

REAL SPIRITUALITY

by Rabbi Yaakov Menken

"Moshe and Aharon went in to the Tent of Meeting, and then came out and blessed the Nation, and the Glory of G-d showed itself to the entire Nation." (9:23)

Rashi explains that this was a special blessing - that the Divine Presence should rest upon their handiwork. [Says the *Sifsei Chachamim*: don't think that this was the Priestly Blessing, because *Aharon* already blessed them... and besides, *Moshe* was a *Levi*! How could he give the Priestly Blessing?]

Rashi continues to explain why *Moshe* gave them this blessing: "because for the entire seven days of consecration [of *Aharon* and his sons to be the Priests], *Moshe* set up the Tabernacle each morning, served inside it, and then took it down each night - and the Divine Presence never rested upon it! And the people Israel were embarrassed, and said to *Moshe*, '*Rabbi Moshe!* All of the work that we did in order that the Divine Presence rest amongst us, in order that we know that we have been forgiven for the transgression of the Golden Calf...'"

So what was *Moshe's* answer? Says *Rashi*, "My brother *Aharon* is more appropriate and worthy, for by his sacrifices and service will the Divine Presence rest amongst you, in order that you know that he has been chosen by the Divine." [Otherwise, the people might have suspected that *Aharon* had not been chosen by G-d to be the High Priest, but by *Moshe* or himself...]

There are several lessons to be learned from this brief text.

First and foremost, spirituality is something real. It is possible to grow spiritually, or decline spiritually - and it takes work. Not everyone who says "I want to see the Divine Presence" gets to see the Divine Presence. One must work towards it - because it represents a potential that can be achieved.

Secondly, there are people that can help, and they must be the right people. Just as association with *Aharon* made it possible for the entire Nation of Israel to witness the Divine Presence, so too our membership in various groups can make a difference for our own spirituality. There are positive groups, and there are negative groups... and it's our choice.

The Seven days of preparation begin on this Sabbath - seven days before the first of the month of *Nissan*. It's an excellent time for spiritual growth!

Text Copyright © 1995 Rabbi Yaakov Menken and Project Genesis, Inc.

The author is the Director of Project Genesis.