

## "And of Levi he said Your Tumim and Your Urim belong to your pious one." (33:8)

Everywhere else in the *Torah* the word *urim* precedes *tumim*. In this instance, the word *tumim* is notably placed first. *tumim* represents the idea of *temimus* - moral perfection - in the highest order. Moral perfection must precede *urim* - the highest degree of intellectual perfection. In this context, the *Torah* proceeds to describe the character of the tribe which is destined to bear the "*Urim V'tumim*." The intellect is not the paramount trait. Rather, the moral character is the primary attribute. The tribe was obligated to structure a lifestyle which did not deviate from the strict moral character which originally enabled it to be designated as the bearers of this unique spiritual oracle. Immediately afterwards, the *Torah* proceeds to describe this tribe, oriented not to its intellectual capabilities, but rather to its moral distinction "*As your pious one, who has devoted himself entirely to You.*" The uniqueness of Judaism is that possessing the highest degree of intellectual acumen does not give one license for moral looseness. On the contrary, the *Torah* demands that the respect accorded to the moral laws must be on a level at least equivalent to the homage accorded to mental prowess.

The term *chasid* designates one who exemplifies the highest degree of selflessness in routine daily life. The extra precaution and strict circumspection demonstrated by this individual in order to distance himself from that which is debasing is generally referred to as *chasidus*. This is, however, only a preliminary stage. *Chasid* - is an appellation which one must earn, in active performance for the community before else. Thus, Dovid *Hamelech*, was able to beseech Hashem and implore His protection: "*May Hashem protect me for I am a "chasid"*" (*Tehillim* 86).

The *Talmud* in *Brachos 4a* interprets this *pasuk* in the following manner: May Hashem protect him for he never looked after his own rights. He lived completely for the good of others, dedicating himself entirely to the community. This unique characteristic is attributed to the entire tribe of Levi. Indeed, the *Torah's* use of the singular form *leish chisidecha* - indicates tat the tribe as a whole is ascribed the traits exhibited by its most prominent members. The hallmark of Levi's uniqueness should be reflected by every member of the tribe which carries this mantle.