

## *Introduction to Parsha #20: Tetzaveh<sup>1</sup>*

READINGS:     **Torah:**                                 Exodus 27:20 – 30:10  
                  **Haftarah:**                             Ezekiel 43:10-27; I Samuel 15  
                  **B'rit Chadasha:**                 Hebrews 13:5-21



*Fashion/create garments of holiness for your brother ....*  
[Exodus 28:2]

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, you are to enjoin B'nei Yisrael ... *v'yikchu eleicha shemen zayit zach* – that they are to bring you pure oil of pressed olives ..... Exodus 27:20a.

In parsha *Terumah* [Exodus 25:1 – 27:19] we got our first exposure to what I like to call the 'Beauty Realm'. We learned that while there can be linkage and interface between the realms of *ha-Shamayim* [KJV 'the Heavens'], where the Holy One dwells, and *ha-Aretz* [KJV 'the earth'], in which we find ourselves deployed, that linkage/interface must be done delicately, according to prescribed protocols. Hopefully you are getting acclimated to the stunning elevation shifts that come with 'realm travel'. Hopefully your eyes are getting adjusted to the Genesis 1:3 'ohr' kind of light, your ears to the true tone of Heaven. Hopefully you are enjoying the other-worldly sights, sounds, smells, and tastes. Hopefully you are remembering the location of the landmarks. Hopefully the furnishings to which we were introduced last week – i.e. the *aron ha-brit* (a/k/a 'ark of the covenant'), the *kaporet* (a/ka/ 'mercy seat'), the *shulchan ha-panim* (a/k/a 'table of showbread', the *menorah* (a/k/a 'lampstand'), and the *mizbeach ha-nechoshet* (a/k/a 'brazen altar') – are

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still fresh in your mind. Hopefully you have developed a healthy curiosity regarding the ‘Great-Nation’ supporting functions that the Holy One intends for these furnishings to serve. Hopefully you have been reveling in the rich blue, purple, crimson color scheme. Hopefully you have been enthralled by the here-a-cherub, there-a-cherub, and everywhere-a-cherub interior decoration motif. Hopefully you have found delight in the stimulating combination of precious metal, rich grained wood, and smooth-as-silk linen textures. Ah, but are nowhere near through exploring the beautiful place our King has prepared for us ‘beyond the Veil’. There are two more furnishings yet to be revealed. And there are functions, and protocols, and possibilities galore yet to learn. But before we get to that, you might be asking yourself why, up to this point, we have we not been shown a single human being walking around in our King’s hallowed halls? Every kingdom must have human subjects - doesn’t it? Every royal palace must have courtiers - right? What’s the point of the Holy One showing us these glorious places if no one from our species can go there?

***So ... Are Real, Flesh and Blood HUMAN BEINGS  
Welcome in the King’s Beauty Realm – or NOT?***

We have no clue yet who - if anyone other than He Who sits enthroned between the wings of the *keruvim* - lives and works in the halls and chambers and doorways of this great palace. In fact, we have not, as of yet, seen a single son of Adam anywhere in the Courts! We have not been told who is responsible for maintaining the *Mish’kan*, or overseeing its operations, or guarding its holiness, or welcoming and supervising visitors. We have not met the doorkeepers. We have not been introduced to the *mayor domo*, or any of the butlers, cupbearers, or stewards he supervises. We have not been introduced to anyone from the foodservice staff, the lighting crew, or the I.T. sector. We have not seen a single musician, psalmist, singer, dancer, standard-bearer, event planner, or pageantry coordinator. We have not met any upper, middle, or lower-level managers. Who are the attendants, *adjutants*, *aides-de-camp*, and the *sergeants-at-arms* in this command-and-control center? Who are the scribes and runners in this communications hub?

Without knowing how human beings fit in the grand scheme of this Great Palace we cannot possibly understand what the edifice and furnishings we have been shown - much less the deep parabolic riddles each of these things represents - has to with us. Without a practical vision regarding what roles fallen, flawed human beings like us are supposed to play here, how can the revelation that a place like it exists, and thrives just outside our realm of natural vision, inspire or empower us? We can be mesmerized and awestruck at the majesty of our King's magnificent *Beauty Realm* - but the purpose for which we have been invited on this tour of the Heavens will remain an enigma to us! No worries! The Holy One is about to fix

that. Buckle your seat belts - Before we get to all that though – uh ... *has anyone seen Moshe?*

### ***The Sounds of Silence***

Even in his communion with the Holy One this week Moshe will not so much as open his mouth. Not even *once* will his voice be heard. He will not intercede on behalf of the people. He will not utter a single syllable – much less sing a song – of praise. He will not beat a timbrel, blow a shofar, or dance before the Holiest of All. He will not utter a breath of petition for anyone back in the Camp – or for the nations. He will not seek clarifications on issues of doctrine. He will not even so much as *take any notes*.

