

## TETZAVEH – “SHALL COMMAND”

### EXODUS (SHEMOT) 27:20 – 30:10

#### INTRODUCTION

1. While the previous portion focused upon the *mishkan*, this *sidrah* focuses upon the *kohenim*, their selection, garments and consecration.
2. If the *mishkan* was to constantly remind Israel of her call to holiness unto YHVH, then the garments and unique duties of the priesthood was to be a constant reminder to them and how they were to represent Israel to the Creator and the Creator to Israel.
3. Consequently, as believers, we are also to be reminded of our calling:
  - a. We are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19)
  - b. We are a royal priesthood.

**“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.” – 1 Peter 2:9**

- c. As such, we are called to keep our garments clean.

**“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” - Rev 16:15**

#### THE OIL (Ex 27:20-21)

1. Were to take “pure” (Heb. זָךְ *zak* “clean, transparent”) olive oil.
  - a. Was to have no foreign substance or sediment and so was to be pressed, not crushed.
  - b. It is believed that olives were gently pressed and first drops of oil collected.
2. That the oil (which is fuel for light) was to be pure interpreted to mean:
  - The priesthood was to remain pure, not contaminated by rest of the nation.
  - Could not allow unauthorized to take part in service.
3. If we are considered priests, this carries the same weight for us.
  - We are to remain pure and uncontaminated.
  - Must be willing to be placed in the Master’s press.
  - Must not invited the profane into our midst and defile the call to holiness.
4. The light was to be perpetual – the Hebrew term is *ner tamid*.
  - a. Aaron and sons were to clean the lamps in morning and replace wicks.
  - b. Light the lamps at evening.
5. There was no light in Sanctuary so always had to be a light – *ner tamid*.
  - a. The lights going out in 1 Sam. 3, indicates the spiritual condition of Eli and his sons.
6. The lamp is thought to be symbolic of Israel in that she is to be a light to nations.
  - a. Isa. 42:6

7. At times that light has ebbed low, and yet, the light has not been totally extinguished.
  - a. A lamp has continued to burn.
8. *Ner Tamid* leads to belief that one of the lamps always burned.
  - a. Some say middle lamp, some say western lamp.
9. This would suggest that נר תמיד *ner tamid* is also שמש *shammash* or “servant.”
10. The light would serve the other branches to kindle the light in their lamps.
11. Thus, Messiah who is Light has prevented Israel from being extinguished.
  - a. He serves to extend that light to all the branches, those on left and right (if middle).
  - b. If western light, would suggest a light was in west and would move to east.
12. That Moses is singled out to perform three specific tasks is interesting. They are:
  - Preparation of the oil.
  - Selection of the Priests.
  - Selection of those who would make garments and build the Mishkan.
  - Previously, Moses had only conveyed instructions to others.
13. This is interesting because Moses is a picture of Messiah, Y’shua. Thus, Y’shua:
  - Conveys to Israel what the Father is instructing.
  - Prepares the oil – presses the fruit to see that the oil is indeed pure.
  - Selects those who are to be His priests – “I chose you ...”; “chosen generation”
  - Selects those in whom He has invested wisdom to build His house.
14. Another thing is to consider that, most likely, there were no olive trees in the wilderness.
15. Thus, the oil first used had to be prepared in Egypt and brought to Moses for inspection.
16. Picture of “oil” prepared in exile is brought to Messiah in wilderness for inspection.
  - a. If western light continued to burn, the inference is Joseph.
  - b. Joseph was the light burning in the darkness of Egypt (where oil prepared).
  - c. Joseph was last to come into land (Gen. 32) and was “at the last.” (acharon).
  - d. From the vantage point of tabernacle, east was prominent and west was “at end.”

### **THE GARMENTS (Ex 28:1-5)**

1. Verse 1: Aaron and sons anointed as priests; all sons born to them automatically priests.
  - a. Living grandsons excluded (e.g. Pinchas).
2. Verse 2: These were “holy garments.” (Heb. בגדי קודש *big'dei kodesh*).
3. The word בגדי *bigdei* “garment,” means “cover,” “present outer appearance.”
4. Comes from בגד *bagad*, which means “to act covertly or deceitfully,” “being faithless.”
5. Might it be the raw meaning of “garment” is linked to the fact that Adam had to be “clothed” to cover nakedness which was result of being faithless to Creator’s command?
6. That the priestly garments were for “splendor and glory” makes one wonder how Adam was “clothed” before He sinned.
7. It seems that, before the fall, Adam functioned as priest (perhaps High Priest of another order).
  - a. He was told to “work” and “guard” in place where Creator met with him.
  - b. He was not of the Levitical priesthood; that came after the Golden Calf incident.
  - c. Before that all of Israel was called to be priests.

**“And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” (Exodus 19:6)**

8. Notice this is what Peter alludes to when he says to the believers:

## **“But you are a ... a royal priesthood, a holy nation.”**

9. This takes us back to the concept that Israel, at large, was to be the *mishkan* where His presence dwelt before the idolatry of the golden calf.
10. Consequently, we see that those who “come near” must be sanctified and must wear clean garments.
  - a. Anyone in His service must consider how they approach Him – pure garments.
  - b. Must be clean as they stand before Him.
  - c. The ordinary *kohen* wore white, linen garments.
  - d. On Yom Kippur, the *cohen ha’gadol* also wore these same linen garments.
11. Would also accentuate the need to exchange garments that have become dirty, with clean.
  - Jacob told his household to put away idols and “change garments” (Gen. 35:2).
  - Joseph had to change garments before appearing before Pharaoh (Gen. 41).
  - Yehoshua the High Priest had to change garments to minister (Zech. 3).
12. Interesting then, that these garments were spotted with blood to sanctify them. (29:21).
13. Is this to remind us that Adam shed his garment of splendor for coats of skin – blood
14. To resume the role relinquished, are the garments of splendor holy because sprinkled with blood?
  - a. Alluding to blood of Y’shua that allows us access to Creator.
  - b. Hebrews 9:12 – with His own blood entered into the holy obtaining redemption.
15. When Y’shua comes up from Edom, his “glorious apparel” spotted with blood (Isa 63:1-3).
16. When He returns His robe is dipped in blood (Rev. 19:13).

## **THE EPHOD AND MEMORIAL STONES (Ex 28:5-14)**

1. Verse 6: Ephod made of same type material and colors as *parochet* – the veil.
  - a. Perhaps showing the relationship between them and its sanctity.
  - b. Also demonstrating that Y’shua is the High Priest symbolized by fusing red with blue.
  - c. The belt, too, is identical in fabric and color.
2. Verse 9: Two *shoham* stones engraved with the tribes of Israel.
  - a. Many translations say “onyx.”
  - b. Most lexicons assign as “unknown meaning” to word.
  - c. One reference says “identity or identify” which is interesting.
  - d. There is a “hidden” aspect of Israel’s identity.
  - e. Joseph is used instead of two sons – corresponding stone on BP is onyx (shoham).
  - f. Two stones with six each, much like the table of showbread - two rows of six.
  - g. Maimonides could assign no real meaning to the command of the showbread.
3. Consider the two stones engraved with the Words of the Law, placed in Ark.
4. Consider also when Israel entered the land, they were to set up stones upon Ebal and wrote the words of the law on them.
  - a. Six tribes were to stand on Gerizim and bless:
    - Simeon
    - Levi
    - Judah
    - Issachar
    - Joseph

- Benjamin
- b. Six tribes were to stand on Ebal and curse:
- Reuben
  - Gad
  - Asher
  - Zebulun
  - Dan
  - Naphtali

5. Point is, the relationship between the tribes and the commandments.

a. Israel is not determined exclusively by genealogy but determined by those who are in relationship and keep His commands; i.e. respect what is engraved on the stones.

**“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” – Exodus 19:5-6**

6. Furthermore, the High Priest bears the tribes on his shoulders before the Creator.

a. He is the messenger and representative of the entire community.

7. This brings this Scripture to mind.

**“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” – Isaiah 9:6**

8. The word government is משרה *misrah* from the root word שרה *sarah* which means “to have power, to persevere, to prevail.”

9. In the places where it is used, it speaks of when Jacob struggled with the angel who gave him the name Israel (Gen 32:28).

a. In fact this word is one of the roots that forms ישראל “Yisrael.”

b. In other words, the government (empire, kingdom) is comprised of the twelve tribes.

10. Another interesting point is when Jacob is fleeing Esau and comes to Luz.

a. The staircase with the angels ascending and descending.

b. He took one of the stones of that place and set it “at his head” (Gen. 28:11)

c. Literally at “his heads.” What does this mean? 12 tribes are the heads.

11. Then sets up the stone and anoints it and calls it Beth el – where the HP would later minister.

a. He poured oil on it anointing it as a pillar.

b. I believe that stone represents Mashiah (HP) who watches over the “heads” of Israel.

12. That “prevail” is an integral part of “Israel” consider words given to Philadelphia.

- They kept His command to persevere, thus He will “guard” them – keep safe (Rev. 3:10).
- Those that “prevail” He will make “pillars” in house of God – Beth’el (Rev. 3:12).
- He will “write” on them the name of God, City of God and “My new name” (Rev. 3:12).
- The Greek word originally meant “carve” or “engrave.”
- Used in Septuagint: the words of the law were engraved on two tablets and on two Ebal stones.

13. Of Israel He says He will put His law in their minds and engrave it on their heart (Jer. 31:33).

14. The point is the High Priest (Messiah) bears the 12 tribes before God as a memorial.
  - a. Indicating God would always be “reminded” of the promise concerning the tribes.
  - b. When they cry out that He has forgotten them in Isaiah, He replies:

**“See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your (stone) walls are continually before me.” - Isa 49:16**

- c. The day will come when He writes His name (authority/word) upon their hearts.

#### **THE BREASTPLATE AND THE URIM AND TUMMIM (Ex 28:15-30)**

1. Verse 15: The Hebrew phrase is **כֶּשֶׁן מִשְׁפָּט *Choshen Mishpat*** (breastplate of judgment).
  - a. First acknowledge, judgment doesn’t necessarily have to be bad.
  - b. Dependent on what side of law you are on – blameless or guilty.
2. Like ephod, it too is of same materials as ***parochet*** – the veil.
3. Upon the breastplate were twelve stones, representing the 12 tribes of Israel.
4. All twelve would be considered precious stones.
  - a. How stones are formed would infer even more intense heat.
5. God’s people are regarded as “precious stones, i.e. “peculiar people,” “special treasure.”

**“Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.” – Exodus 19:5-6**

6. Words “special treasure” is **סֵגוּלָה *segulah*** – a jewel, precious stone. [shutting up]
  - a. Related to something you would “shut up” in a safe place because of its value.
  - b. Something you would guard and protect as in Philadelphia congregation.
  - c. Israel is His treasure or precious jewels.

**“For the LORD has chosen Jacob for Himself, Israel for His special treasure.” – Ps. 135:4**

**“Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. ‘They shall be mine,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘On the day that I make them my jewels (*segulah*). And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him. Then you shall again discern between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him.” – Malachi 3:16-18**

- d. He will have compassion and protect them because they are His jewels.
7. When Peter refers to believers as “peculiar people” the Greek term is equivalent of ***segulah***.
8. Because we are precious stones, we should illuminate because we are called into His light.
  - a. Infers we are to reflect His light; interesting considering the ***urim*** and ***tummim***.
9. The breastplate was square but then folded end to end to make a pouch.
10. One tradition says ***urim*** and ***thummim*** was **concealed** within the breastplate. What was it?
  - a. It means “lights and perfections” in accordance with idiom “perfect lights.”

