

PARASHAT TETZAVEH

(YOU ARE TO ORDER)

EXODUS 27:20-30:10

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading

Ezekiel 43:10-27

Testimony of Yeshua

On Yeshua our great High Priest: **Hebrews 5:1-10; 7:26**

On holiness and being a holy (set-apart) priesthood: **Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2:9; Revelation 5:9-10**

On Yeshua, the believer's daily offering: **John 1:29; Hebrews 7:27; 1 Peter 1:19**

On being a living sacrifice: **Romans 12:1; 1 Corinthians 15:31; Hebrews 13:10-17**

On the prayers of the saints being incense: **Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 27:20 Olive Oil for the Menorah
- 28:1 The *Kohanim* (Priests) and Their Garments
- 28:6 The *Ephod* of the High Priest
- 28:15 The Breastplate of Judgment With the *Urim* and *Tummim*
- 28:31 Robe of the Ephod
- 28:36 The Golden Head-Plate
- 28:39 The Linen Tunic
- 28:40 The Garments of the Ordinary Priesthood (*Kohanim*)
- 29:1 The Ceremony Inaugurating the Priesthood
- 29:38 The *Tamiyd* Offering (the Perpetual, Daily Burnt Offering Offered Each Morning)
- 30:1 The Altar of Incense

Study Questions for This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion)

- 1 27:20-21, *They shall bring pure oil.* Olives, olive oil and the olive tree are very significant biblical symbols. This oil was used for anointing and for burning in the seven-branched menorah—a picture of redeemed Israelite believers comprised of many different congregations (Rev 1:12-13). This olive oil was pure and the olives were beaten or pressed to produce oil for light (Exod 27:20). How does this relate to the

believer's life so that he can be the light of the world Yeshua commanded him to be (see Matt 5:14–16 cp. Acts 14:22; Rom 8:17; 2Tim 3:12; 1Pet 4:12–14; Jas 1:2–3)?

The priests attended the menorah to keep it burning continually from evening till morning. This reminds us of Yeshua's Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt 25:1–13), where Yeshua's exhorted his disciples to be like the wise virgins who kept their lamps trimmed and full of oil as they were watching and waiting for their bridegroom to come.

The level of oil in each virgin's lamp was the factor that determined whether one would be allowed entrance into the wedding or not. Therefore, what is the significance of olive oil (the fuel for the lamps) scripturally? It was used in consecrating kings and priests for YHVH's service (see 1 Sam 16:13; 1 Kgs 1:39; Lev 8:12). It symbolizes YHVH's rich blessings on one's life, was used for consecrating the tabernacle and its contents (Lev 8:10), and as a medicinal agent for healing (Isa 1:6; Luke 10:34). Olive oil is also a scriptural metaphor for YHVH's anointing on one's life (see Ps 23:5; 133:2; Zech 4:12–14), for gladness or joy (note Ps 45:7; Prov 27:9; Isa 61:3; Heb 1:9), for healing by the laying on of hands (read Mark 6:13; Jas 5:14), and for prosperity (see Deut 32:24). In Jewish thought, olive oil is also a metaphor for Torah, since it is a comfort to the head and body even as are the words of the Torah (*Everyman's Talmud*, by Abraham Cohen, p. 134). Oil in the Parable of the Ten Virgins is generally recognized to be a symbol of the blessing and anointing of YHVH's Set-Apart Spirit functioning in one's life. Let us not forget that the same Spirit leads one into YHVH's Torah-truth (John 15:26; 16:13). The five foolish virgins' lack of oil speaks of their lacking YHVH's anointing and blessing, that their lives were not fully consecrated to him, that they were deficient in YHVH's Spirit and were not walking in the fullness of his Torah-truth. Dean Wheelock characterizes the foolish virgins' lack of oil in this way:

