

Parashat Tetzaveh

פרשת תצוה

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The Menorah Illustrates our Relationship with God.

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 27:20-30:10

הפטרה: Ezekiel 43:10-27

הברית: Mark 12

החדשה

10 *Triennial cycle: Shemot / Exodus 27:20-28:30*

The Triennial reading cycle for this week (*Shemot / Exodus 27:20 – 28:30*) details the construction of the priestly garments and that the sons of Yisrael are to bring clear oil beaten from olives to be used to keep the menorah burning from evening until morning. God says “Ve’atah tetzaveh et-benyi Yisrael...” telling Moshe to command the sons of Yisrael to bring the oil for the Menorah. The English translation of “tetzaveh” (an III-Heh verb written in the Piel imperfect form) translates the word as “charge” *27:20 ‘You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. 27:21 ‘In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the Lord; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel. (NASB)* The menorah overshadows the altar, the table of the show-bread, and the laver, in the holy place but what does the menorah symbolize? The uniqueness of the menorah’s construction and symbolism, what spiritual lessons can we learn from it?

שמות 27:20-28:2

וַאֲתָהּ תְצַוֶּה וְאֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיָקְחוּ פֶרֶשׁ
אֵלֶיךָ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת וְיָדָךְ כֶּתִיב לְמֹאֵד לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד:
בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד מִחוּץ לַפָּרֹכֶת אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַעֲשֹׂת יִעָרֵךְ
אֹתוֹ אֲהַרֹן וּבָנָיו מֵעֶרֶב עַד־בֹּקֶר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה חֻקֹּת
עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:
וְאֵתָהּ תִּקְרַב אֵלֶיךָ אֶת־אֲהַרֹן אָחִיךָ וְאֶת־בָּנָיו
אֹתוֹ מִתּוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לְכַהֲנֵי־לֶךְ אֲהַרֹן נָדָב וָאִיְהוָה
אֶלְעָזָר וְאִיתָמָר בְּנֵי אֲהַרֹן: וְעָשִׂיתָ בְּגָדֵי־קָדֶשׁ לְאֲהַרֹן
אָחִיךָ לְכָבוֹד וּלְתִפְאֵרֶת: וְאֵתָהּ תִּדְבֹר אֶל־בְּלִיַּחֲמֵי

Shemot / Exodus 27:20-28:2

27:20 ‘You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. 27:21 ‘In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before the Lord; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel. 28:1 ‘Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. 28:2 ‘You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. (NASB)

The original instructions God gave to Yisrael concerning the design of the menorah is found in *Shemot / Exodus 25:31-40*.

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שמות 25:31-40

31 וְעָשִׂיתָ מִנֶּרֶת זָהָב מְקֻשָּׁה תִּעָשֶׂה הַמְּנֹרָה יִרְכָּה
 32 וְקָנֶה גְבוּעִיָּה כַּפְתָּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ מִמְּנֹה יְהוּי; וְשֵׁשׁ
 קָנִים יֵצְאוּ מִצְדֵּיהָ שְׁלֹשָׁה וְקָנֵי מִנֶּרֶת מִצְדָּהּ הָאֲחֵר
 33 וְשֵׁשׁ קָנֵי מִנֶּרֶת מִצְדָּהּ הַשֵּׁנִי; שְׁלֹשָׁה גְבוּעִים
 מִשְׁקָדִים בְּקָנֵה הָאֲחֵר כַּפְתָּר וּפְרָח וְשֵׁשׁ גְבוּעִים
 מִשְׁקָדִים בְּקָנֵה הָאֲחֵר כַּפְתָּר וּפְרָח בֵּן לְשֵׁשׁ הַקָּנִים
 34 הַיֵּצְאוּ מִן־הַמְּנֹרָה; וּבְמִנֶּרֶת אַרְבָּעָה גְבוּעִים מִשְׁקָדִים
 35 כַּפְתָּרֶיהָ וּפְרָחֶיהָ; וּכְפֶתֶר תַּחַת שְׁנֵי הַקָּנִים מִמְּנֹה
 וּכְפֶתֶר תַּחַת שְׁנֵי הַקָּנִים מִמְּנֹה וּכְפֶתֶר תַּחַת־שְׁנֵי
 הַקָּנִים מִמְּנֹה לְשֵׁשׁ הַקָּנִים הַיֵּצְאוּ מִן־הַמְּנֹרָה;
 36 כַּפְתָּרֶיהֶם וְקִנְתָּם מִמְּנֹה יְהוּי כְּלֵה מְקֻשָּׁה אַחַת זָהָב
 37 מְקֻשָּׁה; וְעָשִׂיתָ אֶת־נִרְתָּיהָ שִׁבְעָה וְהֵעֵלָה אֶת־נִרְתָּיהָ
 38 וְהָאֵיר עַל־עֵבֶר פְּנִיָּה; וּמִלְּקַחֶיהָ יִמְחַתְתֶּיהָ זָהָב מְקֻשָּׁה;
 39 כִּפֹּר זָהָב מְקֻשָּׁה יַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ אֵת כְּלֵה־הַבָּלִים הָאֵלֶּה;
 40 יֵרָאֶה וְעָשֶׂה בְּתַבְנִיתָם אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה מֵרָאֵה בְּהָר:

