, they were chosen to serve Hashem. We, the rest of Bnei Yisrael, must never forget this closeness. Chazal chose to show this honor to the כַּהֲנִים in different ways. When people gather for a meal, כַּהֲנִים should always lead by בְּרַבַּת הַמְּזֹזֵן. When people gather in shul to daven, כַּהֲנִים should always lead by קְרִיאַת הַתּוֹרָה. The important message in this mitzvah and **Being a Mentsch** is to **honor** someone special because of their close connection to Hashem and his Torah and to attach ourselves to them.

There is a famous story told about Rabbi Shimon Schwab in his younger years when he went to visit the חֲפֵץ חַיִּים. Rabbi Schwab was the Rav of the Glen Avenue Shul here in Baltimore for more than twenty years. The חֲפֵץ חַיִּים asked Rabbi Schwab, "Why aren't you a כַּהֵן?" "Because my father wasn't a כַּהֵן," answered Rabbi Schwab. The חֲפֵץ חַיִּים asked Rabbi Schwab again, "Why aren't you a כַּהֵן?" Rabbi Schwab didn't know what to answer. Finally, the חֲפֵץ חַיִּים said, "When Moshe said to Bnei Yisroel after the sin of the Golden Calf, מִי לֵה' אֵלַי Whoever is for Hashem, should come to me?", לָוִי was the **only entire שבט** which came forward to respond to Moshe Rabbeinu's request. The לָוִי thought only about Hashem.

When Aharon was told that he was to help his younger brother Moshe take Am Yisrael out of Mitzrayim, he was very happy and not jealous at all. In fact, the pasuk testifies "וַיִּרְאַה וַשְּׂמַח בְּלִבּוֹ". The middah of Aharon was to honor Hashem and his messenger, Moshe, and to greet and help him. Aharon did not worry about his own position. Therefore, his children were chosen to serve Hashem in the Mishkan. May we too **honor Hashem's servants** and be זוֹכָה to do this mitzvah!

Have a Great Shabbos!