The foolish squander their oil, their precious oil of Torah instruction, which tells them how to live their lives in a righteous manner. Meanwhile the wise hang on to their Torah learning, and thereby save their oil for that time when it is needed. And the time when it will be most needed is when Messiah arrives to take us to the wedding. Then we will need all of the Torah oil we can muster. That is what the "foolish virgins" were missing. They did not have an adequate supply of understanding of the Torah, they were not living a Torah-centered life, they had not prepared themselves adequately to be the wife of the Messiah Yeshua, the one who was the "Living Torah" when he walked the earth some two thousand years ago. (*Hebrew Roots Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 1997, article entitled "Oil For Our Lamps," by Dean Wheelock, p.10)

In the Scriptures, how is the lamp viewed metaphorically? (Read 2 Sam 22:29; Ps 119:105; Prov 6:23.) Believers are to be leading lives reflective of YHVH's light and are to be lamps or lights shining in the darkness of this world (note Matt 5:14; Luke 12:35; Phil 2:15). The ceramic lamps used in biblical times are an apt symbol of our physical bodies, which the Scriptures describe as vessels of clay. These vessels, our bodies, contain the Spirit of YHVH, for the Scriptures tell us that the spirit of man is the candle or lamp of YHVH burning inside of man (Prov 20:27; 2 Cor 4:6–7). At the same time, the pure gold menorah in the tabernacle shows us although we may now be mere vessels of clay as we walk this earth, it is our spiritual destiny, upon receiving our glorified bodies at the resurrection to be gold in that we will be like Yeshua (1John 3:2).

Are we caring for the spiritual lamps of our lives as the priests in the tabernacle did the menorah to keep it burning continually? Are we vigilant like the five wise virgins who kept their lamps ready for the coming bridegroom? Or are we like the foolish virgins who grew weary waiting and failed to prepare for the bridegroom who is Yeshua? (For more on olive oil, the menorah and the saints, see the article below.)

2 28:2–43, *You shall make set-apart garments*. Everything in the *mishkan* (tabernacle) is spiritually and prophetically significant. For example, the colors of the garments of the *kohen hagadol* (high priest) are blue, purple, scarlet and white, which are the same colors as the doors leading into the tabernacle courtyard and tabernacle itself (there were three doors). What do these colors signify? Why three doors? Consider this: there is a door corresponding to each of the three main manifestations of the oneness or uni-plurality (Heb. *echad*) of the "Godhead"—i.e., Yeshua, the Spirit (Heb. *Ruach*), and the Father. This also relates to the three main components of man's being-ness: body soul and spirit (1Thess 5:23).