35 Note that “Menorah” is translated as lampstand in most English translations and that the entire menorah was made from a single hammered piece of pure gold (25:36). In addition to this, the description of the construction indicates that the candles or lamps are arranged to give light towards the front of the Menorah. This means that the six candles will point forward concentrating the light in one direction. The menorah was not meant simply for to give light over a very large space. The purpose of the design was to shine forth the light as a single source and not a diffuse light like that of an ordinary candle. This description indicates that the menorah was designed with special and spiritual meaning rather than for a physical practical purpose to give light inside of the temple of God.

40 The menorah was constructed with seven branches, three on each side and one in the middle. It was worked, beaten, heavy, solid, and hammered out of one piece. In the Scriptures, there is another description of the Menorah found in the prophets, in *Zechariah 4:1-10*.

Zechariah 4:1-10

4:1 Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep. 4:2 He said to me, ‘What do you see?’ And I said, ‘I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; 4:3 also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side.’ 4:4 Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, ‘What are these, my lord?’ 4:5 So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, ‘Do you not know what these are?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’ 4:6 Then he said to me, ‘This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying,

Shemot / Exodus 25:31-40
 25:31 ‘Then you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece with it. 25:32 ‘Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. 25:33 ‘Three cups shall be shaped like almond blossoms in the one branch, a bulb and a flower, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms in the other branch, a bulb and a flower so for six branches going out from the lampstand; 25:34 and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers. 25:35 ‘A bulb shall be under the first pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the second pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the third pair of branches coming out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. 25:36 ‘Their bulbs and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold. 25:37 ‘Then you shall make its lamps seven in number; and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it. 25:38 ‘Its snuffers and their trays shall be of pure gold. 25:39 ‘It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. 25:40 ‘See that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain. (NASB)

65 *'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts. 4:7
'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a
plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to
it!'" 4:8 Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 4:9 'The hands of
Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will
finish it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.
4:10 'For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will
be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel these are
the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth.' (NASB)*

70 In Zechariah's description of the Menorah, he sees the lampstand with a
bowl over top of it (4:2). The bowl and seven spouts feed the Menorah lamps
with olive oil. The symbolism of the Menorah's construction, the oil represents a
75 type of God's Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) and the bowl is the supplier that can
represent God. Zechariah identifies the seven lamps as *"the eyes of the Lord
ranging to and fro throughout the earth"* (4:10). Notice a similar passage in
Hitgalut / Revelation 5:6 that says *"And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the
throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a
Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are
80 the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth."* The apostle John also wrote
in *Hitgalut / Revelation 1:12-20* saying *1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that
was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 1:13
and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe
reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 1:14 His
85 head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a
flame of fire. 1:15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to
glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 1:16 In His
right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged
sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. 1:17 When I saw
90 Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me,
saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 1:18 and the living One; and
I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and
of Hades. 1:19 'Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things
which are, and the things which will take place after these things. 1:20 'As for
95 the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven
golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the
seven lampstands are the seven churches. (NASB) John describes the "seven
churches" to which Yeshua wrote the "seven letters" one to each church,
described in *Hitgalut / Revelation 2-3*, that these lampstands represent the seven
100 churches (ecclesia) of God. These ecclesia represents the true ecclesia today, the
embodiment of all believers in Yeshua. The members (you and I) of the ecclesia
are God's messengers to bear witness to the truth of God. The members of the
ecclesia are lit on fire for God, dedicated and filled with His Holy Spirit; do you
see a parallel here with the construction of the Menorah and a believer's life?
105 Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:14* *'You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill
cannot be hidden; 5:15 'nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket,
but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 5:16 'Let
your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and**

110 glorify your Father who is in heaven. (NASB) Yeshua tells us the light that is within us is set on a hill that goes out into the world. The Scriptures also tell us that Yeshua is the “light of the world” in *John 1:1-9*.

