



Parsha Tetsaveh / You Shall Command

Shemot 28:1 – 30:10

Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA

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This week's *parsha*

has several very interesting aspects to it. First of all, from the time of Moshe's birth, in the beginning of **Shemot/Exodus**, until his death, at the end of **Debarim/Deuteronomy**, this is only Torah portion where his name is not mentioned. The words Yahweh is speaking here are to Moshe. However, we do not find his name written here. Moshe is synonymous with the giving of the Torah. Even among Yahshua's talmidim and leaders of the first Netzarim, Ya'acov/James declared in answering the circumcision argument in **Acts 15:21**; ***"For from ancient generations Mosheh has, in every city, those proclaiming him – being read in the congregations every Sabbath,"*** when referring to the Torah. That is why the omission of his name here, should in itself, cause us to read these verses very carefully, with an open heart and mind.

Now, Tetsaveh begins with **Shemot/Exodus 27:20-21**; ***"And you, you are to command the children of Yisra'el to bring you clear oil of pressed olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually. In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Witness, Aharon and his sons are to tend it from evening until morning before YHVH – a law forever to their generations, on behalf of the children of Yisra'el."*** Here, after the description of the articles and utensils of the Mishkan (Tabernacle), Yahweh's first command is for B'nei Yisra'el to make sure there is enough **"zak"** or **"pure"** oil to keep the Menorah lit continually between evening and morning; and, for the priests to tend it all through the night.

There's a marvelous picture here. The **"Light"**, remember, represents the Word of Yahweh, Torah, both Written and Living. **Tehillim/Psalms 119:105** says; ***Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*** And, **Mishle/Proverbs 6:22-23** reads; ***When you are walking about, it leads you; When you lie down, it guards you. And when you have woken up, It talks to you. For the command is a lamp, And the Torah a light, and reproofs of discipline a way of life,....*** Then Yohanan, speaking of Yahshua said in **Yohanan/John 1:1-9** wrote; ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim. He was in the beginning with Elohim. All came to be through Him, and without Him not even one came to be that came to be. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from Elohim, whose name was Yohanan. This one came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all might believe through him. He was not that Light, but that he might bear witness of that Light. He was the true Light, which enlightens every man, coming into the world.*** And, Yahshua said of Himself in **Yohanan 8:12**; ***Therefore Yahshua spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but possess the light of life."***

In the Mishkan, this **"Light"** illuminates the **"Kodesh"** or **"Set-apart Place"** or the **"Holy**

Place", which is separated, by the veil, from the Ark of the Covenant; which contains the **"Tablets"** of the Covenant, or the **"Witness"** as Yahweh puts it. The Hebrew word used here for **"Witness"** is **"ayd"** (ayin-dalet) which means **"testimony"** or **"witness"**. So, these **"Ten Words"**, these **"Commandments"** on these **"Tablets"** are the **"Testimony"** of Yahweh Tzava'ot. They have and will testify, or be a witness, against us when we sin and they're our covering when we walk in His Word. Our calling as Yisra'el is to not only walk in His Word, His Torah; but, we're also to be as Yahshua described us in **Mattityahu 5:14-19**; ***"You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city to be hidden on a mountain. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it shines to all those in the house. Let your light so shine before men, so that they see your good works and praise your Father who is in the heavens. Do not think that I came to destroy the Torah or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to complete. For truly, I say to you, till the heaven and the earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall by no means pass from the Torah till all be done. Whoever, then, breaks one of the least of these commands, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the reign of the heavens; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the reign of the heavens."***

Now, we can see the picture in our *parsha*. The entire Torah was given by Elohim to Moshe. But the **"Ten Commands"** are His **"Testimony"** and **"Witness"**. The whole of Torah (the **"Light"**) illuminates His **"Testimony"**. The 613 mitzvot (commands and right-rulings) show us how to fulfill the **"Ten Commands"**. Yahshua, as the Word made flesh, just as the Menorah in the Mishkan, illuminates Yahweh's **"Testimony"**. He walked it out in front of the world. And, who tends the **"Light"**? The Cohen HaGadol, the High Priest. Yahshua is **our** High Priest; and as such, He illuminates the **"Witness"** even today. It's no coincidence that the very first High Priest, illuminating the **"Witness"** in the Mishkan was **Aharon**, whose name means **"Light Bearer"**. It's only natural that these two verses in **Shemot 27** would be the lead-in for the description of the garments of the Cohen HaGadol (the High Priest).

