

# *Shiur L'Yom Shenit*<sup>1</sup>

[Monday's Study]

READINGS:     ***Torah Tetzaveh:***                     **Exodus 27:20 - 21**  
                  ***Haftarah:***                                     **Ezekiel 43:10-11**  
                  ***B'rit Chadasha:***                     **Hebrews 13:5-6**

***Keep it burning from evening to morning ....***

[Exodus 27:21]

**Today's Meditation is Psalms 119:97-104;**

**This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is *Tzuri v'Goeli* [My Rock and My Redeemer]**

***V'atah tetzaveh et-B'nei Yisra'el*** – And you are to enjoin B'nei Yisrael ... ***v'yikchu eleicha shemen zayit zach*** – that he take for you pure oil of pressed olives ... ***katit l'ma'or l'ha-alot ner tamid*** – for the light, to make the flames of the eternal lamp ascend. **Exodus 27:20.**

We are taking a Divinely *guided tour* of Heaven's Courts, Chambers, and Throne Room. The Holy One wants to familiarize us with the glorious 'Beauty Realm' milieu in which He reigns. He wants us to know exactly *what His Courts look like, how they are arranged, and what their spiritual substance is*. He is giving us this tour so that we can *build a scale model of His Beautiful Courts upon the surface of the fallen earth*. With regard to every facet of the Heavenly Throne Room Atmosphere and Environment that we need to reproduce in our world, therefore, the Holy One been faithful to follow up the vision with very practical verbal instructions as to mundane matters like height, depth, breadth, material, color, and texture. The Bridegroom-King's plan is for us, as His Beloved Bride-in-waiting, to envision, be captivated by the beauty of, and spend our lives building, trafficking in, and modeling to the world His amazing *Mish'kan*<sup>2</sup>. But, some might ask ... where does Moshe fit into all of this?

## ***Experiencing the Season of 'Prophetic Disconnection'***

Moshe has not been seen or heard from for several days now. The prophet with the holy Fire in his eyes was last seen backpacking up Mount Sinai. Eyewitnesses report that the 80-year-old prophet walked right into the midst of the strange Cloud that we have all seen sitting upon Mt. Sinai. Reports indicate that he was *here one minute* – and *gone the next*. It is as if he has *disappeared from the face of the earth*. This entire week you see Moshe *will not so much as utter a word*. He will receive

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<sup>2</sup> The traditional translation of this word is *Tabernacle*.

revelation – but he will not have anyone to release it to. He will not *prophesy*. He will not *teach*. He will not *adjudicate*. He will not *counsel*. He will not *build up*, *comfort*, *edify* or *exhort* anyone. He will not *judge* or *administrate*. This week Moshe will not have any human interaction whatsoever. In fact, as surprising as it seems in a book of Torah in which he is unquestionably the main human character, the name of Moshe will not even be spoken even one time in the entire parsha called *Tetzaveh*<sup>3</sup>. Moshe is, it seems, totally ‘disconnected’. Why? What possible purpose could this serve? Could it be that this is *a test*? Could it be that the Holy One deliberately ‘hid’ Moshe from us for a while just to *see how well we have internalized the truths he has taught us thus far*?

This series of events introduces a spiritual concept I call the ‘*prophetic disconnect*’. To understand what I mean by this consider that Moshe, the ‘friend of the Bridegroom’, will not be *seen* or even *heard from* all this week – either by the former slaves Moshe left behind in encampment at the base of Mt. Sinai or by us the readers of Torah.

Have you ever experienced a season of ‘*prophetic disconnection*’? Are you perhaps experiencing one *right now*? If so you are *right on schedule* according to the Holy One’s Divine calendar. A time of prophetic disconnection is what the season in which we find ourselves is all about. This is the season leading up to *Purim*<sup>3</sup> - the time each year in which the Holy One chooses to temporarily *hide His Face*<sup>4</sup>. Each year we are called upon to choose whether to go on with business as usual - or *fall on our faces* and *seek His Face with all our hearts*. In the midst of a season of spiritual disconnect, when the Word of the Holy One is ‘rare’ or nonexistent in our world, will we *stay true to His ways*? Or will we succumb to the sirens’ song of other voices that beckon us in other directions and to other destinies? Be prepared for a season of *eerie silence in the spiritual realm*. How

