**פרשת תצוה / Parashat Tetzaveh**

Shabbat Adar 11, 5769, March 7, 2009

32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d

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**G-d’s Plan**

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| **השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week’s Reading** |
| **תורה:****הפטרה:****הברית:****החדשה:** | Exodus 27:20-30:10Ezekiel 43:10-43:27Hebrews 13:10-17 |

 Last week’s Parsha and this week’s Parsha, Parshiot Terumah and Tetzaveh, detail the construction of the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). As we study the Torah we find many over arching themes throughout. In this week’s parsha we find the construction of the priestly garments. The priestly garment alludes to a more important role of the cohanim (priests). The primary job for the priests is to intercede on our behalf before the Lord and to spread the light of HaShem’s Holy Word. The emphasis of the Mishkhan is found in the special dedication ceremony for the Mizbach Ha’Olah in the Mishkhan. During the ceremony, the blood of the korbanot will be sprinkled upon both the mizbayach and the priests (see Shmot / Exodus 29). This week I would like to take a couple steps backwards and look at the big picture.

 In these two parshiot (Terumah and Tetzaveh) we find instructions for building the Mishkhan (Tabernacle), the priestly garments, and for consecrating the priests. The internal structure of the various units in the two parshiot appears to be logical. Reading through *Shmot / Exodus 25:1-27:19* there appear to be a seven part symmetry that helps to explain the organization of the text. The symmetric scheme helps to explain why the instructions of the Mishkhan are presented in two segments (i) *Shmot / Exodus 25:1-27:19*, and (ii) *Shmot / Exodus 30-31:17*. The first segment (See *Shmot / Exodus 25:1-27:19*) records instructions for making the various parts of the Mishkhan accompanying explanations about the function of the various parts; from the Ark of the Covenant to the courtyard. The second segment (see *Shmot / Exodus 30:-31:17*) deals with aspects of the tabernacle and its service including cautions for the priests and people. The structural design of these sections offers a new insight. This new insight, found in the construction of the Mishkhan, is what I would like to discuss in this week’s parashah.

 In the idolatrous world that surrounded Yisrael, the design and construction of a temple would be the responsibility of pagan priests who would not only oversee the temples construction but would also make the temple garments and consecrate the idols in a special ceremony. Interestingly, in the Torah, this expectation is turned upon its head. It is the G-d of Yisrael not its priests who oversee the design and construction of the Mishkhan (tabernacle). Not only is its construction overseen by the Most High G-d, but HaShem gives instruction regarding how He wants His priests to be chosen, dressed, and consecrated. The implication here is very important. Yisrael’s system of worship is not the invention of the priests. To the contrary, as the framing story illustrates, HaShem is to be their G-d and He requires a sanctuary so that He may dwell among them. The Lord further requires the priests to serve Him in the Mishkhan; this service is conditional upon His explicit instructions. Each piece of the priestly garment was designed for worship and revelation of G-d’s will in the various circumstances that would happen to come the way of the priest. This is illustrated in the Urim “lights” and Thummim “perfections” that were carried by the high priest of Yisrael on the ephod (breast plate).

**Shmot / Exodus 28:30-37**

28:30 ‘You shall put in the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the Lord; and Aaron shall carry the judgment of the sons of Israel over his heart before the Lord continually. 28:31 ‘You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 28:32 ‘there shall be an opening at its top in the middle of it; around its opening there shall be a binding of woven work, as like the opening of a coat of mail, so that it will not be torn. 28:33 ‘You shall make on its hem pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material, all around on its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: 28:34 a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, all around on the hem of the robe. 28:35 ‘It shall be on Aaron when he ministers; and its tinkling shall be heard when he enters and leaves the holy place before the Lord, so that he will not die. 28:36 ‘You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to the Lord.' 28:37 ‘you shall fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban. (NASB)

**28:30-37 שמות**



 The Urim and Thurmmim were used by the high priest to determine G-d’s will in some situations. The precise nature of the Urim and Thummim is unknown. The Tanach does not give much information on the use of the Urim and Thummim because references in the Tanach are rare. The first mention of the Urim and Thummim is in the description of the breastplate of judgment in *Shmot / Exodus 28:30* and *Vayikra / Leviticus 8:8*. When Yehoshua (Joshua) succeeded Moshe as leader over Yisrael, he was to receive answers from G-d by means of the Urim and Thummim through Eleazar the high priest in *Bamidbar / Numbers 27:21*. The Urim and Thummim are next mentioned in Moshe’s dying blessing upon Levi in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:8*. The only other scripture these are mentioned are in *Joshua 7:14-18, 1 Samuel 14:37-45, and 2 Samuel 21:2*.

 It is uncertain what the exact purpose was for the Urim and Thummim but what we do know is these were given as signs by G-d to the high priest for direction and counsel. It is mere speculation of the method of use for these two stones. The Urim and Thummim were a means of revelation that has intrigued and baffled readers and scholars of the Scriptures for centuries. What was the oracular means by which HaShem was pleased to speak to his people Yisrael on certain occasions? G-d has spoken to us in many ways; this was one way in which G-d spoke to the High Priest. Other ways G-d speaks to us are by His spirit, through dreams, visions, something happening in our lives, through other people, and through the Word of G-d. These last two weeks G-d has been speaking to us through the construction of the Mishkhan. Looking at these two parshiot, the relationship, structure, and meaning of these Parshiot Terumah and Tetzaveh in the construction of the Mishkhan it is clear the Lord is directing the not only the construction but also the means for approaching him within the Mishkhan. The most important insight we can take away from this week’s study is G-d has a plan. He had a plan for the construction of the Tabernacle and He also has a plan for your life as it says in the following scriptures.

***Isaiah 43:1-3***

*43:1 But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, ‘Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! 43:2 ‘When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you. 43:3 ‘For I am the Lord your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. (NASB)*

***Jeremiah 29:11-13***

*29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 29:12 'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 29:13 'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. (NASB)*

 The details of that plan may not be readily apparent especially the reason why certain things happen the way they do. G-d knows what He is doing, it says in *Jeremiah 1:5* that G-d knew Jeremiah before he was born. The Lord had already decided what Jeremiah was to become. Another example in the Biblical text is the life of Samson. G-d had decided how he would use Samson to deliver Yisrael. The various examples throughout the Torah, and in these two parshiot, G-d does have a plan. If you want to know G-d’s plans are for you, you have to first be close to him. Draw near to the Lord and listen to His voice. This takes a lot of practice and patience. We have to train ourselves how to listen to the Lord speaking in our lives and through His Holy Word. I encourage you today; let’s together begin the process of seeking the Lord and learning to hear His voice. Come say the following prayer with me.

Heavenly Father,

 I know that you have big plans for me. Give me the wisdom to seek you first in all things for life and living. I would like to begin seeking you by placing my faith in your method of forgiveness of sins in the blood of Yeshua the Messiah. Please have mercy upon me and forgive me of my sins. Give me the desire to live an obedient life for you to bring glory and honor to your name. Lord, I want to be used by you to do great things for your kingdom. Please Lord Help me not to minimize my role by bitterness and lack of faith. Take from me any bitterness I might have because I do not fully understand what you are helping me to learn as I grow closer to you. Help me to use everything you have been teaching me in life so that I will be prepared for the tasks you have prepared for me in the future. I thank you Lord for always being there for me. I pray all these things in Yeshua’s name.

Amen.

**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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**הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:**

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever