

TORAH THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

PARSHAS TETZAVEH

Copied from AISH HATORAH

“Premium Gas”

“And you shall command the children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp.” (Ex. 27:20)

The oil for the menorah must be pure, without any admixture of foreign substances or olive particles and sediment. Even though such impurities can be filtered out later on, the verse tells us that the oil had to be absolutely pure and clear from the start. Therefore, the oil was made by pressing each olive gently, until only one drop of pure oil emerged. Afterwards, the olives would be crushed and the resulting oil used for korbanos (offerings). A powerful lesson can be learned from the fact that only the first drop of oil was permissible for use in lighting the menorah, whereas for the sacrifices the second pressing was allowed.

While an observant Jew ensures that the food he eats is kosher, he might be less concerned with the "food for the intellect" that enters his home in the form of literature or via the mass-media. The oil for the menorah represented the intellect, which needed to be 100% pure. The oil for the menorah must be superior to the oil for the sacrifices which symbolized nourishment. The Torah insists that our minds be fed only with information that is the purest and most refined.(1)

While the average car can be filled with any type of gas, high-class luxury cars can only be filled with premium gas. Filling the car with inferior gas can ruin the engine. In a similar vein, the average person may fill himself with all sorts of material, but a Jew has a most delicate soul which can only handle the purest and finest wisdom. When one is filled with only the finest spiritual gasoline, he is able to reach tremendous spiritual heights.

NOTE

1. Oznayim Latorah.