- 3** **28:5**, *Gold, blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen*. The four colors of the high priest's garments relate to the four Gospels, which reveal the truth of Messiah Yeshua. Can you see this? Blue represents the celestial or heavenly aspect of Yeshua, red signifies the blood or the humanity of Yeshua, white represents the purity and righteousness of Yeshua, and purple signifies kingship or royalty of Yeshua. Some commentators see these colors as pointing to the four Gospels, which are the four spiritual doors through which one enters into a relationship with Yeshua. Some see Matthew emphasizing the *kingship* of Yeshua, Mark the *blood atonement*, Luke the *righteousness* of Yeshua and John the *divinity* of Yeshua. What do you think about this?
- 4** **28:15**, The breastplate had 12 stones representing the 12 tribes of Israel. How does this relate to the 12 foundation stones and the stone gates in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:12–14, 19–21)? Where is the stone representing the “Gentiles”? Is there a Gentile gate? If not, then where do you fit in as a born-again believer in Yeshua—by which gate will you enter the New Jerusalem? (Read Eph 2:11–19; Heb 4:16, 9:8–11; Gal 3:7, 9, 28–29.)
- 5** **28:29**, *Upon his heart*. The high priest wore the breastplate with the 12 stones representing the 12 tribes next to his heart and two onyx stones engraved with the names of the 12 tribes on his shoulders (Exod 28:9–12). Yeshua is our Great Heavenly High Priest. What do the heart and shoulders represent in his ministry to us? (Read John 10:11, 14; Luke 15:4–7 pertaining to love, and Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; and Matt 11:28–30 showing how he carries our burdens for us.)
- 6** **28:30**, *Urim...tummim*. In Hebrew, *urim* means “lights,” while *tummim* means “perfection, integrity, complete, innocent.” The priest used these stones to determine the will of Elohim by answering yes-no questions. How this was accomplished, no one knows. Some commentators think they were cast like lots (dice), while other theories exist attempting to solve this mystery. Regardless, what do the meaning of these words teach us as relating to the judgments or decisions of YHVH?
- 7** **28:30**, *Judgment...heart*. The priest wore the breastplate of *judgment* over his *heart*. What does this teach us about the judgments of Elohim? (See Ps 85:10; 89:14; Jer 9:24; Ezek 33:11; Mic 7:18; John 1:17; Jas 2:13.)
- 8** **28:36**, Compare the high priest's white, linen turban and the gold crown inscribed with the words “*Kadosh l'YHVH/Set-Apart to YHVH*” with the helmet of salvation mentioned in Ephesians 6:17, and the command to “take every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah” in 2 Corinthians 10:5. Clean, white garments represent righteousness. How does the Word of Elohim define righteousness? (See Ps 119:172.) We are made righteous by the blood of Yeshua at the time of our conversion, but then we must walk out righteousness, which is the righteous deeds or works of the saints (Rev 19:8, NAS, NIV). What did Yeshua say will determine our level of rewards in his kingdom? Works!! That is, Torah obedience. Read it for yourself in Matthew 5:19 (see also Rev 20:12; Matt 16:27; Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 5:10). Paul teaches us that we are not saved by our works, but that good works of righteousness *are the result* or fruits of one's being saved (Eph 2:7–10). Our good works separate or make us distinct from the world. They help us to be salt and light in the world (Deut 4:6–8).
- 9** **28:1–29:46**, Note the seven steps required to consecrate the priests for service in the tabernacle and compare them with the steps a believer goes through to become a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a set-apart nation, a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into [Yeshua's] marvelous light” (1 Pet 2:9). Discuss how these steps relate to the process a believer goes through from initial salvation to his ultimate glorification. These steps start at the altar of the red heifer just outside the tabernacle representing Yeshua's death on the cross (Heb 9:13 cp 13:12–13). After that, one enters into the tabernacle in a spiritually redeemed (cleansed) state through its outer door (a metaphor for Yeshua, see John 10:7–9), and proceeds to the altar of sacrifice (representing spiritual life and continued redemption in Yeshua). Next one comes to the bronze laver (representing baptism/immersion for the remission of sins and being washed in the water of the Word of YHVH, Acts 2:38 and Eph 5:26). After that, one enters into the set-apart place of the tabernacle where the Spirit of Elohim is and onward and upward spiritually into intimate relationship with the Father as represented by the holy of holies section of the tabernacle. Here are the seven steps required to consecrate a priest:

1. **They were taken from among the children of Israel (28:1).** This prefigures divine election. YHVH calls or chooses each person. Yeshua called his disciples (John 15:16–19). They did not call or choose him, but they had to respond to that call.
2. **They were then brought into the door of the tabernacle (29:4).** The door of the tabernacle is Messiah Yeshua who is the door to the sheepfold. No man comes to the Father except through Yeshua (John 10:1–18 and 14:6). The door is comprised of four colors, which speak of the person and work of Yeshua: blue, scarlet, white and purple. It also speaks of the four Gospels, which is the door to understanding the Person and work of Yeshua.
3. **They were washed (29:4).** Upon accepting the work and Person of Yeshua, one must be immersed for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) to identify spiritually with the death, burial and resurrection of Yeshua (Rom 6:3–14), and the washing of the water of the Word (Eph 5:26).
4. **They were clothed in their official garments (29:4–9).** The redeemed believer is to put on the robes of righteousness. (Gal 3:27, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Messiah have put on Messiah.”) Paul talks about fruits of righteousness through Yeshua in Philippians 1:11. Righteousness is Torah obedience (Ps 119:172) and is a mark of the end-time believers/saints (Rev 12:17 and 14:12) and of the bride of Messiah (Rev 19:8).
5. **They laid their hands on the head of the animals that were sacrificed, blood was shed and sprinkled on Aaron and his sons, *matzoh* (unleavened bread) was waved and burnt, and they ate the flesh of the ram and the *matzoh* (29:10–26, 32–33).** Each believer has to take personal responsibility for his own sins. The sacrifice of Yeshua, the Lamb of Elohim, at the cross must become personal to each person each must have his own personal relationship with Yeshua. Each must “eat” the flesh and “drink” the blood of Yeshua individually (John 6:35–58). Communion during the Passover seder pictures this and is a personal and individual matter.
6. **They were anointed with oil (29:21).** Each person must receive the Set-Apart Spirit (*Ruach*) of Elohim
7. **They are sanctified or set-apart for a special, divine purpose (29:44).** Only after going through these steps is one set-apart unto YHVH as a set-apart priesthood doing the set-apart work of YHVH.

Only on the basis of following YHVH’s steps, as outlined above in a spiritual manner, can one have fellowship with the Father. And what was the result? Relationship with the Father! Read Exodus 29:44–46 below,

And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar. I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest’s office. And *I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their Elohim.* And they shall know that I am YHVH their Elohim, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that *I may dwell among them: I am YHVH their Elohim.* (Emphasis added.)

This is all accomplished through Yeshua living in us spiritually. Yeshua is the Chief Cornerstone of the spiritual building of which the saints are a part (Eph 2:20). He is the end result or goal of the Torah (Rom 10:4). He is the Author and the Finisher of our Faith (Heb 12:2), the Beginning and the End, the *Aleph* and *Tav* (*Alpha* and *Omega*, Rev 21:6; 22:13) of everything.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of Elohim, and precious, you also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a set-apart priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Elohim by Yeshua the Messiah. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Tzion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believes on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious, but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people;* that ye should shew forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of Elohim, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. (1 Pet 2:4–10, emphasis added)

Our faith in Yeshua stays alive and vibrant because of the sacrifices of devotion and praise we offer up daily, morning and night. We are called to do the same work the priests of old did, but in a spiritual or fulfilled sense.

10 **29:7, Anoint him.** Ordination is a religious ritual that YHVH instituted in the Torah when he charged Moses to lay hands upon the Aaron and his sons as part of the process of consecrating them to the priesthood (Exod 28:41; 29:7; 30:30). YHVH then instructed the Israelites themselves to lay hands on the Levites as part of the process of consecrating them to the Levitical service (Num 8:10). In addition, the kings of Israel were also anointed with oil (although hands were not imposed on them) to consecrate them for their kingly duties (e.g., 1 Sam 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kgs 1:39).

The laying on of hands or ordination is nothing more than earth's confirmation of a heavenly calling. The biblical record clearly shows us that when ordinations occurred, Elohim had already chosen someone for a ministry position (e.g., high priest and his sons, the Levites, the king of Israel, or spiritual leaders in the time of the apostles), and men were simply confirming—through the anointing of oil and/or the laying on of hands—a choice that Elohim had already made. The heavenly calling comes first followed by the ordination of men. Heaven chooses who the servants of Elohim will be. Men, organizations, denominations, or churches do not.

In the Testimony of Yeshua, the eleven apostles chose Matthias to replace Judas by lot (Acts 1:15–26). The apostles believed that YHVH would supernaturally direct how the lots fell, and thus the choice would be that of heaven, not of men. In the case of Matthias, there is no mention of laying on of hands or anointing with oil. This may follow the example of Yeshua who simply called and commissioned the original twelve disciples (Matt 10:1; Mark 3:13; Luke 6:13). After all, Yeshua didn't need a ceremony to confirm his choices, since he was heaven's voice on earth.

After that, we have the choosing of the seven deacons in Acts 6:1. These were men who were already full of the Set-Apart Spirit and wisdom, so the apostles simply confirmed the work of the Spirit through the laying on of hands (verse 6).

The same is true in the other examples of ordination in the Testimony of Yeshua. Men would be mentored by a leader or an apostle, and after a period of time (“lay hands on no one suddenly,” 2 Tim 5:22) and after meeting the qualifications of eldership (see 1 Tim 3:1–12 and Tit 1:5–9), they were ordained. This period of training and probation finds its precedence in the Torah, where Levites went through five years of training (from age 25 to 30, Num 8:24) before being allowed to help the priests in the temple service. The biblical example of mentoring for ministry was less of an authoritatively-hierarchical system and more of patriarchal system with the older men lovingly overseeing, teaching and guiding those they had raised up.

11 **Exodus 29:38–42, In the morning...at twilight.** (See also Lev 1:1–17 and Num 28:1–15.) This twice daily offering was known as the *continual burnt offering* (Heb. *olah tamiyd*), and was offered at the door of the tabernacle (verse 42). The word *continual* (Heb. *tamiyd*) means “continually.” The Hebrew word for *burnt offering* is *olah* meaning “ascent, stairway or steps,” and derives from the basic Hebrew verb, *alah*, meaning “to go up, climb or ascend.” In this offering, the fire consumes the entire animal, and the word *olah* refers to the smoke of this whole burnt offering ascending to heaven, which is a “sweet aroma” to YHVH (verse 41). The *olah* was an offering or gift (Lev 1:2, Heb. *qorban*) to YHVH and could be a bull, goat, ram, turtle dove or a pigeon as long as it was a perfect specimen without defect (Lev 1). If an Israelite sinned, he could bring this gift-offering to the door of the tabernacle where he would place his hands upon the head of the animal, after which the priests would slaughter it, and sprinkle its blood around the altar of sacrifice just inside the door of the tabernacle (Lev 1:2,4,5). The meat was then prepared and arranged on the altar and entirely burnt (Lev 1:6–17). When the sinner laid his hands on the animal, it was as if he were transferring his sins onto the innocent, blemish-free animal, where upon YHVH accepted it as an atonement for the person's sin (Lev 1:4).

How does the writer of Hebrews teach that this offering (along with all the other offerings in the sacrificial system) pointed to Yeshua, our Great High Priest, whose atoning death on the cross fulfilled all the types and shadows of the Levitical, sacrificial system? (Read Heb 4:14–5:7; 7:1–10:18.)

Besides the obvious antetypes pointing to Yeshua's death on the cross, what else can we learn from the *olah tamiyd* offering rituals? What are the spiritual implications and the lessons to be learned for the redeemed believer living in the twenty-first century? Matthew Henry in his commentary on Numbers 28:1–8 sums it up very nicely:

The particular law of the daily sacrifice, a lamb in the morning and a lamb in the evening, which, for the constancy of it as duly as the day came, is called a continual burnt-offering (v. 3), which intimates that when we are bidden to pray always, and to pray without ceasing, it is intended that *at least every morning and every evening we offer up our solemn prayers and praises to God.* (emphasis added)

This *olah tamiyd* sacrifice was connected to the rising and setting of the sun as implied by the words of the psalmist (Ps 113:3). At the same time, the priest was to burn incense on the incense altar (Exod 30:7–8) as part of the *olah tamiyd* sacrifice.

The biblical writers foresaw a time coming when either there would be no tabernacle or temple in which to offer the sacrifices and incense, or the designated place of worship would be inaccessible to the Israelite. In this situation, Hosea admonishes sinful Israel to return to YHVH and to offer up the sacrifices (lit. *the calves or young bulls*) of our lips, while expecting Elohim to graciously receive them and take away their iniquity (Hos 14:2). Paul embraced this idea when he admonished the saints to become as “living sacrifices...unto Eohim” (Rom 12:2). In John's vision of heaven, he sees the prayers of the saints as being like sweet smelling incense before the throne of the Almighty One (Rev 5:8). Not only does YHVH view the prayers of the righteous as incense, but their praises of him as a sacrifice or a thanksgiving offering as well (Jer 33:11; Heb 13:15). The psalmist goes on to connect the dots between the *olah tamiyd* sacrifice, incense, prayer and praise when he writes,

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. (Ps 141:2)

How is the non-priest to offer incense before the YHVH? This is done through prayer and worship. The prophet Malachi offers an answer:

