

"And you will command Bnei Yisrael and they shall take for you pure olive oil, beaten for light, to fuel the eternal light." (27:20)

Upon reading the text, one understands this *pasuk* to be commanding Moshe to instruct *Bnei Yisrael* in the preparation of oil for the *Menorah*. The word *vum*, however, has a different grammatical connotation. It means that Moshe will command *Bnei Yisrael* concerning the oil at some future point. In order to convey to Moshe that a command would be issued immediately, the *Torah* should have said, *um, command, which, indeed, it does in Sefer Vayikra*. In *Vayikra 24:1*, Hashem instructs Moshe to command *Bnei Yisrael* to prepare olive oil. The advanced notice of a command is unusual. Why does Hashem forewarn Moshe about an upcoming command? What is unique about the pure olive oil that it receives so much preliminary attention?

Horav David Feinstein, Shlita, posits that the concept of "pure olive oil" serves as an analogy for an approach to *Torah* study. Just as the oil had to be pure from its initial emergence from the press in order to be acceptable for the *Menorah*, so, too, must one study *Torah* in a pure and untainted manner. Oil that had once contained impurities, albeit now thoroughly refined, was still not suitable for the *Menorah*. Likewise, when we teach *Torah*, we must teach in a manner that prevents the admission of any "impurities" which would later require cleansing. Once the lesson has been tainted, purification is extremely difficult.

What are the ramifications of this idea? When we approach the study of *Torah*, we must manifest a conviction that we are studying *dvar Hashem*, words of the living G-d. *Torah* is absolute truth because it originates from the source of truth. Questions are welcomed and encouraged as long as they are genuine and represent a search for the truth. At no time may one entertain a question challenging the validity of *Torah*. Questions must serve to clarify a specific matter, so that we can better understand. *Torah* study is the basis for a Jew's total perspective on life. It molds and shapes the manner in which he views world society, its cultures and values. It protects him from the harmful influence of his broader environment.

We now understand why the *mitzvah* of preparing the pure oil merited a special announcement that it would be given in the future. Hashem made this announcement to Moshe, who was pure himself. Having received the *Torah* directly from Hashem, Moshe committed every fibre of his being to the concept of pure *Torah* -- without embellishment. Thus, he should be the one to command *Bnei Yisrael* regarding the pure oil. He was the most qualified, because he reflected the very concepts he would teach, in his personal life and demeanor. In order to learn and to accept *Torah* from a *rebbe*, it is essential for the teacher to represent the ideals and values that he is transmitting. Moshe lived the ideology that he taught!