Let's read **Shemot/Exodus 28:1-21**; ***"And you, bring near Aharon your brother and his sons with him, from among the children of Yisra'el, for serving as priest to Me: Aharon, Nadab and Abihu, El'azar and Ithamar, the sons of Aharon. And you shall make set-apart garments for Aharon your brother, for esteem and for comeliness. And you, speak to all the wise of heart, whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom, and they shall make the garments of Aharon, to set him apart, for him to serve as priest to Me. And these are the garments which they make: a breastplate, a shoulder garment, a robe, an embroidered long shirt, a turban, and a girdle. And they shall make set-apart garments for Aharon your brother and his sons, for him to serve as priest to Me. And they shall take the gold, and the blue and the purple and the scarlet material, and the fine linen, and shall make the shoulder garment of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine woven linen, the work of a skilled workman. It is to have two shoulder pieces joined at its two edges, and so it is joined together. And the embroidered band of the shoulder garment, which is on it, is of the same workmanship, made of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine woven linen. And you shall take two shoham stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Yisra'el, six of their names on one stone, and the remaining six names on the other stone, according to their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Yisra'el. Set them in settings of gold. And you shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the shoulder garment as stones of remembrance for the sons of Yisra'el. And Aharon shall bear their names before YHVH on his two shoulders, for a remembrance. And you shall make settings of gold, and two chains of clean gold like braided cords,***

and fasten the braided chains to the settings. And you shall make a breastplate of right-ruling, a work of a skilled workman, like the work of the shoulder garment. Make it of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine woven linen. It is square, doubled, a span its length, and a span its width. And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: The first row is a ruby, a topaz, and an emerald; and the second row is a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; and the third row is a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row is a beryl, and a shoham, and a jasper. They are set in gold settings. And the stones are according to the names of the sons of Yisra'el, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name, for the twelve tribes."



Cohen HaGadol's clothing ~ Pictures courtesy of www.templeinstitute.com

Now, **Shemot/Exodus 28:22-43**; ***“And you shall make braided chains of corded work for the breastplate at the end, of clean gold. And you shall make two rings of gold for the breastplate, and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastplate. And***

you shall put the two cords of gold in the two rings which are on the ends of the breastplate, and the other two ends of the two cords you fasten to the two settings, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the shoulder garment in the front. And you shall make two rings of gold, and shall put them on the two ends of the breastplate, on the edge of it, which is on the inner side of the shoulder garment. And you shall make two rings of gold, and put them on the two shoulder pieces, underneath the shoulder garment, on the front of it, close to the seam above the embroidered band of the shoulder garment, and they bind the breastplate by means of its rings to the rings of the shoulder garment, using a blue cord, so that it is above the embroidered band of the shoulder garment, so that the breastplate does not come loose from the shoulder garment. And Aharon shall bear the names of the sons of Yisra'el on the breastplate of right-ruling over his heart, when he goes into the set-apart place, for a remembrance before YHVH, continually. And into the breastplate of right-ruling you shall put the Urim and the Tummim, and they shall be on the heart of Aharon when he goes in before YHVH. And Aharon shall bear the right-ruling of the children of Yisra'el on his heart before YHVH, continually. And you shall make the robe of the shoulder garment all of blue. And the opening for his head shall be in the middle of it, a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a scaled armor, so that it does not tear. And on its hem you shall make pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material, all around its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, on the hem of the robe all around. And it shall be upon Aharon to attend in, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the set-apart place before YHVH and when he comes out, so that he does not die. And you shall make a plate of clean gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet: SET-APARTNESS TO YHVH. And you shall put it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban – it is to be on the front of the turban. And it shall be on the forehead of Aharon, and Aharon shall bear the guilt of the set-apart gifts which the children of Yisra'el set apart in all their set-apart gifts. And it shall always be on his forehead, for acceptance for them before YHVH. And you shall weave the long shirt of fine linen, and shall make the turban of fine linen, and you shall make the girdle of woven work. And make long shirts for Aharon's sons. And you shall make girdles for them, and you shall make turbans for them, for esteem and comeliness. And you shall put them on Aharon your brother and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them, and shall ordain them, and shall set them apart, and they shall serve as priests to Me. And make linen trousers for them, to cover their nakedness, reaching from the waist to the thighs. And they shall be on Aharon and on his sons when they come into the Tent of Meeting, or when they come near the altar to attend in the Set-apart Place, so that they do not bear crookedness and die – a law forever to him, and to his seed after him.

