



## Garments of Light

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**Text: Parashah T'tzaveh; Torah:** Sh'mot 27:20-28:30; **Haftarah:** Yechezk'el 43:10-43:27; **Chadashah:** Philipians 4:10-20, Hebrews 13:10-17.

### Theme:

We are created in the very Image of YHVH, His Kavod (Esteem) is reflected in us, or at least it should be.

### I. Introduction.

In last week's parashah, **T'rumah**, we read the details of the construction of the **Beit HaMishkan (Dwelling, Tabernacle, Sanctuary)**. This week we read about the equipment contained in the **Mishkan**, their use, and the priestly garments worn by the Kohanim in their service in the **Mishkan**. This week's parashah is named **T'tzaveh**. **Sh'mot 27:20** begins: "**V'atah tetzaveh (And you shall command)**

**B'nei Yisra'el that they bring you pure oil of pressed and beaten olives for the light (for the lighting of the Menorah).**" After beginning with the command of the lighting of the **Menorah** parashah moves on to making the **Kadosh (Set-apart)** garments worn by the kohanim when performing the **Avodah (the Divine Service)** performed in the **Mishkan/Mikdash (Tabernacle/Temple)**.

### II. Menorah-the Lamp of YHVH.

**Sh'mot 27: 20, 21: And you shall command B'nei Yisra'el that they bring you pure oil of pressed and beaten olives for the light, to cause the lamp to burn continually in the Mishkan Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony. Aharon and his sons shall tend it from evening until morning before YHVH. It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of B'nei Yisra'el.**

Vaad Hanochot HaT'mimim states: This is hardly the most comfortable place for an olive to find itself; but it emerges from the millstones as liquid light.

R. Lam asks: Why is the commandment of creating oil for the Menorah the brief introduction to the Torah portion consumed with the creation of the garments for the Kohanim? What is the connection? Only the very first drop squeezed from an olive was to be used to fuel

## the **Kavodim (Esteemed)**

lights of the Menorah. Perhaps there's a hint in this simple fact about the subject of clothing. To see how a solitary drop from the essence of the olive was used to shed a pure and **Kadosh (Set-apart)** light we can learn how to dress ourselves in this fashion.

Rav Mordechai Silver says: Light is a metaphor for the Divine, for understanding, for enlightenment. Seeking it, we can become light-givers.

Let's explore the meaning of the **Menorah (the Lampstand)**, and the oil of the olive that creates the light. In **Mishlei (Proverbs) 20:27** we see that the **ruach (spirit)** of a man is compared to the Lamp of YHVH.

**"The ruach (spirit) of a man is the Lamp of YHVH, searching all the inner depths of his heart."**

A lamp without oil is ineffective. The olive oil used in the lamp is representative of the Ruach HaKodesh, illuminating our lives, exposing the darkness, and lighting the acceptable path before us. As the light of His truth illuminates our innermost being, the works of darkness are exposed and must give way to His Light. This light thus expels the darkness found in our hearts, and as we submit to YHVH our hearts and minds are renewed according to His Torah.

It is meaningful that the word **"pure"** oil of pressed olives is used. Oil extracted from olives is specified because several other sources of oil, including sesame seed, flax, and animal fats were utilized in the ancient Near East. The oil used for the Mishkan lamps had to be clear and pure. Whereas the nations used animal fats or other impure oils, the redeemed used only pure oil, the oil of olives that burns brighter and cleaner. This illustrates the concern that YHVH has for our purity. The light of our lampstand shines brighter as any impurities of rebellion, disobedience, and false doctrine are illuminated and eradicated by the purity of His Life that dwells within us.

### **III. Hard Pressed, but Not Crushed.**

Secondly, we see that in order for the oil to become pure, it had to be **"pressed and beaten"**. This **"pressed and beaten"** removed completely the oil from the flesh of the olive. There is no way to extract it. Likewise, the purest revelation of the Ruach Ha Kodesh, and our purity before YHVH, usually comes as we are **"beaten, pressed down, and crushed."** What is the objective of YHVH's **"crushing"** in our lives? A simple parallel reveals that it is to separate the purity of the **Ruach (Spirit)**

from the anti-Torah, worldly influences that pollute its purity. The more pure the oil becomes, the brighter it will burn. **Corinthians Bet 4:8-10** encourages us as we are **"processed"** to purity. **"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. Always carrying about in our bodies the dying of Yahshua Ha Mashiach, that His Life may be manifested in our bodies."**

Finally, as stated previously, the purest olive oil burns cleaner, longer, and with more illumination. As we walk out our salvation in this olam, we must walk it out in the Light of the Ruach HaKodesh dispelling the darkness that surrounds us.

**Ephesians 5:8-17 says: For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in YHVH; as children of Light, for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and tzadakah (righteousness) and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to YHVH. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things that are done by the disobedient in secret. But all things become visible when they are exposed by the Light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says 'Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Mashiach will shine on you.' Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the Will of YHVH is.**

Now, there is a very real connection to be made between the kohanim and the Menorah, the Light of the Mishkan. The People of Yisra'el are to be a nation of kohanim. YHVH had chosen us to bring the light of His Truth to all the nations of the olam. That is one of the primary reasons He gave Eretz Yisra'el, it was at the crossroads of three continents and the best place from which to disseminate YHVH's Truth. Our role as kohanim was twofold. We were to represent YHVH to **people (nations)** by teaching and instructing them His perfect Ways, the Ways of Torah. And we were to represent the people before YHVH by offering up prayers and **korbanot (sacrifices)** on their behalf.

