

**"And you shall command Bnei Yisrael that they take unto you pure olive oil... And bring near unto you Aharon your brother ... that they may minister unto Me (as Kohanim)... And you shall speak ... and they shall make Aharon's garments ."
(27:20, 28:1,3)**

The *Torah* emphasizes Moshe's direct involvement in three tasks: obtaining oil for the *menorah*, appointment of the *Kohen Gadol*, and preparation of the *bigdei kehunah*, priestly vestments. In all other instances which relate to building the *Mishkan* and its various appurtenances, the words *uagu*, *hagu*, or *vag*, are used. This phrase implies *Klal Yisrael's* collective involvement. What distinguishes these three obligations that renders Moshe's involvement essential?

Horav Elchanan Sorotzkin z.l. posits that each of these three tasks require the direct supervision of the *gadol ha'dor*, preeminent *Torah* leader of the generation. He explains this in the following manner. The oil from the *menorah* symbolizes the light of *Torah* which burns constantly, illuminating the entire world with its pure light. The light of *Torah* must be pure, purged of any secular ingredients. This "oil" must be "sealed" with the seal of the *Kohen Gadol* or the *Torah* leader of that generation, attesting to its immaculacy. The *Torah* admonishes Moshe that the supervision of *Torah* study and its dissemination should only be under the watchful eye of *gedolei Yisrael*.

The second task Moshe is obligated to personally oversee is the appointment of the *Kohen Gadol*. This represents the *Torah* leadership of every generation, the Rabbis, and teachers who educate and inspire their respective communities and students with *Torah* knowledge. As the *Torah* must remain pure, so must its disseminators exemplify erudition and values, scholarship combined with virtuous character traits. Indeed, the spiritual havoc during the time of the second *Bais Ha'Mikdash* was caused by the unqualified *Kohanim Gedolim* who "purchased" their position. They were not inducted through due process under the supervision of the "Moshe Rabbeinu's" of that generation. Rather, they were appointed by a corrupt and immoral leadership. The *Torah* admonished Moshe to intervene directly in the appointment of *Klal Yisrael's* spiritual leadership.

The third area which falls in Moshe's domain is the preparation of the holy vestments. Like *korbanos*, the priestly raiment atones for various sins. Indeed, a *kohen* is disqualified from the service if he is not fully clothed in the holy vestments. The method of sanctifying this garb was entrusted to Moshe. He, in turn, transmitted it to wise men who produced the vestments. Nonetheless, there is an important lesson to be derived regarding the sanctity of clothing and the importance of dressing in a manner of *tznius*, modesty.

The *Shechinah* resides among us, protecting us from our enemies. Alas, our disregard for dressing in a *Torah* oriented manner had left us like a *kohen* who is "*mechusar begadim*," missing

his priestly vestments! Moshe is admonished regarding the importance of the Jewish dress code and the ramifications of defaulting this responsibility. Indeed, if we peruse history, we would notice that spiritual decline and catastrophe have occurred whenever these three areas have not been supervised in accordance with the dictates of the *Torah* and its leadership.