



# IS A BEARDLESS KOHEN ALLOWED TO SERVE IN THE BEIS HAMIKDASH?

## DAAS TORAH by Maran Hagaon RAV RAV CHAIM KANIEVSKY shlita

The following was published on page 69 in HaGaon Rav Chaim Kanievsky's "Haggadah Shel Pesach Toras Chaim" (translation adapted from Artscroll's "Rav Chaim Kanievsky on Chumash," Bereishis, page 318 and Shemos, page 329):

A young man from Lakewood once came and presented the following question to Maran Rav Chaim Kanievsky:

"A relative of mine is suffering from acute renal failure," he said, "and desperately needs a kidney transplant. My whole family were tested and I am the only one who is a match. I am ready to undergo surgery to give him a kidney, but one thing is troubling me: I am a Kohen. When the Beis HaMikdash will speedily be rebuilt, I am afraid that donating a kidney will make me a *baal mum*, a "blemished" person who may not perform the *Avodah* (the Temple service)."

Rav Chaim Kanievsky answered him sharply, "A missing internal organ does not render one a *baal mum*. Not only are you allowed to donate your kidney without worrying about becoming disqualified to do the *Avodah*, it is a great *mitzvah* for you to save your relative's life, and that would preclude other considerations!"

Chastened, the young man got up to leave. Before he left the room, however, Rav Chaim called after him, "You are in any case not qualified to perform the *Avodah*."

The Kohen turned back to Rav Chaim in confusion. What had he done wrong, what *pesul* had Rav Chaim seen in him?

"The Ramban (Devarim 14:1) rules that a Kohen who does not have a beard is disqualified from the *Avodah*. You shave your beard, so you cannot serve..."

[Rav Chaim Kanievsky stated similarly to other Kohanim.]

מרן הגאון  
רבי חיים קניבסקי  
שליט"א



הובאו, נתבררו, ונתלבנו כל הדעות בנדון  
בספר הדרת פנים זקן בענין גילוח וגידול הזקן לאור ההלכה  
מאת הרב משה ניסן ווינער  
ניתן להשיג אצל כל מוכרי ספרים