The purpose of the kohanim of Yisra'el was to shine the Light of YHVH's Truth to an olam that to a great extent, forgotten it since the days of the flood.

Yahshua used the analogy of light all the time, and He specifically called His Talmidim to fulfill their role of being light to the olam. **Mattityahu 5:14-16: You are light for the olam. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. Likewise, when people light a lamp they don't cover it with a bowl but place it on a lampstand so that it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people so that they may see your mitzvot and praise your Father in Heaven.**

We have been chosen for a task and that task is to be a **Kadosh (Set-apart)** Nation and a Royal Priesthood.

In Yahshua's Words, we have been given light, the Light of YHVH's Truth, the Light of Revelation, the Light of Torah, the Light of Mashiach Himself. We are to take that light and let it shine. We are not to be like the wicked servant who took what he had been given and bury it in the ground. We are to take it and display it so that everyone may see. We are to fulfill our role as kohanim, teaching the people YHVH's Truth and interceding for them before YHVH. And the result of all this is so that they may see our good works and praise our Father in Heaven. Our obedience to Torah separates us and brings **kavod (esteem)** to YHVH. Therefore it should not be hidden either. We should have displayed the garments, celebrations and unique requirements of our kohan position. Then we and our communities will be a bright Menorah before the Throne of YHVH Whose light will bring pleasure

to both our YHVH and those around us. **Revelation 1: 20** "The secret of the seven stars which saw in My Right Hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are messengers the seven assemblies, and the seven lampstands which you saw are seven assemblies.

#### IV. The Royal Priestly Garments of Light. (Sh'mot 28: 4-42)

The major part of this week's parashah is a description of the garments of the Kohan HaGadol. The ephod, the **breastplate** that was also called **choshen mishpat**, the "**breastplate of judgment** (Sh'mot 28:15), the turban and all the gold and precious gems with which it was adorned are all described in exacting detail. Looking at the materials used in the clothes of the Kohan HaGadol see richness and finery far beyond what the average "**schmo, schlemiel, shnook**" would wear. The garments were made of gold and precious gems as well as the finest possible cloth. The blue color used in the garments were from a mussel found in the sea. The root for **water, mayim**, is the same as the root for **heaven, shamayim**, so we are reminded that it is YHVH who created the earth and everything in it. Additionally because the blue in his garments looks like the blue in the sky, a connection is established between the Kohan HaGadol and the heavenly Throne of YHVH. In **v 30** we come across the first mention of the "**Urim**" and "**Thummim**". Much mystery surrounds the nature and operation of **Urim** and **Thummim**. **HaUrim** means "**the Light**". It is interesting to note that Yahshua is

"**the Light of men**" (Yochanan 1:4 In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men.). **HaThummim** means "**the Perfections**" or in this garment, "**complete Truth**". The names of the patriarchs were engraved on each stone. Hence, the **Urim** and **Thummim** rendered **judgment**. These gems were to be placed in the breastplate of judgment. But there is more here than simple symbolic adornment for a single man who had the privilege to stand before YHVH in the **Kado (Set-apart)**

place, he who bore the names of the Tribes of Yisra'el before YHVH as a remembrance.

Josephus writes of them; "For as to those gems, which we told you before, the High Priest bare on his shoulders, which were sardonyxes, (and I think it needless to describe their nature, being known to everybody,) the one of them shined out when Adonai was present at their sacrifice. I mean that which was in the nature of a button on his right shoulder, bright rays darting out from it and being seen even by those that were most remote; which splendor yet was not before natural to the stone. This has appeared a wonderful thing to such as have not so far indulged themselves in philosophy as to despise Divine Revelation. Yet will I mention what is still more wonderful than this: for Adonai declared beforehand, by those twelve gems which the High Priest bare on his breast and which were inserted into his breastplate, when they should be victorious in battle; for so great splendor shone forth from them before the army began to march that all the people were sensible of Adonai's being present for their assistance. Whence it came to pass that those Greeks, who had great veneration for our laws, because they could not possibly contradict this, call that breastplate the Oracle."

The notes in Josephus say that it was not the light, shining from the gems, which told messages to the Kohan, but a voice coming from the **Kapporet (Mercy Seat)**, speaking the instructions to the

kohanim.

The twelve gems that were worn by the **Kohan HaGadol (High Priest)** when doing service in the **Miskhan (Tabernacle)** or **Mikdash (Temple)**. Also, these twelve gems represented Yisra'el as a treasure. If you were to take the twelve gems and place them together in a container they become a treasure and this is what this symbolizes, Yisra'el as a treasure to YHVH.