Now, in the interest of time, since we have a ways to go here today, I'm going to give an "overview" of Aharon's garments. And, I'll throw in a few other things as we go; some of which comes from the Temple Institute in Jerusalem. But, what I want to you to focus on, as we go through this, is that Aharon and all the High Priests that would follow him, and wear these garments, are a picture of Yahshua, our High Priest.

OK, there are eight garments that the Cohen HaGadol was to wear. These are referred to as he "Golden Garments". Since the High Priest bore the guilt of all the "set-apart offerings" of the Children of Yisra'el, each garment also symbolized the atonement of specific kinds of sins, as we'll see.

First, the "**Breastplate**" was worn over the ephod or shoulder garment. It was woven from linen and 3 colors of wool, with

settings for 12 precious stones arranged in 4 rows of 3. The stones were engraved with each of the names of the Twelve Tribes of Yisra'el. By "**bearing**", as Torah puts it, the names of the Sons of Yisra'el over his heart and, as we'll see in a minute, his shoulders as well, the High Priest signified that he bore the guilt of the people before Yahweh and that Yisra'el, all twelve tribes, were constantly on his heart. The breastplate was connected to the belt of the apron, and fastened with blue (techelet) straps and gold chains. It atones for errors in judgment. The "**Breastplate**" is called in the Hebrew "**choshen mishpat**" which means "**breastplate of judgment**" or "**decision**". The inner fold contained the "**Urim V'tumim**". There has been much speculation about the "**Urim and Tummim**". Were they some kind of stones? The oral history, according to Yehudah, is that the Name of Elohim was written on a piece of parchment and placed inside the "**Breastplate**" which gave illumination to the stones in order to transmit Yahweh's judgments in certain situations. "**Urim v' Tummim**" mean the "**lights**" and the "**perfections**", denoting the illumination of the questions and the perfection of the judgments given. These are unlike any other aspect of the priestly garments or appointments in the Mishkan, as they did not come from the contribution of the people; nor were they created by the craftsmen that made everything else. These are, for now at least, mysteries yet to be revealed.

Secondly, we have the "**ephod**" (in Hebrew) or "**shoulder garment**" was the most important garment worn by the High Priest. It atoned for the sin of idolatry. It was woven from a multi-stranded thread of white linen, and red, blue, and purple wool. In addition, a sheet of gold was beaten very thin, and narrow thread-like strands were cut from it to be added to the other colors. Its appearance can be likened to an apron; it was worn in back, on top of his other garments, and was fastened by a long belt in the front, opposite his heart. This belt was woven into the entire length of the ephod's upper hem. There were also two shoulder-straps that were sewn onto the belt. These straps went behind, up and slightly over the upper corners of the garment, over the priest's shoulders. The settings for the two sardonyx, or shoham or onyx stones were attached at the ends of these straps, on the shoulders. The ephod covered the back of his body. Some opinions describe it as a sort of half-cape; others, more like a skirt. It was long and it extended from just below his elbows, all the way to his heels. It was slightly wider than a man's back, since it was to cover his back and extend a little towards the front on both sides as well, covering a portion of his belly from either side; thus insuring to cover the kidneys which represent the seat of the "**inner man**".

Third, was the "**robe**" (*meh'ee*) which was worn over the tunic. The "**robe**" was a four cornered garment made entirely of blue (techelet) wool dyed from the "Chilazon." The cloak went over the head with a hole in the middle, stitched with a double stitch so it wouldn't tear. The robe was decorated with pomegranates that were made from three materials: sky-blue, dark-red and crimson dyed wools. The bottom of the robe was also decorated with bells. These bells were both made of pure gold exclusively: "A golden bell and (alternatively) a pomegranate... on the bottom of his robe, all around. The pomegranates symbolize the "**set-apart**" or "**kodesh**" "**fruits of the Ruach**" that we are to walk in. The bells symbolize that we are to "**proclaim**" the words of Elohim and thus "**illuminate**" Torah to the nations. This robe, by the way, atoned for evil speech or "**lashon hara**".