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<sup>3</sup> All languages are not equal in their ability to express Divine Truth. Hebrew – because it assumes eternity is expressive literally and pictorially rather than abstractly and conceptually, and because it is focused upon what the Holy One does and says rather than upon what men do and say, is a clearly superior language for the communication of Divine Truth. The Holy One consciously and intelligently chose to speak to humans *in the Hebrew language*. At least by the time He spoke to Moshe the truths we read about in parsha *Tetzaveh* He certainly did not have to use the Hebrew language if He did not want to. Moshe had grown up in Pharaoh’s household and courts and presumably knew many languages. Translation of words in any language into another – such as from Hebrew into Greek, or from Hebrew or Greek to English – is an inexact process. Every language comes not only with its own words but with its own ‘mindset’ and culture. Translated communication is therefore never as good, as clear, or as rich as communication between speakers of the ‘mother tongue’.

<sup>4</sup> Just as Moshe’s name is not mentioned and his voice goes unheard throughout *Tetzaveh*, nowhere in the book of Esther is the Holy One specifically referred to or heard from.

well will you fare in this coming season of *prophetic disconnect*?

***Our Lives Are to Be Lived, and our Avodah Poured Out Like Wine,  
Where Earth and Heaven Meet***

Last week's meditations focused largely upon the first two essential functions the Tabernacle is designed to fulfill. We discovered very quickly that the first function the *Mish'kan* was to designed serve was as the *parlor for chaperoned 'let's-get-to-know-one-another-in-a-safe-atmosphere-conducive-to-developing-relationship' interactions* between us and the Divine Bridegroom. It is in the Beauty Realm atmosphere of the *Mish'kan* that Divine Bridegroom agreed *actually visit with us, converse with us, reveal to us the depth of His love, and share Himself with us as much of His Personality, His Plan, and His Ways we are capable of processing.*

The second function the the Tabernacle is designed to service is as *the stage on which the Plan of Divine Redemption was to be acted out as a prophetic drama for the world to see.*

***We are His Witnesses – to our Families,  
to our Communities, and to the Nations***

Like the constellations and galaxies do in the Heaven, we have been called upon to declare the glory of the Creator on the earth. We are called to act out an *Immaculate Script designed to reveal His Love For and His Redemptive Plan in regard to our species.* Every *sunrise and sunset, every Sabbath, every new moon,* and every *mo'ed* the great redemption story is to be acted out in real time, by the likes of you and me. The themes and modalities of Redemption are to be presented in all their visible, dramatic glory - in and through our real time lives. Through the continual running of this Passion Play throughout the realm of time we are Divinely empowered to *declare to the world not only the awesome things the Holy One has done thus far, but also prophesy to it of the glorious things He will yet do in order to effectuate His Great Plan for the redemption of mankind and all of Creation.*

Of course, every passion play needs a stage. Equally important, every passion play needs a *captivating script and a believable cast of characters.* In this week's parsha, therefore, the Holy One's instructions are going to primarily deal with the matter of Divine *casting and scripting.* Before we get to that, however, it is time to consider yet another function the *Mish'kan* is designed to serve.

## ***Establishing A Strategic Beachhead for Heaven's Invasion of Earth***

In addition to serving as a parlor for Divine Betrothal interactions and as the stage for the greatest passion play ever acted out on earth the *Mish'kan* was also designed to serve as the port of call through which Heaven's strategic invasion of planet earth is to be carried out. The Holy One's Great Plan of Redemption has never been just about Israel. The Holy One's strategy has always been to win back all nations, all cultures, all ethnic groups, and all households of the world to His Fellowship and His Ways. As He told Avram from the very beginning, His Plan was to release through him and his descendants a blessing that would extend to *kol mishpachot ha-adamah* – i.e. all the families of the earth. **Genesis 12:3**; see also **Isaiah 49:6**.

A daring campaign of direct invasion is about to be launched from Heaven. The campaign will not conclude until the Holy One's Kingdom has come, and His Will is done, *on earth as in Heaven*. The glorious Kingdom of the Creator is about to be re-introduced to earth in real time. Every invasion needs a beachhead, every invading force needs a staging area, and every Kingdom needs a palace. The *Mish'kan* will serve all of these functions.