- b. One tradition says, parchment bearing God's most sacred name, pronounced by HP.
  - c. Would cause the individual stones to light up.
11. Opposing this tradition is Ex. 39 which describes the breastplate in greater detail but doesn't mention *urim* and *tummim*.
- a. No mention of any artisans fashioning *urim* and *tummim*.
  - b. Suggesting *urim* and *tummim* was term whereby 12 stones were denoted.
  - c. Breastplate of judgment suggests it was medium of communications, not other item.
  - d. In Lev. 8, *urim* and *tummim* alone are mentioned – not 12 stones – strong proof that they are one and the same.
12. Considering this and fact this was how Israel got answers, it was important they were together – where they were supposed to be.
13. The legend concerning the letters inscribed upon the bowls of the menorah.
- a. The HP would wear the breastplate and stand before menorah – only light in *mishkan*.
  - b. The light provided by pure oil would reflect off the “face” of precious stones.
  - c. Similar to way sunlight reflects off the face of the moon (Israel).
  - d. Would illuminate different letters on menorah, thus giving Israel the answer.
  - e. If there were stones missing, would get an incomplete answer.
  - f. May even make a faulty conclusion because some stones were missing.
14. All the tribes have to be in proper place before Israel can understand clearly.
- a. Romans 11 – blindness in part until the fullness of Gentiles (milo ha'goyim).
  - b. The prophecy pronounced upon Joseph's son, Ephraim.
15. There is no mention of *urim* and *tummim* after the days of David because kingdom was divided into north and south.
- a. Tradition has it that Josiah hid these and ark knowing that Temple to be destroyed.
16. Thus, when David's fallen tabernacle is restored (united kingdom once again), all things restored.

**“On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old.” - Amos 9:11**

17. How can Israel fulfill mandate to be light to the nations if divided?  
 18. There can be no “perfect light” if these “living stones” are not united.

**“Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Y'shua the Messiah.” - 1Peter 2:4-5**

19. That Messiah is at heart of this there can be no doubt.
- a. Word כֹּשֶׁן *choshen* is 358 - משיח *Mashiach* is 358.
  - b. This is adorned with 12 stones – twelve tribes of Israel are on His heart.
20. Verse 30: This was born upon his heart.
- a. Messiah's treasure – precious stones – hidden in a secure place (heart of High Priest).
21. The restoration of the tribes is what is on the heart of Messiah.
- a. John 11:45-52, Eph. 2:11-19

22. Being the “breastplate of judgment” prompts the question: does Y’shua wears this when He judges the nations before Him at the valley Kidron in Matthew 25:32?

### **THE ROBE (Ex 28:31-35)**

1. Verse 33: Gold bells and pomegranates (72 total) were on hem of robe.
  - a. Traditionally, bells are to announce the HP entrance into Holy Place and Most Holy on Yom Kippur.
2. The pomegranates are blue, purple and scarlet – once again reminding of Y’shua, the Word (heavenly/blue) made flesh (earth/red) resulting in purple.
3. Thus, fruit (pomegranate) of High Priest is symbolic of the seed that produced it.
  - a. Y’shua is the seed.

### **THE MITRE, HEADPLATE AND OTHE GARMENTS (Ex 28:36-43)**

1. The headplate was gold and engraved with קדש ליהוה *kadosh l’YHVH* – holy unto the LORD.
2. Though he holds no political or military power, he wears a crown.
  - a. There is no crown ever mentioned in relation to kings of Israel.
  - b. King was distinguished in that he had to write his own Torah scroll and carry it.
  - c. Y’shua is worthy of crown but His priests and kings derive their values and honor from Him.
3. Was to wear it at all times indicated that when in the Sanctuary he would KNOW it was there.
  - a. Thus carry out duties effectively – would put his hand upon it.
  - b. When he wasn’t in Sanctuary was still to “wear” it in daily life.
4. Reminding us that as His people we are to always conduct ourselves as “holy to the LORD.”

**“For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.” - James 1:23-25**

5. Also interesting that this was upon the forehead – the mind.
  - a. Love the LORD with heart (breastplate), soul (mind) and strength.
  - b. Matters of the heart are sometimes concealed but what is conscious is easily discerned.
  - c. Those things of the mind eventually manifest in physical ways.
  - d. We should always remind ourselves of who we are that we can be holy before Him.
6. Verse 38: The High Priest bears the iniquity of all Israel.
  - a. That He wears the plate sanctifies their gifts.
  - b. Should there be any imperfection, HP assumes responsibility (Y’shua).
  - c. Can secure acceptance of offerings brought to the Altar (our advocate)
7. Verse 41: Priesthood was inaugurated once and for all.
  - a. Anointment of ordinary priests did not have to be repeated.
  - b. Their children would automatically be priests by birth.
  - c. In future only a newly appointed HP would be anointed but by wearing garments.

d. This was an eternal statute (verse 43).

