

Parashat Tetzaveh/ פרשת תצוה

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The Eternal Covenant

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Exodus 27:20-30:10

Haftarah: Ezekiel 43:10-43:27

B'rit HaChadashah: Hebrews 13:10-17

Both Parshiot Terumah and Tetzaveh deal with the mitzvot (commandment) dealing with the construction of the Mishkhan (tabernacle). Note that this section of the Torah is called “Tzivui HaMishkhan” (ציווי המשכן, commandment of the tabernacle), where צו (decree, command) is written in the imperative form. The imperative form suggests a grammatical mood that expresses the will to influence the behavior of another. The title “Tzivui HaMishkhan” in these Parshiot deals with the commandment to build the Mishkhan (tabernacle) in contrast to Parshiot Vayakhel/Pekudei which describes the actual construction of the Mishkhan (tabernacle).

Summarizing this week's parsha we find (i) the mitzvah (commandment) to light the Menorah (*Exodus 27:20-21*), (ii) eight types of special priestly garments (*Exodus 28:1-43*), (iii) the seven-day dedication ceremony (*Exodus 29:1-37*) where each day one bull and two rams are offered, (iv) the daily offering on the Mizbach (altar) (*Exodus 29:38-43*) where each day one lamb in the morning and one lamb in the evening are offered, (v) the blessing over the Ohel Mo'ed (אהל מועד, Tent of Meeting), and the altar (*Exodus 29:44-46*), and (vi) the Mizbach HaK'toret (the incense altar) (*Exodus 30:1-10*). This parsha is chuck-full of details. The specific details I would like to look at are those which deal with the Cohenim (priests) and the Mizbach (altar).

Exodus 29:5-14

29:5 Take the garments, and put on Aharon the tunic, the robe for the ritual vest, the vest itself, and the breastplate. Fasten the vest on him with its belt. 29:6 Put the turban on his head and attach the holy ornament to the turban. 29:7 Then take the anointing oil, and anoint him by pouring it on his head. 29:8 Bring his sons; put tunics on them; 29:9 wrap sashes around them, Aharon and his sons; and put the headgear on their heads. The office of cohen is to be theirs by a permanent regulation. Thus you will consecrate Aharon and his sons. 29:10 "Bring the young bull to the front of the tent of meeting. Aharon and his sons are to lay their hands on the bull's head, 29:11 and you are to slaughter the bull in the presence of ADONAI at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 29:12 Take some of the bull's blood, and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger; pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. 29:13 Take all the fat that covers the inner organs, the covering of the liver and the two kidneys with their fat, and offer them up in smoke on the altar. 29:14 But the bull's flesh, skin and dung you are to destroy by fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering. (CJB)

The consecration of Aaron and his sons indicate the great honor and glory of their position which I believe is reflected in their garments. (*Exodus 28:2 You are to make for your brother Aharon garments set apart for serving God, expressing dignity and splendor. (CJB)*) The primary role of the Cohen is to place the blood and particular parts of the animals upon the altar as a sacrifice to make atonement for the people. We see this reflected in the consecration of Aaron and his sons in *Exodus 29:5-14*. The other parts which are not burned upon the altar in the Mishkhan (tabernacle) such as the bull's flesh, skin, the dung, etc are subsequently burned outside the camp because it is a sin offering. I find that statement very interesting because it ties in with this week's reading from Sefer Ivrit (Book of Hebrews).