But now it is time for the Holy One to advise Moshe who He wants to participate in which of the aforesaid functions, how the participants are to be prepared for the tasks assigned to them, and what **specific types of avodah** He wants each of us to perform.

### ***The Essential Avodah – The Gathering of Pure Oil***

The Holy One begins this week's parsha with instructions about the most essential type of *avodah* the Redeemed Community will be called upon to perform.

***V'atah tetzaveh et-b'nei Yisra'el***

*And you are to enjoin B'nei Yisrael*

***V'yikchu eleicha shemen zayit zach katit l'ma'or***

*to bring you clear oil, made from hand-beaten olives, for the light.*

***l'ha-alot ner tamid***

*to keep the lamp constantly burning.*

**[Exodus 27:20]**

The most elementary and essential *avodah* of hosting the Abiding Presence of the Holy One is not performed by the High Priest – it is the service of millions of ordinary men, women, and children like you and me. It is intended to be the magnificent obsession of every redeemed soul. Each of us is to be on a *lifelong treasure hunt* - constantly about the joyful enterprise of seeking, processing,

purifying, and bringing forth the precious oil with which the King will light up the world. All our lives are intended to become *Gat-Shemeni* – a press for the production of pure olive oil.

We who have been redeemed by our Glorious Bridegroom-King are not to rest in that redemption. We have a 'service' we are all to be about the business of doing every day - indeed every moment - of our lives. What is that 'reasonable service'? It is bringing forth pure oil “*for the light*”. The oil we are to bring is not an end in itself; it is 'for the light'. We are to bring whatever is necessary to keep the lamp burning - i.e. to keep the light of our King aglow.'

So, what is the oil we are to bring? What fuels the lamp of our King's light? The parable of ten virgins immediately comes to mind. The wise ones had containers filled with oil; the foolish ones did not. Hmmmmmn.

But what is the spiritual significance of *olives*? Of the *oily substance olives produce*? First of all, oil must come 'from the olive press - in Hebrew, Gat-shemani. You may be more familiar with the Anglicized transliteration of this word: 'Gathsemane'. This is the place of surrendering to the Holy One's will and forsaking our own agenda. It is where Yeshua prayed '**Father ... nevertheless, let Your Will, not mine, be done.**' Secondly, the oil must be 'pure' - i.e. it must not contain any visible fragments/residue of the olive's flesh - even though the method through which the oil is obtained involves pressing/crushing the flesh of the olive. This 'flesh'-straining process calls to mind many of the things Shaul of Tarsus [Paul] talked about in his letters - especially his directives to 'crucify the flesh', to 'die to the flesh', to 'live not according to the flesh', to 'have no confidence in the flesh', to 'make no provision for the flesh', to 'put off the body of sins of the flesh', to 'know no man according to the flesh', and to 'not wrestle/contend with the flesh'. So ... how are you doing on that? How much of what you THINK or allow yourself to FEEL has particles of flesh in it? How much of what you SAY - or write/post online - is 'flesh-contaminated'? How much of your reactions to people and situations has flesh-residue in it? How much of what you DO throughout the day is flesh-driven or flesh-promoting?

You are the light of your world. If the light is not to sputter and die; if the lamp is to produce true illumination - and not just a lot of smoke and foul odor the oil must be fresh - and pure. The cultures of the world are all consumed in the darkness that flows from the desires and works of the flesh. We are called to be a counter-culture - to show the world how to overcome the flesh, its desires, its appetites, and its

pseudo-intellectual pride in its own ethnicity, social class, nationality, belief, and opinion.

So, let's explore the implications of our 'universal avodah' - and *reasonable service*. What does it mean that we are to bring to Moshe – *i.e.* to the Torah lifestyle assigned to us by our Bridegroom-King through the mediation of Moshe - pure *oil* [Hebrew, *shemen*<sup>5</sup>, meaning the oily substance obtained by pressing olives<sup>6</sup>, clear and beaten], *l'ma'or* – *i.e.* "for the light".

### *1. The Humble Olive Tree and Its Bitter Fruit*

Olive trees are not by any means the tallest or most majestic species of tree. They are typically short and squatty. The trunk of the olive tree is not straight, bright, and colorful. It is instead gnarled, twisted and knotty. The fruit of the olive tree is anything but sweet. Indeed, it is so bitter right off the tree that it cannot be eaten until it is processed through immersion in lye, brine, and/or salt.

The olive tree is indeed the most humble of all the fruit trees, and the olive it produces is indeed the most humble of the fruits grown on a tree. Perhaps it is for that reason that it was selected by the Holy One to be the first symbol representing His Covenant People. In latter days He will mix the metaphor, and begin to also refer to the Covenant People as His *Vine*.

The bitter flesh of the *olive* [Hebrew *zayit*] must, however, come before the sweet delight of the grape. The *combustible oil* [Hebrew *shemen*] of the Olive Tree must come before the wine of the *Vine* [Hebrew *gephen*]. We must first be considered a bitter pill for the world to swallow, an irritant to the eye and an offense to the taste; in the course of time, however, He will transform us, and change our nature – and everything that seems bitter in us will thereby be rendered sweet. And in that day all Creation will run to drink from the fruit of the Holy One's choice *Vine*.

Hence the olive tree, not the vine, is the first fruit tree mentioned in Torah aside from the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which were

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<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as *oil* in this passage is *shemen*, *shin*, *mem*, *nun sofit*, Strong's Hebrew word #8081, pronounced *sheh'men*. This is the substance that Ya'akov poured on the stone he set up at *Bayit-El* [Bethel] the morning after he dreamed his famous 'ladder' dream and heard the Holy One's Voice for the first time. **Genesis 28:18**; see also **Genesis 35:14**.

<sup>6</sup> The Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as *olive* in this passage is *zayit*, *zayin*, *yod*, *tav*, Strong's Hebrew word #2132, pronounced *zah-yeet*'. There is no clear Hebrew verb root for this word, perhaps indicating that it is of foreign derivation. The word is first found in Torah at Genesis 8:11, where we are told that it was a leaf plucked off the *zayit* which the dove brought back to Noah, which convinced him the waters had abated from the earth.

found in the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 8:11 the narrative of Torah reveals that the olive tree was *the first form of plant life that the inhabitants of the Ark encountered after the Great Flood*. You remember the story: after the floodwaters began to retreat from the earth, Noah set loose a dove from the window of the ark. At evening the dove returned bearing something in her beak – the freshly plucked leaf of an olive tree.

What did the olive leaf symbolize? It symbolized that the life force of Creation had survived the Flood, that the earth was in the process of recovery and restoration, and that the long season of tribulation for the remnant of the redeemed was drawing to a close. The olive tree therefore became for all time a sign of *new life, new hope, and a new order rising from the debris of a purging judgment*. And the olive itself is a symbol of the fruit of the new life and hope which we have been given and the evidence of our participation in the new order which is arising from the debris of our former way of life<sup>7</sup>. To be *without oil* [like the 5 ‘foolish’ virgins in Yeshua’s famous parable] means to claim to be living a new life and walking in new hope without continually producing fruit consistent with that new life and hope.

## ***2. The Violent Yet Delicate Process of Crushing [Katat]***

The process by which the Holy One ordained that olives [*i.e.* the fruit of the new life, hope, and order] were to be converted to oil for the lamp of the Mish’kan is *katat*. This Hebrew verb refers to a *meticulous process of grinding olives in a mortar bowl with a pestle*. This is a *painstaking, hands-on process designed to elicit the freshest, purest quality of oil possible*. As with any crushing process, however, it also involves a level of *violence* being applied.

The violent yet patient and productive process of *katat* symbolizes the slow, tedious, often extremely painful post-redemption process of *bringing our flesh and its lusts under submission in order that the aroma of Messiah may issue forth from our lives*. It is the Holy One who redeems us and enables us to produce fruit

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<sup>7</sup> Where exactly were all the olives necessary for every single man in the Redeemed Community to bring forth to Moshe pure oil supposed to come from? Mount Sinai, where the *Mish’kan Discourse* was given, was not exactly the kind of place where olive trees grew naturally. The olive tree is instead indigenous to the mountains of Eretz Yisrael, and particularly the mountains that surround the city of Melki-Tzedek – the city that will become Jerusalem.

The requirement that olive oil be brought by each person in the camp therefore laid the foundation for all the focus of later Scripture upon the Mount of Olives. That is, after all, not only Yeshua’s chosen place to abide while on earth [see **Luke 22:39, John 8:1, Matthew 21:1, 24:3, and 26:30; Mark 13:3, and Luke 19:37**], but it is also the place of both Yeshua’s departure from earth and the scene of His soon and coming return.

consistent with our new life in Him. It is our job to place and keep our flesh in the mortar bowl and to keep applying constant pressure to the pestle so as to produce precious oil evidencing consecration and producing illumination that pierces the darkness of this world and allows the shadow of Messiah to always be seen.

### ***3. The Clear/Pure Oil [Ha-Shemen]***

When the flesh of an olive is cold-pressed [*i.e.* crushed with a mortar and pestle] the product is a sweet-tasting, yellowish green olive-scented oil. The first reference in Torah to ‘oil’ [Hebrew *shemen*] is found in Genesis 28:18. After experiencing his first encounter with the Holy One in the form of a dream in which he saw the Holy One appear and heard Him speak from atop a great staircase Ya’akov [Jacob] rose early in the morning, set upright the stone on which his head had laid as he was dreaming this dream, and poured out oil [*i.e.* *shemen*] upon that stone. Ya’akov repeated this oil-pouring process the next time he was at that location.

From this beginning the act of anointing something or someone with oil has become synonymous with consecrating/setting apart that thing or person unto the service and use of the Holy One. By Divine directive each and every component of and each and every servant in the *Mish’kan* was consecrated by the pouring of oil. Later, David, Sh’lomo and most of the kings of Israel and Judah were consecrated through the act of being anointed with oil. And, of course, the title ‘Messiah’ [Hebrew *mashiach*] is believed to refer specifically to one set apart to the Holy One through an oil anointing.

The oil we are talking about each person bringing to the Friend of the Bridegroom is not, however, oil to be used for anointing. It is oil to be used for burning and shining. In this regard, it should be kept in mind that the oil of an olive is not combustible in the way a fuel like gasoline is. With an olive oil lamp therefore what burns and gives off light is not the liquid oil itself but is instead vaporized molecules of the liquid/oil that are continually being drawn to and released by the heat at the end of a flaming wick. In vapor form olive oil molecules have a lower combustion point – lower, in fact, than the combustion point of the wick material. This means that the vapors of olive oil burn before the wick does, and the burning of those produces significantly more light, for a much longer period of time, than the burning of the wick by itself would.

The oil that each person redeemed by the Holy One is to produce and bring forth is similarly drawn forth supernaturally by Divine Fires of testing and purification. We are drawn into those fires by the Holy One on purpose, in order that what will be released by us here on earth is not recognizable as ‘our’ fruit, which would



result in us receiving glory, but is instead Divine Light, which results in HIM receiving glory. We do not spontaneously combust and flame out like a fireball when we encounter the Holy One's purifying fire; instead, we become like the thorn bush of Sinai, burning brightly with holy fire, but remaining alive and continuing to enjoy and produce life.

#### ***4. Ha-Alot Ner Tamid – The Continually Burning Lamp***

The Holy One makes it clear that everyone in the Redeemed Community is expected to participate in His plan for lighting the world. Not a single individual in the Redeemed Community is ever to allow himself or herself to be without oil for the lamp - like one of the 'foolish virgins' of Yeshua's parable. Every son and daughter of the Covenant is to be continually engaged, every day of our lives, in the enterprise of growing, harvesting, crushing, consecrating, and sharing oil. As the olive is the sign of new life and new hope, the production of oil from the olive is the sign of submission to the life-mission and the light-bearing function for which He redeemed us and gave us new life and new hope.

Moreover, from the standpoint of the Community the Holy One makes it clear that there must be a sufficient quantity of oil on hand to make sure that the Divine Light He has empowered and commissioned us to co-create with Him on earth is never completely extinguished. What the Holy One is calling for is a perpetual *olive oil fueled flame* on earth – a *Ner Tamid*. The Holy One is never to be left without a witness to the Light.

#### ***Our Shared Assignment:***

#### ***Keeping Our Lamp Filled With Oil ... From Evening to Morning***

The oil of crushed olives described in the opening verse of parsha *Tetzaveh* was to be used to fuel for the seven-lamp *menorah* which the Holy One ordained to stand just outside the veil of the Holy of Holies. That *menorah's* function was actually to backlight the entire *Mish'kan*, allowing everyone to see - in shadowy form, through a glass darkly - the silhouetted forms of the appointed actors as they participate in the beautifully choreographed prophetic movements scripted by the Author of the Great Passion Play.