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith YHVH of Hosts. (Mal 1:11)

The Torah prohibits offering sacrifices anywhere YHVH has not placed his name. What's more, Yeshua has fulfilled the sacrificial system by his death on the cross once and for all, and has become our Great High Priest. So how then do the nations offer up sacrifices in every place as Malachi prophesies except by prayer and praise? The same is true, of course, for redeemed believers are now part of Yeshua's royal priesthood as Peter testifies:

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to Elohim by Yeshua the Messiah. (1 Pet 2:5)

However, since there is no loner either a temple or a Levitical priesthood, yet the saints are called priest of Yeshua (Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6), how shall we as the saints of the Most High fulfill our priestly duties if not by serving our Master Yeshua through prayer and praise?

12 **29:42–43**, *Where I will meet you.* After discussing the continual burnt offerings that are a prophetic picture of Yeshua's atoning death on the cross, YHVH promises to meet with the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle, and then in verse 43 he promises to dwell among them. Discuss the implications the spiritual and prophetic implications of these symbols (the door, the tabernacle, the burnt offering, YHVH speaking to and dwelling with his people, the consecrating of Aaron and his sons) and how they relate to the individual believers walk today.

13 **30:1**, *You shall make an altar to burn incense.* The altar of incense was made of acacia wood overlaid in gold. Who does this represent spiritually? Though the Scriptures likens the saints to now being like clay vessels, but what is our ultimate destiny? How is gold a picture of this? (Compare 2 Cor 4:7 with 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor 15:49; Phil 3:21; 2 Pet 1:4.)

14 30:6, *You shall put it before the veil.* Why was the altar of incense located just outside the veil of the *dveer* or oracle (the inner most room of the tabernacle or holy of holies)? What does incense represent? (See Rev 8:4.) What did the morning and evening offering of incense (Exod 30:7–8) in the tabernacle represent (See Ps 141:2 and Rev 5:8; 8:3–4.)? Is this not an instructional shadow-picture of what should be occurring daily in the life of the follower of Yeshua? Is your life too busy for daily prayer? If so, what does your Heavenly Father think about this? Is his heart grieved? Is your relationship with him suffering? Are you learning to hear his voice and to receive his instructions on a daily basis through listening-prayer? If you don't have time for daily prayer, is it possible that YHVH may be nudging you to reorder your priorities? Does your prayer time amount to giving your Creator and Father the leftovers of your day—the table scraps and crumbs? Is this appropriate? We are commanded to pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17). Can we come into deep intimate relationship with our Father and enter into the most intimate place any other way than through prayer? This is what the strategic placement of the altar of incense in the *mishkan* is teaching us.

For full treatment of the subject of the Tabernacle of Moses, see our teaching article, “The Tabernacle of Moses: YHVH's Pattern of Salvation for Mankind” available at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/tabernacle.pdf>.

PURE OLIVE OIL BEATEN FOR THE MENORAH

IN EXODUS 27:20, ELOHIM SPEAKING TO MOSES SAYS, “Now you shall command the children of Israel that they shall take for you pure olive oil beaten [or pressed] for the light, to cause the menorah to burn always.”

Olive oil is made by crushing and pressing ripe olives. Whole olive fruit consists of 10 to 40 percent oil, and the fruit pulp is 60 to 80 percent oil. Producers use hydraulic presses to squeeze the oil out of the fruit under low pressure. This technique, called cold pressing, generates little heat, and so the oil retains its flavor, color, and nutritional value ...

Adam Clarke, in his biblical commentary, says regarding Exodus 27:20 that the very ripe and oil-filled olives, after having been picked, when slightly bruised or pressed (before being crushed by mortar stones in a mill) will express the purest, most flavorful and highest quality oil. This oil that flows spontaneously with little or no application of force is called the *mother drop*.

According to *The ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, only the purest of the pure oil could be used for the lamp (menorah). This was obtained by slightly pressing the very ripe olives, but without crushing them. A minute quantity of oil would be squeezed out—only a drop or so—from each olive. This oil was more pure than any of the other oil subsequently obtained via crushing.