Moshe will decrease – in order that the Holy One may increase. Understand, however, that there is a very good reason for Moshe’s silence - He is *in the manifest Presence of the God of Avraham, of Yitzchak, and of Ya’akov*. And in the chambers of the Holy One human beings do not speak or sing or play music – they simply *fall on their face before the Holy One in awe and listen* [Hebrew *sh’ma*]. Indeed, if they say anything at all they cry only ‘***Kadosh! Kadosh! Kadosh! Adonai Elohim Tzava’ot!*** [Holy! Holy! Holy! is the Holy One, God of Hosts].

### ***100% Red-Letter Revelation!***

In light of the disappearance of Moshe from the text we are going to find that this week, for the first time in Torah, there will not be a single line of either narrative or dialogue. There will be not one sentence of ‘he said/she said’ human interpretation or reaction. Every single word we are going to read in parsha ***Tetzaveh*** is going to be ‘red-letter’ revelation – Divine Truth poured out directly from the Throne of the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

Every word we read in this parsha will not merely be inspired by the *Ruach HaQodesh* but will proceed directly - with no intermediary - from the mouth of the Most High God. From the parsha’s opening in Exodus 27:20 to its close in Exodus 30:10 ***Tetzaveh*** is 100% truth proclaimed in the Heavenly Tongue. *Every single verse* we will read this week will consist of words spoken by the Awesome Voice which brought forth Light from primordial darkness, Which divided the waters of the Great Deep into the heavens and the earth, and Which brought forth life in every form known or knowable to man – indeed, Which brought forth man himself.

The words we will read this week – in Hebrew, at leasts – are *the exact words* the Holy One spoke. While all of Scripture is Divinely ‘inspired’ – including such human-involved portions as narratives and the dialogues, Psalms and the Proverbs - and is therefore profitable for teaching at some level, words such as these we are

reading in parsha *Tetzaveh*, directly spoken by the Holy One are ... well, let's just say such direct quotes from Heaven are *very, very special*. Words directly from Heaven are profitable for *sh'ma-ing*.

All words of inspired narrative *educate* us; but direct words from the Mouth of our Bridegroom King *marvelously empower* us. The words spoken by the human characters of the Bible *inform* us; but the words that actually emanate from the Brilliant Mind and issue forth from the Beautiful Lips of the Holy One Himself *radically transform* us.

Since the Holy One delivered our ancestors from Egyptian bondage and called us to meet Him at Mount Sinai He has been soaking us in regular 'spring showers' of Divine truth like this. And now at Mount Sinai the occasional showers of revelation we experienced during the desert passage have turned into a steady, pouring rain. It is *monsoon season* for the covenant people of the Great King. The waters are risen – waters to swim in – a river that cannot be passed over. May the whole earth soon be filled with such glory!

### ***The Name of the Parsha***

The Holy One will not mention Moshe's name even once in this entire parsha. After all, this parsha is most definitely not about Moshe. It is about *SomeOne Else*. We will find out soon enough Who that 'SomeOne Else' is. But first let us see what clues we can find in the name given by the sages to this rather unique parsha – *Tetzaveh*. The word *tetzaveh* is usually translated into English as something like 'you shall command', or 'you are to charge'. What a pity<sup>2</sup>. Such a translation completely misses the essence of the message the Holy One is communicating. The Hebrew phrase *Tetzaveh*, you see, has lot less to do with commands or charges than it does with *scripting* – and *casting* - *the re-enactment on earth of the Divine Passion Play* which was written and performed in Heaven before the foundation of the World. Let me explain what I mean. *Tetzaveh* is a Hebrew word derived from the verb root *tzavah, tzade, vav, hey*, pronounced *tzaw-vaw*'.

The Hebrew letter *tzade* [pronounced *tz*, like the last two letters of the English word 'ritz'], is a Hebraic pictograph of a man bowing in submission before the Holy One. The Hebrew letter *vav* [which is, when used as a consonant, as here, pronounced like an English 'v'] is a pictograph of a *nail* or *peg* – something that connects or fastens one thing to another. The final consonant, *hey*, is a pictographic representation of a window or opening in a Bedouin-style tent – a place where both *light* and *fresh air* are admitted [hence

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<sup>2</sup> The author is not saying that *tetzaveh* cannot be interpreted as 'you are to charge', or 'you are to command'. In the proper context this might be as good a translation as can be hoped for. What the author is saying is that in this particular situation to accept that translation is to miss the point of the parsha.

representing a place/event of revelation and inspiration].