Hebrew 13:10-17

13:10 We have an altar from which those who serve in the Tent are not permitted to eat. 13:11 For the cohen hagadol brings the blood of animals into the Holiest Place as a sin offering, but their bodies are burned outside the camp. 13:12 So too Yeshua suffered death outside the gate, in order to make the people holy through his own blood. 13:13 Therefore, let us go out to him who is outside the camp and share his disgrace. 13:14 For we have no permanent city here; on the contrary, we seek the one to come. 13:16 But don't forget doing good and sharing with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your lives, as people who will have to render an account. So make it a task of joy for them, not one of groaning; for that is of no advantage to you. (CJB)

In *Hebrews 13:12* we find in the same way Yeshua suffered death outside the gate, outside of the camp to make the people holy through his own blood. Here we find Yeshua modelling the Torah in his life and in his death. Today, we as believers have an Mizbach (altar). This Mizbach (altar) is in heaven; it is on the heavenly mizbach (altar) that Yeshua the Messiah made once and for all atonement for our sins. (see *Hebrews 8:2-5, 9:23-24, 10:1-14*) In verse 13:11, we see the cohen hagadol (high priest) brings the animals into the Holiest Place as a sin offering, and the flesh of the animal is to be burned outside of the camp. What is interesting to note is the Levitical cohanim (priests) represent the pre-Yeshua may eat the thank offerings and peace offerings however they are not permitted to eat the sin offerings because the bodies of those animals are burned outside the camp. Summarizing these verses in Hebrews the author appears to use five illustrations:

Five Illustrations

1. Sin offering – Yeshua suffering in his death demonstrates two very significant things. One, just as the cohen hagadol (high priest) brings the blood of animals into the Holy of Holies, in the same way Yeshua suffered to make the people holy in His blood. Two, just as the bodies of the animals used for a sin offering are burned outside of the camp, so Yeshua's death took place outside the camp/city. Now Yeshua suffering like us makes it possible for him to completely identify with us. This is what qualifies him to be our mediator causing him to be able to bridge the gap, between G-d and man and then creates unity with G-d that he himself has.

2. Yeshua was wrongfully considered impure and suffered death outside the camp in disgrace and executed as a criminal on an execution stake outside of the gate at Golgotha.
3. Separation – like Yeshua we experience the pain of rejection, but we must stand with him and not seek incorporation or respect from men, we should seek only for G-d's approval.
4. The reference to Yeshua making the people holy through his blood draws an image of the Red heifer (*Hebrews 9:11-14*). The body of the red heifer was also burned outside the camp so by suggestion Yeshua is also our red heifer.
5. The author of Hebrews also mentions the gate of the city (see *Hebrews 11:9-16, 12:22*) reminding us as believers we have no permanent city but seek the one to come, the heavenly Jerusalem. These statements illustrate for us that by faith we live simultaneously in the "olah hazeh" (this world) and the "olam habah" (the world to come) because we look forward to the day we can be physically and bodily with G-d.

From this week's parsha, it is interesting that we can see a very unique characteristic of G-d. The characteristic is that G-d is a G-d of peace. A G-d of peace because He has reconciled sinful mankind to Himself through Yeshua the messiah; G-d has taken the first step, the initiative in restoring peace and wholeness to all of mankind. Whether you believe it or not, Yeshua has had the most significant influence upon this world when compared to all other men. This is illustrated in something that we use on a daily basis, our calendar. Even our calendar is divided based upon the death and resurrection of Yeshua. Yeshua has come to have a significant role in all of world history because he has given his blood to atone for the sins of mankind. Through Yeshua's blood, He has established an eternal covenant, the B'rit HaChadashah promised by *Jeremiah 31:30-33*. Today, you too can be a part of the eternal covenant which has been established in Yeshua's Blood. All you have to do is ask. Let's pray.

Prayer

Avinu u'Melechani (our Father and our King),

I realize that salvation begins with faith in G-d. I may not have had the kind of faith that I should have in the past, and I ask today that you would help to increase my faith. Today I place my faith in Yeshua as your Messiah and I believe Yeshua has made atonement of my sins upon the heavenly altar. In the past I have done many things that do not please you, in fact, I have lived my life for myself many times. I am sorry and I repent, I ask that you would forgive me in Yeshua's name. Help me to live every day in a way that pleases you, and waits in hopeful expectation for your soon return. I love you Adonai, and I thank you for your gift of forgiveness and salvation. I truly look forward to the time when I will spend all eternity with you!

In Yeshua the Messiah's name I pray, Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua 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