Spiritual Parallels

Here are some other parallels between an olive tree and its oil and a child of YHVH:

- ☞ In their unrefined state both the olive fruit and man are initially bitter and need to be washed via lye (the main cleansing ingredient in soap) to be acceptable to the eater—or to Elohim.
- ☞ Both the olive tree and man are difficult to grow and temperamental when it comes to producing fruit; they both require careful attention. Many factors are involved and great care must be exercised on the part of the cultivator to ensure a good crop yield.
- ☞ The olive fruit and man needs to be crushed to bring out the precious oil. A stone mortar or mill was used in times past to crush olives to produce oil. Similarly, the Scriptures likens Messiah to a stone who will crush all who come to him (Luke 20:18; Matt 21:44).

(This is an excerpt from a longer teaching on this subject found on the Hoshana Rabbah website. The direct link to the article is <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/oliveoil.pdf>)

HAFTORAH READING—EZEKIEL 43:10-27

Understanding the Mystery of Ezekiel's Temple

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF A TEMPLE IS ENIGMATIC. Few passages in the entire Bible are more difficult to understand than chapters 40 to 48 of the Book of Ezekiel where the prophet describes in detail a temple—a habitation for YHVH himself—that he saw in a vision. Ezekiel's temple is similar to the Tabernacle of Moses and Solomon's Temple, but different and grander.

Is this temple to be actually built during the Messianic Era or Millennium (which is the most common interpretation of this prophetic passage)? Or is this temple not a literal temple that will be built, but only figurative and spiritual in nature containing some hidden spiritual message? Bible commentators are uncertain. The Christian commentator Matthew Henry brushes off the vision with a scant commentary giving the following reasoning why: "Here is a vision ... which is justly looked upon to be one of the most difficult portions in all the book of God. When we despair to be satisfied as to any difficulty we meet with, let us bless God that our salvation does not depend upon it, but that things necessary are plain enough; and let us wait till God shall reveal even this unto us." Not content to leave this issue on Matthew Henry's spiritual back burner, this author has assembled a series of insightful quotes from scholars who have studied Ezekiel's Temple in depth and have some thought-provoking ideas as to its spiritual significance that may well spur the reader to examine this subject more thoroughly for himself.

Excerpts from Rabbinic Jewish Commentaries

- ☞ The *Soncino Pentateuch* sees this vision describing a temple that will be built in the New Jerusalem after the return of the exiled Israelites, which occurs when Messiah comes to establish his kingdom on earth. "This new temple was ... to symbolize and embody in concrete form the teachings of Holiness and Purity preached by the Prophet in the preceding 39 chapters of his book... The real hope of the future for Ezekiel lies in perfect and willing obedience to the Law" (p. 350).
- ☞ *The ArtScroll Chumash* notes that at the beginning of the Book of Ezekiel the prophet is shown the glory of YHVH departing the Temple in Jerusalem because of all the abominations done therein (Ezek 9 and 10). That Temple became but an empty shell destined for soon destruction at the hands of the Babylonians. "But [Elohim] removes his Presence from places, not from his people. Throughout Ezekiel's sad task of warning the nation of the consequences of its waywardness, [Elohim] told him that Israel would remain his people, that he would share their exile, and that he would bring them home again. In the concluding chapters of the book, Ezekiel saw the vision, the architecture, the dimensions, the laws of the Third Temple. Finally, he saw the vision of the Shechinah's [YHVH's glorious Presence] return—the same Shechinah whose departure he had tearfully witnessed twenty years earlier" (pp. 1158–1159).
- ☞ The essence of the nine chapters devoted to describing this temple is found in 48:35 where the name of the city is given: YHVH Is There/YHVH *Shama* (יהוה שמה), according to *The ArtScroll Tanach Series Ezekiel Commentary*. The focus of the New Jerusalem is that it is the resting place of the Divine Presence. "[Elohim] wills that there be a New Jerusalem only because he wills that there be a place of welcome for the Divine Presence.... This Temple is to become the throne and footstool for the Divine Presence (43:7) and, in contrast to the two previous Temples which became defiled—and subsequently destroyed—through Israel's sins, this one is to stand inviolate. [Elohim] is to dwell in it, never to depart (43:7)" (p. 605).