Fourth, is the "**tunic**" or "**long shirt**" (*ketonet*) which was made of pure white linen and was not woven with an ordinary cross-weave pattern, but of a pattern consisting of many small boxes, or cells. These cells were similar to the settings made for precious stones with each thread made of six strands. There was absolutely no sewing or seams involved here with the exception of the arm-length sleeves, which by necessity were woven separately and afterwards sewn on. The tunic clung close to the body and extended from the priest's neck,

down to the feet, just above the heels (each tunic was made according to the priest's specific height and width). As it was one piece, it was donned by placing it over the head. This tunic atones for "killing".

Fifth, is the "**turban**" (*mitznepeth*) which was made of white linen, wrapped around the head many times and was flat on top, while the regular priests' turbans were "conical" or semi pointed on top. The turban was fashioned of a narrow strip of white linen, measuring 16 cubits (app. 24 feet long). It was wound around the top of the priest's head after the manner in which one dresses a wound, wrapping the material lengthwise over and over. It atoned for "haughtiness" and sins in the "thoughts".

Sixth, is the "**gold plate**", or, as some call it, the "**crown**" that also goes upon the head; but, below the turban. It was fastened to the turban and tied to the back of the head with blue (*techelet*) straps. It was engraved with the words "**Set-apartness to YHVH.**" The Hebrew word here is "**tzitz**" (*tzadee-yud-tzadee*) which as you know means "**wing**" or "**flower**" and is very much related to the *tzitzit* that we wear on the corners of our garments. It atoned for "arrogance".

Seventh, is the "**belt**" (*abneyt*) which was worn over the tunic, it was very long and made of the above mentioned 4 colors. It was wrapped many times around the body, over the heart. It atoned for the sins of the heart. Josephus describes the belt as being hollow like the skin shed by a snake (*Antiquities 3:7:2*). It was a work of "embroidery". Although the belt itself was made of linen, the embroidery-a floral design-was done of colored wool threads (the three colors which have been mentioned), and attached to the white linen background. This combination of wool and linen together in garments is normally forbidden (see **Wayyiqra/Lev. 19:19**), but it was permitted for the priestly garments.

The eighth, the "**pants**" (*miknauce*) were made of pure white linen, reaching from the waist to the knees. The priest's pants do not serve the same purpose as the other sacred garments. For all the other items which make up their uniform are "for honor and for beauty", as Scripture says. They esteem the sacred office and bespeak dignity, not to mention their deeper significance. But this does not apply to the pants. We are specifically informed here that their function was one of modesty alone, to cover his nakedness. Thus, they atone for the sins of sexuality. These pants were closed; they did not have the usual openings which we are accustomed to. They were worn directly over the body. The tunic was placed over them. And according to most authorities, the upper hem was hollow and had a lace running through it, which was tied at the waist.

We've spent much time before, learning about the symbolism in the colors. But, let me touch briefly on them here. "**Gold**" symbolizes the love Yahweh has for His people. Gold represents the purest and highest form of love. "**Linen**" fabric represents purity. **Revelation 19:7-8** sums this up; "**Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him praise, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife prepared herself. And to her it was given to be dressed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the set-apart ones.**" The "**Red**" or "**scarlet**" wool corresponds to the blood of the sin offering. "**Blue**" wool represents the Heavenly or spirituality. "**Purple**" wool is a combination of blue and red, symbolizing that the High Priest took the blood of the sin offering and made atonement in the heavenlies for us.

While there is certainly a lot more in this, I trust you can easily see Moshiach Yahshua's priesthood in these garments; as they embodied His ministry and His atonement for us. In case you've wondered, it is said that these garments were not washed, as no provision in Torah called for that. When they became stained, soiled or rendered un-wearable in the

Presence of Yahweh, they weren't destroyed, but hidden (perhaps buried) so that they could not be found and worn by another.

As for the rest of the priests, they wore four garments all year round. These are the same as the "**white garments**" worn by the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. They were the tunic, the pants, the turban, and the belt. Referring to these priests, **verses 40-42** state; "**And for Aharon's sons you shall make for them tunics, and you shall make for them belts, and you shall make for them turbans... and make for them linen pants...**" These garment are to be made from flax, and they too must be created from threads consisting of six individual strands. These represent our covering. They remind us to set ourselves apart for our Bridegroom. The "**tunic**" remember, since it atoned for "**killing**" reminds us to "**love one another**". The "**pants**" tell us to guard ourselves from *sexual sin*. The "**turban**" reminds us to guard our "**minds**" and bring our "**thoughts**" into subjection. And, the "**belt**" shows us to guard our "**hearts**". All of this, so that we can become the kingdom of "**priests**" that He has called us to be.

