

Now you shall command Bnei Yisrael that they shall take for you pure olive oil, pressed, for illumination, to kindle a lamp continually. (27:20)

Two people of similar backgrounds attended the same schools and were mentored by the same *rebbeim*. Nonetheless, the level of fear of Heaven of one is far stronger and more committed than the other. One is more meticulous concerning his *mitzvah* observance than the other. How did this happen? In a powerful and enlightening essay, *Horav Shlomo Wolbe, zl*, sheds light on this disparity.

He begins with a simple analogy to a clothing purchase. While most of us purchase our suits off the rack, those who can afford it – and who are fastidious about fit and appearance – custom-tailor their suits. There is no question that a tailored suit fits better and improves its wearer's appearance. Most of us, however, neither care nor have the wherewithal to order a custom-made garment. The world of *ruchniyos*, spirituality, presents a similar dichotomy. Some are “ordinary” articles of spiritual “clothing,” and others are articles that are custom tailored to fit the individual.

This analogy may be applied to the various vessels of the *Mishkan* and the men who fashioned them. The *Menorah*, which used only the purest olive oil, was to be prepared by the *chachmei lev*, wise-hearted, men. In his commentary to *Parashas Vayakhel* (35:14), *Rashi* explains that this is because this oil was different from all other oils. Only the ripest olives from the top of the tree were used, and only the very first drop squeezed from each olive qualified for use in the *Menorah*.

The *Mashgiach* posits that, just as this oil was different from all other oils, *yiraas Shomayim*, fear of Heaven, requires “wisdom of the heart,” since it is unlike any other fear. While many fear Hashem, their fear lacks passion and awe. They are complacent and their fear is on auto-pilot – much like a suit off the rack. It does its job, but sometimes leaves something to be desired. Such fear is “off the rack” and not individually “tailored” to fit the person.

The “tailor” who outfits the person with his garb of *yiraas Shomayim* is none other than the person himself. With cognizance of his attributes, his virtues and deficiencies, each person can (should) fashion his spiritual garb accordingly. Otherwise, it will be a poor fit. The wisdom required to make a prudent and wise decision concerning this goal of *yiraas Shomayim* demands that one not fool himself into thinking he is someone else. Likewise, he should not sell himself short. His goals in *ruchniyus* should be commensurate with who he is and what he can realistically become. No two people are the same, and no two situations are the same. Each person turns to the wisdom of his heart for guidance.

We often make decisions concerning our *frumkeit* goals based on our peers. Just because one's friend adheres to a certain level of *kashrus*, mode of dress, choice of *shuls* and schools, it does not mean that he has to do the same. Each person's decision is personal and based on the individual.

This will prevent the individual from wearing “borrowed” clothing that hardly fits properly, rather than wearing a custom-made suit that fits him perfectly.