Christian Commentary

- ☞ Adam Clarke in his commentary sees a direct correlation between the layout of Ezekiel's Temple and the message of the cross. "The tabernacle and temple were types of the incarnation of [Yeshua the Messiah]: 'Destroy this temple, and after three days I will raise it up;—but this he spoke of the temple of his body' (John 2:19,21). And in that Temple 'dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.' Into this immaculate humanity did the glory of the Supreme [Elohim] enter; and thus, [Elohim] was in [Messiah] reconciling the world to himself.' And this [Yeshua] is Immanuel, [El] with us" (*Clarke's Commentary*, vol. 4, p. 540).
- ☞ E.W. Bullinger in his noted *Companion Bible* says of Ezekiel's Temple or Sanctuary, that it is the palace or habitation of the Messiah in connection with "the city of the great King" (Ps 48:2; Matt 5:35, Appendix 88, p. 126).

☞ “These closing chapters [Ezek 40 through 48] describe the new temple and a new order of worship for Israel. Most important they conclude with the name of the city, [YHVH] *Is There*. This is the key for understanding this whole vision of Ezekiel, which is paralleled by Revelation 21:1–22:15. As John has an angel guide to show him around his New Jerusalem, so Ezekiel has an angel to explain to him his temple vision. Though scholars vary in their interpretation, the temple is best interpreted symbolically, representing the worshipping community of the Messiah, during the church age, the Millennium, and climaxing in the world to come” (*Spirit Filled Life Bible*, notes on Ezek 40:1).

Discussion Questions:

- 1 Read 43:1–9 for context. Who is the target-audience of the prophet’s word? Who are their modern descendants? This is important to determine since it is possible this prophecy is yet to be fulfilled.
- 2 43:2, 4, 7, To whom is this referring? Who will come through the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem in glory? Whose voice is like the noise of many waters? (See Rev 1:15.)
- 3 43:7–9, What is the nature of the sin that the children of Israel have committed? If this is an end-time temple, then must the sins apply to end-time Israelites?
- 4 43:10, What about this temple will cause them to “be ashamed of their iniquities” or Torahlessness (disobedience to YHVH’s commandments)?
- 5 43:11–17, The rest of this Haftorah portion describes the altar. When YHVH’s wayward people are “shown” the layout and design of the temple or sanctuary and the altar it will provoke them to repent (43:10). The word *show* is the Hebrew word *nagad*/נָגַד (*Strong’s* H5046) meaning “to bring forward, to bring to light, or to explain an enigma or dream.” Does this suggest that the meaning of the sanctuary is hidden and will have to be revealed, and when it does will it cause a profound spiritual awakening among YHVH’s people?

In his book, *The Secrets of Ezekiel’s Temple*, Bob Hall discusses the deeper meaning of Ezekiel’s Temple. Here are some main points the author makes in his book:

- ☞ Like Yeshua we must first die in Yeshua (to our flesh man) before we can be resurrected spiritually. This is the real power of the cross. Ezekiel’s Temple is a picture of this (*Introduction* to the book).
- ☞ Ezekiel’s Temple is a journey through the heart of the Father (p. 65).
- ☞ A giant cross sits over Ezekiel’s Temple. The “wings” of the cross are formed by the north and inner south gateways. The head of the cross is formed by the inner eastern gateway and the base by the temple proper. The most holy place forms the foot of the cross. The table in the most holy place resembles the nail through Messiah’s feet. The western building represents the tomb. The altar would be exactly where Yeshua’s heart would be if he were hanging on the cross that is superimposed over the temple, which is also the origin of the river in Ezekiel’s Temple, which corresponds with the blood and water that flowed from Yeshua’s side (pp. 5–6).
- ☞ Ezekiel’s Temple contains the plans for the wedding ceremony of Yeshua, the Lamb (p. 75ff). These plans relate to the seven feasts of YHVH as revealed in his Torah.