To make the Hebrew word *Tetzaveh* a prefix is added the verb root. The prefix added is the Hebrew letter *tav* [the last letter of the Hebrew alef-beit, and the second of the two Hebrew letters which makes the 't' sound]. The *tav* is a Hebraic pictograph representing a covenant, or covenant sign. From a Hebraic standpoint then the word *tetzaveh* pictures *a process where as an outgrowth of an eternal covenant a man who bows in submission before the Holy One becomes permanently affixed or connected to a place of revelation and inspiration*. The message of the parsha is that there is such a man - and such a process - in the Holy One's Divine Plan. On earth, at Mount Sinai, Moshe's brother Aharon is about to be called to become such a man. On earth priests' – *i.e.* at Mount Sinai, all four of Aharon's sons are about to be called to *become and start to function as* such men. We will come to call such men *kohanim*, or 'diplomats, emissaries, mediators, and representatives of the Holy One's Kingdom. But believe it or not the parsha is not really about *Aharon and his sons*. They are merely the *earthly representations of a Heavenly reality*. If you want to understand the essence of the parsha you must open your spiritual eyes and *look through the earthly representations* - and see the outline of the priestly ministry of Messiah. For it is He, much more than Aharon or any of his sons, Who is the true *Kohen Gadol* [High Priest].

### ***Looking At Messiah – and Our Own Destinies – Through a Glass Darkly***

The question is which of two relevant venues we will choose to look at, think about, and talk about. If our imagination is fixed upon priesthood that functions on earth and which involves someone mediating the kingdom of the Holy One to the residents of earth, we will fixate upon and talk about the priesthood of Aharon. If however we choose to look higher, with *spiritual eyes*, to eternal rather than temporal realities, and fix our gaze upon a priesthood that functions in Heaven and which therefore involves someone mediating the interest of men before the residents of Heaven, we will be thinking and talking and marveling at Messiah Yeshua – and our calling to bring to earth what we see taking place in Heaven. What *Tetzaveh* is about, you see, is *a tale of two priesthoods*.

### ***A Tetzaveh Travelogue***

*Tetzaveh* represents a continuation of the dramatic 40-day face-to-Face meeting between the Holy One and Moshe that began back in Exodus 24. Just as the sole speaker throughout this parsha is the Holy One, the sole subject discussed is the *avodah* [i.e. service] of the *Mish'kan*. Remember, Messiah is the *Mish'kan*. And if you are in Messiah, well, *you are the Mish'kan too!* If you understand that, you can surely understand that *Messiah is the Priesthood* – and that, if you are 'in

Messiah', abiding in Him as He calls you to be, *you are the priesthood too*<sup>3</sup>!

### ***A Basic Outline of the Parsha***

- I. *Every Man's Avodah* - Keep the Oil fresh, pure, and available [Exodus 27:21a]
- II. *Introducing the Forerunner/Model Courtiers of our King's Courts* [27:21b-28:43]
  - A. Stewarding the Oil;
  - B. Daily Tending the Lamps of the Menorah;
  - C. Ministering Humbly and Reverently to the Holy One;
  - D. Modeling for us - Walking in Beauty and Honor
- III. *The King's Setting Apart/Consecration Protocols* [29:1-37]
- IV. *Every Evening and Morning's Essential Avodah* [29:38-43]
- V. *The Glorious Promise of the Bridegroom-King's Presence* [29:44-46]
- VI. *Introduction to the Golden Altar of Incense* [30:1-10]

### ***Introducing The Avodah of the Bridegroom-King And His Court***

The Holy One has assigned to every *court* and every furnishing in the *Mish'kan* – and to every *situation and sphere of influence into which He places His called-out ones* - its own *avodah*. What is *avodah*, you ask? It is *faithful, selfless service of a beloved superior motivated by deep respect, love, and a sense of worthiness*. *Avodah* is the essence of true worship in spirit and truth. As radical as it seemed last week for us to be told that our calling requires us to build on earth, for the world to see, a scale model of the Heavenly Throne Room of our Bridegroom-King, well ... that was just the beginning! Once the holy edifice is built, our job – our joy – will shift to *embracing, resonating with, and becoming good students and stewards of its holiness*. Our *avodah* on earth is going to be choreographed to reflect, and model for the world, the *avodah* of the Heavenly- Courts. In other words, we are called to replicate, in real time on earth, what the *angels*, the *elders*, the *four living creatures*, the *serafim*, the *keruvim* and the *Lamb* do infinitely and eternally in Heaven.

Do you get it? The Holy One has given us – His Kingdom of *Kohanim* and Holy Nation - the assignment is to make sure that in all generations and in all situations the beauty and holiness and the majesty of the Courts of the Great King are [a] demonstrated to the world in real ways and [b] maintained even in the midst of earthly people and things that are mundane, irreverent, and downright unclean. Our

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<sup>3</sup> This does not engraft every talmid of Yeshua into the physical lineage of Aharon. It does however identify each such talmid with Messiah in every aspect of His *life work* and *mission*. What Yeshua does in Heaven it is our assigned task to replicate upon earth – in our hearts, households and all our spheres of influence if not in the earthly *Mish'kan*.

