

## קדושת כהונה גדולה

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"והכהן הגדול מאחיו אשר יוצק על ראשו" (ויקרא כא, י) darshen that the כהן גדול must be above the other כהנים. The (ד: א) says תוספתא סנהדרין ולא כשהוא מסתפר ולא בבית המרחץ שנאמר והכהן הגדול מאחיו אשר יוצק על ראשו שיהיו אחיו הכהנים נוהגין בו גדולה ואם רצה שירחצו אחרים עמו הרשות בידו ר"י אומר אם רצה לנהוג בזיון בעצמו אין מוחל כהן גדול (רבנן) תנא קמא allows the כהן גדול to be מוחל his מופרש מן הכהנים and if he would like to have other people with him in the bathhouse the choice is his. ר' יהודה argues and darshens the word וקדשתו to preclude the כהן גדול from being מוחל כבוד and has a חיוב to be מופרש מן הכהנים even כורחו. How do the רבנן learn the word וקדשתו? This question is compelling to the point that early פוסקים use a סברה of not having מוחזק כהנים today as a פתח to allow כהנים to be מוחל כבוד for certain things (such as bentching, et al).

Rav Meir Simcha, in his משך חכמה, explains the word וקדשתו as only applying to a כהן הדיוט and points out that it is not written by כהן גדול specifically. The only specific posuk to the כהן גדול says "והכהן הגדול מאחיו". He suggests that there is a basic מחלוקת between the רבנן and ר' יהודה in the definition of כהונה גדולה: קדושת כהן גדול is said to the כהן הדיוט and there is no higher level of קדושת כהן. Once a person is a כהן, he cannot become more כהן by becoming כהן גדול. The כהן גדול is a separate דין having to do with being separate, not having more קדושת כהן. ר' יהודה, on the other hand, holds that the כהן גדול has a higher level of קדושת כהונה and therefore וקדשתו does apply to כהן גדול to prevent him from being מוחל כבוד.

The נזר gives a טעם for why כהנים can be מטמא. A טעם is a reason for a מצוה, but it also means 'a taste' which connotes that it doesn't cover every single situation. In any event, he says an interesting הגדרה as to why a כהן הדיוט can be מטמא לקרובים while a כהן גדול cannot. He says that a כהן gets his קדושה from his family- his fathers all the way up to אהרן הכהן were all כהנים. Therefore, the תורה says that when a קרוב is נפטר, it doesn't disturb his כהונה because it came from them! Yes, it is true, his mother nor his sister gave him this קדושה. Still, it is a קדושת משפחה. However, a כהן גדול only becomes one because of personal merit. This קדושה is not coming from anyone else to allow him to become מטמא.

According to this, we can explain the שיטות with the following: There are two examples of כבוד- a king who cannot be מוחל כבוד and a תלמיד חכם who can. The כבוד cannot be מוחל because the כבוד is coming from, and belongs to, Hashem. The

תלמיד חכם, on the other hand, as explained by the gemara in עבודה זרה, is described as בתורת ה' חפצו ובתורתו יגהה. This means that when he puts in the hard work of being קונה תורה it becomes his, which means the חשיבות is his. This allows him the choice to be מוחל כבודו if he so desires. Going back to our original מחלוקת - ר' יהודה learns that כהונה גדולה is just a higher level of a קדושה conferred and therefore it is within the כהן גדול's rights to waive. The רבנן learn גדול כהן is a separate קדושה that is self-earned and therefore personally owned, equivalent to the תלמיד חכם, which is why they hold he is able to be מוחל כבודו.

Perhaps we can say the following למעשה in a נפקא מינה scenario: If a כהן is in shul but a ישראל in the minyan decides that he wants an aliyah, there is no question that he cannot take it. The exception to this is if he is an outstanding תלמיד חכם, like רב was נהג in מגילה כא. [בדרך אגב, there is a fascinating תשובת הרמב"ם that addresses the gemara נדרים פא. which discusses why certain תלמידי חכמים were not to see their sons become תלמידי חכמים and ר' יהודה אמר רב says שאין מברכים because he is of the opinion that תורה must come and make ברכת התורה first and take the כהן aliyah for themselves. רב explains this phenomenon as an outcome of they themselves not being מחשיב there only learning enough.] If the minyan went through with giving the ישראל (or לוי) the aliyah instead of the כהן, it is a disgrace and requires תשובה. According to our approach in קדושת כהונה, the תשובה is not for anything לחבירו. His כהן status was bestowed upon him from Hashem. Therefore, it could be that they only need מחילה from Hashem for not following His rules of כהונה. However, if we had a כהן גדול who was מקפיד on bathing alone but another כהן ignored that and joined him - that would qualify as a בין אדם לחבירו violation because the כ"ג gained his status from personal merit and owns it.

I would like to end with a מחשבה: The whole concept of קדושת כהונה and גדולה shows us that each and every one of us is placed in a different matzav in life. Those of us who are not כהנים, we will see במהרה בימינו the עבודה being done by כהנים and realize that we cannot do it. Every person was given his own personal attributes and every person should be happy with himself. He should still be happy even though he is not a כהן. Some people have more brainpower, some people have more wealth, some people have more חן. We should all be happy with our own individuality, our own מעלות that Hashem gave each of us specifically. We should all be זוכה to focus on developing our own מדות והנהגות and evolving ourselves to fulfill our own potential. From that we will be באמת עובדי ה' and each person יבא על מקומו יבא שלום.