## **THE CONSECRATION OF THE PRIESTS (Ex 29:1-46)**

1. More details are given in Leviticus 8.
  - a. Tradition says that 1 Aviv is when Aaron and sons assumed their duties.
2. Verse 2: Priests consecrated in part by partaking of unleavened bread.
3. Verse 4: Had to be ceremonially washed before they could “draw near” קרב *karav*.
4. Reminding us of the Psalmist who said:

**“Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.” - Psalm 24:3-4**

5. The word “pure” is בר *bar* which also means “son.”
6. Verse 9: This was to be an eternal duty – Aaron’s family are *kohenim* from birth.
  - a. Which begs the question, “what about the Melchizedek order” (Y’shua).
7. Verse 20: blood on right ear, right thumb and right big toe.

**“Through the ear, one hears and understands; through the hand, one acts; through the feet, one moves about. All three are consecrated to show that the Lohen dedicates all his faculties to God’s service.” (R’ Hirsch).**

- a. In other words, priests were to “hear” and “do.”
8. Verse 21: The beautiful, immaculate garments are sprinkled with blood that they may be holy.
  - a. This is striking because they are called “holy garments” but are made holy by blood.
  - b. Connects to idea that garments are related to faithlessness
  - c. Blood was shed to cover Adam’s nakedness.
  - d. Blood sanctifies the garments of HP that he may stand before the LORD.
  - e. No where do we see the garments will be sprinkled with blood again (blood remained)
  - f. Passed down to next HP and so on.
9. In our case, we can only stand before Him because of Y’shua’s blood.
  - a. Furthermore we understand that Y’shua entered into Holy Place with His blood.
  - b. The blood was applied once and for all - Y’shua entered once into the Holy Place.
10. Part of consecration ritual included a meal comprised of things that attained atonement.
  - a. They could not eat unworthily.
  - b. No stranger or alien was allowed to partake of it because it was holy.
  - c. Reminds us of admonitions when it comes to Passover
  - d. The meal that represents our atonement – at one ment – with Creator thru HP.
11. Verse 37: Whatever touched the altar was supposed to be holy or, some argue, whatever touched the altar became sanctified and considered holy.
12. Verses 44 – 45: It is the Creator who sanctifies the *mishkan* and everything in it.
  - a. Consequently, when He meets with His people, they will know that He is LORD.
  - b. He will dwell within them.
  - c. This is why we were taken out of Egypt.
  - d. This summarizes the purpose of the *mishkan*.



### **THE ALTAR OF INCENSE (Ex 30:1-10)**

1. Why is it just mentioned now? Its purpose was much different than other furnishings.
2. God's presence was to dwell within the *mishkan* (the people) and His holiness and their carnality presented a danger for them.
3. By means of Golden Altar and burning incense provided a means to "shelter" them from potential danger.
  - a. Similar to thick dark cloud at Sinai – there for Israel's benefit.
4. No sacrifices concerning blood were offered only incense burned:
  - In morning when priests cleaned lamps and arranged wicks of menorah.
  - In evening when the lamps were kindled.
5. Thus the smoke and fragrance of incense provided shield of protection.
6. Thus, the psalmist reveals something very important for us:

**“Let my prayer be set before you as incense, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” – Psalm 141:2**

7. Many times our prayers and petitions shield us from danger.
  - a. Many times, evidence of a contrite heart.
  - b. Lifting of hands as the evening sacrifice is when incense was being burned.
8. That God inhabits praises of His people is to say “He is enthroned upon praises.”
  - a. Merkavah – war chariot which is throne.
  - b. In Revelation, many voices issue from throne of God – praises.
  - c. Prayer in conjunction with praise is what provokes God to war on our behalf.
  - d. Yehoshaphat going to battle the three bands of invaders.
9. Thus, prayer and praise is a daily requirement in service to God.