Bridegroom-King is not to be left without a company of joyful, passionate, loving, faithful, and wholly dedicated witnesses.

That is why we are each given a *sphere of influence/zone of impact* upon the earth. Parsha *Tetzaveh* is about us being empowered by our Divine Bridegroom-King to establish our little patch of earth as a beachhead for His Kingdom. *Beachhead establishment protocol* is our reasonable AVODAH. Within our assigned sphere/zone of relevance our task – indeed, our reason to exist – is to *demonstrate the priorities, the goodwill and good news, the wisdom, the decrees, and the shalom of Heaven to our little corner of the earth.*

It should scarcely need to be mentioned at this point that AVODAH is *not* – *was never designed to be* - a means for men to earn either salvation or righteousness. AVODAH is simply the natural response of a heart that loves the King. It is powered by love - not motivated by reward. And it is *to be accomplished only in full and continuous cooperation with the empowering breath of the Holy One's mouth and the prophetic energy inherent in His Words.*

Did you ever wonder why Yeshua said things like *'If you love me, you will keep my commandments'* [John 14:15] with one breath, then turned around and said *'without Me you can do nothing'* [John 15:5] with the next? No man can claim one ounce of credit for *avodah*. And no man truly engaging in *avodah* would be tempted for a moment to try. All honor and glory belongs to the Holy One, Whose Breath empowers us and Whose Words energize us. Just remember, therefore, that *Tetzaveh* is not part of a tome of *ancient history*. And please do not fall into the silly theological trap of believing the *avodah* of the *Mish'kan* is just 'ceremonial law', that has been done away with in Messiah. There is something deep, rich, and intensely spiritual going on in *Tetzaveh*. Deep is calling unto deep. This is *your life and destiny* we are talking about.

### ***1. The Most Basic Avodah of All – Each Man's Responsibility to Collect and Maintain Pure Oil in His Lamp***

[Exodus 27:20-21]

The Holy One kicks off the description of our reasonable *avodah* by instructing Moshe concerning a task for which everyone in the Redeemed Community is going to be responsible for – namely the supplying of the *Mish'kan* with *pure olive oil* for use in keeping the golden *menorah* blazing. The Holy One tells Moshe: ***V'atah tetzaveh et-B'nei Yisra'el*** – *You are to enjoin the sons of Israel ...* ***veyikchu eleicha shemen zayit zach katit*** – *they are to bring you pure/clear olive oil, crushed by hand ...* ***l'ma'or l'ha-alot ner tamid*** – *in order that the light of the lamp may continue to ascend forever.* It is essential that there be oil for the lamp – that light may be kept burning. Each of us has a responsibility to make that happen. Every day. Patiently,



respectfully, seek to gather the oil of the Kingdom from every man and woman you meet. Keep the Kingdom vessels full. Keep the Kingdom lights burning. It is a **chukat olam** – i.e. a mandate forever – **l'doratam** – in all generations.

## **2. Garments Specially Designed and Crafted to Honor the King**

[Exodus 28:1-43]

The Holy One then tells Moshe about the special garments He wants His highest-ranking servants and Courtiers to wear when they perform their duties: **V'asita vigdei-kodesh l'Aharon achicha l'chavod uletifaret** – *And make garments of honor and beauty for Aharon your brother.* These garments are to consist of a *breastplate*, an *apron-like ephod*, a *robe*, a *tunic*, a *cap with a headband* reading 'Kadosh L'Adonai', a *sash*, *linen undershorts*, the *Urim* and the *Tumim*.

## **3. A Few More Essential Elements of Avodah**

[Exodus 29:1-46]

The Holy One will then go on to describe in detail a seven-day commissioning ceremony He has designed for everyone who will participate in the *Mish'kan's* services. The protocol for a twice daily 'offering' of covenant love, called the *tamid*, will be revealed. Every morning and every evening a beautiful drama of redemption is to be played out, as a lamb is to be brought to and burned on the brazen altar. Day after day, year after year, millennia after millennia, a sweet savor is to arise from us Heavenward. Just as the creatures and elders and angels and saints of Heaven declare their praise to the Holy One and re-affirm their fealty to the Bridegroom-King of Heaven repeatedly, so are we, their earthly counterparts, to do in our world.

As these instructions draw to a close the Holy One will pause to reiterate that it is His intention, in the course of this *avodah*, to come and dwell in the children of Israel, and to be their God throughout all generations to come.

## **4. The Ultimate Avodah – A Pleasing Fragrant Aroma Unto the King**

[Exodus 30:1-10]

Then one more furnishing – the *golden altar of incense* – will be introduced 'out of time'. On this altar, which is to be located just outside the innermost chamber of the *Mish'kan*, incense is to be presented each day, morning and evening. What a privilege to be given such a task – to fill up the senses of the King with a pleasing, fragrant aroma of AVODAH.

## ***The Week of Assigning and Scripting the Leading Roles in the Great Passion Play***

The Holy One instructs Moshe in *Tetzaveh* who will be chosen for the "lead" roles in His passion play. The Divine Voice proclaims:



***V'atah ha-k'rev eleicha et-Aharon achicha v'et-b'nav***

*And you - [Separate] your brother Aharon and his sons*

***ito mitoch b'nei Yisra'el l'chahano-li***

*from among the descendants of Yisrael in order that they may kahan for/unto Me.*

**[Exodus 28:1]**

Aharon and his sons are specifically chosen to serve as *kohanim*. Our English Bibles translate that Hebrew word as ‘priests’. We will explore the deeper meaning and many connotations of that term in later studies. For now, however, we will be told merely that the Holy One wants Aharon and his sons to collect the oil provided by each member of the Redeemed Community and use it to keep the light of the *menorah* burning “***from evening until morning***” before the Presence of the Holy One. This *avodah* is to be performed by Aharon and his sons “***for the ages, throughout all generations***”.

None of this makes any sense, however, unless we keep in mind the basic terms of the Betrothal Period Protocol.

### ***The Basic Terms of Betrothal Period Protocol***

Over and over again during the lengthy Courtship process in Egypt the Holy One proved Himself a faithful and worthy suitor. But while as a result of the Exodus experience the Betrothed People saw *the fringes of the Holy One's power, ate of His Provision, drank of His Living Water, and experienced amazing demonstrations of the depth of His Covenant Commitment*, they have much to learn about how their Divine Bridegroom THINKS, what He PRIORITIZES – much less WHAT HE EXPECTS OF AND DESIRES FROM THEM.

Acquiring the latter kinds of understanding – and coming to grips with the implications and advantages inherent in their Betrothal to Him - will *take some time, will require a lot of patience, and will involve multiple phases of transformation*. One does not get transformed from Eliza Doolittle into Mrs. Professor Henry Higgins overnight – or without fits and starts and an occasional season of one-step-forward, two-steps-back. Much less does a population of slaves steeped in generational strongholds of fear, shame and suspicion get transformed into an *am segulah*, a *mamlaket ha-kohanim*, or a *goy k'dosh* without some *trauma*, some *drama* ... and at least a few threats to chunk it all and *run home to momma*. *Let the TRANSFORMATION begin!* Class in ‘How to be the Bride of the Creator of the Universe’ is now in session.

#### ***First Semester: Getting to Know Messiah Through Case Studies***

The Holy One began our transformation from redeemed slaves to princes and of Heaven by laying out for us both a curriculum to study and a training course for us to navigate. He chose to begin our transformation with a course designed to *renew*

*our minds* so that we could begin to cast aside the slavish orientation to life we learned in Egypt and begin to walk in the *bridal orientation* for which He created and redeemed us. I have previously described this first phase in the curriculum He designed for us as ‘*What Would Messiah Do 101*’. This first unit in the renewal-of-the-mind-to-think-like-a-Bride curriculum was found in parsha *Mish’patim* – *i.e.* **Exodus 21-23**. Over the course of those three chapters the Divine Bridegroom laid out a *hypothetical case* approach to *teaching us to begin to think the way He thinks*. The Holy One utilized a ‘case study’ method. He first laid out for Moshe a series of widely diverse hypothetical situations/controversies. Then He told Moshe plainly – so Moshe could tell us – with regard to each of those situations ‘*What Messiah Would Do*’ – *i.e.* what rulings and actions the perfect mix of Divine wisdom and Divine compassion would bring forth.

By inviting us to study and meditate on how the Holy One sees specific practical situations and controversies and how He Who judges ‘*not by the sight of His eyes or by the hearing of His ears, but with righteousness ...*<sup>4</sup>’ would address those situations and controversies, the Holy One began the process of teaching us to think not like slaves but like not only a *goy k’dosh* and a *mamlakat kohanim*, but also like His beloved *am segulah*.

### ***Second Semester: Getting to Know Messiah Through the Mish’kan***

So we discovered that the learning that the Holy One’s Bride-to-be must do is to be accomplished first of all through learning to *sh’ma* both the Voice of the Bridegroom and the teachings of the friend of the bridegroom. But we quickly discovered that learning to *sh’ma* is just the critical first step in the Divinely ordained learning process. The lessons in righteousness are designed to be reinforced by regularly *ra’ah*-ing [seeing] Heavenly realities and then *asah*-ing [putting into practical application in real time] those Heavenly realities on earth for the world to see.

The Holy One is not just a *Glorious Deliverer*, a *Teacher Par Excellence*, or a *Philosopher Without Peer* – He is a *King*. And a King must have a *Kingdom* – a kingdom that is built [*asah*-ed] in physical flesh and blood and deed. Beginning last week in *T’rumah* therefore the Holy One introduced us to phase 2 of the ‘*What Would Messiah Do*’ curriculum. He called Moshe to ‘*come up here!*’ and gave him *a tour of the Heavenly Throne Room*. The Holy One showed Moshe *a place not built with human hands* - a place *outside of time*, a place that is not a place at all as humans think of things, but is instead an eternal reality. There the Holy One showed Moshe blood on a mercy seat in Heaven – and I personally believe He showed him as well the blood of a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

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<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 11:3-4.