Folks, it's **all** in here! We didn't even go "**deep**". These pictures have always been there for us to see. But we didn't for so long. We talk about now being the time for the "**scales**" to fall off of our eyes. And, that's true. But, we must search out the truth, if we are going to find it. Yahweh tells us in **Yeshayahu / Isaiah 45:17-19**; ***Yisra'el shall be saved by YHVH with an everlasting deliverance. You are not to be ashamed nor hurt, forever and ever. For thus said YHVH, Creator of the heavens, He is Elohim, Former of earth and its Maker, He established it, He did not create it to be empty, He formed it to be inhabited: "I am YHVH, and there is none else. I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth. I have not said to the seed of Ya'aqob, 'Seek Me in vain.' I am YHVH, speaking righteousness, declaring matters that are straight.***

Now, as the scales fall away; now is the time! We must take hold of it. Yahweh says in **Yeshayahu 55:1-11**; ***"Oh everyone who thirsts, come to the waters. And you who have no silver, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without silver and without price. Why do you weigh out silver for what is not bread, and your labor for what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to Me, and eat what is good, and let your being delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, so that your being lives. And let Me make an everlasting covenant with you, the trustworthy kindnesses of Dawid. See, I have given Him m as a witness to the people, a Leader and a Commander for the people. See, a nation you do not know you shall call, and a nation who does not know you run to you, because of YHVH your Elohim, and the Set-apart One of Yisra'el, for He has adorned you."*** Seek YHVH while He is to be found, call on Him while He is near. Let the wrong forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to YHVH, who has compassion on him, and to our Elohim, for He pardons much. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares YHVH. ***"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from the heavens, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so is My Word that goes forth from My mouth – it does not return to Me empty, but shall do what I please, and shall certainly accomplish what I sent it for."***

So, where to now? What do we do next? First, we must set our house in order. We must follow our Redeemer, the Illuminator of Yahweh's Testimony, the Covenant. We must move ahead in Torah, since it is the instructions for keeping His Covenant. And, we must make our house His House. Which brings us to the Haftorah reading for this *parsha*. I don't know how many times I've read this, even recently, and not seen this before. It took a minor

dispute between two of our brethren during our midweek Torah study to make me stop and re-read it several times. And, there is was. Now, **Yehezqel / Ezekiel 40 ~ 47** is about the coming "**Temple**" of Elohim, His "**House**". These chapters describe it in fine detail. But, the key to the door is in the middle, at the beginning of this week's Haftarah reading. I want to read it to you. **Yehezqel 43:10-12** says; ***"Son of man, explain the House to the house of Yisra'el, and when they are ashamed of their crookednesses, they shall measure the measurements. And since they shall be ashamed of all that they did, make known to them the design of the House and its structure, and its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its laws, and all its forms and all its Torot. And write it down before their eyes, so that they observe its entire design and all its laws, and shall do them. This is the Torah of the House: Upon the mountaintop, all the boundary of it, all around, is most set-apart. See, this is the Torah of the House."***

Oh, House of Yisra'el, we are to learn the Torah (Instructions) of the House. Over the last couple of years we've done a lot of looking at what makes up the Mishkan and its appointments and utensils. We've focused on the Mishkan, or Ohel Mo'ed, the Tent of Meeting, because it was Yahweh's House while Yisra'el was indeed Yeshurun, His chosen treasure, in the wilderness, the place of learning and testing. There's so much more to learn about the Tabernacle and most certainly about the future Temple. And, we must not forsake the first or second Temples either in our studies. It sounds a little overwhelming, doesn't it? But, think about where we were two years ago versus where we are today. Yahweh brought us here, because we've sought Him and obeyed. Besides, we're already seeing that the themes, the pictures, are all related. In fact they're not only related, they're the same. We just have to learn the details, the "**Instructions**", the "**Torah**" of the "**House**". Because, in Torah we learn how we are to "**walk-out**" our faith.

May Abba Yahweh, El Shaddai continue to teach us His Instructions, that we may "walk" in His ways and that we may illuminate His Testimony in the nations where He has scattered us, until He brings us to His House in Eretz Yisra'el. B'Shem Yahshua HaMoshiach, Ahmen v' Ahmen.