If there is no light on a stage, you see, the message of the play cannot go forth no matter how well the actors perform. By assigning the "part" of bringing the oil for the *menorah* to every single member of the Redeemed Community the Holy One assured that *no one in the Community would be left out*. Every person in the Redeemed Community has at least one part in the drama. Everyone is provided the opportunity to serve by *to bring clear and beaten olive oil* for the *menorah*.

## ***Oil For the Menorah? What Meaneth This?***

The *oil-harvesting*, *oil-refining*, and *oil-carrying* functions necessary for the production of light from the seven candlesticks of the Kingdom are now all essential components of our new creation identity. Our lives are all forever *associated with and dependent upon the olive tree*. Our destinies are all *intimately and eternally intertwined with the olive press*. We are the Kingdom's *oilmen*. We are all called and empowered to be *Guardians of the Oil*. Every person who enters covenant with the Holy One is become as one of the wise virgins, *carrying an ample portion of pure, hand-beaten oil from the olive tree wherever we go*. We are all, individually and collectively, called to co-labor with Messiah at all times, in all seasons, to keep the lamp with which our Creator has chosen to light the world burning brightly. In connection with the *Mish'kan* the oil we learned to harvest, purify, carry and make available for Kingdom use was derived from physical olive trees. But that was just a picture – a picture telling a much larger story. In the world in which we live today the oil we are called to harvest, purify, carry, and use to the Light the world is to be derived from the spiritual olive tree – *Israel*. As Shaul of Tarsus explained, from this olive tree come *the adoption* [our status as sons crying 'Abba, Father'], and *the glory* [the weight we carry into every situation by reason of the time we have spent in His Heavenly Courts, receiving His counsel], and *the covenants*, and *the giving of the Torah*, and *the service of God* [as real-time earthly ambassadors of His Heavenly Kingdom], and *the promises*, as well as *the repeating pattern of the lives of the patriarchs*. **Romans 9:4-5.**

The rabbis have therefore interpreted the 'oil for the menorah' directive with which parsha Tetzaveh begins as an incident to the mission of all B'nei Yisrael, which is to serve as "a light to the nations". Isaiah 42:6 for instance reads:

*I, the Holy One, have called you for a righteous purpose;  
In righteousness I will take you by the hand, and will keep you;  
I will give you for a covenant to the people, for **a light to the nations**.*

The quoted passage is one considered Messianic by many of those entering into covenant with the Holy One through Yeshua. The verses immediately after the quoted verse fairly shout the Messianic theme, stating the purpose of the light to be " *...to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and [to bring out] those who sit in darkness from prison.*" See also Isaiah 49:6:

*It is too light a thing that You should be My servant  
to raise up the tribes of Ya'akov and to restore the survivors of Israel;  
I will also give You for **a light to the nations**,  
that My 'Salvation' may extend to the end of the earth."*

Hence Yeshua declares to His talmidim:

*You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.  
Likewise, when people light a lamp they don't cover it with a bowl,  
but put it on a lampstand so that it shines for everyone in the house.  
In the same way, let your light shine before people,  
so that they may see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven."*

And remember that it says in the TaNaKh: ***Ner Adonai nish'mat adam*** - i.e. a man's soul is the candle of the Holy One [Proverbs 20:27]; and ***Ner mitzvah v'Torah ohr*** - i.e. a candle is a mitzvah and Torah is light [Proverbs 6:23].

Yeshua made it clear in His discussion of the Judgment to come that the 'oil' required of us is indeed Torah's *mitzvot*. For He said:

*Then the King will tell those on his right hand, 'Come, blessed of my Father,  
inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;  
for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat;  
I was thirsty, and you gave me drink;  
I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you clothed me;  
I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.'*

*"Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry,  
and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink?*

*When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you?  
When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?'*

*"The King will answer them, 'Most assuredly I tell you,  
inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'*

*Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed,  
into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels;  
for I was hungry, and you didn't give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink;  
I was a stranger, and you didn't take me in;  
naked, and you didn't clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me.'*

*"Then they will also answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger,  
or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn't help you?'*

*"Then he will answer them, saying, 'Most assuredly I tell you,  
inasmuch as you didn't do it to one of the least of these, you didn't do it to me.'  
These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

[Matthew 25:34-46]

Feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, caring for the foreigner, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and imprisoned – those are not a new religion – they are *Torah deeds*. They are what the Hebrews have long called 'tzedakah', or 'mitzvot'.

Could it be then that the *shemen* of which Yeshua spoke [that which the wise virgins possessed plenty of] is a *lifestyle of Torah-consistent conduct* by ordinary men and

women who *sh'ma*? I am not talking about a '*works-based salvation*'; I am instead talking about a *dance of love* with the Messiah who shows us the way.

It is *all about Messiah*. It is *what He saw the Father doing*. And it is *what we see Him doing, day-by-day, and everyday*. Messiah is constantly about the business of walking out the Holy One's Torah. If we are with Him, emulating Him, flowing in unity with Him, what do you think we will be doing?

### ***Questions for Today's Study***

1. The name of this week's Sidra is "*Tetzaveh*".

[A] What does that mean in English?

[B] In what verse is that word found?

2. The Torah *sidra Tetzaveh* begins with the Holy One directing the collection of something from the people. The focus, however, is not upon giving but upon *divesting*, or *casting off something that is holding the people back*.

Imagine Harry Houdini tossed underwater bound up in silver handcuffs, gold chains, wrapped in heavy, expensive cloth, and weighted down with flagons of extra virgin oil and water-tight chests filled with the world's finest spices. Houdini's task would not be to 'give' those treasures away – it would be to *divest* himself of them so that he could increase his buoyancy and quicken his rise to the surface. Those things are *what is keeping him from the oxygen he needs*. To divest himself of them is to make *t'rumah* [achieve buoyancy].

[A] What did the Holy One tell Moshe collect from the covenant people?

[B] How and for what was Moshe to use this material?

3. Verse 21 of chapter 27 explains the use of the substance to be collected from the people.

[A] *From* when until when was the menorah to be tended?

[B] Who was to be responsible for keeping it burning?

[C] Read Isaiah 42:5-8 and 49:5-6. Who does the Holy One say in those verses is to be a burning/shining "light" to whom?

4. Read Matthew 5:14-16. Memorize these three verses for Erev Shabbat.

5. In Exodus 28:1 the Holy One directs Moshe to "take" someone(s) "***from among B'nei Yisrael***" to minister to Him "in the priest's office".

[A] Who is/are mentioned by name as persons to be set apart for this purpose?

[B] Look up the meaning of those names in the Bible Dictionary, and list one or two things you find out about them in reading the article on them in that dictionary.

6. To get an idea of what is happening in this week's Haftarah parsha, read Ezekiel 40:1-4 and 43:1-9, 44:4-16, 23-24, 46:1-3, and 47:1-12. From reading those verses, what do you think is going on?

7. In today's Haftarah verses [Ezekiel 43:10-11] what does the Holy One say is the reason He is showing Ezekiel this vision? Why do you think anyone would have the kind of reaction the Holy One seeks just from hearing the vision Ezekiel saw?

8. In today's suggested B'rit Chadasha reading the writer of the book of Hebrews is concluding with some final, but very important, comments.

[A] Of what are we warned to keep our lives "free"?

[B] What is to make us "content"?

[C] When we see someone who has more than us, or we see something that really looks "cool", what promises of the TaNaKh does the writer of Hebrews tell us to meditate upon?

[D] For Shabbat, memorize both of the verses to which the writer of Hebrews refers us, and be able to give the book, chapter and verses from which they come.

[E] Why do you think "love of money" is regarded by the writer as so dangerous to one who is seeking the Holy One and His righteousness?

*May our lamps be filled with oil forever!*

### ***The Rabbi's son***

### ***Meditation for Today's Study***

**Psalm 119:97-104 [Mem]**

***Oh, how I love Your Torah! It is my meditation all the day.***

***Through Your commandments You make me wiser than my enemies;  
for they are ever with me.***

***I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation.***

***I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.***

***I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word.***

***I have not departed from Your judgments, for You Yourself have taught me.***

***How sweet are Your words to my taste - sweeter than honey to my mouth!***

***Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.***