**Sh'mot 19:5: Now therefore, if you will obey My Voice indeed, and keep My Covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine:**

**T'hilli 135:4: For YHVH has chosen Ya'akov unto himself, and Yisra'el for His peculiar treasure.**

**Mattityahu 13:44: Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the man when he has found it, he hides it, and for joy thereof goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.**

We unite with all the various Tribes of Yisra'el. Every tribe is a precious gem that contributes to the Nation as a whole. (Most of Yisra'el, unfortunately, doesn't appreciate what was lost when the Tribes went off to exile.)

Further, a picture is being painted for us of how to come before YHVH. We are to come to Him in His blood **korban (sacrifice), YHVH Yahshua**, and as R. Hall writes, our garments should be beautifully ornate. The kohanim came before YHVH in the finest clothing available, wearing fine ornate jewelry and being cleansed and even perfumed in the prescribed manner. How much more should we apply these things to our physical and spiritual walks, before presenting ourselves to YHVH?

The materials which adorned the Kohan HaGadol's garments are significant for what they represent to all of us. Each one of us is a kohan in YHVH's Kingdom as part of Yisra'el and through the Mashiach. The garments of the kohanim are there to remind us who we really are.

There are striking parallels between the gems that were part of the Kohan HaGadol's garments : those described in

**Yechezk'el 28: 12, 13: Mortal, raise a lamentation over the m'lakh of Tyre, and say to him Thus says YHVH Elohim: You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of YHVH; every precious stone was your covering,**

**carnelian, chrysolite, and moonstone, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald; and worked in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.**

Unlike most “Christian” Scriptural commentators who see this as a description of Lucifer or haSatan, many Jewish commentators apply this to Adam. YHVH adorned Adam with all this beautiful work as the crown of creation. The description reminds us of what once was before we fell from that wonderful and perfect state. It is a reminder that we have the potential for that kind of existence because that is what we were created for.

The Kohan HaGadol, because of his position and activities in the **Kadosh of Kadoshim (Set-apart of Set-aparts)**, is a representation of that state in the here and now. In a very real sense he re-enacted the situation in Eden before man sinned and intimacy with YHVH was made a lot more difficult. The Kohan HaGadol had the opportunity to fellowship with YHVH in that way, to meet with YHVH at the **Kapporet (Mercy Seat)**, to see the **Kavod (Esteem)** of YHVH face to face. In those garments he is a symbol of what once was and the potential for all of us to recapture that state of being. As the kohanim of YHVH we too should be adorned with every precious stone set in gold, we should be clad in a white robe with the Name of YHVH and Yahshua HaMashiach written upon us for this is who we really are, precious and unique and **kavodim (esteemed)** among all the creatures YHVH created.

We are created in the very Image of YHVH, His **Kavod (Esteem)** is reflected in us, or at least it should be. When you read about the Kohan HaGadol, picture the garments, the gems, the gold, the pure white linen, the wonderful, **kavodim (esteemed)** appearance. And then think about yourself decked out in the same way. It is for this we were created, sometimes it helps to stop and think about whom we are and why YHVH made us. There is power for living in that realization if we choose to walk according to our original programming and as close to that perfect state of being that the Kohan HaGadol represents.

## **V. Conclusion and Application: You Are That Mikdash.**

The previous parashah, T'rumah, spoke of the building of the **Mishkan (Dwelling, Tabernacle, Sanctuary)**. Sh'mot 25:8 "**And let them make Me a Mishkan that I may dwell among them.**" Or "**And they shall make Me a Kadosh (Set-apart) Place, and I shall dwell in their midst.**"

The instruction for the building of the Dwelling Place of YHVH is a type and shadow of the outward man, in view of the fact that all Believers have now become the **Mikdash (Temple)** of the Living YHVH.

**Corinthians Alef 3:16-17: Don't you know that you yourselves are YHVH's Mikdash and that the Ruach Ha Kodesh lives in you? If anyone destroys YHVH's Mikdash, YHVH**

**destroy him; for YHVH's Mikdash is sacred, and you are that Mikdash.**

**Parashah T'tzaveh**, on the other hand, refers to the garments of the **Mishkan (Dwelling, Tabernacle, Sanctuary)-Mikdash (Temple)**, which illustrate the inner man. It is by the Ruach HaKodesh that man is given the spiritual gifts that enable us to offer our service as acceptable a pleasing to YHVH. R. A. Berkowitz writes: YHVH is intimately involved in the lives of His Redeemed. He has given us the power to live this life as those of the Redeemed Community. Because of His **Chesed (Kindness or Grace)** and **Racham (Mercy)**, He has given us His Torah a pattern and standard for life and living. In addition, He has given us His very Breath of Life, and empowers us in order that we might "**press on**" through our Sanctification and "**work out**" our Salvation. He has equipped us with the spiritual tools we need in order to "**prepare**" our **garm (the inner man)** to be pleasing in His Sight. **Colossians 1:10: states, "You have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him that created him."**

Keep in mind the fact that YHVH does not look on the outward things, but looks upon the heart is concerned and occupied with the inner man, and speaks here of the necessity of the knowledge of Him being illuminated deep within our hearts.

And therefore let it be so! YHVH Yahshua HaMashiach.