The Holy One then gave Moshe thorough and precise instructions as to how he – and Israel – were actually supposed to *reproduce a shadowbox version or scale model of that Eternal reality on earth out of earthly materials*. The Holy One told Moshe to build – or have *us* build – a *mish'kan* [Tabernacle] right there at the base of Sinai. How were we to build it? We were to build it *after the pattern shown to Moshe* on the mountain. The *Mish'kan*, we learned, is not to serve only as a *parlor for betrothal-period interactions between the Holy One and His immature but committed Bride-to-be nation*. This strange but wonderful-looking tent enclosure we are to build here at Sinai is also designed to serve as *the 'stage' on which we are to act out a Divine Passion Play* for the world to see. Different acts of this Play are to be acted out at different times of the year. Some things are to be done daily; others weekly, Sabbath by Sabbath. There are also dramas that we are to act out on each new moon and at each harvest season. These activities are to be continually replayed on the *Mish'kan 'STAGE' year after year and generation after generation after generation*.

Before He brought us to Sinai, you see, the Holy One wrote a glorious script for what the 'Divine Passion Play'. What we are to do is to re-enact, with earthly actors and earthly props, the eternal reality of how and why there is blood on the mercy seat of Heaven. What kind of blood? Blood from a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world!

***Third Semester: Getting To Know Messiah Through the Imagery of Priests, Priestly Garments, Priestly Avodah, and Priesthood Protocols***

As every play needs a script, every script needs a cast. In the first two aliyot of ***Tetzaveh*** the Holy One is going to 'cast' the Passion Play. Who will play the 'male lead'? That role, of course, will be played by the Holy One. The Holy One will, however, be working with a very special cast of 'supporting actors' – Aharon and his sons Nadav, Avihu, Elazar, and Itamar, and on and on throughout eternity. Generation after generation, men from the line of Aharon will play the part of *the High Priest of Earth and mediators of wisdom, mercy, and grace*.

On its surface, the focus of the instructions of *Tetzaveh* will seem to be upon Aharon and his sons. But it is not merely Aharon and his sons that the Holy One intends to engage in the *Mish'kan* enterprise and perform the priestly tasks the Holy One is going to be describing. Look deeper. Visualize Mashiach in this role. And through, and in unity with, Mashiach, visualize yourself, your children, and your children's children engaging in this great redemptive enterprise as well. We are called to function as the Holy One's kingdom of priests. Moreover, every single person the Divine Bridegroom redeems has an assigned role to play in the grand scheme as well. This is not just a passion play, you see – it is a strategic invasion

of earth by a team of special forces who have allegiance to, and are willing to give up their lives for, the King and Kingdom of Heaven. The purpose of *Tetzaveh* is to awaken the *kohen* – *i.e. diplomat/emissary of Heaven* – in all of us.

In the course of *Tetzaveh* we will look not only at the Holy One's instructions as to who is to perform the various elements of the *avodah of the Courts*, but also how those who perform such functions are to be attired. We are to be light bearers, you see. And the light will be revealed primarily in the following stunning colors:

1. *zahav* [gold],
2. *techelet* [sky blue],
3. *argaman* [dark reddish-purple]
4. *tola'at shani* [crimson],
5. *shesh*<sup>9</sup> [the brilliant, bleached white color of fine linen].

The essential elements of the High Priest's attire will be:

1. A *breastplate of mishpat*;
2. an *efod*;
3. a *robe adorned with bells and pomegranates*;
4. a *tunic*;
5. a *turban* [head covering];
6. a *gold headband*;
7. a *sash*;
8. *linen underpants* [28:42]
9. *the Urim and*
10. *the Tummim*

The garments the other priests are to wear will be much simpler. They will not draw attention to themselves. Their attire will consist of merely:

1. *linen undershorts, hidden from view*,
2. a *plain white tunic*,
3. a *sash, and*
4. a *simple linen head covering*.

After the Holy One instructs us regarding wardrobe/uniform issues, He will tell us how, once the *Mish'kan* is built and ready for use, these supporting characters are to be made ready to play the roles established for them. The Holy One will start by laying out the *Procedure for Priestly Consecration* - *i.e. Kadash-ing*. This procedure will begin with a *public presentation and acceptance*, followed by a *mikveh*, a *robing ceremony*, and an *anointing with fragrant oil*. This will be followed by an *inauguration of each of the elements of avodat Mish'kan* – *i.e. the service/worship of the Tabernacle*.

The *kohanim* will start by presenting their own ‘*chata’at*’ – i.e. ‘*sin atoning*’ ceremony. This will involve *the selection and presentation of a surrogate to die in their place, followed by the very personal, intimate laying on of hands, the kosher slaughter* [designed to cause the surrogate animal as little pain as possible], the *sprinkling of the surrogate’s blood* [*avodah ha-dam*], the *burning of the surrogate’s ‘fat’* [*avodah ha-chelev*], and the disposition of the surrogate’s remaining flesh<sup>5</sup>.

The priests will then present their own *olah* – i.e. ‘*not my will but yours be done*’ - ceremony. This will be followed by a special consecration ceremony, which will include the presentation of a *ram, with grain, and lifting up*, for all to see, first *the breast* and then *the thigh* of the surrogate ram. Remember that Yeshua said ***And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.*** John 12:32. This will culminate in a great banquet, like unto the Passover meal. And, like the Passover meal, it will inaugurate a seven-day period of special consecration, analogous to our annual seven-day period of fasting all leaven. Then once the seven-day consecration period is over, the *avodah ha-yom* – i.e. the altar *avodah* of each regular day – will be instituted. The daily service will begin with a morning *olah ceremony* – the *tamid ha-boker*, and conclude with a bookend evening *olah ceremony* – the *tamid ha-erev*.

What is the idea behind all this? The Holy One tells us:

***... At the entrance into the Tabernacle of Meeting ...  
there I will meet with the children of Israel,  
and the Tabernacle will be sanctified by My Glory.***

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***I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and be their God.  
And they will know that I am the Holy One, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt,  
that I may dwell in the midst of them.***

[Exodus 29:42-46]

The parsha will conclude with the Holy One instructing us to build and use yet another prophetic implement of worship – a golden altar for the burning of a special blend of fragrant incense. ***V’asita mizbe’ach miktar ketoret ... and Aharon is to burn incense on it ... a perpetual incense before the Holy One throughout your generations.*** Exodus 30:1, 7-8. Night and day, day and night, we are to *let the sweet scent of incense arise*, and fill our senses, then the *Mish’kan*, then all the earth, and then, ultimately, the Heavens.

### ***The Haftarah of Tetzaveh***

**Ezekiel 43:10-27**

The haftarah this week is taken from the 43<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the Book of *Yechezkiel* –

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<sup>5</sup> *Shesh* is written in Hebrew as *shin, shin*. It is a noun derived from the verb *sh’yish*, meaning ‘*to bleach*’. Hence, the reference is to a material that has been *bleached so as to be perfectly white*.

the prophetic book known to most English speakers by the Anglicized name ‘Ezekiel’. In the course of a lengthy prophetic vision of the end-times the Holy One will set the Hebrew prophet *Yechezkiel* upon a perch in ‘*the gate*’ – i.e. the great double gate on the East side of Temple Mount. This gate is, of course, the special gate designed for the King to make his entrance to the Temple. **Ezekiel 43:1.**

The Temple in place at the time of this visitation will be none other than the Glorious *Millennial Temple* – the one that the nations will come in the coming era when Messiah reigns upon the earth. While perched in the Eastern gate of this future Temple Yechezkiel will see *K’vod Elohei Yisrael* [the Glory of the God of [Israel]] approaching from the East. His senses will be overwhelmed. First he will hear *a sound* like the sound of *mayim rabim* [i.e. great [or many] waters]. Soon his eyes will be completely flooded *with the light of His glory*. **Ezekiel 43:2.**

Yechezkiel will then witness the passing of the Glory of the Holy One through the East Gate and into the Temple. **Ezekiel 43:4.** In the powerful wake of the Holy One’s royal procession Yechezkiel will find himself swept into the inner court of the Temple. He will then behold the Glory of the Holy One ‘filling’ the Temple. **Ezekiel 43:5.** An *ish* [man] will then suddenly appear beside Yechezkiel. And the Holy One will release the cry of His Heart to this *ish* [man] in the hearing of Yechezkiel, declaring:

*Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet,  
where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.  
No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, they nor their kings,  
by their harlotry or with the carcasses of their kings on their high places.  
When they set their threshold by My threshold,  
and their doorpost by My doorpost, with a wall between them and Me,  
they defiled My holy name by the abominations that they committed;  
therefore I have consumed them in My anger.  
But now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me,  
and I will dwell in their midst forever.*

[Ezekiel 43:7-9]

The counsel of the Holy One will then be announced.

### ***Yechezkiel’s Avodah***

Yechezkiel will then be commissioned to perform a very specific form of *avodah*. He will be sent to ‘*describe the Temple to the House of Israel*’ in order that they may ‘*be ashamed of their iniquities*’. How will he do this? Yechezkiel is actually to let the people ‘*measure the pattern*’ of the Temple. If the people will only respond with the most rudimentary form of regret for their breach of covenant – just by experiencing shame over their unfaithfulness – the prophet is then to make known to them *the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws*.



This stunning series of revelations to the ‘House of Israel’ is strategic. It is calculated to have a destiny-reshaping impact. Here is the message [Rabbi’s son paraphrase]:

***You may have forgotten Me, but I will never forget you!  
You may have forsaken Our Covenant, but I will never do so!  
The cry of your heart may no longer be  
for the Throne of My servant David to be re-established upon the earth,  
but that cry is always at the epicenter of every beat of My Heart.  
Your passion for the idea of My Presence  
shakan-ing in your midst may have faded, but My pulse still quickens  
and My heart still begins to leap within My Chest  
at the very thought of being with You!***

***And if I have to build a Temple for Myself on Mount Moriyah,  
I will do so. And I will make it so stunningly beautiful that  
you will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is  
the most glorious Temple ever seen in any land, by any people, in any era.***

***And I will cause My Glory to abide there, right in your midst,  
right before your eyes. And I will love you until your fear subsides.  
And I will yet be your God, and you will yet be My People.  
And I will do it all for love.***

### ***Corresponding Readings from the Apostolic Scriptures***

Hebrews 13:5-21

*Tetzaveh* also corresponds nicely to some passages from the apostolic book most people call ‘*Hebrews*’. This ‘book’ is actually a *letter* written in the 1st Century CE by an unidentified writer to those of Hebrew descent who were following Yeshua. In his letter to the myriads of Hebrew-born *talmidim* of Yeshua who were now dispersed throughout the world, an unidentified writer addresses in some detail a number of issues relative to the Redeemed lifestyle. The point of the letter was to make sure that believers from the Covenant Seed who were faced with the imminent destruction of the Second Temple and the devastation of Jerusalem by *the Romans* did not do what their forefathers had done when exiled in Babylon and Persia after the destruction of the First Temple and the devastation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians.

### ***To What Does the Writer of Hebrews Direct Our Attention?***

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews passionately exhorted the redeemed of the Holy One to redirect their focus from the gaudy, Romanesque Temple that Herod had built as a monument to himself and the corrupt human beings who now ministered therein **to the eternal realities of Messiah’ priesthood and His**

*continuing work on our behalf in the Heavenly Courts after which the chambers and courts of the earthly Temple was supposedly – though very imperfectly – patterned.* With this as our focus, the writer knew, the season of ‘*prophetic disconnect*’ that was imminent would not cause the people who experienced it to lose their faith in the Holy One, disassociate from their destinies, and get caught up in the culture and mindset of the pagans amongst whom they were about to be sown like bushels of seed.

In the passages from this very special letter that we will read this week the writer will begin by telling us specifically *from what, if we are to remain true to our Divine mission in life while in exile, we absolutely must keep our lives “free”.*

### ***About What Will The Writer of Hebrews Caution Us?***

The author of Hebrews will warn us against *covetousness*. He will counsel us not to seek after and pursue that which our pagan neighbors seek after and pursue. He will warn us that if and when and to the extent we who are chosen people of the Holy One to be a light to the nations begin to *covet what our pagan neighbors have* instead of *that which the Holy One has provided for us and called us to be and do*, we fall into serious jeopardy. If we go even further and in order to obtain what the pagans around us have or to fit in with them, we start to *dress* like them, *eat* like them, *think* about life like them, and *educate our children* like them, we will lose our connection with both our God and our purpose on earth. If we go still further astray and actually adopt their pagan *dreams* and *aspirations* and *values* and *priorities in life* as our own, we will very quickly become like *salt that has lost its savor*. That is the *wrong way* to respond to a season of *prophetic disconnect*.

Let us be careful to hear and heed the warnings and adopt the focus of the apostolic messenger who wrote this letter, Dear Reader ... that we may be able to arise, and begin to fulfill *our destiny and purpose on earth* at our *such a time as this*.

*May our lamps be filled with oil – and may we hunger for His Appearing –  
always and forever!*

***The Rabbi’s son***

***Amidah Prayer Focus for Week***

**Petition #19: Tzuri v'Goeli** [*My Rock and My Redeemer*]

***Yehi ratzon m'l'faneicha Adonai Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu***

*May it be Your Will, Holy One our God, and God of our forefathers*

***Sheiyibaneh beit ha-mik'dash bim'harah v'yomeinu***

*that the Holy Temple be rebuilt, speedily in our days*

***v'ten chel'qeinu b'torateicha***

*And grant us our portion in Your Torah*

***v'shom navad'cha b'yirah kimei olam uchshonim qad'moniot***

*And we will serve you with reverence as in days of old and in former years*

***V'or'vah l'Adonai min'chat y'hodah v' Y'rushalayim***

*And may the grain of Y'hudah and Y'rushalayim be pleasing to the Holy One*

***Kimei olam uch'shanim qad'moniyot***

*As in days of old and in former years.*