John 1:1-9

115 *1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 1:2 He was in the beginning with God. 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 1:5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 1:6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. 1:7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. 1:8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. 1:9 There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. (NASB)*

1 ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ θεὸς
2,3 ἦν ὁ λόγος . οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν . πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ
4 ἐγένετο καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν . ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ
5 ἦν καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων . καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ
6 φαίνει καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν . ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀ-
7 πεσταλμένος παρὰ θεοῦ ὄνομα αὐτῷ ἰωάννης . οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς
μαρτυρίαν ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσω-
8 σιν δι’ αὐτοῦ . οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς ἀλλ’ ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ
9 τοῦ φωτός . ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον
10 ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον . ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι’

Note the capital Greek letter “Phi” (phos, photos, etc) indicating that the Light is a proper name for Yeshua

125 Yeshua acknowledged that He is the light saying “I am the light of the world” in *John 8:12*. He also said that “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you, he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light” (*John 12:35-36*). As the light of the world, Yeshua brought the truth of God into the world. His words were the Father’s words (*John 7:16*). He also declared that he came down from heaven to do the will of the Father (*John 6:38*). In addition to this, Yeshua said in *John 8:28* “I do nothing of myself but as My Father taught me, I speak these things.” There are many more verses that describe the relationship of Yeshua, the Light, and us.

130 The Menorah symbolizes the unique relationship between God and His people. It is illustrative of God’s divine light and is symbolic of the ecclesia and Yeshua in the Torah of God and having seven candle sticks shows its completeness. The Menorah expresses the fullness of the light that is in found in Yeshua (*John 1:1-14*). Being in Christ as members of His body (*2 Corinthians 12:12-27*) we also show forth His light that is in us. God’s command (charge) to the people to bring oil for the lamp to burn illustrates our commitment to uphold the Light of God in Yeshua to the nations. To shine forth the light that has been
145 given to us by faith in Yeshua the Messiah. In addition to this, the Menorah was made from one piece of pure gold. The branches were beaten from the central trunk illustrating that the source of the light is the central trunk. The source of our strength, spiritual power, and the light of truth today is Yeshua Himself. The oil

150 of God's Spirit must flow from Him and into us, which is the Ruach HaKodesh
(Holy Spirit). The hammering and beating of this single piece of pure gold
suggests to us that Yeshua had to undergo hammering and beating of men by
scourging and flogging of the Roman soldiers and the extreme suffering of being
nailed to the cross (execution stake). Yeshua had to suffer and die for us to
155 become our Savior and Redeemer. *Hitgalut / Revelation* suggests the lampstands
are symbolic of the ecclesia, and so as the branches of the Menorah, we too must
undergo trials, tests, and sufferings in this life, just as the branches were beaten
and drawn from the central trunk of pure gold (Yeshua the Messiah). The apostle
Paul wrote *Shelachim / Acts 14:22 "We must through much tribulation enter the
kingdom of God,"* and David wrote in *Tehilim / Psalms 34:19 "Many are the
160 afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivereth him out of them all"* and in
*Tehilim / Psalms 119:67 "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep
your Word."* With what we know about the meaning of the Menorah, is it
surprising what Yeshua said in *Matthew 12:35 Let your loins be girded about,
and your lights burning; 12:36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for
165 their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and
knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. (KJV)* The apostle Peter also
wrote it this way, in *1 Peter 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are
harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and
suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 2:21 For you have
170 been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an
example for you to follow in His steps, (NASB)* illustrating that we are to shine
forth the light of Christ in our lives to the world and to expect suffering if we
follow in Christ's footsteps. What a wonderful design God has created in the
construction and purpose of the Menorah. Ask yourself this question "Has my
175 life been typified by this description we find in the Scriptures?" For the rest of
the week, think on the following questions.

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Questions

1. *What kind of light am I to the world?*
2. *How much am I shining forth the truth of Christ?*
3. *Do I have plenty of oil in my lamp and have I trimmed my wick to do good works for the glory of God?*

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever