

Teruma

The Fourth Crown - Keser Shem Tov

by Rabbi Eliyahu Kirsh

In Avos 4:13 Rabbi Shimon says that there are three crowns: The crown of Torah, the crown of kehuna and the crown of kingship. But the crown of a good name is above all of them. There were three items in the Mishkan and later in the Bais Hamikdash that had crowns: The Aron, the table of the showbread and the altar for incense. The crown on the Aron represented the crown of Torah. The Crown on the altar for incense represented the crown of kehuna. The crown on the table of the showbread represented the crown of kingship as this table symbolized Hashem's kingship and control of all of the wealth in the world.

The Shem Mishmuel by the Sochachover Rebbe, Zt'l, explains that the word that the Torah uses for crown is *zer* which is similar to the word nazir. A nazir abstains from wine to live a life dedicated to a higher purpose. Similarly, a crown shows a sense of being above usual desires and being in a higher world metaphysically. The Shem Mishmuel further explains that the other crowns have a potential for negativity. Great as the crown of Torah is, it can lead to arrogance if not utilized properly. Similarly, the crowns of Kehuna and kingship can lead to arrogance and taking advantage of those of lower status. Other bad character traits can potentially go with these crowns as well. This being the case, all of these crowns had a rim around them perhaps symbolizing limitation of some sort. Where do we find the crown of a good name in the Bais Hamikdash? In the menorah. The Menorah gave off pure, perfect, holy light. Every individual in Klal Yisroel could attain holy light. There was no potential for any bad. Therefore, the menorah had no rim, symbolizing ever-growing holiness. This was indeed the fourth crown, the Kesser Shem Tov.