

The Secrets of the Flames

Understanding the Eight Days of Chanukah

Deuteronomy 17:11

לא תסור מן הדבר אשר יגידו לך ימין ושמאל
You shall not divert from the word they tell you, either right or left.

Deuteronomy 32:7

שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך
Ask your father, and he will tell you; your elders, and they will inform you.

Maimonides: Preface to the count of the Mitzvot

יש מצוות אחרות שנתחדשו אחר מתן תורה, וקבעו אותן נביאים וחכמים ופשטו בכל ישראל-כגון ועירובין, מקרא מגילה, ונר חנוכה, ותענית וידיים. ויש לכל מצוה ומצוה מאלו פירושים ודקדוקין תשעה באב,

There are [also] other commandments that were instituted after the giving of the Torah. They were established by the Prophets and Sages and spread throughout Israel, for example, the reading of the *Megillah*, [lighting] a Chanukah candle, fasting on Tish'ah b'Av, [setting up] *eruvim*, and [washing one's] hands [in preparation for prayer and eating]. Each of these commandments also possesses explanatory aspects and details.

Maimonides Negative Commandment #312

The 312th prohibition is that we are forbidden from disagreeing with the Sages who pass down the Oral Tradition (may they rest in peace), or from deviating from any of their instructions in Torah matters.

The source of this prohibition is G-d's statement (exalted be He), "Do not stray from the word that they declare to you." The *Sifri* says, "The verse, 'Do not stray...' constitutes a prohibition."